

## **Stowaways on a Band Trip**

by Steve Fawcett (VHS 1967)

Thank you so much for preparing and posting the video of the 1964 and 1965 Vic High Band trips. I was on the '65 trip, as one of two "stowaways" (and I spotted the two of us on the video). As to why it was necessary to smuggle a couple of Central Junior High students onto the bus, you have to go back to 1960. That was the year The Royal Commission on Education in the Province of British Columbia released their report (referred to, back then, as "The Chant Report"). This was a very wide-ranging report (460+ pages), which effected many changes in the system, one of which was to change which grades were in which schools. Up until then there was Elementary (K-6), Junior High (7-9), and Senior High (10-12). Now there was to be Elementary (K-7), Junior Secondary (8-10), and Senior Secondary (11-13; except that the Grade 13 never happened).

The 64/65 school year was in the transition period – it was only the second year that the Grade 10s stayed back in Central. Which means, of course, that Vic High was feeling the pinch in some areas – only two grades to draw on. The Vic High Band was planning an ambitious trip, and Mr. Sample realized he was short a couple of trumpet players. He also taught music at Central, so he knew just where to find two Grade 10 trumpeters. After he pulled a few administrative strings, Mary Ann McCammon (now Mary Ann Mutter) and I were invited to join the band, go on a trip, and get out of some school. Wow! We started attending Vic High Band practices Monday evenings and two mornings a week before school. Evening band practices – how adult!

I was keeping a diary of sorts at that time. It was a three day/two night trip; Thursday to Saturday. "In the bus everybody crowded in the back and sang." Except me – "I sat up front and read." The first day's destination was Windermere High School, on the east side of Vancouver. "Had a sock-hop afterwards. Met a mint dame." We were billeted by students of that school.

The next day we drove up the Fraser Canyon. "We stopped today every couple of hours for a 15-minute break. I always bought a milkshake, pop, or cone. Clinton's sure a hick-town. Me & this other guy got billeted by an old lady who let us use the house of her son, who was away. We had a bash. Made toast, had an electric blanket, etc. The old lady really stuffed us with delicious food." Mary Ann remembers, "they had a fun dance in Clinton at the school for us!" When we were gathering at the bus the next morning, one of the local adults informed me that the 'old lady' was none other than Ma Murray, the well-known journalist.

On our final day we drove back down the Fraser Canyon and stopped at Harrison Hot Springs resort. The hotel served us all a nice lunch. "We then played an outdoor concert with the wind and all. We swam afterwards. The water was beautiful. It's really a posh place there. Had supper on the ferry. Arrived at Vic High at 9:30 about."

I certainly had no recollection of someone making a home-movie of the trip. What a surprise to see those images! Thanks again.