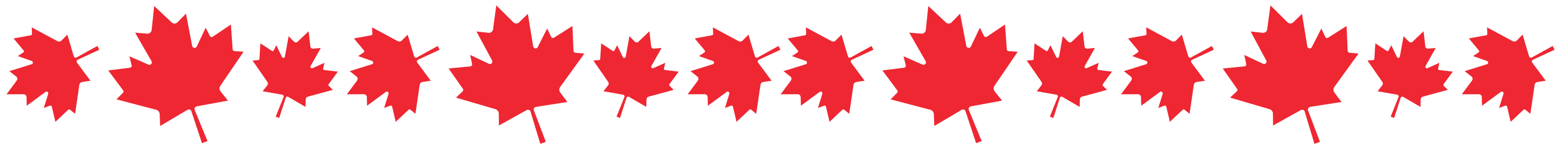


KCVI'S CANADIAN FLAG- A HISTORY



When the Canadian Parliament set the date for the official introduction of the new Maple Leaf flag for February 1965, the principal of KCVI, Arthur Martin, decided that the new Maple Leaf flag would be flown from the school's flag pole on the official date of its introduction. Unfortunately, Mr. Martin found there were no commercial flags of the size required, 6' x 3', available for purchase in the city. He had the necessary red and white cloth purchased to make the flag.

Mr. Martin asked the Home Economics department to use the material to cut and stitch a home-made Canadian flag for the occasion. Ms. Kay Shand, a member of the Home Economics department, undertook the task. The result is the flag you see before you.

Shortly before noon on Monday, 15 February, 1965, small group consisting of the principal, head boy/girl and the school band assembled at the main entrance, Frontenac Street. The Canadian Red Ensign, which Prime Minister Mackenzie King had declared, in the midst of World War II, the unofficial Canadian flag to be used until the new flag was designed and accepted, was lowered from the flag pole as the band played God Save the Queen. The new Maple Leaf flag was attached to the halyard and raised to the peak of the pole as the band played the national anthem, O Canada precisely at noon to coincide with the raising of Canada's new flag on Parliament Hill. It is certain that this was one of the first of the newly designed Canadian flags to fly in a school in Canada.

After its lowering that day, the flag was placed in the care of Ronald Ede. Ron had a keen interest in the history of KCVI and it is because of him that we have the flag and many other artifacts representing this history. The flag became part of a display in the KCVI Centennial Room. In 2011, some years after Ron's death, the flag was discovered in that display and an effort began to preserve and display the flag prominently in the school. With monetary support from the Cataraqui Kingston Rotary Club, the Canadian Club of Kingston, the KCVI Coffee Club, Maybee's Men and Kingston Frameworks, the flag was framed. In that framing, the sides of the flag were folded, its full length was not displayed. It was sewn to its backing with tiny stitches to hold it in place.

It was also suggested by the President of the Canadian Club, Patrick McCue, that two honorary members of the club, the Honourable John Matheson, co-designer of the Maple Leaf flag, and the Honourable Peter Milliken, former KCVI Head Boy 1963-64, MP Kingston and the Islands, and Speaker of the House of Commons, sign the flag. Arthur Martin, principal at the time of the raising of the flag, also signed the flag along with Donna Ede on behalf of her husband, the late Ronald Ede.

The framed flag was presented to the school in an assembly scheduled for 9:30 a.m., Monday, 13 June, 2011. The organizers and financial supporters were present to officially present the framed flag to representatives of the school administration, the staff association, and the Head Boy and Head Girl representing the students. The Honourable John Matheson spoke about the creation of the design for the new flag to the student body. The flag was then mounted along with a plaque on the east wall of the KCVI Library.

In 2019, as KCVI prepared for its closure, the flag was removed from the Library wall and it was noted that the method of attachment to its backing was causing tiny tears to the flag and that the folding was causing differential fading. An artifact conservator was hired to assess the flag and its framing and at her suggestion, the flag was sent to the Queen's Art Conservation lab, where it was removed from its backing, cleaned and repaired. One of their recommendations was that if the flag was to be displayed again, it be done showing its full length and with the highest standards to ensure its preservation. And that is what we have done. Our thanks to the KCVI/QECVI Legacy Committee and the Limestone District School Board both of whom were instrumental accomplishing this.



John Matheson was born in Arundel and raised in Quebec City. He attended Queen's University. He served in World War II with the First Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery, 1st Canadian Infantry Division and was wounded near Ortona, Italy in 1943. John studied Law at Osgoode Hall, graduating in 1948 and with his wife Edith settled in Brockville John was elected Federal Member of Parliament for Leeds in a 1961 by-election. He was re-elected in 1962, 1963, and 1965 and served as Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister Pearson. During his political career, John was a leading member of the parliamentary committee, which successfully shepherded the adoption of the Canadian (Maple Leaf) flag by parliament in 1965. He retired in 1992. He eventually settled in Kingston, where he passed away at age 96 in 2013.



Arthur Martin was born in Brighton, Ontario. He served his country during World War II in the RAF as a navigator on Lancaster bombers. He later attended the University of Toronto and worked in various locations in Ontario, coming to KCVI as principal for one year, 1964-65. He retired in 1980 and died at the age of 95 in 2014.



Miss Shand

Katharine (Kaye) Shand was born in Windsor, Nova Scotia in 1906. She graduated from the Margaret Eaton School of Physical Education in Toronto where she excelled in a variety of sports, particularly ice hockey. She later attended Acadia University and taught there and in various schools in Ontario. She came to KCVI in 1960 and retired from there in 1971. She retired to her home town of Windsor and passed away there in 2002 at age 96.

You can read more about the history of Canada's national flag here,
<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/flag-canada-history.html>

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