



CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Roger Skillings '68

It is my pleasure once again to send greetings from the Association to all Vic High Alumni.

This year has seen a change in leadership at Vic High. In June 2006, we said good-bye to Keith Forshaw as he retired to take up an exciting new challenge as the Director of Academics at a private school in Egypt. We enjoyed working with Keith during his five years as Vic High's principal. He was proud of the school and worked effectively to maintain its standards of excellence.

We are equally delighted to welcome Stephen Bennett, Vic High's new principal. Stephen had been a vice-principal at Vic High since 2003, when he joined the school from the Fraser Valley. However, his association with the school goes back further than that. As a UVic student teacher, he did his practicum at Vic High – and taught in the very room where we now hold our board meetings. He has jumped into the Principal's position with the enthusiasm and commitment characteristic of his predecessors.

The other major event affecting us this year is a sad one. In August 2006, Peter Smith passed away. We have included a tribute to him in this newsletter. Peter's passing is a great loss to Vic High, but his wonderful efforts to keep the history of the school alive continue to inspire us.

During the last several years, he devoted many hours to preserving the history of the school through his work in the VHS Archives. We are determined to ensure that this work continues – and it *is* continuing, thanks to the efforts of our "Archives Team".

The VHS Archives recently revealed yet another treasure – a story from the March 11, 1903 *Daily Colonist* that reads:

The first regular meeting of the Victoria High School Alumni will be held on Friday the 20th instant. Papers have been prepared on the early history of the school, and in addition an appropriate programme will be given by Alumni talent. The work of enrolling members is proceeding very successfully.

Some of us naively thought that the Alumni Association started with the 1976 Centennial. Little did we realize that we were only repeating history.

In closing, I must say how overwhelmed we are by the generosity of Vic High's alumni. In only two years of fundraising we were able to meet our target of \$50,000 for the Vic High Alumni Association Endowment Fund. As a result of your contributions to both the endowment fund and our general fundraising campaign, we are able to continue working with Vic High and its current students to help maintain the fine traditions of our school. Thank you once again for your ongoing support.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY, JUNE 4, 2007 5:00 P.M.

VIC HIGH STAFF ROOM

EVERYONE WELCOME

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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



Stephen Bennett

This school year at Victoria High School has been a busy and exciting one for students and staff. Since September, I have had the pleasure of visiting most classrooms in the school. Without question, this has been an incredible thrill from my perspective. I have had the opportunity to see dedicated and talented master teachers working with motivated, eager students in a variety of settings. Whether it was reading poetry in an English class, participating in current affairs discussions in Social Studies, looking at projects in shop classes, talking about the importance of doing well in Math, witnessing some thought-provoking presentations in Science, discussing art projects or watching a variety of performances, the hard work and dedication of staff and the excellent performance of students shone through in delightful and awe-inspiring ways. The students and staff of Victoria High School are an amazing group of people. This, of course, is not a surprise. It is the continuation of a longstanding tradition.

The start of the school year was very busy. Once classes were underway, the staff, in a time-honoured tradition, served a delicious pancake breakfast to the entire student body. The 'Cornerstone Breakfast', a significant part of Victoria High School's rich tradition, was enjoyed by all. Later on in September, the Leadership class and Student's Council sponsored a corn roast and a variety of activities. A terrific amount of corn was prepared and eaten by enthusiastic participants. Our fall awards ceremony, held in early November, was a wonderful event as well. It was a welcome opportunity to become reacquainted with some of the visiting award winners. It was also heartwarming to be part of a ceremony that reflected the overwhelming

generosity of the VHS Alumni in your provision of financial awards for truly deserving students. Your support in this is truly appreciated.

December saw the arrival of our Fine Arts evening. This was a huge success and once again the talent of the students of Victoria High School shone brightly from a variety of perspectives. The second last week in February was reserved for our open house in the Fairey Technical Building. Our Technology teachers and their very willing students put on a spectacular show for our visitors from a variety of middle schools along with their parents and members of the public.

The students and staff of Victoria High are now well settled into their second semester. As Spring Break approached, the graduating class of 2007 began to make preparations for year-end ceremonies and celebrations. This will be the 131st time this cycle has happened. The great sense of history and tradition at Victoria High School is matched only by the dedication and participation of so many great individuals, both students and staff. It is a pleasure and a privilege to be a part of this history and tradition. Thank you for your continued support and care for Victoria High School.

"Palma Non Sine Pulvere"

1940s "HOMECOMING"

Coming in June 2008 – the Vic High Alumni Association will be hosting a Homecoming for all Vic High students from the 1940s and earlier years. We will have entertainment, refreshments, plus meeting and greeting of grads from that era. If you are in this group and would like to help to make this special event happen, contact Ken Leighton at 250-652-2686 or e-mail at kenleighton@telus.net or alumni@vichigh.com.

There will be more information on the Homecoming posted on the website www.vichigh.com in the next few months and in next spring's newsletter.



PETER SMITH REMEMBERED

In August 2006, Vic High lost its official historian and one of the finest students ever to graduate from the school. Dr. Peter Lawson Smith suffered a massive stroke in late August and passed away on August 29th. He was 73.

Peter's life and Vic High were forever intertwined. He was, of course, the youngest child of Vic High's legendary principal, H.L. Smith, and Alice Corry Smith. Harry Smith was on the staff of Vic High for 41 years, from 1914 to 1955. For 21 years, from 1934 to 1955, he was Vic High's much loved and much admired principal. Alice was a Vic High grad who returned to teach at Vic High after graduating from McGill. As was the tradition of the day, she had to resign her teaching position on her marriage to Harry in 1919. Peter loved to tell the tale that he was born between Acts II and III of *Macbeth*, being performed that night at the Vic High Auditorium. He also glowed when he recalled his mother's view that if married women had

been allowed to teach, she would have been principal of Vic High.

Peter was a remarkable student. When he graduated from Vic High in 1949 at the age of 16, he was the leading student not only at the school, but also in the province. He achieved the same distinction when he graduated from UBC four years later. Although in his early years he was recognized as a mathematical wizard, his undergraduate and graduate degrees were in Greek and Roman studies. He received his Ph.D. from Yale and taught at Yale, Carleton and UBC before returning to Victoria in 1963 as the founding chair of the UVic Classics Department. He served in that position until 1969 and was the Dean of Fine Arts through most of the 1970s. He taught until his retirement in 1998 – and even after that he could often be found in the classroom.

Peter's accomplishments were many. He excelled as a scholar, translator, writer and historian. He was a marvelous speaker and was devoted to drama – both serious and comedy. But it is as a teacher that he will long be remembered. UVic students who would normally not have been interested in classics were drawn to his classroom because of his outstanding teaching abilities. Many recall his classes as a highlight of their university education.

His importance to Vic High cannot be overstated. He excelled as a student and was the editor of *The Camosun* during his graduating year. His love and enthusiasm for the school only grew as the years went on. In 1976, he wrote *Come Give A Cheer! One Hundred Years of Victoria High School 1876-1976* for Vic High's Centennial. It is a remarkable book that not only documents Vic High's first 100 years, but also tells the tale of the early history of secondary and post-secondary education in the Province. It continues to be an excellent read and a tribute to the many teachers and principals of Vic High who built the school and influenced Victoria and its students so profoundly.

The 100th Anniversary also provided an

opportunity for Peter to showcase his creativity and humour. As many of you will know, his father was celebrated for, among other things, his intimate knowledge of Shakespeare. In a kind of tribute, in the 1976 Centennial show, Peter delighted audiences in a trio of goofy professors singing a take-off of Cole Porter's 'Brush Up Your Shakespeare' – new lyrics for which were written by Peter himself.

Peter was actively involved in the Vic High Alumni Association from the time of its creation. He was the co-chair of the 125th Vic High Reunion, held on May 4-5, 2001. Over the years he delivered many eloquent speeches about Vic High, entertaining former students at reunions and bringing the history of the school to life for its current students. At the VHS graduation ceremonies in June 2006, he gave the address to the graduating class. The 2007 Camosun is being dedicated to Dr. Smith – a testament to the impact he has had on today's students.

After his retirement from UVic, Peter made an enormous contribution to the Vic High Archives. He spent many hours every week in

Room 100, sorting through documents, preserving photographs and answering queries from former students and family members of former students seeking information from the archives. In this activity, he was able to combine his love of history and phenomenal memory for details of Victoria's past with his impressive knowledge of technology. He worked very hard to preserve the amazing collection of records and history in our archives.

No tribute to Peter would be complete without mentioning his wonderful sense of humour – always acute, but gentle and often aimed at himself. Fittingly, his memorial service was full of laughter as Peter and his zanier moments were fondly remembered.

Peter was an amazing and much loved person. He combined brilliance with humour, humility, hard work, enthusiasm, thoughtfulness and generosity. He gave tirelessly of his time throughout his life as he made significant contributions to Vic High, UVic and the broader community of Victoria. We owe him a great deal and will miss him very much.

ENDOWMENT FUND REACHES \$50,000 GOAL

In the fall of 2005, the Alumni Association created a new endowment fund to support school activities in areas of the performing and visual arts, athletics and vocational education. Recent cutbacks in school funding have created the need for additional funds to support discretionary activities. Our concept was to create a permanent fund, managed by the Victoria Foundation, with the income being used on an annual basis to support these activities. Our initial goal was \$50,000.

We are very pleased to report that our target of \$50,000 was reached this spring. We want to thank all of you who contributed so generously to this fund, both in response to our appeal for donations and to those who gave in memory of Lawrie Wallace (1913-2006).

Principal Stephen Bennett will be working with us to ensure that the annual income from the fund will be used for activities that will make a significant contribution to the school and its students. Examples of the types of uses that could be made of the funds include purchasing specialized equipment for the shops or assisting with the purchase of lighting and costumes to support the fine and performing arts programs.

Your generosity and support for Vic High and the Alumni Association are very much appreciated by today's school and its students. The fund, together with the \$8,000 in scholarships and bursaries that we provide annually, show our ongoing support for Vic High and its students and indicate to them the important influence the school has had on our lives.

THE ARCHIVES TEAM

The Vic High Archives, as we have often reported in this newsletter, is an invaluable collection of materials and a great asset, not only for our alumni but for history buffs and researchers from far and wide. The Alumni Association recognizes this and is committed to maintaining and improving the collection.

With Peter Smith's loss, we have put together a new "Archives Team". Jim Conner and Frank Thomas, who have worked faithfully in the archives for many years, continue their fine work and we are indebted to them. Jim and Frank have been joined on the "Archives Team" by Faith Reimer, Ken Roueche, Don Kissinger and Jill Wallace.

Faith set up the archives in 1976 when she taught at Vic High, and she is delighted to return. We are lucky to have her and the great knowledge, experience and organizational skills she brings. Ken is familiar with the Vic High

Archives – because he used the archives as a resource for his recently published book, *A Fairfield History*. Ken is excited about the opportunity to preserve the photos in the archives and to work with the staff and students at Vic High to enhance their knowledge of the history of the school. The article below on "Fairey Tech" tells of the work he is doing. Don and Jill are assisting them with their work and with funding issues.

We are also very fortunate to have two alumni who are providing professional oversight and advice: John Adams and Derek Reimer. John is an historian who specializes in Victoria and B.C. history, and Derek is an archivist who spent many years with the Provincial Archives. We are grateful for their assistance and for the work of all our colleagues who have come forward to ensure that Peter's work continues.

The archives is open every Tuesday morning from 9 am to noon during the school year. Visitors and donations are welcome.

FAIREY TECH: THE OTHER VIC HIGH



Dr. F.T. Fairey (1887-1971) staff and students to make greater use of the collection.

The first result of this invitation is the "Fairey Tech Project". The project will focus on the history of Fairey Tech and the vital contribution it has made to the community. Under Ken Roueche's leadership, a team has been assembled to collaborate on the project, including current and past instructors Bill

To ensure that the materials in the Vic High Archives are being used to enhance the experience of today's students at Vic High, the Alumni Association has taken the initiative to invite

Morrison, Stewart Wheeler, Ed Wignall and Fred Packford. We are also fortunate that Randall Fairey, the grandson of Dr. F.T. Fairey, for whom the centre is named, is involved. Randall is currently working on a detailed biography of Dr. Fairey.

Fairey Tech has a website, www.faireytech.ca, on which we will display photos and stories. Hopefully, this photo gallery will be on the website before summer. The next step will be to use the materials from the collection to create a photo gallery in the main entrance to Fairey Tech. Longer term, 2009 is the 60th anniversary of Fairey Tech. To mark this event, we are thinking it would be fun to prepare a more formal document, perhaps even a book, detailing the history of Fairey Tech. If you would like more information on the Fairey Tech Project, or have some materials or information to contribute, please contact Ken Roueche at 250-384-7606 or kroueche@shaw.ca.

REUNIONS

Please visit the Vic High website at www.vichigh.com to get up-to-date information about reunions and e-mail contacts. When you are on the site, click on Reunions for the latest information.

2007

Class of 1942

65 year reunion:

Wednesday, June 6, 2007

A luncheon will be held at McMorran's from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm.

Contact Fran Blandy at fblandy@shaw.ca or Jack Weber at 384-8371 for further information.

Class of 1947

60 year reunion:

Wednesday and Thursday, June 6 and 7, 2007

Contact Jim Ireland at (604) 943-5464 or Evan Oakley at (250) 592-9378 for further information.

Class of 1972

The class of 1972 meets for lunch every couple of months. If anyone is interested in seeing photos of the lunches or being added to the email lunch list or grad list, please contact Beth Barnes (Morrison) at 386-7272 or by e-mail through the Vic High website at www.vichigh.com.

Class of 1977

30 year reunion:

Saturday, May 26, 2007

The class of 1977 will be meeting for a casual

golf game and BBQ dinner at the Glen Meadows Golf Club. Check-in for golf is 12 noon and dinner is at 7 pm. (\$85 for golf and dinner, \$35 for dinner only.) For further information, contact Heather Keevil at 370-7819, Ron Basi at 480-8101, Jackie Phillips (Pellizon) or Barb Milligan at 595-7581 or e-mail them through the Vic High website at www.vichigh.com.

Class of 1997

10 year reunion:

The class of 1997 is planning a tenth reunion. To get details, help or just let us know where you are, please e-mail Vicky Campbell by going to the Vic High website at www.vichigh.com.

2008

Class of 1948

60 year reunion:

Spring 2008

Please contact Ken Leighton at kenleighton@telus.net or (250) 652-2686. We are open to your suggestions about the reunion and any inquiries you have and please tell us if you know of any grads who have recently moved.

Class of 1958

50 year reunion:

The reunion committee is in the process of locating grads. Contacts are George Brice at sgbrice@shaw.ca and Hazel Johansen at hjohansen@telus.net.

RECONNECT WITH VIC HIGH FRIENDS

Where are they now? Let them know where you are.

You can now use the Vic High Alumni website, www.vichigh.com, to contact old friends. When you register online, you and your classmates can get in touch with each other.

It's easy. Just go to the website, register and click on 'Find Alumni' to get in touch with friends from Vic High.

It's Private and Secure. In these days of heightened concern about personal information, we were careful to design a system that will permit contact while protecting privacy.

Once you have registered, you can send a 'blind' email to other members. Other members will similarly be able to send you a 'blind' email asking whether you want to get in touch with them. No one's email address is revealed unless they choose to reply. This service is only available to Vic High alumni who register on the website.

Sign on – Sign up – Rediscover old friends!

DONATION AND CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

Help the Vic High Alumni Association continue its work supporting Vic High and its students through the scholarship and bursary fund and providing funding for school activities and the Vic High Archives.

Even if you cannot contribute at this time, please use this form to update your address and e-mail address or do this by visiting our website at www.vichigh.com.

Name: _____ [School Name: _____]

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Telephone Number: () _____

E-mail: _____ VHS years: _____

I wish to make a voluntary tax-deductible donation

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 Other _____

Enclosed is my cheque payable to the Victoria High School Alumni Association* OR
 Use your Visa or Mastercard to make your donation online by visiting our website at www.vichigh.com*

Please enroll me as a new lifetime member of the VHS Alumni Association (\$10.00)

Personal information provided to the VHS Alumni Association will be used and disclosed only to support the purposes of the society; i.e., to provide financial and other support to the school and its students, to facilitate reunions and communications among Vic High Alumni and to document the history of the school. If you do not want us to use the information about you for any of these purposes, please indicate as follows:

I do not consent to the use or disclosure of my personal information for any of the above purposes.

Please specify. _____

*You will be mailed an official receipt in this amount for Income Tax purposes.

Further information about donating online is available at www.vichigh.com

E-MAIL ADDRESSES, PLEASE

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT E-MAIL ADDRESS. BECAUSE OF THE COST OF PRINTING AND MAILING THE NEWSLETTER, WE ARE PLANNING TO DISTRIBUTE AS MANY NEWSLETTERS AS POSSIBLE ELECTRONICALLY IN THE FUTURE. PLEASE ENSURE THAT WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT E-MAIL ADDRESS SO THAT WE CAN KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YOU. YOU MAY E-MAIL IT TO US AT ALUMNI@VICHIGH.COM OR SEND IT BACK TO US ON THE FORM ATTACHED. AND DON'T FORGET TO VISIT THE VIC HIGH WEBSITE AT WWW.VICHIGH.COM.

This newsletter is published by the VHS Alumni Association. Contributors are: Stephen Bennett, Denis Johnston, Ken Leighton, Ian McKinnon, Alan Perry, Ken Roueche, Roger Skillings and Jill Wallace.



Alumni News
VICTORIA HIGH SCHOOL



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