

Memories of Chilliwack Junior-Senior High School

September 1942 to June 1943

Chilliwack, British Columbia

Written by

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A few people have told me what they remember about the school year
September 1942 to June 1943 at Chilliwack High School.

Martin Dayton, Boys' Senior Ring and President of the student body remembers
the Air Cadet Corps best.

Norman Richards looks back with pleasure on the competitions of the Table
Tennis Club.

Gwen (Vaughan) Motyka thinks back to her participation in sports and vividly
recalls all her teachers. She remembers Miss MacNaughton suggested she visit
families who had lost their sons during the war. She comments, "It was an
English assignment I did not enjoy."

Nan (Hurndall) Tissington recalls work on the school papers and annuals.

The world was in the middle of World War II. Although it was officially the
Chilliwack Junior-Senior High School, the school was called "CHS". Students of
that year recall many teachers with respect and affection. Achieving a high
school education was the reason why many were at school, and this account
deals with some of the other facets of student life at CHS.

Student government was elected early in the school term. Martin Dayton and
Dorothy Graham, both senior matriculation students, were Senior Rings. They
were also President and Vice-President respectively of the Students Council.
Margaret May was Secretary and Henning Jensen, Treasurer.

Biddy White was the inter-club representative and Eldon Rideout, House Cabinet representative. Don Johnston represented the Junior High School and Howard Denike was the Speaker for the Assembly. These Executive Officers also served for the Student Assembly.

Also on this executive were the house presidents:

- ☞ House One - Eldon Rideout,
- ☞ House Two - Edith Osborne
- ☞ House Three – Claude Creelman,
- ☞ House Four - Joe Wade
- ☞ Also all the Division presidents.

Divisions were the individual “home” classrooms and the four houses were means of dividing the students into four groups for competition in sports and other events.

A change of major importance in that year was the formation of No. 147 Squadron, Air Cadets of Canada. There had been a cadet corps previously but in the spring of 1942 it had been decided that an Air Cadet Corps would be formed at Chilliwack High. The School Board and Chilliwack Rotary Club agreed to sponsor the movement.

Four boys were taken to Vancouver to participate in drills and two parades with a Vancouver squadron of air cadets. These same boys also had training at No. 37 Flying Training School in Calgary. They were Martin Dayton, James Duthie, Robert Barrett and David Hinds.

That summer Principal J.C. McGuire and several teachers – G.W. Graham; C.S. Carroll, R.H. Osborne, P.H. Harford and G.H.Elliott trained at No. 3 Serving Flying Training School, Calgary. They qualified as Air Cadet Officers to train the boys.

By October 17 other boys had joined the first four in training to be non-commissioned officers. They drilled and studied every Thursday night. All boys in grades 11, 12 and 13 were enrolled in the air cadet squadron. They learned something about aircraft recognition, airmanship, armament drill, meteorology, air navigation, air force mathematics, signals, physical training, hygiene and sanitation, administration and organization. Getting uniforms and wearing them for the first time was a major occasion for the cadets. Much of the training was in school hours with some classes also held in the evenings. In the spring the squadron was inspected by Air Commodore Earl McLeod and the boys received high praise. At the school's graduation ceremonies on June 27th the boys received their LAC – Leading Air Cadet designation.

Boys in lower grades were in the Army Cadets. There was also an inspection of them in the spring by Lieutenant Colonel H.E. Goodman.

Cadet training was only one part of the "War effort". Red Cross activities, under the leadership of Miss Marion How were started in earlier years. There was an organized knitting program and many money-making projects.

Students were urged to buy war savings stamps and competitions between divisions were held. Salvage was collected and students were urged to “get in the scrap”. They collected metal, rubber, bottles and rags.

School gardens took on a special interest when the agriculture department of the school offered special instruction on growing “Victory Gardens”. Students who had good grades were allowed to leave school before the end of the final term if they were required to work on home farms, or had jobs on farms. So many men were in the armed services and student labour was really needed. But despite the war efforts, high school kids were still high school kids. They had their fads like “sloppy Joe” sweaters and “moron jokes”. Blue and gold sweaters were very popular and Glenn Miller was voted favorite band leader.

The sports program of the school really suffered during the war. Gasoline rationing and the shortage of rubber for tires meant that school buses were not allowed to be used to transport students to sporting events. Lack of transportation meant the breakdown of district competition. When the army took over the Sardis Community Hall it was the end for the basketball team that had trained there and provided competition for CHS. There were still the inter-house competitions and there were inter-city basketball games for both girls and boys basketball teams. There was also a sports program within the air cadet training. Sporting competitions with members of the local army camps were also held. There was an inter-district soccer game held but it appears that this was just among CHS students.

Days were punctuated with the blaring bell that signaled the beginning and end of each class. The D.R.I. (daily routine instructions) were read aloud in each classroom first thing in the morning. School buses to the various outlying districts arrived and departed with almost military precision.

The Table Tennis Club was one of the most popular sports clubs in the school. Mr. C.S. Carroll was the enthusiastic sponsor of this group of 82 members, 62 boys and 20 girls. Mr. Carroll put up the first cup for competition. Len Butchart won the first school tournament that year, defeating Norman Richards. Several members of the club went to Vancouver to participate in a "Milk for Britain" tournament sponsored by the Burrard Club.

In September it was announced that Chilliwack High School had won the Vancouver Daily Province Shield for the best annual (yearbook) in British Columbia. ***The Frontiersman***, the annual for 1941-42 was the first produced in 18 years. It was edited by Lois Dickinson.

The feeling of "A hard act to follow" gripped the annual board members who embarked on producing the 1942-43 yearbook. Continuing the frontier theme, this time the school was likened to a pioneer river boat.

The school paper "The Tatler" which had been published five times in the previous year, became a free weekly paper put out on Fridays. There were full staffs for both the "blue" and "gold" editions. Seventeen weekly papers were produced during the year, with a large, more ambitious magazine type "Tatler" before Christmas.

K.D.M. Large and R.J. Boroughs were the teacher who guided annuals and Tatlers, as well as W.L. McCutcheon who supervised the art work.

Some events recorded that year included a Hallowe'en dance when apple juice was served instead of tea or coffee. This might have been because of rationing but when a Hard Times dance was held later in the year refreshments were pie and coffee.

Remembrance Day services were held November 10 as it was a school holiday on the 11th. Some teachers and many students were lost in the war.

Remembrance was a meaningful thing to the students.

A heavy snowfall shut down CHS for two weeks and then for an additional week or two senior students had classes at Central school while plumbing and heating problems were resolved at CHS. It was reported there was an acute fuel shortage at the school. It was rumored that there would be no Easter holidays because of the time lost in the winter, but when the time came there were holidays after all.

There were many clubs and interests and a school orchestra. The whole school was proud when it was announced that Henning Jensen, a grade 12 student and gifted violinist had become a member of the Vancouver Symphony orchestra.

CHS students competed in the "Dollars for Scholars" programs over radio station CJOE in Vancouver. Dorothy Graham, Martin Dayton Helen Anton and David Hinds took part.

“Charley’s Aunt” was the senior Drama Club’s presentation in April. The play drew a full house to the CHS gymnasium. Earl Peterson portrayed the title role. Miss Jean L. MacNaughton, who taught Drama and English, directed the play. There was an inter-house track meet with 75 events, with an Assembly later on to present the athletic awards.

Edith Osborne was presented with the Max Stewart Memorial Cup. Mr. Stewart was a former teacher who lost his life in the war. The Les Eyres Trophy was presented to Leonard Hall, the captain of the CHS soccer team. The competition had been fought out with Langley and Abbotsford.

The whole Sardis team with Captain Leonard Hall was called to the stage to be presented with the district soccer league cup. Howard Guile was the winner of the Robert Field memorial trophy for the junior boy amassing the most points at a track meet. F.O. Field was a senior matric student and an ardent track and field enthusiast in the 1938-39 year. C.S. Carroll presented the Table Tennis cup to Len Butchart. Soon it was time for final exams, the issuing of the Annual and graduation.

Diplomas were awarded to 135 grade 12 and senior matric students on June 25, 1943. Margaret Taylor gave the class history and John Vancrick the valedictory address. The graduation ceremonies were held in the afternoon and witnessed by 600. Girls wore white afternoon dresses and carried bouquets of spring flowers. Some of the boys wore air cadet uniforms.

At that time there were 366 former students and teachers listed in the armed forces, including 18 who had been killed in action, died in services or were reported missing.

Women's Canadian Club bursaries were awarded to Jean Young and David Hinds. Earl Peterson won the HMS Lion Chapter, IODE Award.

Of the 57 crests awarded for service to the school 27 were Honour crests, 27 Senior and 20 Junior.

"You have reason to be proud of your school," said Principal J.C. McGuire at the graduation ceremonies. "We have some of the highest scholastic standings in the province; our CHS annual won a contest as the best in the province and our 147th Squadron of the Air Cadets has been reported one of the best in Canada."

It was in the school term of October of the 1943-44 when it was announced that for the second time CHS had won the Vancouver Daily Province Shield for the best High School annual in British Columbia.