

BELOVED FORMER VIC HIGH VICE-PRINCIPAL PASSES ON

Reg Reid, vice-principal of Victoria High School from 1967-77, died in April 2017 at the age of 92. The appreciation below is by King Lee (VHS 1958).

Reg Reid spent 16 years of a 37-year career in education at Victoria High School. Returning to the school from which he graduated and was class valedictorian in 1943, Mr. Reid began teaching English at Vic High in 1957 and taught until 1963 before he became vice-principal at Central Middle School. He returned to Vic High in 1967 as vice-principal under Principal Duncan Lorimer. In 1977, he left Vic High when he was assigned to be vice-principal at Mt Douglas High School.

“It hurt him when he left,” teaching-colleague Gus McTavish recalled. “He bled black and gold.”

Mr. McTavish, who was a Vic High vice-principal from 1982 to 1990, taught at the school for seven years while Mr. Reid was the vice-principal.

“He was really, truly respected. It was a big job and he handled it seamlessly.”

Mr. McTavish said Mr. Lorimer and Mr. Reid were an incredibly good team and that former principal Jack Lowther said Mr. Reid was the best vice-principal he ever had.

“He was the glue that held everything together,” Mr. McTavish said of Mr. Reid.

Another teaching colleague, Tommy Mayne, said he remembered that Mr. Reid was part of a group known among themselves as the “Vic High Navy.”

Mr. Mayne said that for a few years, a small group of Vic High staff members would board a small armada of boats on the first Friday after classes were finished in June and camp on various Gulf Islands locations for the weekend.

Mr. Reid was also witness to one of the saddest incidents in the school’s history. In the spring of 1942, after the Dec. 7, 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in Honolulu, Hawaii, the Canadian government imposed a British Columbia coastal ban on Japanese residents and transported them to internment camps in the interior of B.C. and elsewhere in Canada.

Mr. Reid, then a Grade 11 student, saw a small group of Japanese-Canadian Vic High students being forced to leave school, including an outstanding Grade 12 student, Yoshio Shimizu, who only had about a month to go before graduation.

Peter Smith, who wrote “Come Give a Cheer, One Hundred Years of Victoria High School, 1876-1976,” interviewed Mr. Reid and stated, “He remembers vividly the final morning assembly attended by his Japanese-Canadian schoolmates, a brief but emotional ceremony. Principal H. (Harry) L. Smith read a favourite psalm and students recited the Lord’s Prayer; then everyone filed out of the auditorium quietly, as the doors were held open by Yoshio Shimizu, a popular member of the Grade 12 class. Many of Yoshio’s fellow-students were in tears.”

Mr. Reid met his wife, Iris Chapman McIvor, at Vic High and they were married for seven decades. She graduated from the Vic High in 1941.

Mr. Reid remained connected to the school, joining the board of director of the Victoria High School Alumni Association. He was later made an “honorary director” of the group.