

John Gough interview_Part 1

[Judith Windle interviewing John Gough in 1978]

00:00 John Gough: Since 1931, I've resided very close to the Normal School, and prior to my marriage in 1932, at which time I came to this particular location, I lived within about a ... a good half mile of the Normal School. Actually not far from the site of the present Richmond Elementary School. My mind goes back to about the year 1917, when ... there was a vast open space which stretched from Richmond Elementary School to the Lansdowne Junior High School, and extended all the way from Shelbourne Street to ... Richmond Road. I lived on the southwest corner of that ... 75 acre piece of land and I can remember looking northwards towards Mt. Tolmie and seeing workers ... building the ... what became ... what was to be a normal school. Around the normal school itself, the site of the school which I believe covers some 7 acres, ... there were wide open spaces on which ... cattle grazed, and actually, across the street from the normal school, to the west, ... there was a ... a slaughterhouse ... run, I believe, by the Good H ... Goodacre butcher firm of the city of Victoria. It was my good fortune, at a later date, I think the year was 1922, to attend the normal school for ... one year, and it was in that year, that ... the enrollment of the school ... became one of the largest in its ... history. I believe the enrollment ran about 250, and ... there were a great number of men attending at that time. In fact, some of them had ... returned to school ... after serving ... in the First World War, and in the process of rehabilitation, they were taking ... the course in teacher ... training. ... There was a group of about 50, at least 50 in the class, but we still nevertheless managed to, all of us, to crowd into one room, and we were accommodated by ... using ... pieces of plywood, or wood at least, perhaps there wasn't plywood in those days, but we had large ... pieces of wood which we ... placed ... across the aisles from one desk to the other, and ... used chairs ... as needed. The ... course which we took lasted one year, and ... it ran on very much the same schedule as the ... public elementary schools ... in which at a later date we presumably ... would be ... teaching. We started ... approximately at quarter to nine and ... our classes ... ran right through until ... 3:15 with no spare periods ... five days ... a week. Perhaps ... the most relaxing time of the week was on Friday afternoons, at which time ... we attended meetings of the Literary Society. ... This was a ... an assembly, so to speak, of all ... students, all students, ... it was obligatory to be there, all students and staff, and ... on the Friday afternoon from roughly 1:45 until 3:30, ... we enjoyed 05:04 a program which was presented by our fellow students, and obviously among the students there it was a, as was, as is to be expected, there was considerable ... talent, music, ... drama, and, and so on. And so we entertained one another, but ... basically this provided an opportunity for each of us, or those who did participate, to ... in presenting programs, to ... develop ... competence and skill, shall we say, in ... undertaking ... programs in our schools at a, at a later date. At times ... guest artists were brought in, and I can remember on one occasion ... and she was indeed a true artist in her day, we had ... Emily Carr come to the school and present a ... program.

... I can recall Emily Carr coming to the school, and bringing with her ... many examples of her work, virtually all of which were ... done on large sheets of brown paper, and as ... most, most people know, ... Emily Carr did her work in the most ... had to do her work as in the most economical manner because of her own ... particular ... financial ... situation. I don't know at the time that ... the students and staff were ... greatly excited, so to speak, about what they saw. But nevertheless ... we did, I'm sure, enjoy her ... her presentation.

In the course of our ... program of ... instruction and ... this ... program was more or less followed by the staff over a long period of time ... we ... the staff spent a great deal of time ...

reviewing with us ... the ... various subjects which ... were being taught. In the ... public schools, which we would be expected to teach, and actually, subjects which had been taught to us when we our ... when we ourselves were ... had been in ... in the elementary, in the elementary grades. So there was a concentrated review of subject matter, in ... obviously arithmetic, science, nature study in those days ... Arithmetic, we didn't refer to it as mathematics, and ... grammar ... literature, and we were also ... we also spent some time in ... physical education. In addition to ... acquiring a mastery of ... subject matter, insofar that was possible in the course of 10 months, and after all it was preps and mere veneer, we ... spent considerable time in ... what might be call ... what is called methodology, in other words, the staff explained to us how we might proceed in teaching a lesson in, on, in geography, or in ... arithmetic ... and so on, and ... this presumably was to equip us to handle our future teaching situations. We had opportunity to put what was presented to us into practice by visiting local schools. And ... in my day, and again I'm thinking of 1922, but ... even during years after that, and I know that this was so because I was later a member of of the staff and as a staff, we followed this ... procedure with ... the ... teachers in training.

09:59 Practice teaching was undertaken, or experienced, by students ... visiting schools, at first in Victoria, and then later on throughout the Greater Victoria School area, and spending half a day a week at least, sometimes two half days a week ... in a ... in certain, in certain schools. It was customary too, for the ... staff of the normal school to send out ... two students to ... each of several classrooms ... in, in local schools, where the students ... would ... present lessons which they had had time to prepare in, in advance.

There was ... always great excitement of the normal school, on what might be called assignment day, and on that day, ... each normal school student would ... receive ... a specific assignment for his ... his practicum. And ... at the end of the ... regular teaching day ... each student would ... go to a certain part of the building, and there receive a ... a sheet, which indicated the particular lesson that ... he was to teach, and you can imagine the concern on the part of some students who ... received assignments, shall we say, in, in music, or in art ... when they realized that they were perhaps not particularly gifted or well trained in that particular ... subject.

Following receipt of the assignment the student would then ... go to ... the particular instructor of the normal school staff who was somewhat of a specialist in this particular subject which had been assigned to the student, and from ... this instructor, the student would get what was called lesson help. And, and then within the, then, ... in subsequent couple of days or so, ... the student would write up a lesson plan. He would then go to the school and he would present this lesson to the class. ... Usually there were two students to each classroom, and ... the teacher of the class, the regular classroom teacher, acted as a critic. She would evaluate the teaching procedures ... talk over her estimation of ... success or otherwise with the students, and then after the students had departed would ... prepare a written report - critique, if you like, which was then sent to, back to the normal school, and ... shortly after, the ... student and the ... member of the normal school staff who had ... helped that student, would sit down together and ... discuss the ... critique of the ... teachers.

... Later on ... this would ... perhaps ... be about the mid ... 30's, ... a method was developed at ... by this normal school staff which ... gave the student teacher a better opportunity to experience ... teaching on a ... more continuous basis and ... arrangements were made with local schools to accept ... students for a longer period of time than a half day, and ... in other words, ... students were assigned to a classroom for a ... a week or so and thus there was greater opportunity for a student to ... to see ... how his ... teaching methods ... could be developed, or were developing, what success was being achieved. And then also about that time, there was ... there came into being a system whereby at the end of the normal school year, the teacher, the student teacher, would return 15:00 to his home town, so to speak, or area, and ... would do practice teaching in a school in ... the environs of his ... of his home ... This ... extended over approximately a month. Again ... criticisms were sent back ... by ... the local ... teacher - regular teacher of the classroom - and ... a further evaluation of the student's work was ... made by a staff member who ... would visit the area. He would travel from the normal school out to going to the Okanagan, shall we say, or various parts of Vancouver Island, ... cover several students, and then ... later discuss ... his ... evaluation ... with them. So that in general was the method, the ... way in which teacher training ... was carried on. Of course ... for over a long period of time ... the teacher training program was in a sense a ... veneer program, in that it was ... superimposed on the work which a ... a student had completed either in the high ... in the high school or ... at the ... post-secondary level, shall we say, for ... say, ... Victoria College or, or, first or second year at the ... U.B.C.

Such is, is not the case today, ... of course, or has not been laterally, in that ... the academic and the teacher training program have been ... integrated. You have your ... Faculty of Education and ... the period of ... training has been extended from one year to ... to four or five ... and we now have degrees conferred in ... in Education.

But ... for many, many years, ... the normal school merely ... accepted ... students directly from ... the high schools, and I can recall that, when I was going through Victoria High School, ... time of the First World War, there were some students in the high school were taking just two years of high school ... with the intention of then going to the normal school, from which they would ... graduate with a Second Class Certificate. If I might be personal, in my instance, ... case, I took three years of high school, which entitled me to ... a First Class Certificate. ... Again, being personal, if I might be, ... instead of going directly to normal school after graduating from Victoria High School, I attended Victoria College for two years, and then proceeded to ... the normal school where at ... at which time, D. L. MacLaurin ... was ... principal. At that time, ... Mr. MacLaurin did not have his ... doctorate, but ... was able to earn that ... at a later date from the University of Washington, Seattle, his thesis being the ... Early History of Education in the ... Province of British Columbia. And I believe he ... really broke new ground ... in ... dealing with that ... particular ... subject. He was a ... [burly?], scholarly man, a gentleman who ... was a great disciplinarian, and ... I can assure you that in those days 20:03 when we were at normal schools, we were, all the students were more or less exemplary models of ... behaviour. ... The school was run

on a very firm and strict, in a very firm and strict way, and ... I think all of us were being turned out presumably as real, really, really models and model characters and ... but that was all to the good ... There wasn't the freedom and the permissiveness that ... one sees in ... today and ... in some ... institutions.

I'm prompted at this time to just ... as a sidelight, bring in the ... way in which most of us reached schools ... reached the normal school ... in those days. I, I referred to the vast open spaces around the school ... and ... At the time during the period of the First World War, prior to that and even after that, the only method of reaching the normal school from ... from the city, was by, ... by a streetcar. And this ran on a half hourly basis, from ... It passed the City Hall having come from Burnside, and then it came up Fort Street, and up ... up Richmond Road, and it was used ... by ... some of the students, and the opening of the school ... was more or less geared to the arrival of the ... streetcar at ... the normal school site at ... half past eight. And I have very pleasant recollections of ... walking up Richmond Road with fellow students, and at times with ... some of the staff ... first thing in the morning ... wooden fences on each side to keep in the the cows grazing in the fields ... hedgerows of ... of wild roses, and ... larks singing ... singing above the fields. And there we were, trudging up to the normal school, on our way to the normal school, some on foot, some on the Mt. Tolmie streetcar, as we used to, used to call it.

... Coming back to ... methodology and ... techniques in teacher training, it's of interest to note in passing that, housed in the normal school itself, were two classes of elementary school pupils. ... One classroom contained grades one to four, and the other, grades five to eight. ... Miss Scanlon was principal of the senior group, and Miss Barron was in charge of the ... primary division. ... These were regular classrooms, operated along the same lines as those in the ... elementary schools in ... the city, but they were called Model. They ... constituted what was known as the Model School, and ... conceivably the teachers in charge were the best, as far as teaching abilities concern, that could be, could be found. And these children ... were used at times by these two teachers and by individual members of the normal 24:58 school staff to demonstrate methods in a particular subject. And I can recall ... seeing these students used by staff members for ... for that ... that particular purpose. These ... children incidentally ... came from the ... from homes in the area ... surrounding ... the Model School, and generally speaking, there was a, usually a waiting list, ... for admission.

Judith Windle: Were there any requirements for the children? Were there any requirements for the children to go to the Model School?

JG: No, ... these children were ... were not ... accepted on the basis of ... of intelligence, or ability in any way. ... As I've suggested, generally speaking, they were taken from ... the ... area around homes in the area around ... around the school.

Well, I've spoken of, referred to the opening of the school in ... 1918\ And ... classes operated there until World War II ... at which time, the building became a convalescent hospital for ... wounded soldiers. ... This hospital was operated by the, by the Federal Government which ... had made arrangements with the ... Provincial Government ... to use the building for, for, for this purpose, and no sooner had the ... Federal Government taken charge of the building, that ... it undertook to ... install ... an elevator which is still in operate, operation in the school, and I think it also ... enlarged ... some of the doors so that ... the movement of beds could be ... could be facilitated. ... It was somewhat of a shock to ...

the staff of the normal school and ... students who ... were in ... attendance, when it was learned that ... this development had ... when they learned earlier that this development ... was contemplated. Here was the ... a school in operation which was ... being asked to ... transfer its ... activities elsewhere. And if my memory serves me right, consideration was given to ... transferring the work of the local normal school to ... Vancouver, and integrating it with the Vancouver Normal School, which was the only other normal school in the province, a school which had ... been open many years before the, before the local, the Victoria Normal ... School. ... As a member of staff, ... I was concerned that I might have to transfer my family to ... Vancouver, and ... other members of the staff ... had ... had similar feelings.

... Fortunately in some, fortunately in some respects, the ... local Chamber of Commerce ... came into action, and ... with the argument that ... there would be great loss of ... economy to ... the local community if such a transfer took place, etc., and finally ... arrangements were made to retain ... the work of the normal school in Victoria. And I can recalling ... I can recall 30:05 that we moved from the building, down to a large hall on View Street. I think the hall has been ... demolished, that for some time it ... attached to it was the name Sorocco. I believe the Shrine club had something to do with it ... when it was first built. It stood on, on the south side of View Street between ... Blanshard ... between Vancouver and Cook, between Vancouver and Cook Street, and

there, for a, for a few months, ... we operated ... under most adverse conditions, largely because of the fact that ... there was only one large room, there might have been one or two small, adjoining rooms, but you can imagine the ... the difficulty of a ... a staff of some 7 or 8, each trying to teach the subject matter in which it was in, he was, he or she was interested, to a group of something like ... 200 students. ... Fortunately, it was possible to ... transfer activities to ... the ... to part of the Christ Church Cathedral, actually the Memorial Hall, which had much better facilities in that, not only was there ... a fairly large ... Sunday School hall that could be used, but also there were ... there were classrooms which were used for ... for religious education, and these were, these we were able to use ... with the students in ... in training.

I can't recall exactly how long the normal school functioned, if we might call it such, in the Memorial Hall, because it was in 1942 that I left ... the staff to become Inspector of Schools for, for Saanich, having been invited by the trustees to, to work in that, in that capacity.

Whilst I can't give the exact date ... there came a time when the normal school ... activities were returned to their former site, and once again ... teacher training went on beneath the good old clock. ... Then there came a time when the, the normal school ... approached a phasing out, so to speak, particularly as regards its ... the method of training teachers, and I refer to this briefly ... previously - won't go into it at any length now, but gradually teacher training became integrated with what might be called university academic ... training, and the one year program in Methodology gave way to a process which ... gave way to programs which required several years to complete ending with ... the granting of ... or earning of a degree in ... education. Victoria College ... became associated with this ... this development. ... Again, whilst I can't give you the exact year, ... there came a time when Victoria College ... outgrew its facilities ... at Craigdarroch. And ... it was necessary, therefore, to find ... find additional ... space.

34:58 I believe that Dr. John Ewing was ... principal of the college, had been principal of the college, and had been concerned about ... finding ... additional facilities, as was ... Dr. Harry Hickman, who ... who succeeded him. ... There came ... There arose an opportunity for Victoria College to ... to transfer its work to the normal school ... grounds, and ... not finding again, adequate space ... there, for all of its teaching activities, it ... with the assistance of funds from, with the ... utilizing funds from the Provincial Government, ... steps were taken to erect ... the building which now stands just at the east of the normal school, and this was ... christened, so to speak, the Ewing Building, in honour of the ... of John Ewing, who had ... died a ... short time before. At the rear of the normal school building, at the present time, that is 1978, there stands a ... there stands several huts which are used, ... have been used, I believe, for teaching of biology and the sciences, and I suppose it is generally known that these came from ... from Craigdarroch. To the ... east of the normal school, which became known as the Young Building, and ... the Ewing Building, to the east of these buildings is the Paul Building, and that was built in the days when Victoria College ... College occupied ... what might be called the old normal school site, and it was built ... largely to provide office space for the college staff, and as is generally well known, it was named after E. B. Paul, who was ... the first principal of Victoria College. And I can still recall seeing, I can recall seeing Dr. Paul sitting in his office ... in Craigdarroch, ... in the old library of the ... lovely building that was built by, by, by the Dunsmuirs, in the days when I had the good fortune to attend ... Victoria College.

Well then there came a time when ... Victoria College became the University of ... of Victoria. And it still carried on ... I believe at the ... Lansdown ... Lansdowne site ... for a short period, prior to ... the, prior to its move, the ... the transfer of the University of Victoria to the ... Gordon Head ... site.

Now since we are more concerned with the normal school building than a, than anything else I presume, it's interesting to note that there came a time when the University of Victoria no longer needed to use the normal school ... building. This was ... in late 1965.

At that time, several officials of the Greater Victoria School Board were becoming concerned 39:52 about the inability of the schools' system, particularly the senior secondary schools, to provide courses that would meet the needs of ... certain students whom we have ... who appeared to be potential ... drop-outs. ... These were students who ... did not, were not adjusting them, ... could not adjust to the ... discipline of the school, to its mode of operation, and ... were finding difficulty in ... mastering subject matter, and in general ... were defeated with the programs that ... that were being ... being offered. ... And so it was thought advisable to try and ... develop a program that would ... that would challenge them, particularly one that ... would ... seemingly ... treat them ... as young adults. And so ... after considerable ... negotiations with the ... with officials of the Department of Education ... the Greater Victoria School Board was ... given permission to ... undertake a program ... to be financed in part by the ... Provincial Government, ... undertake, ... offer courses that ... seemingly would ...

appeal to ... these ... drop-outs, potential or ... actual. And so there came into being, under the auspices of the local school board, what was called an Adult Institute. The problem was, where to house this, and as already hinted, fortunately ... space became available ... in the ... facilities that ... being vacated by ... the University of Victoria. And I can remember working with ... President ... Dr. Taylor, the first president of the University of Victoria, in ... negotiating arrangements for ... rental of the ... of the building. At the same time, ... negotiations were undertaken on behalf of the local school board, to purchase the Paul Building from the ... University. And ... the ... Paul Building eventually, fairly rapidly, became ... the administrative centre of the ... Greater Victoria School ... District.

It seems pertinent at this time to just quote from one of the annual reports of the Greater Victoria School District. ... These reports ... go back, annual reports go back to 1946, when the Greater Victoria School District was formed. But at the moment, I have in my hand, a report dated School Year 1967/68. And the section of this report deals with adult education in the, the Greater Victoria School District. And this particular, I'm quoting from a two page article which was written by J. H. Dalglish, who was commonly known as Jack, and I think to Jack Dalglish should go a great deal of credit for developing ... this Adult 45:00 Institute which after all we must remember ... was largely responsible for the ... birth of ... Camosun College. And here, I think, to some extent, history ... was made ... with reference to the development of community colleges throughout the whole province of British Columbia. Associated with Jack ... Dalglish was ... Alan Batey and Alan ... Alan had ... spent considerable time, ... many years teaching industrial arts and ... technical work, vocational technical work, in local schools, and particularly at the F. T. Fairey Technical Unit, which is associated with Victoria High School. And Alan and Jack ... were ... really enthusiasts with reference to the development of ... the Adult .. Institute, which at first, ... gave courses mainly in ... what might be called academic, academic ... subjects. Alan was principal of the Adult Institute for ... for several years. But here we, here I'm quoting from this article by Jack Dalglish.

The heading is the Institute of Adult Studies. "With two academic years of operation behind it", in other words we're going back to late 1964, although not too sure, I think this needs perhaps ... checking, but, from one source I, I note that the ... Adult Institute really opened September 1966, but this can be checked. From this report of 1967/68, I read: "With two academic years of operation behind it, some evaluation of the Institute is both possible and desirable. One of the key concepts in the establishment of the Institute was that it should serve the community by providing adults for whom limited, or no educational facilities existed, with an opportunity to make educational progress, and thus avoid the shoals of economic distress. Since it opened its doors on September 12, 1966" (there's the date) "September 12, 1966, approximately 2000 members of this community have paid fees to study here. Approximately 800 more have sought counselling without actually registering for studies. This adds up to community involvement of approximately 2,800 people. In the academic year 1967/68, 1,914 registrations were made, of which 468 were daytime students. The Institute's programs have in the past been largely limited to Department of Education academic courses. These offerings have served a valuable function, by providing the structure by which adults have been able to work toward completion of Grade 12 and Grade 13."

An aside, obviously, ... this program enabled students who had dropped out from the high schools, to return and carry on their courses in a, an atmosphere that ... appealed to them more so than the atmosphere that was ... much more rigid in the ... in the high schools. ... For example,... they were able to perhaps, break off for cups of coffee, and they were able to have a smoke when they wanted, ... activities which you couldn't very well ... tolerate in a, in a high school, and this, this satisfied their mentality, and ... mode of life, and as a result, ... they were able to carry on with the ... with their studies, and eventually proceed to some ... into some form of ... of work which ... was ... rewarding to them, otherwise [inaudible] 50:02 would be unemployed, shall we say.

"However, to fulfill its role in the community, the Institute must move ahead, by broadening and updating its academic programs, and by introducing attractive alternates in the form of career oriented courses."

That's the end of the quotation. But as you and, as we know, ... the ... Camosun College as ... has broadened its offerings, it, it's ... it's gone far beyond the academic offerings of the Adult Institute and ... there's such a wide variety of courses today that it's just ... really unbelievable what has been done in that regard. So then, we've led up to the ... eventual ... utilization of the old normal school ... as ... as a community college.

Just to bring this to a conclusion.

[Inaudible]

JG: Well, we've seen the ... normal school ... turn into a facility used by the, by the Victoria College, and then into an Adult Institute operated under the auspices of the Greater Victoria School Board, and then finally ... it became ... Camosun ... College. Which was ... if I'm not mistaken, operated at first ... operated several years by the ... by the School Board. And it wasn't until early in 1978, I believe, that ... Camosun College counsel was able to negotiate the the purchase of the site from the University of Victoria for ... a price of, I believe, 4 million ... million dollars. Rumour has it that ... Camosun College is going to extend its activities to the Paul Building? And, uh, and the media center. I understand that ... the school board is going to vacate all or most of the Paul Building.

For just a few words about ... staff, which I had the good fortune to know for, over a period of ... many years ...Incidentally ... information about the ... about the staff - names and periods of ... association with the school, can be found in the Public Schools Annual Reports, which are housed in the library of the Department of Education and of course the school annuals produced mainly by the students themselves ... contains ... They contain information and pictures of staff. But I well remember ... as already mentioned ... D. L. MacLaurin who was ... principal of the school from its ... opening until ... approximately 1932. And ... after making an outstanding contribution in that particular position ... Dr. MacLaurin ... became ... Deputy Minister of ... Education. His office ... being in ... in the Parliament ... Buildings.

54:58 Associated with ... Dr. MacLaurin was ... My day, here I'm thinking again of around 1922, was ... B. S. Freeman, and ... Harry Dunnell, and ... V. L. Denton. These three ... had come west from the Maritime provinces and it's rather interested in those days many of the top ... officials, figures of education were from the Maritime provinces or from the old country which I presume is to be expected, because in the west we hadn't yet ... developed, so to speak, our own crop of ... outstanding ... educators. And these three men were from ... from eastern Canada, and associated with them was a ... very delightful gentleman called Harry Dunnell, who had come from ... Great Britain, and ... in those days at normal school, he ... taught ... art, ... the MacLean Method of Penmanship, and he also taught elementary woodwork to the boys in the ... senior division of the ... normal school. And, if I might be personal, ... it was my good fortune to succeed Harry Dunnell, ... to teach those subjects until the day came when I ... specialized in ... in the teaching of ... social studies.

Dr. MacLaurin ... was a ... quite ... an authority in ... in grammar, and ... was co-author of ... a work in that subject for use in public schools ... with ... Harold Campbell, at a later date, and ... Mr. MacLaurin also ... was a specialist in the teaching of ... of arithmetic and ... instructed the teacher's training in ... in school ... law. In other words, how could they operate in a classroom under the protection of the, of the law, so to speak.

B. S. Freeman taught, (retired Baptist Minister if I'm not mistaken, who lived down on Bank Street for many years, not far from the hospital, and again, used to walk up the Richmond Road with students, the morning, pointing out the beauties of nature along the way). Freeman taught nature study and science, and he was on the staff from the opening of the school, I believe, until, well, about 19 ... mid, mid 1930s at least. In his day, school gardens were, were ... in vogue. In other words ... he and the department were promoting the ... a program ... in rural schools in particular, which encouraged ... children to ... teachers and children to ... cultivate little, little plots. And so, at the normal school, ... the ... student teachers were exposed to this ... to such a program. 59:10 And I can recall that on the southwest corner of the campus, kitty-corner in other words directly across from ... the present Lansdowne Junior-Senior Secondary School ... We in my day and others ... prior to that and after that ... turned over the sod, so to speak, planted the seeds, each of us were in pairs, we had a little area perhaps ... 6 or 8 feet square, and we planted carrot seeds, etc.