



MDAA Fall Newsletter 2020

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Our MDAA VISION:

* Engaged with alumni, students & staff showing pride & spirit in our school.*

President's Message



Fall is definitely upon us with the leaves almost done and gardens finishing up. Our board of directors continues to work on projects for alumni and students despite COVID-19. We are having our board meetings successfully on Zoom and just had a well-attended AGM in October. A silver lining to the pandemic with Zoom is that it allows alumni from all over the world to be on-line with us to see how our year unfolded.

I'm so impressed by how well the administration, staff and students are doing in these unique times. When I pop into the school, all the protocols are being well-observed and there are smiles all around...(you CAN see them even with the masks on. :) Congrats, MDSS! You do us proud!

The MDAA board is moving ahead with the plaques being re-done to fit into the current bleachers. Please consider ordering your plaque if you haven't already. It's a great fundraiser and a way to have your name in perpetuity at our alma mater. It is a good gift for a friend or family members too. See the ad further into this newsletter. There are a good number of second and third generations MD alumni families among us.

We are pleased to welcome two new board members, Shirley Lee '88 class and Bruce Ralphs '81 class. We are appreciating the input, skills and experiences they bring to the table. We continue to look for interested new board members who have time and skills to offer us. Do let me know at: newsletter@mountdoug alumni.com

Enjoy our Fall Newsletter and please let us know if there is something you'd like us to cover that would be of interest to many of our MD alumni.

Warmly,

Principal's Message



What a first year for a new principal... Mount Doug has been an extremely welcoming place to be, and despite the challenges of COVID, I had an amazing first year and a successful startup for the 2020-2021 school year, although it was different from any other start up.

Students returned to school in September with strict safety protocols and structures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The daily structure allows for 75% face-to-face instruction following a modified Copernican system. Students complete only two classes at a time and the year is broken into four quarters. The overall student population has declined to 844 total (739 domestic students and 105 International students, many who have deferred arrival to February, 2021). The loss of students is due to a natural reduction in enrollment which was projected: a loss of international students, and students choosing to learn from home through a Distributed Learning Program due to COVID.

School activities also have to follow strict public health and safety protocols. Athletics are slowly starting up with skill development only. Competitive play is currently suspended. Clubs are starting to meet although some virtually and others through maintaining physical distance and wearing masks. The focus of the year is to look for creative ways to connect.

The 2019-2020 school year concluded through three phases of a return to school plan. Following spring break and the suspension of in-class learning, remote learning was set up and technology was loaned to support students, and families-in-need had the same educational opportunities as their peers. In May, the school welcomed back into the school vulnerable students who needed to be supported face-to-face while remote learning continued. In June, there was a voluntary partial return to classes, and about 25% of the student population returned to the school where each class was offered once a week for face-to-face support. It was great to have students back in the building.

Mount Doug was the host of the Greater Victoria School District Summer School. Phil Pitre was the principal and organized completion classes for core academic classes. Students participated in hybrid classes where they attended either a morning or afternoon session for two and a half hours and completed the second part of the day from home.

Finally, the Grad Class of 2020 had a very unique grad experience. They had a year of grad activities which included Spirit Week, a Winter Semi-Formal, a Fill the Foyer Campaign at Christmas and a successful and fun Grad Lock In. While we couldn't celebrate as a large Grad Class for a Recognition Ceremony at the end of the year, we did post a virtual ceremony online for families to share at home. A Grad Celebration Walk was also organized to allow the graduates the opportunity to get together in groups of seven and walk across the stage in the Mount Doug gym in front of four family members and guests. This small celebration allowed the grads to experience the right of passage of walking across the stage to receive their diploma

and any awards or scholarships they had earned. While for organizers it was a two-day marathon with forty-three small ceremonies, to the graduates and their families it was a very special event.

Donna Thompson
Principal

Spotlight on Our Bursary recipients -



KIERA BANDY - MDAA ACADEMIC BURSARY recipient

What have you been doing since you graduated in June from MDSS?

I'm in 1st year Philosophy at UVic and I love all my classes.

What do you see yourself doing after you complete this degree?

I hope to pursue a degree in Clinical psychology and then become a counsellor - maybe go abroad perhaps England or Italy - so I can help the people in the community with the skills and knowledge given to me by my education.

How have you used your bursary?

The bursary funds went toward my UVic tuition fees.

What do you do in your spare time?

I love hanging out with my friends as safely as we can now and walking my dog. I used to row and play soccer at MDSS but put that time into my studies now.

Looking back at your time at MDSS, what would you say was a highlight for you? Definitely rowing with that community and its events and the Challenge Program.

Who was a favourite or influential MD teacher and why?

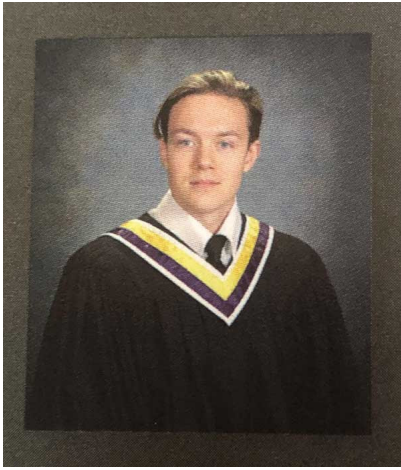
I really appreciated all my teachers at MDSS. I'd say Mr. Meldrum... he was very inspired by the material and when working with the students.

This award means a lot to me as it's an award coming from my father's and my uncles' alma mater too. I am proud to join the Mount Doug alumni community. I have always loved being in school, and from a young age knew that I wanted to attend university. Thank you, MDAA.

Good luck in your studies, Kiera, you have so much to offer the world!
By Wendy Gedney

CONNOR WELLMANN - Len Michaux Bursary recipient

What have you been doing since you graduated in June from MDSS?



I graduated from Mount Douglas Secondary School and registered for my courses in the upcoming semester at the Victoria Conservatory of Music. I will complete my diploma in the Music Performance Program at VCM and then transfer to Vancouver Island University to pursue a Bachelors' Degree in Jazz. I will then obtain a teaching degree. The bursary will help me work towards my goal.

What do you see yourself doing after you complete this degree?

My plan is to teach music both privately and in the education system.

What do you do in your spare time currently?

I spend much of my time now doing practice and studying, which was surprising to me at first as I used to have at least some free time each day, but now I get very little. With many of the changes going on right now as well, it's even more so surprising as I spend most of my days inside, only going to school for practices on Monday and Friday. I have to set Sunday as my 'day off' as I get no break at all from school or practicing. I also try to stay in contact with all my friends as they still live in town. Many plan or have moved away though, so I try and go get food with them or just hang out before we get too old and busy.

Looking back at your time at MDSS, what would you say was a highlight for you?

A lot of the teachers and staff were very helpful and such a great experience to learn from. As I started to pursue my idea of what I was going to do after high school, I gained much of their support and guidance for which I am very grateful. One class that stood out to me though was drama, as I had never actually selected the class. It was the only other available class to switch out with one of my others, and at the time of doing so, I was very unsure. I don't regret it one bit, it was very enjoyable, especially with all my friends. Acting is a very expressive class where I had a lot of fun. You aren't required or expected to have any prior acting experience, so don't feel limited by not having any. I came in totally new to the idea of acting and then made it to my final year where I was hoping I could do it again after graduation.

Who was a favourite or influential MD teacher and why?

Mr. Awai. As my concert band, jazz band, pit band, and guitar class teacher for the four years that I was at Mount Douglas, he helped me figure out all the musical ideas and skills I needed to know and paved my path to what I wanted to do, teach music. Without taking multiple classes with him I really can't think what I would have tried to focus on or go to after high school. Even on his own, he is funny and a fabulous teacher to be with and I'm very glad that I had his instruction, and that he was the one, for the most part, who showed me how to properly play piano. I am very thankful to have been one of his students.

Thank you for the thoughtful responses, Connor. On behalf of the entire Alumni board, we wish you the best for your studies!

By Rod Lindquist

Gone but Not Forgotten (since our Spring Newsletter April '20)

Wally Melville '46 - d. January '20 - - missed in last newsletter

Neil Dennison Baker '47 - d. January '20 - missed last newsletter

Gerry Emery '50 - d. April '20

Dave Wakelin '62 - d. April '20

Brent Ewing '60 - May '20

Rich England '59 - d. May '20

Sherry Warner McGarry '85 - d. May '20

Mike Essery '81 - d. May '20

Wayne Stewart '81 - d. May '20

Barrie Custance '54 - d. May '20

Maura Hall Bourdon - d. June '20

Ann MacGregor '78 - d. June '20

Trav Custance '52 - d. June '20

Nellie Bing - teacher - '70-'91 - d. June '20

Ken Tschritter '64 - d. June '20

Mildred Ivy Gerard Plant '49 - d. June '20

Ted Waring '69 - d. July '20

Martin Payne '76 - d. July '20

Rod Owen '72 - d. July '20

Mary Fee Stofer - '63 - d. July '20

Ken Stofer '39 - d. July '20

Jack Broocke '67 - d. Sept. '20

Randle Dykes '71 - d. Sept '20

Dianne Frampton '66 - d. Sept. '20

Joké Johanna VanBourgondien Slater '70 - d. Sept. '20



Our Feature Alum - Teacher STAN GILL

* As well as MD students, all staff - teaching, administrative and support - of MDHS/MDSS are considered to be alumni by our MDAA Constitution.

*Stan taught at both MD campuses, the original one on Cedar Hill Road 1963-70 and then on the current campus on Gordon Head Road 1970-97.



1966



1968



2016

Born in New Brunswick, Stan Gill joined the Royal Canadian Navy after his high school graduation and traveled to several countries during that time. Following that, he went back to school and took his teacher training in New Brunswick and then taught there for six years. After that time, he chose to attend the University of Maine to attain his masters degree.

Following graduation, he came back to New Brunswick, picked up his belongings and his wife, who was seven months pregnant, and drove a UHaul trailer across Canada to Victoria where he had accepted a teaching job at MDHS in 1963.

The next year, while teaching, Stan joined the Naval Reserve in Victoria and was with them for fifteen years until 1979. In the summer of 1976 Stan was sent to Montreal for five weeks as part of the security force at the '76 Olympic Games.

Stan was the consummate educator; he made outstanding contributions to all aspects of school life. He was a highly respected and popular physical education and history teacher, but Stan will be most remembered for his accomplishments as Mount Doug's cross country and track and field coach. Under Stan's mentorship, Mount Doug's track teams won sixteen Island championships and five Provincial championships. In addition, his cross-country teams won six provincial titles. He trained a number of very successful athletes who went on to represent BC and Canada as well as earning university scholarships in Track and Field.

Stan was involved in all aspects of sports at MD. Not one to be satisfied with the status quo and also being a life-long learner, he developed and improved programs for the betterment of his students there. He worked behind the scenes, being highly involved administrating the Lower Vancouver Island Secondary Schools Sports Association as well.

Stan is a humble and unassuming man and a perpetual optimist with a warm and welcoming smile and manner with a high degree of integrity: a true gentleman. He treated everyone with dignity and respect.

He had a way of making connections with students that ended up being life-long. His retirement at MDSS in 1997 was a testament to that characterization, as many of his former students as well as his fellow staff members wanted to be there to honour him as they packed that gym to thank him and wish him well.

Whatever Stan did, he did with a great deal of integrity, be it on or off the track or in the classroom. Alumni John Howe and Daryl Hooker not only had the privilege of having Stan teach and coach them at MD but also they had the opportunity to come back and teach with him there. For both of them, he was a great mentor and role model.

Stan was pleased that both his children attended MD when he was teaching here as well.

In his retirement, Stan has continued to be a model of good health and positive and productive in his activities. He plays golf twice a week and goes for daily long walks and pre-COVID, he partook in fun monthly poker games with some former MD colleagues.

Stan spent his whole teaching career in BC at MD and was the longest serving staff member at MDSS - 34 years!! Thank you, Stan, for your service and dedication and the legacy you have left at our school!

- by John Howe MD '68 & Wendy Gedney MD '67

Did you know? Arbutus Middle School (was Junior High School) is having a 50th Anniversary Celebration of its opening? Many Arbutus alumni went on to become MDSS alumni. For details, see: our MDAA FaceBook page or call Arbutus Middle School at 250.477.1878.

News from our school...

On a celebratory note, Mount Doug Secondary would like to thank Grade 12 student Ryan A. for putting in the Superpower Your School nomination which garnered the school a \$20,000 award for technology from Staples based on our environmental initiatives! Those included starting a school garden, restoration work on Mount Tolmie, running a school recycling program, doing shoreline clean-ups, working on plastic reduction and education, and being part of One Planet Saanich to look at sustainability and more.

A volunteer team submitted a request for technology and other goods that would help everyone across the school. There will be a new laminator so we can make fantastic durable information signs for our school garden as well as long-lasting, reusable educational materials. There is a new computer for community leadership to help with all their technology support for every event that runs at our school in

normal times. The school will be installing a studio for students to make their own podcasts in the Learning Commons. They will also be a lending library for students to take out good cameras as well as video equipment and tripods to make fantastic visual projects . We will have video conferencing materials so that speakers joining us from afar will be able to hear and discuss with students in the school's career center as well as in Room 201.

Many teachers were able to get specific technology aids to enhance the classroom experiences for students. The Environmental Leadership program will have an armada of new rolling recycling bins as well as more of the blue box bins to continue and hopefully expand the recycling program.

For the earth.

Ms. Amelita Kucher
- Environmental Leadership & Science teacher

“Be the change you wish to see in the world”... Gandhi

Business Listings - Want free advertising for your business? Go to our MDAA website - mounddougalumni.com - and click on Business Listings and choose the section in which you wish to be. Thanks for supporting your fellow alumni and their businesses.

Plaques - Buy a plaque for yourself and perhaps one for another MD family member or friend. An easy Christmas gift and a lasting memory. These plaques are mounted to the new bleachers in the Mount Douglas Secondary gym and will be there in perpetuity. Check out Alumni Sales on our website.

Donating - Canada Helps will issue you a tax receipt immediately when you donate. Support our alumni association and support our alma mater. Go to our MDAA website - mounddougalumni.com - and click on DONATE. Thank you.

Any questions or comments, let us know at: newsletter@mounddougalumni.com

Thank you, MD Alumni.... From our MDAA board and your Newsletter committee:
Rod Lindquist '02, Wendy Gedney '67, guest contributor John Howe '68 & '74-'86 teacher, and proof-reader, teacher Dianne Gillespie 1989-2006