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Tape 69, 1

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Darlene Clyne - Researcher

- In 1947 Richmond had its first age representative team for 18 years old and under.
- Al Mathieson was the coach of this team and the moving force behind it.
- I was playing for a team in Vancouver but when I heard Richmond was going to have a team, I came and tried out for pitcher and made the team.
- In 1948 Mike Vaselenek took over the ball club.
- Mike Vaselenek was from Steveston.
- The first year we came into the league, we were playing against clubs in Vancouver who viewed us as farmers.
- According to the Vancouverites, anyone who came out of Richmond were farmers.
- Our uniform colours were gray and black.
- Since there were so few merchants in Richmond at that time, they had a difficult time in funding the team.
- In 1948 when Mike Vaselenek took over the team, he got the Steveston Legion and Merchants to sponsor the team, and because of this it was decided that we would have to play some games out of Steveston.
- At that time there was much in the way of facilities for playing ball in Steveston.
- A lot of the boys from Marpole used to come out and play ball for Richmond.
- Other men who were actively engaged in the Richmond Baseball Club were: Cliff Holmes and Jimmy Walkers.
- In 1948 the age was 21 and under.
- It didn't matter if you were 15 or 16; if you were good enough you played ball.
- Cliff Holmes took over the ball club in 1950.
- I went back to Ontario in 1949 to play ball and then came back to Richmond in 1952.
- When I got back, baseball was on age divisional levels.
- It was kind of on shaky grounds; they weren't too sure of what they

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CONNIE MAC LEAGUE

- were doing or where they were going.
- In 1952 they formed a House League in Richmond, consisting of boys from Marpole, Steveston and Richmond.
 - Doug McLeod became very active in baseball; there wasn't anything he wouldn't do to make sure the boys had a chance to play baseball.
 - He used to go over to Brighthouse Park with his own lawn mower to cut the infield grass.
 - Because baseball was on shaky grounds in Vancouver, they realized that something had to be done about baseball so they approached the House League here in Richmond.
 - Richmond baseball was still functioning here where other areas were starting to crumble.
 - Baseball had strong roots here.
 - Some of the men from Vancouver, Sid Stubbins in particular, who was one of the finest things that ever happened to Minor Baseball in the Lower Mainland, came out and approached the executives in Richmond about coming into our House League.
 - Well, they weren't quite sure at that time what they really felt about, Vancouver clubs coming into Richmond to play baseball.
 - They knew where they were going here, they had a league functioning that was solid but they didn't know whether these other teams coming in would upset the apple cart.
 - Some of us who had been involved in the late 40's with the representative teams playing all over: we played in New Westminster, South and North Burnaby, Vancouver and Kitsilano.
 - We felt anything that would get baseball re-established was the sure thing, so Fraserview and Mount Pleasant joined the league around 1959.
 - Sid Stubbins would undertake to be President of the Vancouver Connie Mac League and they would form an executive.
 - They wanted a team from Richmond to enter it.
 - Well, that was hard for a lot of people here to understand because that would mean the dismissal of the house team and make the team far more competitive.
 - They didn't---whether they wanted to or not but it reached a point where the league was going to function, whether Richmond would become a part of it or not.

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- So Richmond decided rather than get left out, they would join--this Vancouver Connie Mac League was formed in the early 1960's.
- Jack MacKeron sponsored the first Richmond team to enter the Connie Mac League.
- Brian Buck, Bob Latrace and myself coached this team---these were boys from ages 16 to 18 years.
- I had played on the first age representative team in Richmond, I had coached the House League team and now I was back coaching the representative team that once again playing out of Richmond.
- I was involved in coaching the Connie Mac team for three years, then Garry Gilmore took over around 1965.
- There are other men who have done so much for baseball in Richmond.
- When Garry Gilmore came up he had been coaching Babe Ruth in the 1950's.
- I came back to coach a Pony team that my son was playing for.
- It was about 1952 that the Little League came into Richmond.