

History of the Rural Municipality of Wolverine # 340

A petition for the organization of a Rural Municipality was submitted on August 9, 1909 to the Municipal Commission for Saskatchewan by a municipal committee composed of Robert H. Cash, Archie McQuarrie, James H. Henry, Donald Duff and James. F. Anderson.

The Committee suggested the name of "Plesterfield" for the proposed municipality. It could be speculated that the name "Plesterfield" comes from the name of a homesteader in the municipality by the name of F.T. Plester.

The statutory declaration was signed by Archie McQuarrie in the Village of Guernsey on August 9, 1909. Following this document 3 "Resident Electors Approvals" #115, #116 and #117 were signed by residents within the proposed municipality under Section 15 of *The Rural Municipality Act* that stated: "We the undersigned resident electors of the proposed Rural Municipality of Plesterfield hereby declare that we are desirous of having the said Municipality duly organized under the provisions of *The Rural Municipality Act* and that for this purpose it is desirable that a vote of the resident electors should be taken for and against the organization of the said Rural Municipality."

Then on December 13, 1909 when rural municipalities were established changing from Local Improvement Districts in the Province of Saskatchewan, the approval came back as "Plasterfield" not "Plesterfield". Based on minutes from January – March, 1910 it is evident that the Council was not satisfied with the name "Plasterfield" and still used the name "Plesterfield" and in fact the Municipal Council requested a listing on new names for submission to the Municipal Commissioner with the criteria that the new name should represent the district as a whole and not just a specific resident. The name Wolverine was claimed by the committee and on March 18, 1910 the name of the municipality was changed from Plesterfield to Wolverine. Wolverine is the name of a creek/lake that flows and lies within the municipality boundaries and therefore would represent the entire district.

The first Council was made up of Reeve J.H. Henry from Division 1 who homesteaded on SE 04-35-22 W2 in 1907. Councillor for Division 1 was E. Armatage who homesteaded on NW 06-35-22 W2 in 1905. Councillor for Division 2 was J.F. Anderson homesteaded on the SW 25-34-23 W2. Councillor for Division 3 was Archie McQuarrie on the NW 24-34-24 W2. Councilor for Division 4 was G. Stewart who homesteaded on the NE 32-35-22 W2 in 1906. Councillor for Division 5 was F.C. Robins on NE 06-36-23 W2 and Division 6 Councillor was C.W. Higgins who homesteaded on the SE 14-36-24 W2 in 1907. Robert H. Cash was the first Secretary and the first office of the municipality was at the home of Robert H. Cash located on the NE 36-35-24 W2. It should be noted that Robert Cash was the first Councillor for Division 6 and T.H. Williams was hired as the first Secretary-Treasurer; however Mr. Williams resigned within 2 weeks of being hired and subsequently Robert Cash had applied and was hired.

The first road building outfit in 1918 was operated by Chris Underhill, John Fraser, Gus Wignes, Gus McCutcheon, Emil Keinlen, Frank Greene and consisted of a huge steel wheeled steam tractor and a pull type grader.

In 1933 the R.M. signed an agreement with the doctors and St. Elizabeth's Hospital so that ratepayers were eligible for free hospital and doctor care.

Ratepayers were able to earn \$0.25 per mile for man and four horse team for road dragging done in the municipality.

In 1934 the R.M. paid \$0.01 per gopher tail and \$1.00 per coyote.

In 1935 the provincial government established Highway #20 and took it over from the R.M.. The annual meetings were held for the first time in the Burr Hall, prior to that all annual meetings were held at Mile End School.

In 1936 W. Ford contracted to build an office size 16' x 26' in Burr for the sum of \$575.00. Records and equipment were moved into this new office on June 8, 1936 from the Robert H. Cash residence.

In 1937 the gopher tail bounty was discontinued and one can of poison was given for each quarter section owned by the farmer. It was also in 1937 that an application was made to the federal government to establish a community pasture in the south west corner of the R.M.

In 1938 the government supplied vaccine to combat the equine encephalomyelitis epidemic raging in the province.

In 1939 Council set a maximum of \$6.00 per quarter section that a ratepayer could earn doing road construction. The rate of pay was \$0.30 per man hour, \$0.40 per hour for foreman and \$0.70 for man and four horse team per hour.

Grasshoppers invaded the RM in 1939 and a garage and a \$32.00 mixing machine was set up to mix poison. The land owner was responsible to spread the bait.

This same year W. Newton built a brick safe in the R.M. office for \$110.00.

In 1940 World War II was in progress and the secretary Fred Harris resigned and enlisted in the Armed Forces, H. Churchill was hired.

In 1941 Council approved the purchase of a war bond and agreed to pay \$12.00 per month. The mill rate was set at 8.5 mills.

In 1942 the R.M. was established as a purebred sire area and the Community Pasture was completed.

In 1943 an Adams Road Patrol was purchased for \$221.00. A residence for the secretary was also purchased at a cost of \$1,200.00. The basement was constructed for \$400.00, the cost to move the building onto the foundation was \$500.00 and a well was dug for the residence at a cost of \$75.00. The rent for the secretary was set at \$11.00 per month.

In 1944 a Richardson road patrol was purchased for \$385.00. The first road gravelling was done this year and for the first time road work payments were made in cash rather than as a payment towards land taxes.

It was in 1945 that discounts were allowed to ratepayers who paid their taxes by the first day of August. A piece of land was purchased for a nuisance ground and this land was fenced. The government was asked to put up a purchasing centre for horses due to low feed supplies this year. J.J. Lucas excavated the first dugouts in the R.M. during the fall of this year.

In 1946 the doctors services were engaged at a cost of five thousand dollars per year to the R.M.. The first motor grader to patrol municipal roads was purchased.

In the spring of 1947 a 6,000 lb maximum weight restriction was placed on municipal roads.

In 1948 the tax levy was set at 20 mills.

A municipal shop and garage was built in 1949 and by 1954 power was extended to the R.M. office and residence.

Due to the heavy flooding in the spring of 1955 the Water Rights Branch of the province was asked for engineering assistance in draining the water. Four street lights were installed in the Hamlet of Burr.

In June 1956 an unfortunate incident occurred when the secretary and the council as a whole resigned. It was due to a misunderstanding and miscommunication between ratepayers and Council. A delegation arrived at a Special Council meeting and protested the office and residence being moved to Humboldt, when Council was only contemplating that the secretary take up residence in Humboldt. The meeting was out of control and the councillors and Reeve resigned one by one. The Secretary was Martin Thurmeier, Reeve Jack Lees and Councillors Herb Kopperud, Albert Merkosky, William Nagus. M. Stiel, Mel Crook and Henry Poth respectively in division order. The Lieutenant Governor appointed H. Newman as Administrator for the balance of the year until a new council could be elected in October of that year to govern in 1957.

A plebiscite was held on October 31, 1957 on the time question.

In 1960 votes were taken on the question of mixed drinking in beverage rooms and a change of municipal boundaries.

St. Mary's Villa was organized in 1962 with all municipalities and towns surrounding Humboldt becoming stake holders.

The closed herd bylaw was passed in 1964.

In 1966 the Humboldt and District Fire Protection was organized and the R.M. became a member. During this year the municipal residence was renovated and water and sewer was installed.

A new municipal office was started in November 1966 and completed and officially opened in conjunction with the Centennial Celebrations held in July 1967. Also the street lights in Burr were converted to vapour lights.

On December 31, 1970 the Burr Conservation and Development Authority Area was established.

In 1971 Homecoming celebrations were held.

The quonset machine shed was constructed in 1974 and in 1976 the Wolverine Recreation Board was formed with representation from all sport clubs and the R.M. Council.

The first spring ratepayers meeting was held in April 1977 with a good attendance.

An ambulance agreement was entered into with the towns of Humboldt and Lanigan in 1978.

The municipal residence was sold in 1980 and the Secretary-Treasurer commuted from Humboldt. The R.M. supported the Sports Clubs in the area through the Facilities Grant on a yearly basis and is currently still supporting these type of activities through the Sask. Lotteries Grant.

In 1980 a committee was organized by Council and representatives from each Division to hold Celebrate Saskatchewan celebrations in Burr on July 3. The day consisted of an interfaith service, program, free noon luncheon, parade, entertainment, a barbeque supper and dance. It was a huge success and boosted the largest attendance of any of the Celebrate Saskatchewan functions in the entire province.

The momentum of community spirit and organization followed in 1981 with the publishing of a history book "R.M. of Wolverine Memory Album". The book is still available from the R.M. Office.

In 1981 the Council adopted a bylaw to provide for the eradication of rats under the Pest Control Act, thus the council would obtain and keep on hand a supply of bait recommended by the department as suitable for the destruction of rats.

The Council agreed in principle to the expansion of the Central Parkland Lodge at Lanigan in 1982. Also, that the Hunter Creek – Attica Creek C & D project proposal be accepted in principle but not in cost.

A bylaw authorizing financial assistance to the Leroy Regional Park was adopted.

The Council also enacted a Direct Sellers Bylaw and a Zoning Bylaw to control the development and use of the land within the municipality.

In 1985 a machine shed was erected for approximately \$40,000.00.

On June 12, 1985 Heritage Day was held in Burr to unveil a cairn that was erected in front of the R.M. office displaying the Honor Roll of the R.M.. Unveiling was done by Reeve Henry Poth, Mike Schmidt and Louis Domotor, MLA.

A Special meeting was called on July 24, 1985 to discuss the grasshopper situation. A grasshopper bylaw had been proposed but Council could not agree on all the wording and the bylaw did not proceed.

The Municipality designated the Mancroft Church located on the SW 30-36-23 W2nd as a heritage property.

The municipality entered into a five year agreement respecting the joint funding of certain recreational facilities with the Town of Lanigan and Humboldt, the Village of Guernsey and the Wolverine Recreation Board.

In 1986 the municipality designated the Wolverine Church located on the SW 05-35-23 W2 as a heritage property, a fence was erected around the municipal cemetery at Morven and the St. Elizabeth's Hospital Grant Bylaw was adopted.

In 1987 the 1978 740 patrol was traded in for a 1986 730 patrol from Redhead Equipment for a difference of \$98,000.00.

During the 1980's four community wells were developed and are presently still in use.

In 1990 the R.M. office was damaged by fire and while the office was being renovated and repaired a trailer was brought in for temporary use as an office.

In 1991 the over levy of St. Elizabeth's Hospital taxes was placed in a reserve for future remittance for the project when all municipalities agree to the same funding level and the R.M. paid a \$1,000.00 commitment to the Leroy Leisureland Regional Park.

In 1992 a 1988 - 730 Champion Patrol was purchased from Redhead Equipment less the trade-in of the 720 Champion for \$25,000.00 for a total cost of \$52,468.00.

In 1993 the Burr Retail Postal Outlet was moved to the R.M. Office from the former Schmidt store. The R.M. office was renovated to accommodate a private entrance and the postal boxes.

In 1993 a 6400 John Deere 85 H.P tractor was purchased from Humboldt Farm Equipment for \$37,500.00 including a trade in of a 2675 Massey tractor for \$29,030.00.

A road maintenance agreement was entered into between the R.M. and Possberg Pork Farms for the years 1993 and 1994.

A resolution was passed to pay an individual \$15.00 per beaver tail.

In 1994 the R.M. purchased a 740A Champion grader from RedHead Equipment for a cost of \$130,500.00.

A letter was sent to the Honourable Carol Carson in 1995 regarding the state of flooding of some farm lands in Division 1 and 2 and requesting road maintenance assistance.

A work truck was purchased for the R.M. at a cost of \$3,000.00.

In June of 1996, Council enacted an amendment to the Zoning Bylaw by a democratic vote of the ratepayers of the R.M.. The amendment dealt with the size and separation distances of Intensive Livestock Operations (I.L.O.) from residents and existing I.L.O.'s. The amendment was approved by the taxpayers.

In 1996 Council also pursued purchasing the P.F.R.A. pasture for future gravel reserves. Due to the federal and provincial government restrictions this purchase was not possible.

The municipality became a member of the Agricultural Health and Safety Network which provides valuable information to the farm families within the municipality.

In 1997 the R.M. purchased a 1997 6400 John Deere tractor for \$50,900.00 plus taxes. The Municipality entered into an agreement to form a Regional Waste Management Authority (REACT) with surrounding rural and urban municipalities and steps were taken to begin the decommission process of the local land fill located near Burr.

In 1998 Council recommended amalgamation of St. Mary's Villa with Central Plains Health District instead of the current affiliation.

In 1999 Council requested the return of funding that was levied by the municipality for the future construction of a new St. Elizabeth's Hospital. The amount of \$50,046.79 was returned to the municipality to be held in trust for the proposed construction of a new hospital.

The R.M. purchased a 1982 Chev truck for shop use as well as a 1981 Caterpillar 627B Scraper for \$169,060.00. The Old 1963 TS 14 Scraper was sold for \$20,000.00. The municipality decided against a natural gas hook-up by Sask Energy, for 161 subscribers at a cost of \$6,214.89 per interested subscriber, due to lack of interest.

In 2000 the R.M. participated in a petition against forced amalgamation of municipalities that presented to the Legislative Assembly and also made a presentation to the Task Force Hearings in regards to this issue on April 13, 2000 in Saskatoon.

The Council agreed to raise the local share of funding that was required by this municipality for the St. Elizabeth's Hospital Redevelopment Project. Due to the amount of funding in reserves for this project no additional funds needed to be raised.

In 2001 a general vote of the ratepayers was conducted in regards to joining a new farm organization known as the Agricultural Producers of Saskatchewan. The results were 13 in favour of joining and 119 opposed joining the organization. The municipality declined to join APAS.

The R.M. purchased a new 10 ft Schulte rotary mower from Morris Sales and Service for \$11,865.00, this price included that trade-in value of a 1997 Schulte 10 ft mower.

As farm safety is always an issue, the R.M. hosted a Farm Response Emergency Preparedness Training Course which was sponsored by the Centre of Agriculture Medicine. There was a favourable response from the ratepayers and two courses were held.

In 2002 the R.M. purchased a 2002 John Deere 770CH Motor Grader from Brandt Tractor Ltd. At a cost of \$196,200.00 which included the trade-in of a 1986 Champion 730 motor grader.

In the summer of 2002 the R.M. hired the firm of Jamieson Consulting Services Inc. to oversee and supervise the removal and decommissioning of the abandoned underground fuel tanks located in Burr on Lot 3, Block 3, Plan 76H02321. Funding of this project was covered by an environmental grant from the provincial government.

In 2003 the RM office received a face lift with exterior renovations which included new siding and roofing material and the replacement of new windows and doors. The work was undertaken by Humboldt Lumber Mart. The office computer system was also updated and a 1995 half-ton truck was purchased for shop use at a cost of \$9,900.00.

In 2006 the Municipality approved the development of a lake-shore subdivision along the north shore of Stoney Lake which consisted of 9 lots.

Fun Facts

Reeve Roy Powell holds the record in this municipality for the most number of years serving on Council. He was Councillor for Division 2 from January 1957 – February 1991 and then as Reeve from February 1991 to the present. It was 50 years in January 2007.

Cyril Hale holds the record in this municipality for the most number of years serving as a Division Councillor. He was the Councillor for Division 3 from January, 1969 – November 2006 which is 37 years.

The present make-up of the Council is as follows:

Reeve: Roy Powell Councillors: Division 1 –Thomas Senko; Division 2 – Bryan Gibney; Division 3 – Elise Dale; Division 4 – Joseph Hinz; Division 5 – Michael Syroteuk; Division 6 – James Lees and Administrator – Sandi Dunne.

Currently the municipal equipment consists of the following:

| | |
|---|--|
| 2007 CAT 140H Series II Motor Grader | 2005 Schulte Flex Arm Mower Attachment |
| 2006 CAT 140H Series II Motor Grader | 2001 10' Schulte Mower |
| 2001 John Deere 770CH Motor Grader | 2004 15' Schulte Mower |
| 2001 MX110 Case Tractor with Front End Loader | 1981 – D7G CAT Crawler |
| 1997 John Deere 6400 Tractor | 1982 – 627B CAT Scraper |
| 2005 Rainbow Shop Trailer | Low Boy Trailer |

Roll Call of Secretaries

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Dec 1909 – Jan 31 st 1910 | T.H. Williams (elected as Sec-Tres at the Jan 17 th 1910 meeting and resigned at the Jan 31 st 1910 meeting) |
| Jan 31 st 1910 – June 1936 | R.H. Cash (resigned as Div 6 Councillor at the Jan 31 st 1910 meeting and appointed as the Sec-Tres) (26 years) |
| June 1936 – 1940 | F. Harris (enlisted) (4.5 years) |
| 1941 – May 1943 | H. Churchill (4.5 years) |
| 1943 – 1947 | Gordon Ismond (4 years) |
| 1948 – 1952 | J. Bates (5 years) |
| 1593 – 1956 | M. Thurmier (5 years) |
| 1957 – 1962 | F. Fenski (5 years) |
| 1963 – 1964 | L. Ritsco (2 years) |
| 1965 – 1966 | J. Whyte (2 years) |
| 1967 – 1974 | Ian Bonter (8 years) |
| 1975 – 1991 | Frank Saretsky (17 years) |
| 1992 – January 1999 | Coleen Bowman (7 years 1 month) |
| February – September 1999 | Damon Tanchak (8 months) |
| November 1999 – present | Sandi Dunne |

Roll Call of Reeves

| | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1909 – 1911 | J.H. Henry (3 years) |
| 1912, 1914 – 1915 | J.F. Anderson (3 years) |
| 1913 | J.C. Burr (1 year) |
| 1916 – 1919, 1929 – 1933 | L. Thomas (died 1933) (9 years) |
| 1920, 1925 – 1928 | A. Smith (5 years) |
| 1921 – 1923 | P. Wood (3 years) |
| 1924 | D.W. Armatage (1 year) |
| 1934 – 1946, 1949 – 1956 | J. Lees (21 years) |
| 1947 – 1948 | C. Paproski (2 years) |
| 1956 – 1968 | V. Smith (12 years) |
| 1969 – 1974 | B. Duke (6 years) |
| 1975 – 1990 | H. Poth (16 years) |
| 1991 – Nov 2008 | R. Powell (18 years) |
| Nov 2008-present | B. Gibney |

Roll Call of Councillors

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <u>Division 1</u> | |
| 1909 – 1912, 1923 – 1928 | E.H. Armatage (10 years) |
| 1913 – 1914 | F.B. Kramer (2 years) |
| 1915 – 1916 | F. Hunter (2 years) |
| 1917 – 1922 | C.J. Scott (6 years) |
| 1929 – 1932 | T.A. Pichard (4 years) |
| 1933 – September 1945 | M. Paproski (13 years) |
| 1946 | C. Paproski (1 year) |
| 1947 – 1952 | N. Kowbel (6 years) |
| 1953 – 1956 | H. Kopperud (4 years) |
| 1957 – 1967 | W. Hunter (10 years) |
| 1968 – 1979 | S. Senko (12 years) |
| 1980 – 2002 | D. Kachur (22 years) |
| January 2003 – 2006 | D. Williams (4 years) |
| November 2006 – November 2012 | Thomas Senko (6 years) |
| November 2012 – April 23/2019 | Craig Bartel (6 yrs 5 months) |

Division 1 - Con't

June 26/19 – Present

Donald Williams

Division 2

| | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1909 – 1912 | J.F. Anderson | (4 years) |
| 1913 – 1916 | M.A. Currie | (4 years) |
| 1917 – 1923 | O.W. Armatage | (7 years) |
| 1924 – 1932 | C. Trainor | (9 years) |
| 1933 – 1934 | J. Adams | (2 years) |
| 1935 – 1938 | R.H. Maddocks | (4 years) |
| 1939 – 1945 & 1949 – 1953 | W. Spence | (18 years) |
| 1946 – 1949 | A. Powell | (4 years) |
| 1954 – 1956 | A. Merkosky | (3 years) |
| 1957 – February 1991 | R. Powell | (34 years 2 months) |
| April 1991 – August 1995 | R. Merkosky | (4 years 5 months) |
| January 1996 – June 1996 | B. Owen | (6 months) |
| August 1996 – 1999 | N. Lenyk | (3 years 5 months) |
| 2000 – 2001 | W. Suchy (died Dec/01) | (2 years) |
| February 2002 – Oct/2007 | B. Gibney | (5 years 8 months) |
| November /07- Oct/2009 | Carl Lueke | (2 years) |
| November 2009 - | Ron Suchy | |

Division 3

| | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|------------|
| 1909 – 1915 | A. McQuarrie | (6 years) |
| 1916 – 1924 & 1926 – 1932 | W. L. Wilson | (16 years) |
| 1933 – 1946 | D. Sutherland | (14 years) |
| 1947 – 1952 | O.W. Leyh | (6 years) |
| 1953 – 1956 | W. Nagus | (4 years) |
| 1957 – 1963 | Ted. Senko | (7 years) |
| 1964 – 1968 | Brock Duke | (5 years) |
| 1969 – 2006 | Cyril Hale | (38 years) |
| Nov 2006 – Nov/2020 | Elise Dale | (14 years) |
| Nov/2020 - | Rod Dale | |

Division 4

| | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------|
| 1909 | G. Stewart | (1 year) |
| 1910 – 1915 | A. Kienlen | (6 years) |
| 1916 | B. Lukan | (1 year) |
| 1917 | C.W. Hall | (1 year) |
| 1918 – 1921 | G. Koppes | (4 years) |
| 1926 – 1944 | A.M. Saretsky | (18 years) |
| 1945 – 1947 | B. Klassen | (4 years) |
| 1919 – 1921 & 1948 – 1953 | A. Kienlen | (15 years) |
| 1954 – 1956 | M. Steil | (3 years) |
| 1957 – 1964 | A. Saretsky | (8 years) |
| 1965 – 1972 | J. Wiegers | (8 years) |
| 1973 – 1978 | Dave Novecosky | (5 years) |
| 1979 - 1988 | Art Klassen | (10 years) |
| 1989 – 1995 | Gerald. Saretsky | (7 years) |
| 1996 – 1997 | Larry. Benning | (2 years) |
| 1998 – Oct 2007 | Joseph. Hinz | (10 years) |
| Nov-07-Present | Sandy Flory | |

Division 5

| | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1909 – 1911 | F.C. Robins | (2 years) |
| 1912 – 1919 & 1922 – 1923 | A. Smith | (12 years) |
| 1920 – 1921 | J.M. Gray | (2 years) |
| 1924 – 1938 | J. Zlukosky | (14 years) |
| 1939 – 1943 | J. Kennedy | (4 years) |
| 1944 – 1945 | G. Wignes | (2 years) |
| 1946 – 1952 | J. Schedlowsky | (8 years) |
| 1953 – 1956 | M. Crook | (4 years) |
| 1957 – 1961 | E. Possberg | (4 years) |
| 1962 – 1975 | R. Giddings | (14 years) |
| 1976 – April 1977 | L. Merkosky | (1 year 4 months) |
| May – December 1977 | A. Bells | (8 months) |
| 1978 – 1987 | J. Syroteuk | (10 years) |
| 1988 – 1996 | O. Tameling | (9 years) |
| 1997 – Nov/16 | M. Syroteuk | (20 years) |
| Nov/16-Nov/2020 | Dennis Merkosky | (4 years) |
| Nov/2020 - | Joan Nemeth - Syrotuek | |

Division 6

| | | |
|---------------------------|--|------------|
| 1909- Jan 31/1910 | R.C. Cash (resigned to become the Secretary Treasurer) | |
| Feb 16, 1910 – 1910 | C.W. Higgins | (1 year) |
| 1911 – 1912 | D. Bain | (2 years) |
| 1913 – 1915 | G. Ross | (3 years) |
| 1916 – 1921 & 1924 – 1927 | W.F. Brundell | (10 years) |
| 1922 – 1923 | H. Stebbings | (2 years) |
| 1929 – 1929 & 1934 – 1939 | K. Nelson | (9 years) |
| 1930 – 1933 | J. Lees | (3 years) |
| 1940 – 1951 | W. Hill | (12 years) |
| 1952 – 1956 | H. Poth | (5 years) |
| 1957 – 1976 | R. Grisdale | (20 years) |
| 1977 – 1995 | E. Pocock | (14 years) |
| 1996 – Oct/07 | J. Lees | (12 years) |
| Nov/07-October 2009 | Glenn Mason | (2 years) |
| Nov 2009 – Nov 2014 | Regan Schlacter | (5 years) |
| Nov 2014 - | Blaine Possberg | |