

Interviewed: May 31, 1976Tape 68, 24

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Darlene Clyne - Researcher

- In 1958 first started girls softball.
- Started with 14 year old girls; there were 16 teams.
- Recreational leagues formed from the Recreation Department.
- Didn't run too successfully at first, there were a lot of drop-out.
- Lorraine Crooms and Mrs. Herch worked with softball for many years.
- We got through the summer but wasn't successful, and it was run through the office recruiting volunteers to coach them and sending out schedules.
- I did all the schedules at the time.
- That fall we called an organizational meeting, we had about 12 people out and the Lady Lions decided to sponsor the league the following year.
- We started with 10 year old the following year and we had 21 teams.
- The Lady Lions gave \$100.00 the first year and \$250.00 the second year.
- This was for bats and balls mostly, we didn't have uniforms then.
- We formed an Organizational Meeting; Lorraine Crooms was the first President.
- The league just grew and grew.
- We divided it up into different divisions and different areas.
- Then Bob and Shirley Maddocks came along and did all the scheduling.
- Last year there were 84 teams.
- We have an Invitational Tournament: it started when Festival of Sports came in about five years ago.
- When the league first started, there was a registration fee of 50¢.
- Then it went up to \$1.00.
- We always played out of the school grounds.
- The idea was that when the boys were playing soccer the girls would be playing softball, this way it gave the girls something to do.
- Then we formed the House Wives League for softball.
- The idea was for the mothers to come out and coach the girls.
- If we could get them to play then may be we could talk them into coaching also.

Eileen Dawson

BASEBALL & SOFTBALL

- We always put a clinic on.
- Gordie MacDonald used to come and give softball clinic every year just to give the coaches some ideas because some of them didn't know what softball was all about.
- In girls softball, it's all volunteers.
- When it started off it was strictly a fun league, now it's becoming more competitive.
- Ladies Softball started out with about four teams.
- We play one night a week at school grounds.
- It grew and got more competitive.
- Originally it was called The House Wives League and it was just for fun.
- I played myself for the Grauer Growlers.
- Delta came into the league and now it's the Richmond-Delta League.
- Used to write a funny column about the league.
- In 1959 there weren't any playing fields, the Municipality spent almost all their money getting playing fields and ball diamonds into shape.
- There never have been "billiard tables" but they have been pretty good.
- Our soccer pitches are still the best in the Lower Mainland.
- Explains how Community Recreation got started.
- Mentions a girls softball team that got beat 95 to 5.
- Shirley Tappee and Roy Louis were two people who were very involved in girls softball.
- Mentions men's softball.
- Steveston was and still is known as the Capital of Men's Softball.
- Names some of the men involved in early Minor Baseball: Cliff Homes, Bert Stevens, Harold Smith, Grant Davies, Don Smith, Bill McFarlane, and Eric Anderson (brother of our former Mayor Henry Anderson).
- We started off with little guys.
- We had a 12 team Little Leagues.
- Then there was a big Organizational Meeting and Richmond decided to join Little League of America..
- There were Little League, Babe Ruth, Connie Mac and Juveniles:
 - 10 - 12 year olds Little League
 - 13 - 14 " " Babe Ruth
 - 15 - 16 " " Connie Mac
- We played Little League for quite a while until about 13 years ago.

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BASEBALL & SOFTBALL

- Little League brought in a mandatory insurance scheme that every leagues had to buy American Insurance.
- A lot of the teams got their back up, Richmond being one.
- So when it came to the play off we didn't buy the American Insurance and they revoked our Charter.
- They wouldn't let us play in the All Star games because of not buying American Insurance, so I thought "Well, there's no way that Richmond after all these! that they're not going to play in a tournament!"
- So I wrote to every baseball leagues I could find out about in B. C. and invited them to tournament.
- Of course we couldn't pay for any of their fares, so the tournament ended up including Richmond, Coquitlam, Burnaby, New Westminster, southern slopes and around here.
- At that time I thought this is ridiculous so let's form a B. C. Minor Baseball.
- So I wrote to all the leagues I could find out about and we called a meeting.
- I didn't want to hold the meeting in Richmond so I had gone to our Council asking them if I could spend some time trying to form this B. C. League but it would mean some of our time, some printing facilities and all the rest of it.
- They said "Go ahead!"
- Our first meeting was held at New Westminster.
- I was the only woman, I'll never forget it as long as I live, and there were 75 men.
- We did form the League and I had at that time, Keith Metman who was the Provincial Sports Co-ordinator at the meeting.
- We formed a steering committee and B. C. Minor Baseball League which is still in effect today and I am still on the Board of Directors.
- When we formed the league we dropped Babe Ruth and went from the Minor Leagues to the Pony and the Colts.
- Richmond Babe Ruth won the Championship in 1957.
- That was the only year they ever won it but we have won the Minor Leagues Championships many many times.

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BASEBALL & SOFTBALL

- In the leagues it goes as follows:

- Tadpoles Under 8 year olds
- Mosquito Under 10 year olds
- Brunco 11 and 12 year olds
- Pony 13 and 14 year olds
- Colts 15 and 16 year olds

Then you go into Juveniles and Juniors.

- The other thing this "body" does is if Richmond does win a Provincial Championship and go on to the Western Canadian Finals, we pay travel costs.
- Discusses the All Star teams.
- The philosophy behind our Recreation Department was to afford an opportunity for every kid to be able to go into some type of sports he wanted to do.
- Baseball has always had sponsors.
- It used to be \$450.00 for a sponsor to finance a team and \$100.00 per year.
- This goes way back, it's the same price today.
- That was used to outfit the boys in uniform and baseballs, bats, everything.
- The boys used to pay \$1.00 registration fee.
- We always had four leagues in Richmond.
- Some of the people really involved in baseball are Irene Howard, Amos & Shell Friesen, Joe & Vera Woodthrope and Colleen Prediger.
- Brunco diamonds run 60 feet.
- Pony " " 80 " .
- Senior " " 90 " .
- Also talks about Basketball: had all basketball at Cambie Gym; had about 60 girls.
- Discusses the Tennis Club and how it got started.
- Discusses the different sports that got started in Richmond.
- When I first started with Recreation Department, made 50¢ an hour, worked eight hours and got paid \$4.00"It was fun!"
- I can honestly say "In all my years I couldn't wait to get to work in the morning".
- I coached one sport, that was a softball team.

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BASEBALL & SOFTBALL

- Had to transport the girls to and from the games.
- I had a little Austin, had 13 girls in it one time, and pulled up to a gas station and asked the attendant to "fill the car up" and he said: "Lady, I think you are full!"
- My favourite sport is soccer.
- Discusses the Sports Awards, Banquet that is held every year in Richmond.