

# THE B.C. TEACHER

May/June 1979

Volume 58 Number 5

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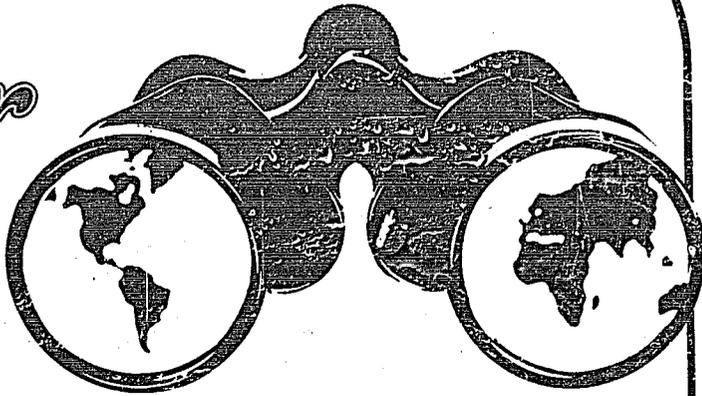
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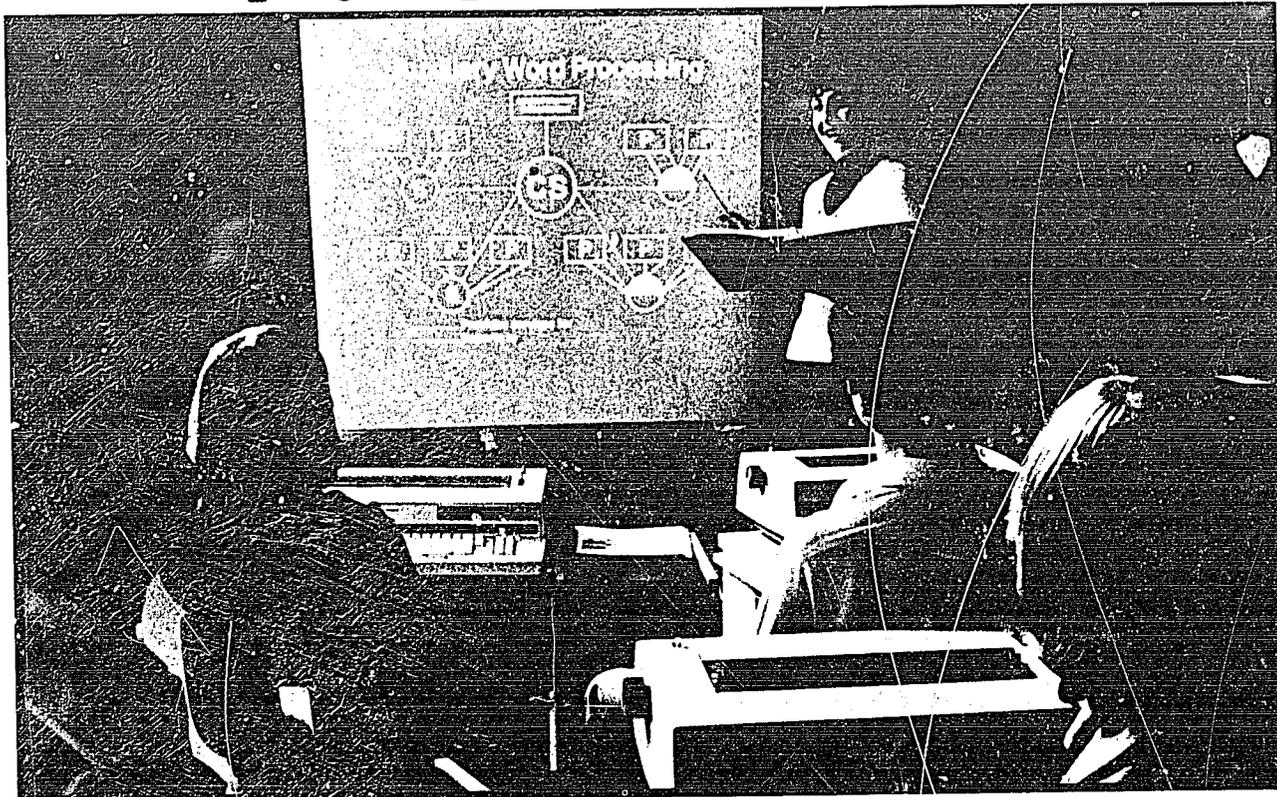


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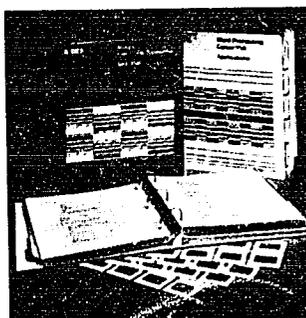
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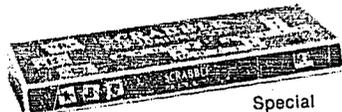
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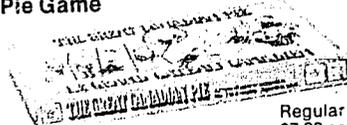
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# HOW TO PLAN YOUR ESTATE THIS SUMMER

Planning your Estate is best done while suntanning. So take a pencil, paper, a lounge chair, iced juice and your free Estate Planning Guide from Teachers' Trust out to the backyard. Now, take a few moments to consider your arrangements.

By planning your estate, leaving a Will and making sure that you have assigned a responsible executor, you are ensuring that your favourite gold pen or the contents of that mysterious safety deposit box are distributed to the special people in your life.

When you're ready, call us for an appointment. (If you live outside the Lower Mainland, please write to arrange a convenient appointment date.) You are invited to talk with your Teachers' Trust officer as many times as you wish and all consultations are free. There are no obligations and no charges for this service. Your personal estate counsellor can make sure that you are fully aware of all your alternatives and if you have any tax or investment questions, ask the professional.

## **Yes, you need a Will.**

That's the only way to make sure that your wishes will be carried out. When you meet with your Teachers' Trust officer, a Will planning summary is prepared and sent to your lawyer. When you examine all your alternatives with the guidance of your Trust officer, you save your lawyer's time and your money. It's worth your while to stop in at your Trust Company.

## **5 years old is too old.**

Once you've written your Will, you can't simply forget about it. Laws do change, so as a favour to yourself and your family, take some time to review the old document. Your Teachers' Trust officer will make sure that you're taking advantage of new legislation.

## **Enter the Executor.**

That's the person or trust company you name in your Will to be responsible to carry out the terms of your Will. It's a big job and it's important that your Executor is both knowledgeable and level-headed. If you appoint Teachers' Trust as your Executor or Co-executor, your estate will be administered efficiently and according to your wishes.

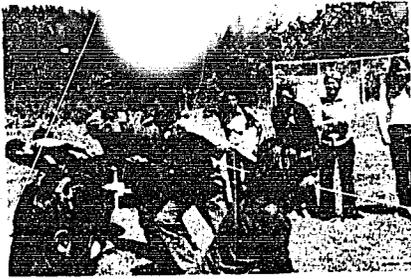
## **Today's the Day.**

You can read the Illiad again this summer and you can also go for 3 under par. We know you have other things to do. But this summer, you don't have anything better to do.

**Estate planning is your responsibility.** Write today for your free Estate Planning Guide.

# TEACHERS' TRUST COMPANY

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**PHOTO CREDITS**

BCTF files — p. 175 (bottom), 189, 190; John Denniston — p. 185; Mardee Galt — p. 193; Jon Henderson — p. 192; Gladys Perrin — p. 175 (middle), 178, 179, 181; Mark van Manen — 175 (top), 186.

**COVER STORY**

When Gladys Perrin decided she would spend a year teaching for the Department of Indian Affairs, she had little idea of what to expect. Her year turned out to be an enjoyable and challenging one, for she worked with the entire village, not just the school children. On sports day, for example, everyone came, and many of the villagers participated as well as the students. Our cover shows the sack race, one of the highlights of the day.

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# From Owl Readers

## HE LIKED US

● Please accept my compliments for bringing out yet another excellent issue. I found the March-April issue extremely useful and enjoyable.

As a learning assistance teacher I found the article on learning disabilities by Richard Dopson of special interest. Other articles in the issue were equally good. The basic theme of "lifestyles" was very timely and an appropriate choice for the issue. All of the articles fully justified their place in it.

Once again, congratulations to all responsible for the issue.

Bal Sanghera  
Lillooet

## HOW TO TEACH SUCCESSFULLY

● What keeps teachers going in the face of the frustrations of the school system?

How can we live with the absurdities of our top-heavy bureaucracy, the ingratitude of an ignorant and reactionary public, and the injustice of always having society's problems shoved on our doorstep, without being given either the money or the authority to deal with these problems?

What, besides the mortgage payments, keeps the rank and file on the job? It's faith, hope and love.

Cynicism is deadly and eats the cynic from inside out; without faith in the ultimate perfectibility of homo sapiens, one becomes a member of the living dead, the ZOMBIES!

Without hope that some of these little seeds you plant will sprout and that some of those horrible boo-boos you made will be forgotten, teaching will become a mere job, and you will turn into a day counter (only 1921 days left till retirement!).

But the most important is love. While faith is the willingness to accept a substitute for knowledge, and hope is ersatz success, love is real, honest and immediate.

Education, like parenthood, is first, foremost and in essence an act of love, and that makes being a teacher, even at its most gruesome worst, one tiny grade better than running a hamburger service station.

But I sure hope we're not just kidding ourselves.

Jack Boulogne  
Surrey

## OUR FAME SPREADS

● About two weeks ago a copy of your January-February issue appeared in our staffroom. I have been unable to find out how that came to be, but I want you to know that I am very impressed with what I read. I cannot decide if I liked the article *Literature for Today's Children* or *The World of the Child* the most.

I would like to subscribe to your magazine at once. Congratulations on a well planned, colorful and inspiring magazine!

Cathy McLaughlin  
Truro, Nova Scotia

## RIGHT TO BIRTH

● The editorial staff is to be congratulated for the Year of the Child issue (January-February).

There appeared to be one omission: nowhere was there mentioned the right of the child to the most fundamental of all rights, the right to life. The preamble to the United Nations' Declaration of the Rights of a Child states: "Whereas the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity needs special safeguards and care, including *appropriate legal protection before* (italics mine) and after birth."

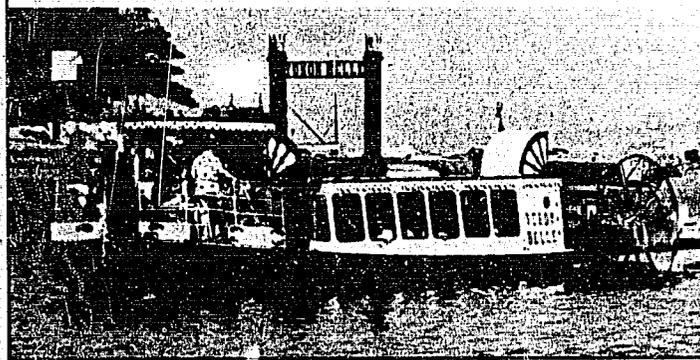
Your paraphrasing principle No. 4 on page 94, "to protection against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation" is considered inadequate by this writer.

Principle No. 4 states in part, "The child shall enjoy the benefits of social security. He shall be entitled to grow and develop in health; to this end special care and protection shall be provided both to him and his mother, including *adequate pre-natal* (italics mine) and post-natal care . . . ."

Perhaps some teachers need reminding that a partial solution to falling enrolment is to allow (and encourage) more babies to be born.

E. P. Webb  
West Vancouver

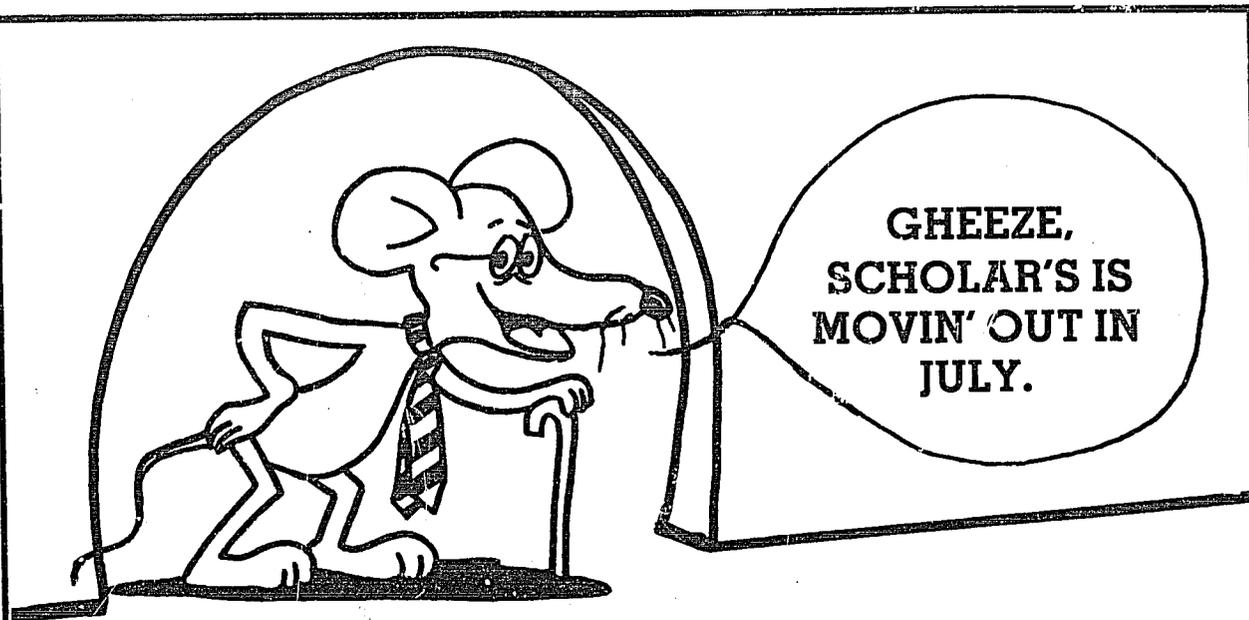
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# what you do

GLADYS PERRIN

**Teaching Carrier Indian students was an unforgettable and rewarding experience for this Lower Mainland teacher.**



● It was January 1978 when our household had reached that state of economy when more funds were needed, especially with a daughter studying theatre in England.

I had used my teaching career periodically throughout our married life, particularly in the arts, and I'd always had the secret longing to know exactly what isolated Indians would express, aside from their ancestral designs. So with teaching experience of elementary through secondary as background, I applied to Indian Affairs for a job.

With fair warnings about living in isolation, I was accepted as principal of a two-room school in the scant Indian village of Portage on Stuart Lake, right in the heart of our northern lake district. I was an emergency replacement for a young "first year" teacher.

With suitable duffle coat, fur hat and boots, I boarded the plane and was lifted out of Vancouver's moist morning, to land at Prince George's crystal clear whiteness. People seemed to beam on one another with a jovial, it's-a-great-life expression.

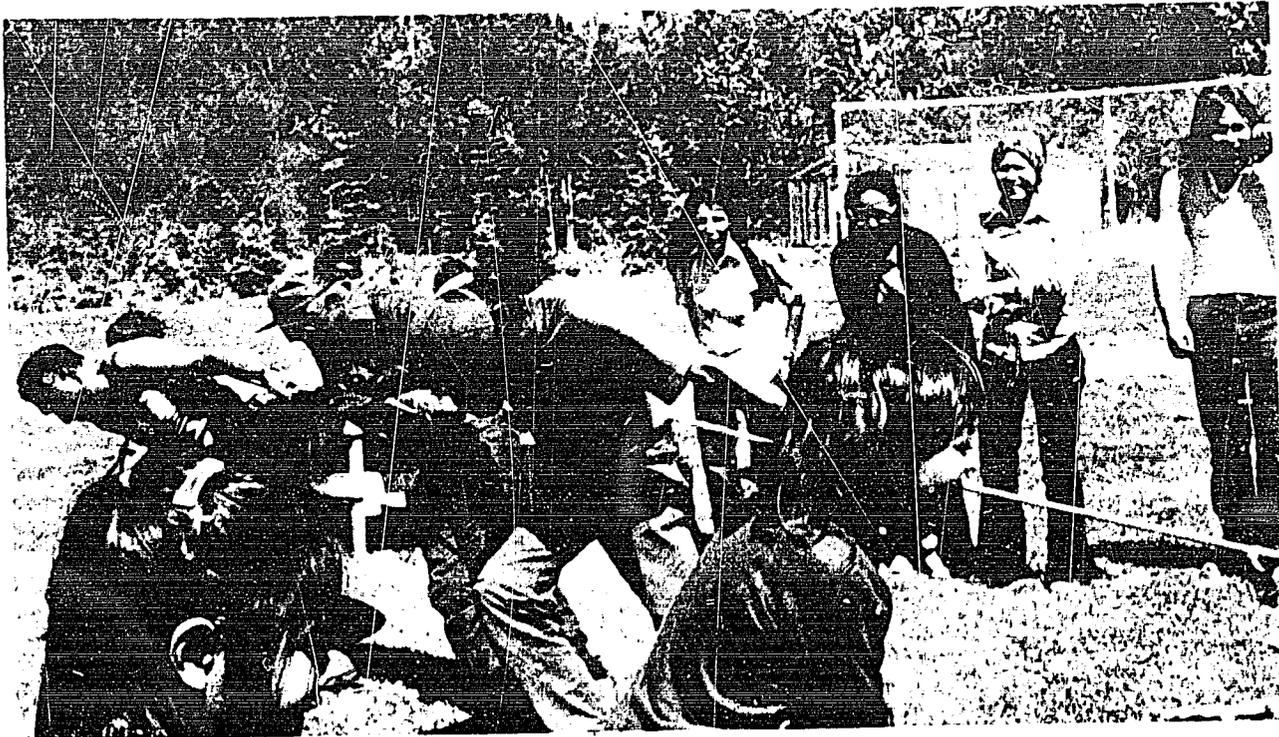
Two charming Indian Affairs office women met me, wondering if I were going to be a sister of the church, being a more mature person coming to the rescue of little Portage School. Their charm and intelligent conversation as we drove the highway from Prince George to Fort St. James impressed me tremendously, not to mention the snowy vista of hills and delicate poplars as we sped along in that powerful, well handled government car.

At Fort St. James we met Vera, the junior room teacher of my school, whose sweet smiling nature gave me the feeling life must

be easy up here. After I said farewell to my escorts, the vitally important next step was to shop for groceries that would last us for at least three months. It was a long tape the cashier handed us!

With the grocery boy still trying to get everything into suitable boxes, the large van-like taxi drove up to take us out to the frozen shoreline of Stuart Lake. A Cessna arrived out of the blue to greet us, and with gusto the pilot had us, boxes and baggage, all aboard, ready to go. Everything co-ordinated all so easily. I was having too good a holiday to experience the rigors of the North. But I had not yet started teaching!

The half-hour flight over the whiteness of frozen lakes and hills, smudged with dark patches of wintry trees, ended all too soon as we landed on the Stuart Lake inlet that eased up to Portage. Climbing out of the



*(Opposite page) Volleyball was very popular; everyone joined in. (Top) Sports Day was one of the highlights of the year — especially the tug-o-war. (Left) The author learned much about a different lifestyle. Here is Monica with a moose hide she is drying. (Above) Poling was the way to move boats.*

plane, I was welcomed by the Chief Councillor of the village and young smiling faces anticipating their new teacher.

As we followed the skiddo putting our belongings over the snow, I quickly took in the village — two rows of box-like houses, one facing the river, the other having more of a semblance of "main street," with a little blue church to grace it. Most houses were painted pink, green, barn red or yellow, but the chief's home boasted purple, with a small totem. Evidently there was a feeling for color.

With curious looks from door steps, and more children and dogs joining our entourage, we reached the teacherage. I had arrived, and school was to begin on the morrow.

## A CLASS OF 10!

My registration was only 10 children, but with a range of Grade 4 to Grade 7 there was a lot of preparation just looking into the basics; arithmetic in itself was a real brushup course for me. The school was pleasantly new, with blue carpeting to soften one's tread and a view of the windows of log fences enclosing a barnyard.

With one apprehensive look at the bullet hole that had left quite noticeable evidence of past violence, I rang the school hand bell, to begin my first day.

No one appeared!

Looking into Vera's room, I enquired, "Where are they?"

She nonchalantly replied, "Indian time, you know; they'll come."

It wasn't long before there was a scuffling of boots off at the entrance and in came my pupils, all smiles, to gather round me. My opening with a little formality was to have the junior room come in to meet their new principal. They came tumbling, running, laughing, and giggling so that I knew my first big problem had begun.

Being something of a storyteller, I gained their open-mouthed attention, finishing with, "Let's start school on time, nine o'clock!" But to punctuate this closing statement came the innocent challenge, "Wot you do now, teacha?"

They didn't want verbal teaching; they wanted action that made them feel busy.

Eventually they came on time, or even too early, when I brought bags of marbles and skipping ropes for the earlier arrivals to play with. Because both of these items were a new experience, they soon found it difficult to put away such pleasures to start school.

There was a carry-over of the skipping ropes into the arithmetic lesson. Finding my Grade 4s and 5s at a constant deadlock over remembering their multiplication tables, I'd

simply say, "Skip it," meaning they actually skipped through the rhythmical saying of the table needed. The Grade 6s and 7s would look up from their arithmetic to silently say the table to themselves with lips moving.

Every morning each class had their share of time with me, a personal togetherness, that found us sitting on the floor, busy at the blackboard or looking out the window to solve a problem in some unique way.

They liked math, because I gave it all the pep and enthusiasm that was necessary to keep them alert. The most concentrated number question I was asked when walking with a few after school was, "How many children do you have, Mrs. Perrin?"

"Two," came my answer. Holding two fingers up, Patsy exploded, "Only two! Doesn't your husband love you?"

It was easy to step out of school at the end of a day because we were established as part of the village. Although there was ample land and fencing around both school and teacherage, the land was regarded as free roaming territory by both horses and cattle. An Indian-built fence gave no resistance to a forceful rump, so when spring came the greener grass within the school yard became common pasture. In due course one walked with caution to avoid the dung.

Eventually we had a clean-up as well as a tree-planting day. All the men in the village turned up to help, and women drove horses to haul away the rubbish.

An arrangement had been made with Indian Affairs to pay for the new fencing, and we'd agreed to keep the animals out. One day that week I walked up to three men lolling on the grass beside some unfinished fencing. "How is it getting on?" I asked.

"We wait for the women to strip," they replied, pointing to the bush.

Anticipating some primitive ritual that would be embarrassing, I turned to leave, when the women came out of the bush with denuded logs for the fencing.

"Hi, teacha," they cheerfully called, "we been strippin'!"

---

**"How many children do you have?"**

**"Two."**

**"Only two! Doesn't your husband love you?"**

---

The village was really restful in its green carpet-like setting, with the river meandering through, out to Stuart Lake. The houses

that faced along the river embankment had easier access to the landing where the people pailed out their supply of water. Whenever children were late for school the usual reason given was, "I was packin' water for Mom."

Two basic essentials for any woman to keep her household going, were water, and wood to keep the stove burning. Although we teachers had modern facilities, I sometimes envied the cosiness of the Indians' kitchen stoves and smell of wood.

On days when a hunt had been successful, the children would burst into school that morning with, "Johnny got a moose!" and I'd listen to details on how the men had tracked down the animal.

In their excitement over having a plentiful supply of meat again they'd slip into their own unlearned form of speech: "Member it was jus foggy; can't see no sun," or the ending, "We gonna have lots to eat."

Then remembering they were in the classroom they'd suddenly explode with, "Wot you gonna do now, teacha?"

## STORIES SUCCESSFUL

Moving into English, particularly creative writing, seemed easy and natural. My whole experience of living with them was a "story" so that when they became tired of textbooks I'd have them relax and listen to my story of fishing, getting a load of hay, or a Saturday skiddo ride across Stuart Lake. They were fascinating experiences for me, and became a source of inspiration for them.

The pupils soon realized that stories were part of my teaching approach, and as the months went by they were writing fluently even though their speech still maintained such expressions as "Wat dat?" or "Did you see dat nodder dog dey got?"

Friday was always a very satisfying day. We devoted the greater part of the afternoon to arts and crafts. Because my pupils seemed to have a stubbornness in their makeup — they balked at a formal lesson — they ended up having a choice of drawing, painting, lino-block, knitting, flower making, etc.

The lino block work was truly successful. Creating original designs, they set up excellent prints to decorate the covers of their report cards or make wall hangings for their homes, which needed some decor. They loved every piece of art done, as if it was some hallowed possession.

Their spontaneous work appeared Oriental; something that took one back in time to a culture that reflected intricacies of a more delicate nature.

One Grade 5 boy was very talented in expressing himself. He was such a "born artist" that he would not get on with his

morning math until he'd done another design — "just a quickie," as I called it.

I had hoped to get my charges into wood carving, seeing the wonderful logs lying in their yards, but my time was so short, the carving tools never arrived, and as we moved into spring the outdoor sports activity became the essential program.

The hardest work I did with my pupils was to get them moving, to limber up, to appreciate what it meant to get in shape for a sports day — something they had never experienced. Remember, they were isolated children who had seldom been to town — space on a boat to Tache or Fort St. James was for adults and transporting essential goods. To get out and simply run seemed ridiculous. Why-run-for-nothing was the attitude; would be different if you were hunting.

---

### With an apprehensive look at the bullet hole, I rang the school bell.

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Besides talking up the beauty of their ancestors who ran, I played right into their greatest pleasure, Friday night films. At the end of that school day the question always came, "Gonna have film to-night?" So we'd set up chairs and projector for the evening showing of films from the National Film Board, which came in the mailbag from Prince George Branch.

The whole village would come: mothers with babies, little tots, young people, old grandparents with their well-lined faces, as well as the regular parents and children of the school.

The outside world came in and broadened their horizons beyond Portage, Tache and Fort St. James. They saw the vast herds of cattle in Alberta, shared with the Bella Bella Indians the activities of their thriving community, heard high school bands, listened to singing, and saw crafts performed that stirred their emotions in wanting to do likewise. They saw that the world danced, played games and entered the Olympics — so much of the outside world that they had never shared.

The films brought results. Volleyball became a major pastime, along with softball. Running distances was an accepted challenge. Funds were found to start building a skating rink and a much needed workshop. The importance of both children and adults having something to do, of playing together, struck home, and their thinking surged forward so that Portage was expressing itself at Band Council meetings in Tache. I know now that the answer to

helping our Indians is to give them guidance and recreational activity to break the monotony of their lives.

Practice for basic running, high jump, relays, etc., was done with a sense of pride, and often with parents looking on to show their interest. The sack race was the biggest laugh of all — how they loved tumbling upon each other, until their hopping became as efficient as that of any rabbit.

On the final sports day the whole village turned up to compete so enthusiastically, that the young men were still matching each other for the high jump at sundown. Free ice cream and hot dogs were supplied by the Band Council, so the day became a great one for everyone to remember.



*The author, Gladys Perrin. She enjoyed her year immensely, and encourages other teachers to do what she did.*

Happily showing off their ribbons, tired children went home with mothers while the young people carried on a baseball game. Just as I had decided "feet up" was to be my reward for the evening, a knock came to our door. "Are you coming to the dance?"

Their hall was a natural log structure with board floor and benches for seating. In the dim light I was surprised to see everyone had turned up, including mothers with small babies. We all seemed to be hypnotized by the "dance," as everyone surged to the floor to give his or her expression to the music. I danced that night with more energy than I'd spent all day on the sports! And there was no drinking.

What are some of my never-to-be-forgotten moments?

- to walk out from the village alone on a Sunday, stand on the frozen snow-covered lake, and listen to the silence;
- to sit on a wooden bench in the little church and listen to the chantings in Carrier, led by the chief, a man of deep spiritual feeling;
- to see all the children absorbed in their art, Friday afternoons, cares of the week

gone, just pleasantly singing with Nana Mouskouri, their favorite record;

- to run out of school for the sharing of a great moment at the barn — "A calf is born";

- to squat over a hole in the ice while everyone waits in whispers for the tug of a bite — and quickly you land it amid squeals of delight over your prize — a fish;

- to visit a grandmother who loves her grandchildren, as she sits on her favorite seat by the stove, smoking a handmade cigarette. She gives the children more stability because young parents disappear into town for a day or so;

- to gather all your girls in the teacherage for a most important lesson — how to bake bread — and at the end of the day, see each, proudly carrying home a crusty brown loaf;

- to see an Indian woman scraping the hide of a moose so that it will become the finest moccasins, ones she will decorate artistically with beads;

- to attend a Sunday afternoon shoot-out when all the men compete to see who is the best marksman on a ringed target;

- to know that spring breakup is complete and that the boats are ready — you are poled upstream, you feel the thrill of "going to town", over that vast Stuart Lake;

- to see the swallows had arrived chirping outside our school windows — how we went out to see them darting everywhere over the village, gleaming in the sunshine;

- to see ploughing of the garden with a hand plough and horses — such was their need for potatoes to last the winter;

- to hear hammering down of a coffin as all the older women sang their chant, just before the burial service;

- to listen to an Indian as he or she earnestly tells you they have an affinity with the "spirits" around them, that an Indian communicates most effectively through silence, with his or her fellow Indians.

\* \* \*

"Wot you do now, teacha?" still rings in my ears, but I'd like to pass the question on to you, the teachers of B.C.

If you want to experience the most creative teaching you'll ever do, seek out Indian Affairs and go into remote regions of this province where you are needed. There, education breaks the bonds of a classroom environment and becomes a way of life on a I-teach-you — you-teach-me basis.

Take the challenge if it stirs the real teacher in you. O

Gladys Perrin began her teaching career in a log cabin schoolhouse 20 miles out of Quesnel. She later taught in Surrey, Victoria, Dawson Creek and West Vancouver, before teaching in the Carrier Indian School she describes in this article. She is now living on Saltspring Island, and hopes to pursue a writing career.

# Use MAGIC to debunk the charlatans



The rich fantasy world of children makes them susceptible to exploitation. Those who claim to have extraordinary mental or physical powers find a ready audience — and market — in students. Teachers and parents can use magic to debunk the claims of such people.

## KAS MAZUREK AND BRIAN TITLEY

• Astral travel, psychic surgery, telekinesis, psychic photography, clairvoyance, telepathy, retrocognition, ouija-board prediction, spiritualism, demon possession: these are but a few examples of what can be wholly real phenomena for the school child.

Our experiences teaching in Grades 2-12 have convinced us that such metaphysical beliefs are alarmingly deeply rooted in our supposedly rational and pragmatic educational system.

We have no data to support this allegation, but the teacher and parent need only ask the child or adolescent to confirm the existence of such conceptions.

Certainly not all children hold the listed beliefs, but the great majority adhere to one illusion or another.

Furthermore, although we shall limit our discussion to the school age population, many adults also entertain many such beliefs.

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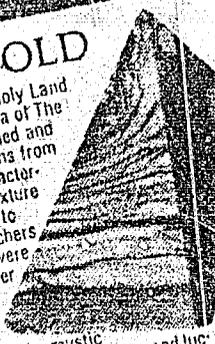
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ported by mere hearsay are the easiest to dispel. However, the apparent legitimacy of media-reported instances of paranormal phenomena make this source of belief much more difficult to discredit. Why, after all, would newspapers, books and television — the very tools teachers use to illustrate and define reality — be misleading in this instance? Personal experience is, of course, the most convincing of all.

For the student, the effects are much more damaging. Obviously, dissonance must occur if the student is to try to choose between the authority of the media, or the convictions that ensue from his personal experience, and the exhortations of the teacher. But there are other, long-term, possible consequences.

The growth of an anti-scientific and anti-rational orientation may be encouraged. If not everything can be "scientifically" learned or explained — even in principle — there must exist a vast noumenon that is independent of our understanding and control, yet can affect us directly.

A devastating correlation of the above is the emergence of a fatalism that hints to students that they can never be fully competent actors in the world. There is always someone out there who knows some "secret" they cannot hope to share, or some "power" that can make all their conscious efforts and skills be in vain. Thus lack of initiative, and failure in the event of action taken, becomes justifiable — sometimes inevitable. Fate excuses failure.

#### REMEDIES

If we seek to avert such a subversion of an education system dedicated to the graduation of self-motivated, confident and pragmatic young adults, we can take several steps.

Obviously, we must first be aware of the situation. The science teacher must recognize that the dynamics of the Newtonian and the Einsteinian universe are in competition with the fickle workings of the occult in his/her students' minds. The laws of physics become meaningless when one enters the Bermuda Triangle. Less dramatically, the popular guru of Transcendental Meditation

can guide sincere followers to "supernatural powers" that will allow them to become invisible, pass through walls, and levitate.

In like manner, the physical education teacher must be cognizant of students' belief that "natural talent" is not in need of the inconvenience of basic training; while the music teacher must be wary of such beliefs as the conviction that "genius" is not in need of rote practice. Until we become aware that children believe these things, the practice they need to develop basic skills will be looked upon as a wholly irrelevant and unjustified imposition of drudgery.

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### Uri Geller has refused challenges worth thousands of dollars to perform before professional magicians.

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Returning to combatting uncritical belief in paranormal phenomena, we suggest the following procedures. Above all, teachers and parents should become familiar with reputable, empirical literature that debunks the wildest exaggerations.

There are many popular books attesting to the supernatural wonders of the Bermuda Triangle, but are students guided to the in-depth investigations of Lawrence Kusche (*The Bermuda Triangle Mystery — Solved*) who gives the other side of the story?

Students are aware of the claims of Uri Geller, but are they aware that he has consistently refused challenges worth thousands of dollars to perform before professional magicians?

Are we aware that the Occult Investigations Committee of the Society of American Magicians, in decades of investigation, has not found one instance of a parapsychological phenomenon that could not be duplicated by the conventional techniques of practising magicians?

Are we aware of the investigations of many universities — on both sides of the Atlantic — into everything from ESP to pyramid power?

The answer is negative because empirical research is time consuming and not very glamorous. The popular reports make much livelier reading, and this keeps the independent, scientific research of persons and institutions who have no vested interest in the promotion of belief in paranormal phenomena out of the public eye. It is time educators and parents became more in-

formed and more selective of the literature our children read.

With the appearance of very readable and entertaining books that give very rational explanations for paraphenomena from psychic surgery to telekinesis (Milbourne Christopher, *Mediums, Mystics and the Occult*; The Amazing Randi, *The Magic of Uri Geller*), we have literature that is capable of holding the attention of students. Such literature should be used to counterbalance the information students assimilate through the popular media reports.

However, the most effective pedagogical tool is demonstration. We pursue this general course of action; after ascertaining the major beliefs entertained by a group of students, we begin systematically to produce the phenomena students are convinced are paranormal. We demonstrate "mind reading", "materialization" and "dematerialization" of objects, and physiological phenomena through the use of basic hypnotic induction techniques.

Such a demonstration must always emphasize that the person is using only manipulative techniques, has absolutely no special powers, and is merely demonstrating a skill almost anyone in the audience can master.

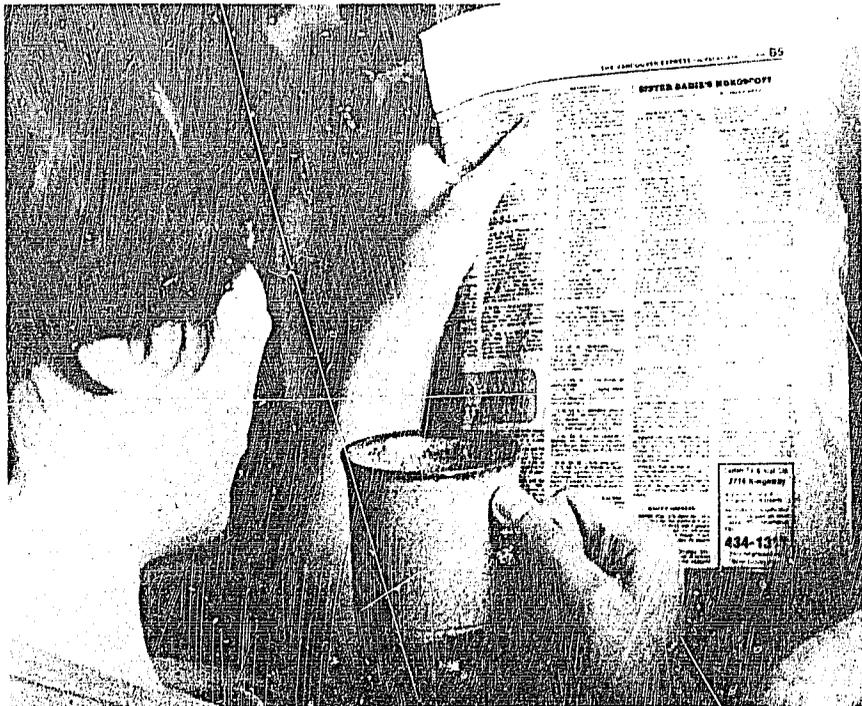
The range of phenomena students are interested in experiencing is really quite limited, and easy to duplicate, if one has any basic knowledge of magic and the tests for hypnotic susceptibility used by practising hypnotists. What is critical is that students see a wholly "mortal" entity perform apparently impossible feats — while being constantly reminded that only a skill, not paranormal power, is involved. Afterward, the exaggerated claims of the practitioners of the paranormal can be critically discussed.

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### Not a single phenomenon has been found that cannot be duplicated by magicians.

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Teachers who protest that learning such new skills is too demanding are reminded that they need not give the demonstrations themselves. Every city has a host of people who, like the authors, are magicians or hypnotists. Such people are, in our experience, only too eager to afford themselves an opportunity to practise in front of an audience. That such a demonstration is not only instructive, but also entertaining, goes without saying. If accompanied by critical discussion, such demonstrations will result in reinstating magic and other examples of



Incredible as it may seem, some people rely heavily on the horoscopes printed in newspapers to guide their activities during the day ahead.

paranormal phenomena to their proper role — entertainment.

Of course, critical discussion does not imply a blanket rejection of the possibility of the existence of phenomena that elude full explanation by our present body of scientific knowledge. A therapeutic tool such as hypnosis should not be abandoned simply because no fully satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon has been formulated.

What critical inquiry is designed to counter is the tendency to reject scientific canons of investigation and jump to the conclusion that a scientific explanation cannot fully illuminate the dynamics of an event, and that a "supernatural" force must therefore be involved.

## RESULTS

We have without exception been immediately rewarded by students for our efforts. Having a live demonstration of a phenomenon they themselves defined as a miraculous feat quickly yields the realization that events cannot always be taken at face value. Their perception of the practitioners of the paranormal correspondingly change very quickly. Now, through guided discussion, they are readily able to grasp the central point: a *skill*, not a "power", is involved.

We always attempt to correlate this with the skills of a plumber, dentist, astronaut, etc., to get across the vital message that learning, hard work and discipline can open the doors to accomplishment. Just as there is no "mystery" to piloting the Concorde, there is no mystery to telekinesis: both are

skills, and skills can be learned. The difference is one of frankness. Pilots are interested in portraying an image of highly skilled professionals; those who practise the ruse of telekinesis are often all too quick to at least hint that they have extraordinary powers.

It is most gratifying to see the results of such a demystification. The students rapidly change from confused spectators, awed by what they have seen, to active individuals whose attitude — "Hey, that's neat, and I can do it too if I want to take the time to learn how" — betrays their new confidence. Surely this is an attitude to skill acquisition we want our children to have.

And surely it is obvious that until talents are defined as skills — and students are convinced these skills can be mastered — many career opportunities will appear to be out of the grasp of most students.

These motivational and aspirational benefits are complemented by a lesson in psychology. The children must gently be made aware of how easily they were awed, how little sincere effort they made to question the claims of those who awed them and, most important, how readily and on how little evidence they were willing to concede that someone held knowledge and powers vastly superior to their own talents. They have learned something about their own vulnerability, and they have developed the germ of a critical attitude that will not make them so gullible in the future.

And they learn a basic lesson in research procedures simultaneously. Not all books are equally reliable, not all sectors of the media are above sensationalism, and not all

individuals can resist the promotion of a vested interest. Learning to be selective in a Gutenberg Galaxy that overwhelms us with "facts" is an imperative of our time.

All of these lessons must, of course, be made clear to — and reinforced for — the child. The implications of changing one's perception of a phenomenon from a paranormal occurrence to a common manipulation of skills, and the consequences of viewing someone as an extraordinary person, then within the hour suspecting him/her of trickery, must not be passed over. If these lessons are reinforced, we may hope for beneficial long-term results.

Certainly a more empirically minded individual may develop. In an era that places so much before the consumer — religious, political, psychological fads of all sorts — the ability to separate the truth from the advertising propaganda becomes an economic and psychological survival skill. The prudence of "checking the facts" is not an anachronistic platitude.

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## Students learn that a skill, not a power, is involved.

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But perhaps the greatest hoped-for benefit is an undermining of the tendency to be a blind follower. As long as a mysterious realm of metaphysical forces exists, we cannot be masters of our own fate. Unfortunately, there are many who are willing to lead, claiming they somehow have gained access to a mysterious fount of knowledge and power.

If we value self-initiative, self-confidence and individualism, we cannot stratify the world into those who know and do, and those who wonder, watch and follow. Practitioners of the paranormal contribute to a mystification of knowledge. This results in a world view that convinces children that many things are quite simply out of their grasp, out of their control.

And these children grow into adults.

## RECOMMENDED READINGS

Christopher, Milbourne. *Mediums, Mystics and the Occult* N.Y.: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1975.

Hansel, C. E. M. *ESP: A Scientific Evaluation* N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966.

Kusche, Lawrence David. *The Bermuda Triangle Mystery — Solved* N.Y.: Warner Books Inc., 1975.

Lilley, Wayne. "The Pyramid Pushers" in *The Financial Post Magazine* April, 1976.

Rachleff, Owen S. *The Occult Conceit* N.Y.: Bell Publishing Company, 1971.

The Amazing Randi. *The Magic of Uri Geller* N.Y.: Ballantine Books, 1975. O

Kaz Mazurek and Brian Titley are both working on Ph.D degrees at the University of Alberta, in Edmonton.

# The Holi-Daze

ALFRED E. EVANS

**You'll be surprised at how many of your firm beliefs about school holidays are myths.**

● Introduce a teacher to a non-teacher and during the ensuing conversation the non-teacher will probably make some comment about "all the holidays that teachers get."

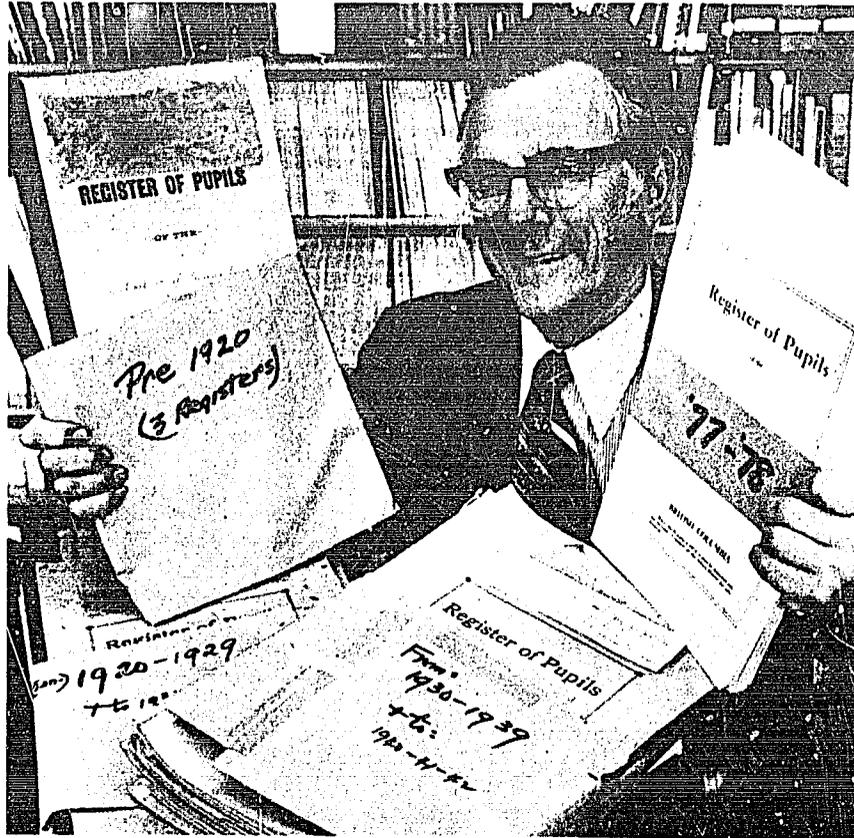
Most of us accept this with good-natured tolerance, even if we have been in the profession long enough to realize that the gap between the commenter's annual holiday time and ours is likely to be very much less than it was in the past.

I have several friends, well-established in contract-protected jobs, whose total actual paid vacation, compensatory and other time off certainly appears to give them at least as much free time as I have, if not more. Admittedly, this would probably not be the case if my friends and I were 20 years younger. In their jobs, increased free time is usually a reward for long service, which it isn't in teaching.

Even if it is still true that teachers in general enjoy more holiday time than most people in other occupations, there is another popular opinion on the subject, often heard even from teachers, and that is *not* true. That is, that the school year is shorter now than it was in some dimly-remembered time in the past.

Especially from parents we hear that "they didn't have all these holidays when we were in school." Oddly enough, nobody ever seems to refute this except by equally unreliable memory, despite the fact that school attendance is probably the most recorded and documented of data. Schools all over the province have piles of old registers going back to their beginnings, and many school districts have microfilm records of schools that no longer exist.

I recently had such a cache of past registers come into my administrative clutches in an older Burnaby school which



The author shown with some of the registers he examined. He had a fascinating time digging back in time, and found that the memories many adults have of their school days are faulty, to say the least.

has been in existence since 1912, although the original building was replaced in 1955. What started me looking through them was an interesting item in our school board's newsletter of May 9, 1978. It announced that Burnaby CUPE members would get their Remembrance Day holiday during the Christmas vacation, since pupils and teachers would not have a day off, November 11 being a Saturday.

I checked with a couple of my friends who work for a living and, sure enough, they have a Remembrance Day holiday written into their contracts and would enjoy a long weekend, probably keeping their children out of school for the Monday holiday. One of the ladies informed me, however, that when she was in school they *never* got a holiday for Remembrance Day.

Well, she went to Burnaby schools so, after agreeing on a suitably elastic time reference to avoid revealing her age too closely, we looked it up in the old registers.

The record showed that there had been no school on Remembrance Day, or an adjacent Monday or Friday, for 10 of the 12 years she went to school. Her reaction was, "We couldn't have had a holiday. I remember we always went into the gym and had two minutes silence." It never occurred to her that this usually took place the day before the holiday.

Another publication that led to memory-searching was the ministry's five-year calendar for schools, with some interesting variations in the Christmas and Spring/Easter vacations. So, back to the registers and a large sheet of squared paper.

Soon the columns were full of neat figures showing all the holiday and vacation data from 1918 to the present. There were a couple of gaps in the registers before 1918, which made it seem like a logical place to start. Besides, 60 years is a nice round figure and far enough back to preclude contradiction by the best of memories. This is only the

record of one Burnaby elementary school but there is no reason why it should be different from those of other B.C. schools. Here are the facts.

### SCHOOL OPENING

Let's start at the beginning, the opening day of school in September. Traditionally, this is the Tuesday after Labor Day, which is the first Monday in September. This means that Labor Day can be anywhere from September 1 to September 7, so school openings range from September 2 to September 8.

Apparently in the hungry thirties the sight of pupils and teachers enjoying a full week's more vacation at the beginning of September was too much for somebody, because in 1931, '36 and '42 school started on Tuesday, September 1, the following Monday being the Labor Day holiday.

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### November 11 on a Saturday has resulted in a school day holiday only twice — in 1933 and 1972.

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There was an eleven-year gap before Labor Day occurred on September 7 again in 1953, but evidently nobody noticed because school started on Tuesday, September 8. I remember that in 1959, during Robert Bonner's brief tenure as Minister of Education, he announced a September 1 opening, but withdrew it when howls of protest arose from newly-affluent parents who weren't going to close up the summer cottage before Labor Day for anybody.

Incidentally, the 6-5-6-11 year repeating cycle illustrated above is true of any day-date combination. To prove it, get a perpetual calendar and make a list of the years in which your birthday has been, or will be, on a Sunday, for example. It is often the eleven-year gap that causes the uncertainty about previous practice. People don't remember that far back and seldom think to look it up.

The only other variations in the first day of school were in 1947 when opening was delayed until Monday, September 8, because of a polio epidemic; three years ('56-'58) when only teachers attended on

opening day; and 1975 when school started on Wednesday, September 3. This latter was explained in the Department of Education's publication, *Education Today*, as being "traditional" when Labor Day occurs on September 1. Somebody must have misinformed Eileen Dailly, because this unique tradition had never happened before, at least not in the preceding 57 years.

### THANKSGIVING

As the days shorten following the autumnal equinox and the new school term is well under way, the first holiday is Thanksgiving. In 1918 this was, as today, the second Monday in October. It was in 1919 too, but was the third Monday in 1920. Then for the decade 1921-1930 Thanksgiving was shifted to Mondays early in November, ranging from the 6th to the 12th. The intention seemed to be to relate the holiday to the Armistice observance.

In 1929 the Thanksgiving holiday is shown as falling on November 11. In 1931 Thanksgiving was returned to the second Monday in October, where it has remained ever since, except for an unexplained variation in 1935 when it shows in the registers as October 24.

### REMEMBRANCE DAY

The actual signing of the Armistice on November 11, 1918, was not noted, at least in the registers of Burnaby schools, because they were closed during the peak of the great Spanish influenza epidemic. The following year schools were closed on Tuesday, November 11.

I always feel a little uneasy referring to Remembrance Day closing as a holiday, which in modern parlance hints at festivity, but will do so for the sake of brevity and consistency. From 1920 to 1930 there was no specific Armistice/Remembrance holiday, but, as noted above, Thanksgiving was celebrated on a near Monday. Since then November 11 has always been a holiday when it has fallen on a weekday. Saturday, November 11s have usually not been compensated by an adjacent day off except in 1933 (Friday, November 10) and 1972 (Monday, November 13). A Sunday November 11, on the other hand, was always followed by a Monday holiday except in 1945, and according to our five-year school calendar, will not be in 1979.

### CHRISTMAS VACATIONS

The general pattern for the Christmas vacations in the first two-thirds of our 60-year period was quite simple. The last day of school would be the Friday before December 24 and the opening day of school would be the Monday following January 2. This gives a full two weeks, or actually 16 days, between dismissal and reconvening of classes. This pattern worked fine and was always followed whenever Christmas Day fell on a day other than Sunday or Monday. The awkwardness of these latter two was remedied in a variety of ways over the years, such as mid-week closings and openings creating extra-long or extra-short vacations.

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### Christmas vacations were 18 days in 1938, '39 and '44.

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One of the first recommendations of the 1960 Chant Commission to be implemented was a regularization and shortening of the Christmas vacation. From now on, said the new regulations, the first day of the holidays would be December 23 and school would begin again on January 3, unless these dates fell on weekends. This was followed to the letter in 1961-62, with an interval of only 11 days between opening and closing of schools. The next year's vacation was a day longer because December 22 was a Saturday.

Then came the first snag. January 3 — by regulation a school day — fell on a Friday in 1964. Would pupils and teachers have to return to school for only one day in the week? When the school calendar was published the answer was no, which put that year's vacation right back where it had always been — 16 days. This happened again in 1968-69, followed the next Christmas by the same problem at the other end — December 22 on a Monday.

So, with these concessions, the new regulations produced the same results as the old practice for five out of the 15 years they were in effect.

It never appeared in official form but just before the demise of the NDP government in 1975 Ms. Dailly was quoted in the press

as saying that she was going to return the Christmas vacation to its former two-week status. The new five-year calendar seems to do this. The '78-'79 Christmas vacation has the distinction of providing for one of the earliest dismissals on record, December 15, although this has happened twice before ('39 and '44), and the earliest return to school, January 2, which has never happened before in our 60-year period. It is also one of the longer vacations on record — 17 days — but not the longest. There were 18-day vacations for the Christmases of 1938, '39 and '44.

### EASTER VACATIONS

The Easter vacation of 1919 was atypical. To help make up for time lost in the 'flu epidemic closings it was held to a four-day weekend, April 18-21 inclusive. Then from 1920-1973 schools were dismissed on the Thursday before Good Friday and reconvened on the Monday following Easter Monday, giving a 10-day interval in every case. It is worth noting that, particularly in recent years, parents of the holidaying students would probably report to their jobs on only four of these days.

All the details of the varying dates of Easter and the related Christian feasts can be found in your prayer book or almanac. In our 60-year period the earliest Easter Sunday fell in 1940 on March 24. It can be as early as March 22, but this last occurred in 1818 and won't happen again in the lifetime of anybody now alive. Our latest Easter was April 25 in 1943, which is the latest possible. This means that we have dismissed for the Easter vacation as early as March 21 and have gone back as late as May 3, a spread of over six weeks.

Beginning in 1974 the spring break was dissociated from Easter and set for the week that straddled the end of March and beginning of April. This reduced the actual length of the typical break to nine days, but it was usually followed in a week or two by the four-day Easter weekend, which really amounted to an extra day off in total. However, this bonus occurred only four times, because in 1975 and 1977 Easter was early enough to coincide with the spring break.

Our five-year calendar provides that, starting in 1980, the Easter vacation will extend over 10 days, beginning with Good Friday or ending with Easter Monday, whichever brings it closer to the first of April. This reduces by one week the spread of possible times as compared to the old Easter vacations and, like most simple but effective ideas, leaves us wondering why nobody ever thought of it before. If the new procedure is followed for the remainder of the 20th century the vacation will end with

Easter Monday in 13 out of the 20 years and will always encompass a uniform 10 days.

### VICTORIA DAY

Between Easter and the end of the term we now have only one holiday, the Monday on or immediately preceding May 24. For about the first half of our 60-year period this was not the case. Queen Victoria's birthday was observed on whatever weekday May 24 fell, or an adjacent Friday or Monday if it fell on a weekend.

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### Pupils today attend school for as many days as they ever did.

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There was also a holiday in June marking the birthday of the reigning monarch, which was June 3 up to the death of George V in 1936. Edward VIII's birthday was celebrated once, June 23, before his abdication in the same year just three days before the birthday of his brother, George VI, on December 14. This date was duly proclaimed, and resulted in the only time that there were two King's Birthday holidays in the same calendar year.

However, mid-December was a poor time for a holiday so subsequent observances of George VI's birthday were held in June, usually on an early Monday, twice on Thursdays, and in five of the 16 years of his reign, not at all.

The coronation of Elizabeth II was the occasion for a holiday on June 2, 1953, but that is the last June holiday on record. The Queen's birthday celebration has ever since been combined with the modern Victoria Day.

### SCHOOL CLOSING IN JUNE

The closing day of school before the summer vacation was the last Friday in June for the first 12 years of our 60-year period, the actual date varying from June 24 to June 30. Then for the next decade a tough attitude is evident — school remaining in session until June 30 most years and no earlier dismissal than June 26. Indulgence and severity grappled for another dozen years, with the former coming out slightly ahead. One dismissal date (in 1944) was June 23, a full week ahead of the last Friday.

In 1953 began a 13-year series of Thursday dismissals, varying from the 23rd to the 29th. In 1957 a new idea popped up — pupils would continue to be dismissed on Thursdays, but teachers would return on Friday to do all the paper work incidental to school closing. This practice of a final day

"for teachers only" has continued to the present, but for the last few years toughness has predominated, with mid-week closings as close as possible to the last day of June.

The idea of a working day for teachers on which pupils are not required to attend was apparently unheard of before 1944, when the first local teachers' convention appears in the registers on November 24. These have continued in Burnaby with changing titles and dates, now usually in February. Various other days or half-days "for teachers only" crept in and were finally regularized by the Department in 1973 and fixed at a total of six days a year, now reduced to five.

The terminology in our registers and official directives has made a distinction between "prescribed days" and "days in session." The former usually refers to all days on which teachers would normally be on the job, the latter only to those on which student attendance is recorded. Apparently this terminology is changing, since the new five-year calendar shows "days in session" totals that include all the "non-instructional" days.

### LOCAL EVENTS

Extraordinary holidays or school closings for local special events, now almost non-existent, were very common in the years immediately following World War I. For example, in 1920-21 the registers show a half holiday on October 14 (provincial fair), and full holidays on October 20 (provincial election) and May 7 (New Westminster May Day).

These and other extraordinary school closings for special events, royal visits, inclement weather, etc., come to a total of 30 days in the first half of our 60-year period, not counting the 1918-19 flu epidemic. The last 30 years show only 20 such days, including the one-day teachers' strike of March 19, 1971.

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### School closings for local special events were common after World War I.

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The total number of school attendance days for the year has varied over the six decades from a low of 185 in 1970-71 to a high of 197 in five different years, the latest being 1961-62. The average for the first half of our survey period, not counting the flu epidemic, was just under 192 days of actual pupil attendance. The same calculation for the 1949-1978 half gives just over 191 days. This slight difference is more apparent than

*Continued on page 203*

# Beyond the call of Duty . . .

BRIAN WARNER

**Should teachers be paid overtime for extracurricular activities? This teacher says yes, explains why, has answers for the critics, and tells how a fair rate of payment could be worked out.**



*Many school activities are sponsored and coached by teachers out of school hours. The author asks why teachers should be expected to work regularly on their own time without pay.*

Whether known as extra-curricular, co-curricular, or extra-class activities, one measure of a school and its teachers is the amount of time, skill, and energy expended on athletic teams, bands, drama clubs, and other organizations that exist largely outside of regular school hours, depending for their survival on the voluntary and unpaid services of the sponsoring teachers.

Although there is apparently no conclusive evidence to show that student participation in these offerings leads to superior academic achievement, studies have noted, among other things, that dropouts tend to be uninvolved in extra-curricular activities. At present, those who support the concept of broadly based extra-curricular programs may have to be content with what they feel and sense about their worth.

This brings us to another question, the unpaid teacher and the uninvolved school board. How many trustees bask in the reflected glory of a winning athletic team, a musical comedy production that plays to packed houses, or a group of student hospital volunteers? Surely, the feeling that there is something worth while, something *right* about these and similar activities is almost universal among those connected with education.

How many districts in British Columbia, then, support these projects by putting their money where their collective mouth is by reimbursing the teachers involved? A mercenary and unprofessional idea? Aren't we somehow supposed to put in this time out of the dedication that sets us apart from others and our love of young people?

Perhaps, but let's examine the issue a little more closely.

What precedents can we find in the practices of unionists, professionals, and indeed some of our own colleagues engaged in occupational sidelines?

In the case of the first two groups the answer is obvious. As a matter of fact, it would be difficult to think of any other group of salaried or self-employed workers, with the exception of the clergy, who are expected to work regularly on their own time without pay.

Looking at our own profession, the teacher who instructs an evening class for adult education or a community college is ordinarily paid on an hourly basis. The driver-training instructor working outside of school hours is similarly recompensed in at least some districts, as is the person teaching or coaching during the summer months. Are not the allowances received by administrators at least partly in recognition of the extra time required for their increased responsibilities?

What about those of us who feel that the intrinsic satisfaction derived from activity sponsorship is sufficient compensation? Most of us have days or "peak experiences" during which we feel we should pay for the privilege of working with young people. Realistically, however, there are also the days in which we find ourselves not on the peaks but in the pits. Should we really be satisfied to rely on a corps of the gifted, the charismatic, and the profoundly dedicated who exist, after all, too rarely in any vocation, including our own?

For those who remain unconvinced, consider the attitudes of your older colleagues toward extra-curricular sponsorship. How many coaches over the age of 40 do you see in B.C. schools? Compare that to the university and professional ranks. Why do so many former coaches end up in administration? Is it, as my jock friends like to point out, because of their aggressiveness, intelligence, and superior organizational abilities? Could it not, in fact, be a recognition that the administrative position is the one spot in our educational system where the educator is financially rewarded for accepting extra responsibilities and spending extra time?

### HALF SALARY?

If you believe that accepting extra pay for extra duties would sully the teacher-student relationship, contemplate whether or not your students and the community at large would really hold you in higher regard if your teaching salary were half of what it is. Actually, I have found over the years a small but significant number of my students who assumed automatically that I do receive overtime, just like their fathers and mothers.

On the one hand, am I so desperate a candidate for sainthood that I will thrive on the real or imagined remarks circulating among my students? "Good old Warner . . . he does this all on his own time. Gee, he must be dedicated."

On the other hand, can I count on continued sufficient intrinsic satisfaction to continue with my sponsorship year after year, or to turn it over to an interested colleague? That is apparently what our school boards rely on exclusively, assuming that as the current crop of athletic coaches, musical and dramatic directors, and other sponsors burn themselves out, replacements will come out from the ranks of the keen and eager recruits.

In these days of a teacher surplus, is it not revealed rather threateningly in some of the advertisements for teaching personnel that appear in the media? "Must be willing to coach girls' basketball and two minor sports . . ." Talk about indentured servants!

If you are actively involved in some form of extra-curricular sponsorship, ask yourself if you want the students, the public, and your employers to think you are making a great sacrifice and doing everybody a great favor by virtue of your participation. Presumably the answer is no. Now ask yourself if you do not at least occasionally get the feeling that your employers think they are doing you a favor by allowing you the pleasure of this educational dessert following the academic main course, or more insidiously, that the terms of your employment demand such participation.

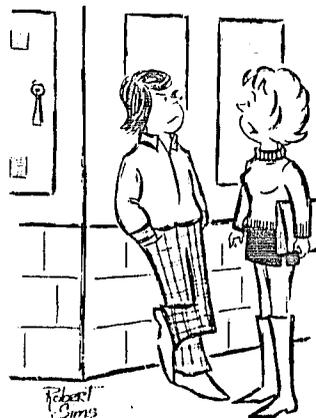
The solution, like many solutions, is simple. That does not necessarily mean that the thought processes undertaken to arrive at it were simple, but this will be left to the reader's judgment.

As teachers, we should assume a more significant share of the responsibility individually and through our professional organization to ensure that an aspect of public education almost universally recognized as important not continue to be shortchanged. Furthermore, we should insist that school boards assume a much greater moral and financial responsibility than previously evidenced.

A suggested procedure would entail the formation of a local association committee. Annually, after receiving input from students, teachers, parents, and other interested citizens, the committee would meet with a school board committee to discuss and agree on sanctioned extra-curricular activities for the coming school year, including the maximum acceptable teacher hours approved for financial reimbursement, which would vary depending upon the activity.

This may involve some risk from the sponsoring teacher's point of view. Perhaps it is decided that the basketball season is too long. Perhaps the band director will be denied overtime during a lengthy tour. But rather than leading to win-at-any-cost coaches and other such undesirable results, this consultation should have the effect of providing a more equitable balance of activities for all interests.

When I mentioned this idea recently to an athletically inclined colleague, he pointed out, "You could have somebody getting paid to sponsor a chess club just like the basketball coach." My answer was and is, "Why not?"



"Oh, Eddie, don't drop out! Why don't you get on the Student Council like I did and then you'll never have to go to class!"  
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Ah, you say, but what if you want to introduce something new and completely different, say a jai alai club? Surely provision could be made for pilot projects in any agreement, and it is to be hoped that teachers would retain the freedom to go ahead on their own, after making sure they had the necessary insurance coverage.

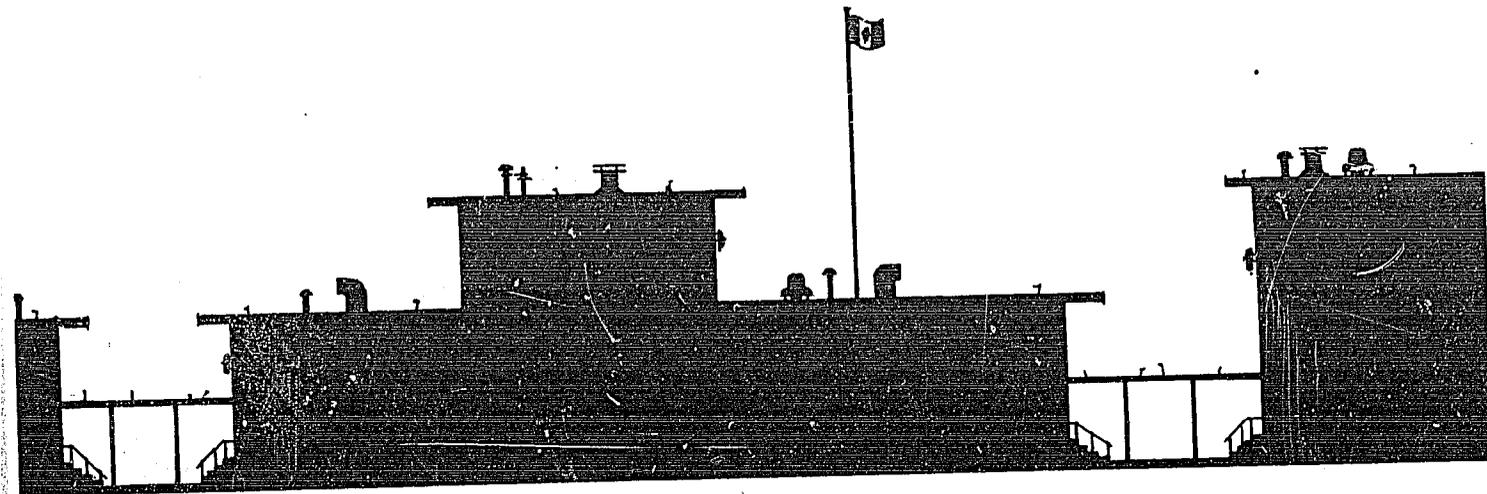
But, you demand, what if those rascally trustees or your own staffroom politicians connive to cut your activity? First, it must be assumed that the teacher-members of the committee would not themselves be directly involved in extra-curricular sponsorship. Second, if your activity were cut, and there were not screams of outrage from students, parents, and the citizenry at large, would that not tell you something? Although momentarily wounding your pride, it would surely be better to find out sooner, rather than later or never, that you were wasting your time and efforts.

The compensation aspect of this proposal is even simpler — payment to each  
*Continued on page 203*



*Coaching teams involves many hours of voluntary work by teachers, and some of those hours can be at awkward times, interfering with the home lives of teachers. Is it fair that teachers should be expected — not just asked — to inconvenience themselves and their families, and to do so without pay?*

# Do we need a Canadian folk high school?



JON HENDERSON

**Most Canadians have never heard of folk high schools, yet they are very popular and effective in Europe. Perhaps it's time we had the schools in our country.**

● Imagine a school whose popularity with young people, ages 16 and over, has been retained for well over a century.

During the early 1970s, in parts of northern Europe, this school received four applications for each available space. The school is non-compulsory and therefore does not issue credits. It prides itself on providing an exam-free milieu as well as the freest curricular structure in the world today.

During the eight months the students stay at this residential school, they immerse themselves in a variety of courses pertaining to their native culture. Courses stressing the literature, language, history, sociology, arts and crafts, music, sports and dances of the native country are presented, as well as other mini-courses that allow for the self-fulfilment of the individual.

Students have to pay a monthly stipend to help cover room and board, while the state provides the lion's share of the operating costs. Private sources of capital are often provided by independent societies

or foundations and municipalities so that both operating and capital costs can be met.

The school in question is the *folk high school*.

The concept of the folk high school originated with a Danish theologian, educator and nationalist, Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig. The original purpose of this school was to preserve the Danish culture and language against the onslaught of the more powerful German (Prussian) and Latin cultures of his time. Since Grundtvig's time, however, the folk high school has assumed the roles of a catalytic agent for social change and a school for the self-fulfilment of the individual.

In the small country of Norway, population four million, there were 83 such schools in operation during the 1974-75 school year, ranging in size from 60-140 students. Two more of these schools are now on the drawing boards. The folk high school in Norway is experiencing a renaissance in popularity and the school authorities are

hard-pressed to meet the ever-increasing demand by young people for this kind of education.

The folk high school today is not unique to Scandinavia. It has been exported and successfully transplanted in both eastern and western Europe, Africa, Asia and the United States.

In Canada, there have been attempts to establish this pedagogical idea but they have met with limited success. Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba have tried to implement schools based at least in part on the Scandinavian model during the 1930s, 40s, 50s and 60s, but all of these have ceased operation for one reason or another.

During the 1970s in some of the native Indian communities of northern Ontario, the educational authorities have been experimenting with schools from four to seven days in duration that embody some of the elements of a folk high school. The Banff School of Fine Arts was also an attempt to establish Grundtvig's model, but the Banff

School has abandoned many of the original concepts associated with the Scandinavian model.

What are some of the more common characteristics of the folk high school? The physical structure of the school is designed so that home-like qualities are stressed. Fireplaces, comfortable living and recreational rooms, small nooks and crannies and coffee corners are interspersed throughout the interior of the buildings, providing the school with a warm home-like atmosphere. The dormitories are designed to ensure privacy for each individual and to stress the qualities of home through appropriate furnishings and interior decoration. Teaching methods stress oral involvement through small group discussions and the active participation of students in the teaching process.

### DECISION-MAKING SHARED

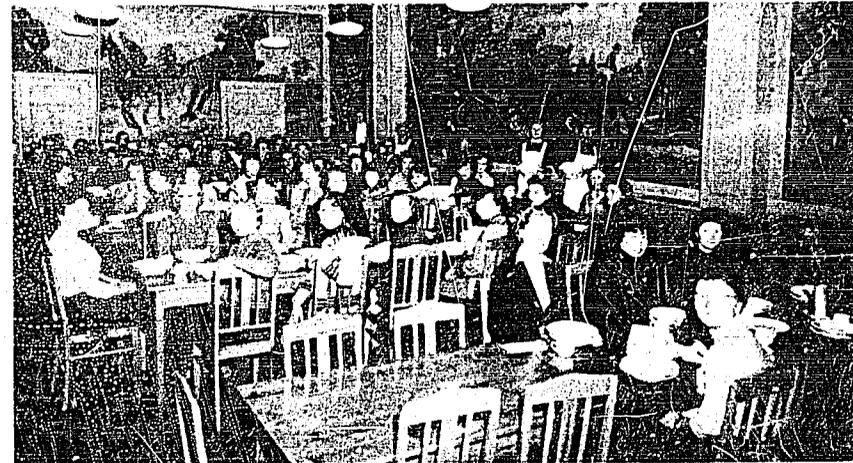
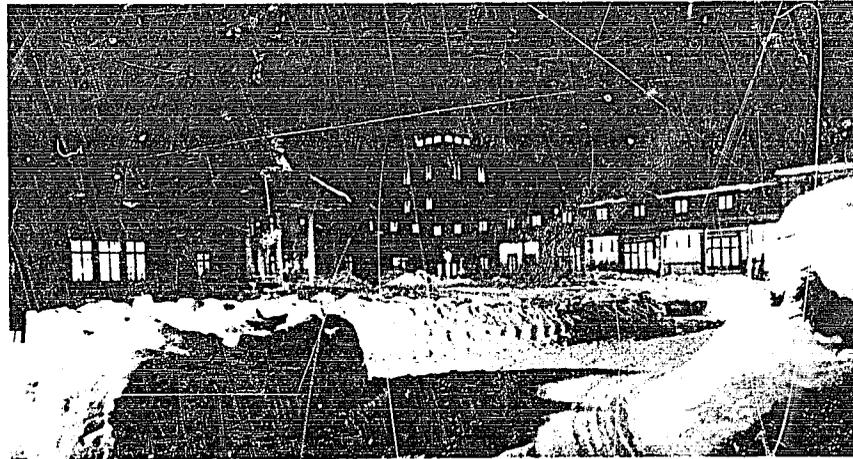
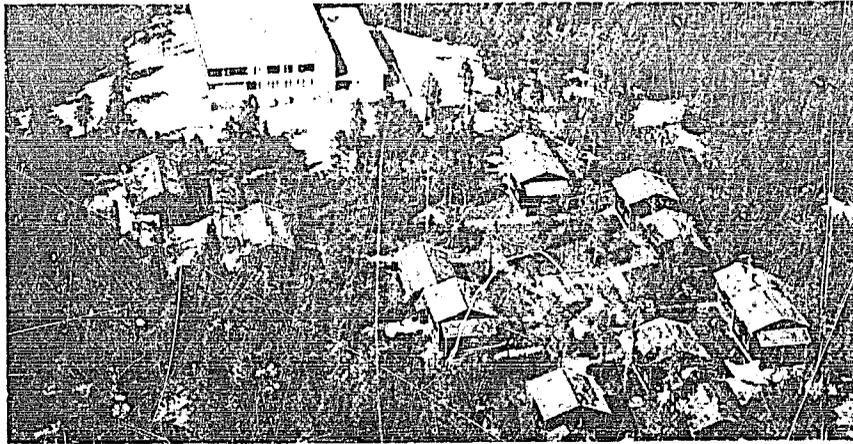
Although the principal has complete responsibility for the operation of the school, most principals share some of the responsibilities with their students and teachers through a participatory decision-making process that usually occurs at a weekly meeting involving all teaching personnel and students. The school does not have formalized exams and the use of evaluatory instruments is discouraged wherever possible throughout the curriculum.

The schools are more often than not located outside large urban centres to reflect the more relaxed atmosphere of the rural setting. Students are selected so that all regions of the country have some representation at the school. Although the government subsidizes these schools substantially, the schools have managed to retain a sizeable degree of autonomy from state control.

Canada does not have this kind of educational alternative available to her students at the present time. Maybe it is time to give a proposal for a Canadian folk high school some serious consideration.

I propose that we:

- establish Canadian folk high schools in the six major regions of Canada — the Arctic, the Prairies, British Columbia, Quebec, Ontario and the Maritimes;
- introduce a curriculum based on a Canadian studies format — for example, Canadian literature, history, sociology, political science, economics, botany, geography, English, French, native arts and crafts, sports, music, drama, ecology and mathematics;
- encourage representation from the six Canadian regions at each of the folk high schools;



- encourage the use of both official languages at the institutions;

- explore the possibilities of providing such an alternative form of education for credit at a junior college level and/or at the senior secondary school level.

The above is intended only as a rudimentary framework for a Canadian folk high school. The idea is here. Our students are waiting. ○

Bibliography available on request.

Jon Henderson teaches at Charles E. London School in Richmond. During 1974-75 he took a leave of absence to study the folk high school in Norway, and subsequently wrote a master's degree thesis on the topic.

*(Top) A folk high school in northern Norway. The small buildings are residences. (Middle) The main classroom and dormitory complex at Hurdal Folk High School in southern Norway. (Bottom) The cafeteria and assembly hall of Hurdal Folk High School.*

# Reading with your child

MADELEINE O'KEEFE

**Here is a handout to answer parents' questions about how their children learn to read.**

☉ **Scene:** Typical classroom, some desks in rows, others grouped in threes and fours, many exciting displays of student work and stimulators on the walls, desks and tables.

**Time:** Evening. Several parents corner the teacher with their concerns.



**Mrs. Reeder:** Robert won't read anything on his own. He only wants to play hockey or watch TV. Even when I turn the TV off he won't read. He doesn't even look at the paper, but then his dad and I don't either.

**Mrs. Fonniks:** When Susie doesn't know a word I always tell her to sound it out. She never does. Can't she read?

**Mr. B. Tacks:** I'm not going to waste time playing games at home. I want him to read.

**Mrs. Noddenuf:** We practised those words you sent home. I guess we did them two or three times last month. Does Harry know them?

**Ms. Dilligent:** Jackie read all those words and spelled them too. We probably spent two hours learning them. She knows them now.

**Teacher:** Parents, here are some ideas to solve your reading blues. It's on this paper called *Reading With Your Child*.

I know you consider reading very important and want to help your child. The best way you can do that is to help the kids practise reading. You see, we teach them many skills but they need lots of time to practise using those skills.

Ms. Fonniks, Susie can read, and she can sound out some words, but we teach those skills in a certain order and she hasn't learned them all yet. She can sound out words that contain the sounds she knows. But there is another skill you can help her with. We call it "prediction" or using "context clues." Number 6 on this paper tells how you can help Susie learn to use this skill.

If Susie has time to think about a hard word, she'll probably get it. You can help her by reminding her to do some of the things number 6 suggests — like telling her to skip the word for now and read some more. Then when she has more ideas about the story she can go back and read the word.

Sometimes kids can't say the word but they know what it means (#6(d,i)). For instance, if the word in the story is "vehicle" and they know it means "car" that is good reading. They can learn the new word "vehicle" later.

Mrs. Noddenuf, Harry needs to practise some words more than two or three times to learn them. Sometimes children need to practise as many as 50 times before they learn something. If you try to follow #8, so that Harry practises every day, he'll be getting lots of repetition of his words.

Mrs. Reeder, many of the ideas on this paper (#1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8) might help Robert want to read at home. Especially if he has your attention for a few minutes each day (#8) and thinks you like to hear him read (#5), he will look forward to his reading

## Reading With Your Child

1. Oral reading should be a performance situation. That is, the child should be reading to entertain or inform the listener.
2. For that to happen:
  - a) you must listen attentively;
  - b) he/she should read the passage silently ahead of time;
  - c) the passage should not be so difficult that he/she needs a great deal of help.
3. During silent pre-reading:
  - a) allow him/her as much time as he/she needs (if you are doing something else, such as washing dishes, there is less pressure on him/her to hurry). During this time he/she is using his/her skills to unlock difficult words and comprehend the passage;
  - b) let him/her ask for help if he/she needs it. (You may need to tell him/her a new word, or explain something he/she doesn't understand.)
4. During oral reading:
  - a) give him/her your full attention;
  - b) preferably sit facing him/her so that you are the listener and he/she is the reader;
  - c) allow him/her time to correct himself/herself.
5. After the reading:
  - a) comment on the content of the passage;
  - b) praise his/her reading of the passage;
  - c) tell about a part you particularly enjoyed.  
These make him/her aware of the value of his/her performance.
  - d) ask questions occasionally;
  - e) let the child play teacher and ask you a question. This is even better for developing his/her comprehension skills.
6. When errors occur:
  - a) allow time for him/her to become aware of the error and correct it on his/her own.  
Frequently, by completing the sentence he/she will know the correction. Sometimes he/she may need to read further.
  - b) evaluate the importance of the error. Many times the reader substitutes a word with the same meaning (e.g., house for home) and the listener will not be aware of the error. This does not need to be corrected.
  - c) if the error affects the meaning and the child ignores it, draw his attention to it by saying, "I didn't quite understand that part," or "I don't think that made sense." Ask him to reread the sentence so you will understand it. This emphasizes the purpose of reading, which is to gain meaning, and that you as listener are also doing this.
  - d) if the child has difficulty correcting an error:
    - i) ask him to tell you what it means and allow him/her to continue;
    - ii) say, "Maybe we shall understand that after we read more";
    - iii) read the sentence to him, skipping the wrong word. Usually children can correct when hearing the sound of the sentence.
    - iv) tell him/her the correct word.
  - e) you may like to keep a short list of difficult words on a marker to review periodically. Help the child pick out two or three words after the reading that he/she wants to remember. They may be new words to learn or errors to correct.
7. Suitable materials for reading practice are:
  - a) his/her reader;
  - b) relatively easy library books;
  - c) passages he/she chooses to share, such as newspaper articles, magazine articles, textbook passages.
8. Emphasize the importance of reading in your home by:
  - a) setting aside a routine time such as right after dinner, or just before bed;
  - b) limiting the time spent to 15 minutes for primary children, 20 minutes for older children (unless the child wishes to extend it);
  - c) taking your turn as reader so that he/she can be the listener;
  - d) spending this time alone with one child, or making it a family affair, everyone doing some reading and listening.



"Is this the reading clinic?"  
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extremely hard to spell, even though she can read them. Learning words by sight like that is one of the skills Jackie is learning. Let's give her the opportunity to practise reading her sight words and use her other skills too. I would be delighted if you could help her use the skills in #6, and spend only 10 or 15 minutes every day instead of two hours at a stretch.

Mr. Tacks, I see that you recognize that reading is a process that uses many skills. Playing games can be a valuable way of practising one skill, but games have to be changed frequently as the child's skills change. An important thing the reader needs to learn is how to apply these skills as he/she is reading. Kids also need to know that reading is important, and you can help Boris a great deal by following #2, 4, 6, 8 and helping him with #7. Perhaps you could take him to the library or share interesting things you read with him.

\* \* \* \*

time. I think it's important that you practise every day to build up the habit of daily reading. It might be fun for the whole family to read together (#8(d)).

Ms. Diligent, I'm glad you worked so hard with Jackie. Some of those words were

*Reading With Your Child* (see box item) was written as a response to just such queries and comments from parents. Teachers in my school and throughout the district have found it a valuable handout at

report card or interview time. Teachers are welcome to reproduce it for distribution to parents, aides, etc.○

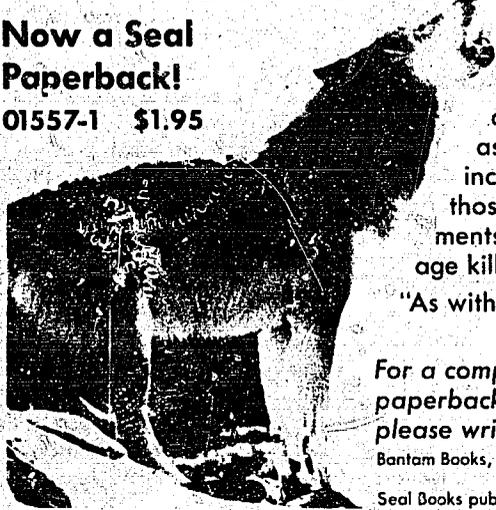
Madeline O'Keefe teaches at Riverdale Elementary School in Surrey.



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●With so much talk these days about such things as the core curriculum, basic skills and functional literacy, and although these things are of vital importance and may have been under-emphasized in the recent past, now is a particularly opportune time to try once more (indeed it is a perennial task) to keep these things in a proper perspective, to see them in context with the broader and deeper purposes of public education.

Teachers, of all people in our society, need to guard against the powerful blandishments of those in positions of power who would be quite content to have our schools run by efficient technocrats.

Real teachers are more than mere technocrats; they have about them a quality of poetic imagination that keeps them informed about the true importance of their work. As a contribution to the task of keeping that poetic imagination alive — among teachers and among the members of the wider public whom they serve — I offer the following statement of educational policy and aims.

I claim no originality in writing it, for it is essentially an amalgam of thoughts by two great educational thinkers, Harold Loukes and M. V. C. Jeffries. I hope it may stimulate thought along similar lines and the eventual writing of a fully authorized statement of public educational policy and aims in terms strong enough and inspired enough to stir the imagination and fortify the will of every participant in the educational enterprise during the next phase of Canadian and world history.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THE PROPOSED STATEMENT

For the consideration of teachers, "humankind's true legislators," and the public that employs them.

The purpose of education in the public schools is to nurture personal growth, and to promote personal values. The process of education is concerned not only with the communication of knowledge and the acquisition of skills, but also with the formation of right attitudes — attitudes toward learning, toward work, toward truth and goodness, toward other people, toward life in general.

Moreover, the process of education is a person-to-person activity; it can truly function only when there is personal communication, under conditions of mutual respect.

The nurture of personal growth and the promotion of personal values are directed toward the goal of freedom, freedom for the individual and freedom for the society of which the individual is a part. Despite the fact that the word freedom has been sometimes abused, it remains, in its true meaning, a word of unique value and power.

## a matter of opinion

# BEYOND CORE

E. L. BULLEN

During World War II, Franklin Roosevelt said that what we were trying to do was to build a world founded on four essential freedoms: "freedom of speech and expression, everywhere in the world; freedom of every man to worship God in his own way, everywhere in the world; freedom from want, everywhere in the world; and freedom from fear, anywhere in the world."

These words about freedom give something of a picture of the kind of world our society wants, some indication of the values our society would like to see operative. In their light we can usefully look at education in British Columbia.

Freedom from want implies the necessity for education to be utilitarian in the sense that no one can be said to be educated who is not able to earn his/her daily bread. Perhaps the first and most basic duty of teachers is to make sure that everything possible is done to fit their students to perform some socially useful function, of their own choice, in the society they will enter as responsible members when their school days are over.

Freedom of speech and expression implies not only the ability and opportunity to speak and write, but also the need to have something worth-while to speak and write about. This means that education must be concerned with books and ideas appropriate to the capacities of those being educated. It means, too, developing not just knowledge *about* things, but knowledge *of* them, so that when people express themselves, they will express their own minds, not someone else's.

Freedom from fear implies not only freedom from external fear of war, civil disorder, and lawlessness, but freedom from internal fear, from neurotic anxiety, or that which has been described as fear in search of a cause for itself. Education today involves not only education for international understanding, but also a deliberate, conscious effort to use the findings of psychology to make possible freedom from neurotic fear for those being educated.

The need that psychology has proven, of love and assertion of personal value at all ages, but particularly at early ages, has brought to education a new dimension of vast importance. In parts of British Columbia, the challenge to teachers in this respect is particularly great because of the cultural changes wrought, largely by external forces over the past hundred years, within the native communities. Integrated schools provide only the setting in which teachers must try to nurture integrated persons, and an integrated society.

Finally, the freedom of people to worship God in their own ways implies that education should take very seriously the various faiths by which people seek to live, by which people grope after an understanding of ultimate reality that will give meaning to their lives.

Education should seek to engender in students a real tolerance for various faiths, be they religious, scientific, or philosophic. The development of such tolerance, as opposed to mere indifference, should lead students to believe in the value of dialogue with dissenting opinion, of true conversation about ultimate questions. ○

E. L. Bullen is District Superintendent of Schools for School District #49 (Central Coast).

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## A word in your ear **OR** Life in the staffroom

GEOFF HARGREAVES

●The other lunchtime, a colleague was rummaging through the sheaves of out-dated newspapers, office memos, and ancient grease-stained lunch bags that collect in staffrooms, in search of something blank on which to note down his Scrabble scores, when he turned up the McGregor Report on teacher training.

Happily, the designer of its cover had left between its title and profiles of teachers symbolically hardening through various intensities of blue and red, a decent gap quite free from all inscription, almost as if he had my colleague's needs directly in mind.

"What is that?" asked another Scrabble player, with the kind of enthusiasm he usually reserves for inquiries about strange odors, uncomfortable lumps in chair seats, and exotic diseases.

The report was swivelled round where it lay, so that the uncompromising black letters of its title were visible to all.

"I can't say I got much out of my teacher-training," said the second Scrabble-player. "Did you?" he added, turning suddenly to me.

"Er, yes and no," I asserted, with my usual directness.

"Who's to play first?" asked our fourth.

"I think you are," I said to him, and the game began.

As it progressed, I wondered exactly what I had got out of my teacher training.

I did a year's training only to satisfy the requirements of the Teacher Qualification Service. For five years I'd taught without a certificate, to the apparent satisfaction of my principal and students, at least after one or two ugly moments in the first months. But, like a Christian missionary shown the earnest devotions that savages pay to idols, TQS was unimpressed. To enter the ranks

of the faithful, I needed formal baptism.

The first thing I learned from my teacher training was that you're 21 only once. At the time I'd just nudged 30, so was always an odd man out, not an instructor, no longer quite a student, rather like a one-legged man at a sporting event, detached, sometimes envious, occasionally incredulous.

Having had to pay off debts for my B.A. and resenting every penny of it, I now husbanded my cash carefully. Which meant that the youngsters with whom I shared a house knew where to come to cadge cash for a drink when their own funds had dwindled to nothing.

On those occasions we'd head downhill to a pub that overlooked the beach. This pub was the most fly-blown, dilapidated structure I'd ever entered. The middle-class students, largely from a sense of novelty, I suppose, regarded it with a feeling akin to wonder. The glasses were sticky with an anonymous crud, the beer was sour, the upholstery on the seats reeked of aged dust. The students loved every lousy bit of it.

The regular clientele, who, for all I knew, never left the premises, for they were always there, seemed burdened with inertia. One man particularly. His stomach overhanging his belt, he sat silent, slightly open-mouthed, all evening. I never saw him drink — though the beer in his glass did diminish, probably, in that airless room, by rapid evaporation. His inertia was so overpoweringly intense that he had attracted onto his dark, baggy suit, maybe through the force of his gravity, small lightweight objects like bits of fluff, stray hairs, cigarette ash, blades of withered grass, and spindly twigs.

In the opposite corner, also night after night, sat a distinguished professor of literature, whose books on Elizabethan drama

used to receive rave notices from international critics and are still reprinted. He too was silent; but I did see him drink.

In honor of the "working-class" clientele, the middle-class students, romantic Marxists one and all, would sing folksongs about miners, sailors, and working girls led astray by affluent members of the gentry. Sometimes they cleared a space between the tables and, with one of their number, a girl, playing a concertina, they would perform some morris dances, stamping their heels and waving handkerchiefs. "Bunch of fairies," was the only response I ever heard voiced by the "workers."

Then, to round things off, the girl with the concertina would sing plaintively through her nose songs of whining despair. Though only 19, she had about her a self-destructive drive that had already coarsened her attractive features and made her look prematurely worn. As she sang out a high note and her bosom swelled, a brief flame would suddenly light up the eyes in the distinguished professor's ruined face and as suddenly die out.

"Yes," I said, "I think I did get something out of my teacher training."

"Garbage!" exclaimed one of the players.

"I beg your pardon," I asked, disconcerted.

"Garbage," he reiterated. "G-a-r-b-a-g-e. All seven tiles." He darted a finger toward the Scrabble board. "That's 73 points. A coup de grace! It's going to be my game, by the look of things." O

Geoff Hargreaves teaches at Cowichan Senior Secondary School in Duncan.

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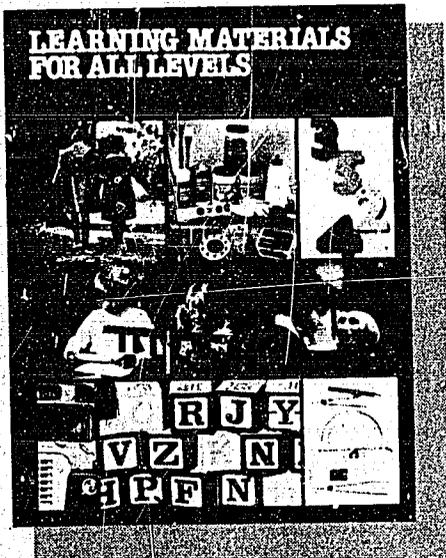
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## ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE

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604-530-2141 or 604-534-2072 (home)—4543-205A St. Langley V3A 5X4.

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### Died

January 26, 1979  
December 11, 1978  
February 1, 1979  
November 7, 1978  
February 10, 1979  
December 14, 1978  
January 15, 1979

### Retired

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Agnes M. Allan  
Margaret (Maynes) Babcock  
Fred Barger  
Bernice E. Barton  
Bessie M. (Hurray) Bestivick  
Robert L. F. Bruce  
Ruth S. Bryson  
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Isabel K. (Holton) Dunsmore  
Doris M. (Lister) Ferguson  
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Nanaimo  
Cranbrook  
Castlegar  
Vancouver  
Nelson  
Vancouver  
Victoria  
Vancouver  
Agassiz  
Vancouver  
Sechelt

### Died

November 1, 1978  
January 17, 1979  
September 28, 1978  
September 14, 1978  
March 11, 1979  
October 4, 1978  
January 6, 1979  
February 11, 1979  
February 5, 1979  
December 15, 1978  
February 18, 1979  
January 13, 1979  
December 18, 1978  
December 7, 1978  
November 22, 1978  
April 22, 1979  
February 9, 1979  
February 11, 1979  
October 7, 1978  
November 4, 1978  
April 25, 1979  
October 19, 1978  
November 2, 1978  
January 6, 1979  
March 18, 1979  
November 6, 1978  
October 15, 1978  
January 27, 1979  
December 1, 1978  
November 21, 1978  
January 11, 1979  
January 20, 1979  
December 29, 1978  
February 8, 1979  
January 10, 1979  
January 7, 1979  
October 31, 1978  
December 16, 1978  
December 2, 1978  
February 1, 1979  
December 12, 1978  
December 11, 1978  
November 23, 1978  
October 12, 1978

# They're talking about...

●**Elinor Brown**, long-time and respected Burnaby primary teacher and officer of the B.C. Primary Teachers' Association, who was one of two resource leaders to a seminar on early childhood education held during September 1978 in Durban, South Africa.

Elinor and Mary Howarth, a PD staff member from one of the Ontario teachers' associations, were sponsored by the Canadian Teachers' Federation to this first seminar on early childhood education for black teachers. The seminar, organized by the African Teachers' Association of South Africa, was designed to give the principal and teacher participants an introduction to the theoretical aspects of early childhood education. Elinor adds that participants "were united by an impelling desire to see that the pre-primary classes be instituted with qualified teachers and with classes from 20 to 32 children" — a far cry from present size of black primary schools, in which classes range from 50 to 62 pupils.

Participants in the seminar were trained to be resource leaders for their own colleagues.

Elinor adds that she and her husband stayed in Johannesburg. Based on this moving experience, Elinor concludes that "my hopes are high that, within the next 10 years, the future of many young black children in South Africa will be very different."○

●**Rob McLean**, vice-principal of Anne Stevenson Junior Secondary School in Williams Lake, who was a member of a Canadian Teachers' Federation team that taught teachers enrolled in the 1978 summer session courses sponsored by the Nigeria Union of Teachers.

Rob is willing to deliver a special social studies session on Nigeria to students and other interested groups, and also has the names and addresses of Nigerian teachers and principals who are interested in being pen pals with Canadian teachers and schools.

If you are interested in "twinning" a school or a class, or interested in a Nigerian teacher pen pal, contact Rob at 392-6229 or write 1250 Western Avenue, Williams Lake, B.C. V2G 1H7.

●**"A Guide for Life,"** the Vancouver School Board's health education curriculum project. Phase one involved the development of a K to Grade 12 curriculum framework with goals, related learning outcomes and topics revolving around three basic aspects of health — the environmental, the physical and the mental/social. District staff, administrators, teachers, parents and students formed a team to provide input for this initial phase.

Phase two will result in a resource book outlining a wide range of suitable classroom activities, ideas, suggestions and available references. The Vancouver Health Department will aid in this phase. Phase three will be implementation and will focus on provision of a comprehensive district- and school-based in-service program.

**Diane Brow**, elementary consultant, worked on phase one and her current task involves developing the resource book and the in-service program. **Garr Roth**, curriculum and professional development intern, is assisting Diane in co-ordinating the development of resources and planning implementation of the program.○

## HAWAII

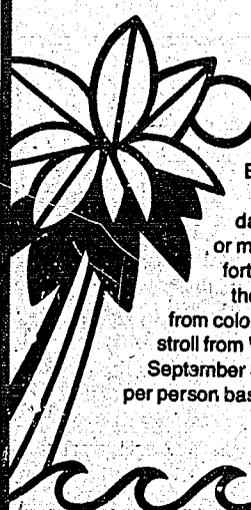
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## THESE TEACHERS HAVE RETIRED

Most of the teachers listed below retired earlier this year or last. A few had left teaching before this school year but were granted deferred allowances. To them all the federation extends good wishes for the future.

Gillian M. Allen  
William C. Bell  
Basil Charles Bengier  
June K. Bjune  
Ronald K. Bryant  
Lorne A. Carmichael  
Samuel V. Coulter  
Dorothy L. Dahl  
Marcial E. Desjardins  
Frank W. Dutton  
Edward N. Ellis  
Donald O. N. Forbes  
Marton E. Foster  
William B. Fountain  
Edward Gabel  
Lillian P. Grieva  
Gavin E. Halkett  
Donald M. Hanson  
Robert E. Jones  
Margaret M. Johnston  
Ethel I. Joslin  
William R. Lee  
Ruth E. McConnell  
Mary L. McGarrigle  
Mary M. McLary  
Florence E. McMillan  
George A. Maggs

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Victoria  
Gulf Islands  
Alberni  
Vancouver  
Vancouver  
Coquitlam  
Creston  
Nelson  
Victoria  
Vancouver  
Vancouver  
Victoria  
Burns Lake  
Kelowna  
Chilliwack  
Nanaimo  
Abbotsford  
Greater Victoria  
Kelowna  
Penticton  
New Westminster  
Vancouver  
Qualicum  
Richmond  
Cowichan  
Duncan

Tillie M. Milligan  
Frances A. L. Munro  
Margaret A. G. Nicholls  
Bessie M. Page  
Arthur B. Paul  
Ronald S. Price  
Zelma S. Pritchard  
Margaret E. Purvis  
Kory Regan  
Susie Anna Rempel  
George L. Seens  
Karl H. Stegler  
Doris Ethel Sluggett  
Franklin H. Smith  
John I. Sopiro  
Kenneth L. Storey  
Jean A. Straight  
James D. Taylor  
Walter D. Thorne  
Kenneth Y. Tomlinson  
Lois D. Trousdell  
Thomas J. Tull  
Grace I. Vickers  
Moira A. Whitfield  
Dora A. Wilcox  
Nancy E. Williams

Kelowna  
Victoria  
Qualicum  
Sooke  
Alberni  
Langley  
North Vancouver  
Cranbrook  
Sechelt  
Chilliwack  
Vancouver Island West  
Vancouver  
Burnaby  
Vancouver  
Victoria  
Summerland  
Victoria  
Vancouver  
Coquitlam  
Shuswap  
Vancouver  
Vernon  
Greater Victoria  
Sooke  
Victoria  
Courtenay

Continued from page 190

teacher on an hourly basis, up to the agreed-upon maximum number of hours allocated to the activity, with the salary pro-rated on the teacher's annual salary. Thus, while some activities might entail more total hours, the method of compensation would be equal, to the extent that it would be based on the individual's position on the salary grid. This should have the added advantage of providing more experienced teachers some financial incentive to remain involved, and it would not preclude sponsors from putting in additional time without pay, although it would give them the opportunity to reflect on whether that time was worth it to them and their students if it was not worth it to the school board.

If this system seems unworkable, consider the workings of the present non-system, and the unbalanced emphasis on certain activities. Where are the debating clubs, the madrigal choirs, the foreign language societies, the hospital volunteers? While these and a multitude of other activities flourish in individual schools, what consistency of opportunity do we find around the province? Can't we assume some professional responsibility in this area, and encourage school boards to assume their rightful share of responsibility in implementing and enhancing the activities that can be such a vibrant and enriching part of the educational experience for our students?

As Postman and Weingartner put it, "The characteristics of an extra-curricular activity

form a useful model for almost any system of learning: there is no compulsion, relatively little fear of failure, many options; informal relationships, clear objectives, indisputable relevance, no distinction between work and play."\*

Otherwise, we are cheating our students and ourselves. O

\*Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner, *The School Book*, New York, Dell, 1973, p. 157.

Brian Warner has been a band teacher in the Hope School District for seven years. He formerly taught in the Shuswap District.

Continued from page 188

real. It could be accounted for, or even reversed, by the fact that we are now more meticulous about recording attendance. For example, it has been almost universal practice as long as I can remember to keep pupils only during the morning on the opening day of school in September. Yet in all the older registers attendance is marked for the full day. In more recent years attendance is marked for only the half day, the other half being recorded as non-instructional and deducted from the allowable total of such days.

The conclusion we can draw from all of this is that pupils today attend school as many days a year as they ever did. The days in session "for teachers only," which average about three a year over the past 3 years, have not reduced actual instructional time at all. They have, in effect, been a contribution by the teachers of extra hours

and effort toward the betterment of the profession. O

Alfred E. Evans is principal of Inman Elementary School in Burnaby.

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# New Books...

C. D. NELSON



## OUR BOOK REVIEW EDITOR . . .

is ill this month. We wish him a speedy recovery, and hope that his usual column will be in this space in our next issue.

Meanwhile, here are three reviews by John Church, of the BCTF staff. They provide a useful follow-up to our special issue (Jan.-Feb. 1979) on the International Year of the Child.

## CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Nickerson, Betty (ed.), *O' You and Me, Nous Autres: A Contemporary View of Human Rights by Young Canadians, Vue contemporaine des droits de la personne*

*par les jeunes Canadiens, All About Us, Nous Autres*, Box 1985, Ottawa, Ont. K1P 5R5, 1977, 96 pp., \$3.95

Here are 30 drawings — each one to illustrate an article from the *United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, and a drawing that illustrates the *Canadian Bill of Rights*. The drawings have been selected by a panel of students from over 300 drawings submitted by students in Ottawa Valley high schools.

This small volume is important because it shows in graphic form how a representative group of young Canadians perceive the articles of the U.N. Declaration as well as their own Canadian Bill of Rights. In one sense the medium is becoming the message, for everything is stated in

both official languages, but fortunately drawings defy the language barrier. In short, we are reminded at one and the same time of our universality as human beings, and also of our uniqueness and distinctiveness as Canadians.

To British Columbians — parents, students and teachers — who have been studying a BCTF prepared working document, *Rights and Responsibilities*, which has suggested new rights and responsibilities for all those involved in education, the book is particularly appropriate. After all, the working document included in the appendix is *The U.N. Declaration of the Rights of the Child*.

One hopes that John A. Macdonald's Presbyterian soul is not suffering too many agonies as a result of having the school named in his honor listed as though John A. were a member of the MacDonald clan.



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*Task Force on the Child as Citizen, Admittance Restricted: The Child as Citizen in Canada*, The Canadian Council on Children and Youth, Box 599, Station B, 59 Sparks St., Ottawa, Ont. K1P 5P7, 1978, 172 pp., \$8.95.

Written by the 12-member Task Force on the Child as Citizen, *Admittance Restricted: The Child as Citizen in Canada*, focuses on Canada's 7,000,000 children, but is addressed to every literate resident of Canada. The study examines both what is and what ought to be — the first because "it is through our day-to-day attitudes and actions that the lives of children are actually shaped so we will look instead at present realities." The second invites us to tread the path outlined to an improved tomorrow.

Four principles undergird the report. Children must be accorded their full rights as citizens. The family is usually "the best environment for the healthy development of children." There must be equality of opportunity — an end to a system of a few winners and many losers, a system in which children are not guaranteed minimum levels of economic support, health care, protection and education. Finally, the individuality of each child's interest must be protected on those occasions where these interests would be contrary to those of the parents.

Lucidly and forcefully written by individual members of the task force, the book contains seven chapters. (Gary Onstad, a Burnaby Central Senior Secondary School teacher, is one of the authors on this national interdisciplinary task force team.) It begins with an overview, followed by separate chapters on the child's need for economic support, for health care, for protection and for education. A chapter is addressed to the special needs of that most neglected and abused child — the Native child.

The final chapter rings the clarion call for support for children's rights to advance children from their current passive and dependent stance to that of recognition as full-fledged citizens, though in some cases, other members of society will have to guarantee these rights through "special representation." Discrete use of pictures enhances the volume's visual appeal.

The timing of the publication on the eve of 1979 as the International Year of the Child is most appropriate. Its revolutionary message for Canadians to change their attitudes and actions towards children, to advance from viewing the period of childhood-adolescence as a sorting-out stage in which a few already advantaged children are confirmed as winners and the many others are classed as losers, will undoubtedly promote worth-while discussions and debate. It is only through a raising of the overall level of awareness and understanding that genuine progress to acceptance of children as citizens will be made.

B.C. teachers will be particularly interested in the chapter on education, particularly as several BCTF working papers have served as source materials for the description of the current operation of the educational system.

This is an important book that no one should neglect. This reviewer, while he agrees with the intent of the comment that in bilingual Canada, no one should be able to graduate from public school "without a working knowledge of both official languages," has to hope that ancillary observations of this order do not become major stumbling deterrents to a sharp and clear focus on the fundamental issues this timely and provocative volume requests Canadians to recognize, and then to act upon.

## FOR PARENTS

*Today's Family in Focus*, National Parent-Teacher Association, 700 North Rush Street, Chicago, Illinois, 60611, \$3 per set.

Eight brochures, six pages in length, including a one-page cartoon, outline some current theories on family life and child care. Written by scholars at the "cutting edge" of new research, they are designed to help parents "to develop a critical perspective and to pursue self-education in the area discussed." Each brochure concludes with six questions for reflection or discussion and an annotated selective bibliography for additional readings.

The eight brochures are organized in two series, *The Parent in Modern Society* and *The Modern Parent in Action*.

In the first series, Steven L. Schlossmann, in *Parent Education: Where It's Been and Where It's Going*, suggests the need to bring the PTA organization into the mainstream of the current societal decision-making process by divesting it of its female and middle-class orientation. While this will increase its credibility, it is essential that the PTA insist on maintaining its commitment to political action and to political education.

Michael W. Apple, in *Children's Rights and How Parents Can Protect Them*, reinforces the political advocacy role by pleading that "parent power" be marshalled to guarantee that children are treated fairly and justly and that they are psychologically and physically secure. Several authors note in *Work and the American Family* the implications of many more working mothers.

Hope Jensen Leichter, in *The Family in Today's Educational World*, explores the influence of the school and television on the individual child's education which occurs primarily in the context of the family.

Michael Posner's *Parents, Children and Preventive Medicine* is the first brochure in the "Action" series. Medical practitioner Posner pleads for a new partnership of parent-doctor in promoting preventive pediatric medicine.

Alan L. Lockwood, in *Children and Values: A Guide for Parents and Teachers*, describes three approaches — inculcation, to be avoided, values clarification, the strengths and weaknesses of which are assessed, and moral development, to be emulated — to intentional values education.

In the last two brochures, K. Alison Clarke-Stewart, in *Developing the Mind of the Child* and *The ABCs of Children's Social Development*, emphasizes the primary role of the parent as model as the child grows cognitively and socially. Social skills of caring and sharing, giving and helping, conforming and co-operating, being friendly and sensitive and appropriately assertive are to be stressed, she insists, to counterbalance the pervasive societal influence of competition on many school practices.

Apart from petty annoyances created by being told that such values as "being assertive, independent and self-reliant" are American, rather than those sought by humankind, this reviewer believes these brochures are important to B.C. teachers. Implicit in all eight is the message that the crucial relationships in education are those that exist among parent, teacher and child.

In particular, the Schlossman and Apple pamphlets are critical as guides if a redistribution of authority and responsibility in education is to be realized. Lockwood and Clarke-Stewart raise expectations. They suggest what many more B.C. schools might become if more children were confronted with educational opportunities for decision-making on moral issues, and if more teachers were to focus their own practice on the intensely human activity of modeling.

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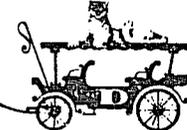
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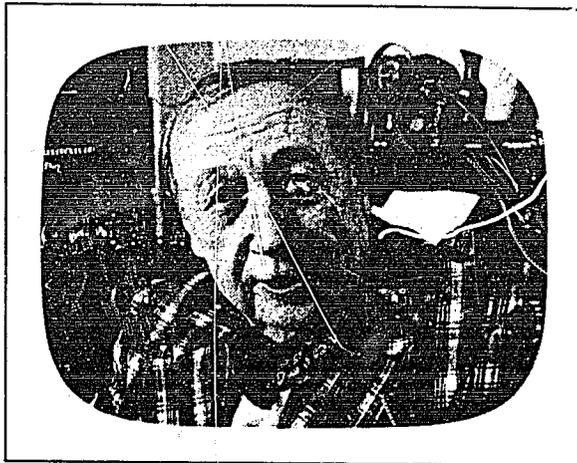
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Gordon Sinclair

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