

Valedictory Address

Honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen, fellow graduates. When I was nominated to give this year's Valedictorian Address, I felt it my duty to tell you of what Sir John's Graduating Class of 1972 sees as it's past and it's future.

For some of us this is only a break in our education. I know that quite a few will be going to either universities or technical schools down south. Most of those who are carrying on, will be going to Alberta, but I know that some are going to B.C. or further afield.

For those who are leaving school, this is a beginning of a whole new way of life, also the ending of an old one. Since this is an ending for some of us, I think it only right that we should look back and see what is ending.

We are the screaming kids of twelve years ago, who were deposited by our parents in our first classroom. That first day, I think the only thing each of us had in commons was our desire not to be there. I think that all we graduates still share the same desire. In these twelve years I think I can safely say, we learned quite a bit, though most of it despite ourselves.

If a school system is to succeed it must develop with the child it is educating. I think our education system has succeeded in this. In our early grades we were taught the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. The world was shown to us in vivid black and white. As we advanced to grade five and six our studies of the world around us went into more depth. Before where there had been only two answers, a right one and a wrong one, there are now many answers, and none of them are clearly right or clearly wrong.

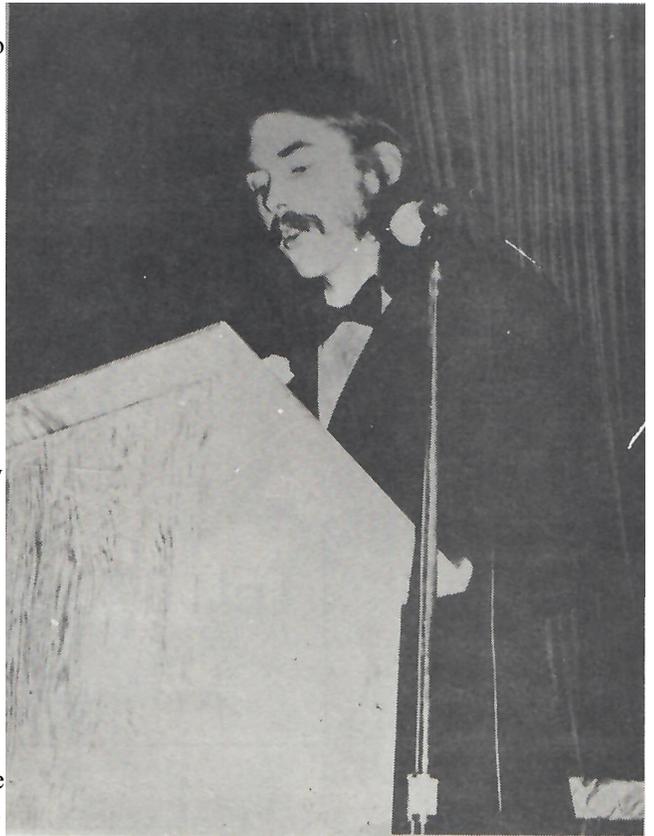
Up until grade six our parents and teachers had sheltered us and made all the important decisions in our life. It was now time for us to take the responsibility of making these decisions ourselves. In the proceeding grades we learned how to make these decisions. It was in grades ten, eleven and twelve, that we learned how to choose between the half rights and half wrongs we discovered in the world around us.

I think now that we are leaving school the most important decision that we will have to make will be, deciding on a rewarding career. Since I feel that this is the most important decision that we will have to make in the years to come, I would like to give you my views on the success in our chosen careers.

I feel that there are three ways to gain success in life and one way to fail. Success in a career may be gained effortlessly. Many of us will leave school and go right into successful and rewarding lives. Others will work for many years to attain this kind of success. There are yet more of us who will try many careers and only after many failures find the one that suits them.

As I say, there are three ways to succeed, but there is one way to fail, and that is to give up. Not all of us have the ability to wait indefinitely for success to come along, and in fact I think that many of us will never see the success in our own lives. The recognition of success is possibly the main reason for the failure of the human race. Youth is always seeking a purpose in life. We all seek a separate identity. I think that the true success in life will be attained when we find those identities.

In conclusion, I would like to read to you a simple and touching motto that I know most of you are familiar with, but I think need be reminded of once in a while. "God grant me the understanding to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference between them."



In memory of Mr. Bob MacQuarrie, who passed away in October, 2021 at the age of 86. Thank you for the quote.