

Our Founding Fathers



SWIFT CURRENT & DISTRICT
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Swift Current Board of Trade came into being in the early part of April 1907, and like many other busy bodies forgot its exact birthday as its original books and most of its records were burned in the City Hall fire of January, 1921.

The first newspaper comment on the Board of Trade appears in the Swift Current Sun of April 23rd, 1907 as follows:

“A Board of Trade has recently been formed with a large membership and has already done much to advance the interest of the town and district. The officers are President W.W. Edmanson; Secretary-Treasurer J.K. Hislop. Directors: Chas Reid, Dr. W.H. Field, and I. E. Argue. Legal Advisor, W.O. Smyth.”

The founders of the Board demonstrated their faith in the future of the city and district and built on the solid foundation of the State. They took steps at the early date of May 12th, 1908, to incorporate the newly formed organization under the Dominion charter and on September 17th, 1908 was registered in the department of the Secretary of State, Ottawa.

The western Boundary of the board was between Ranges 20 and 21 West 3rd Meridian. There were two reasons for not extending farther west: Firstly because Maple Creek was a larger town than Swift Current and secondly because the Western portion was more adapted to grazing than agriculture, and they were particularly promoting agriculture.

The primary functions of the Board of Trade were to promote the general commercial and industrial activities of the community which it serves, irrespective of any political or sectarian affiliations. During the ensuing years the Swift Current Board of Trade widened its scope by laying particular stress upon the agricultural welfare of the district, realizing that the stability and success of the business centre bears an identical and mutual relationship to the progress and development of the farming community.

The Board of Trade fully recognized that to perform an adequate service it must assist by all possible means the general citizenship welfare and to this end its membership roll is to open to representative members of all businesses, trades and professions with special inducements to attract as large a representation as possible among the farmers of the adjacent districts.

It was the object of the Board of Trade to preserve cordial relationships, business and otherwise, among all the people of the community, no matter how diversified the interests involved may appear to be, for it is the experience of the Board's labors that mutually co-operative endeavor is the keystone to the general prosperity of our people. In short, the Swift Current Board of Trade is a medium through which progressive projects and policies may be introduced and carried through for the general advancement of the interests of all who live and labor in the city or district.

Throughout the early years, large sums of money were spent with varied results on sending delegations for various matters of public interest. Consistently advocated roads, railroads, branch lines, wholesale houses and promoting Swift Current as a distributing centre. Re-stocking was done of Lac Pelletier and the Swift Current River with millions of fish fry from the Government Hatchery. Initial involvements also included community picnics - the Memorial and Diamond Jubilee; which became large financial successes fostering public enterprises such as \$1000.00 stock in the Skating Rink, a permanent picnic fund and the larger part of the War Memorial. The name Memorial Park originated within the picnic committee.

Pioneering members of the Chamber who are still in existence today include; Stark and Marsh Chartered Accountants, Standard Motors, RBC, Thompson Auto Supplies(now NAPA) W.W. Smith, Dickson Agencies, and our longest serving member -Warren's Funeral home.