HERITAGE HOUSE HAPPENINGS

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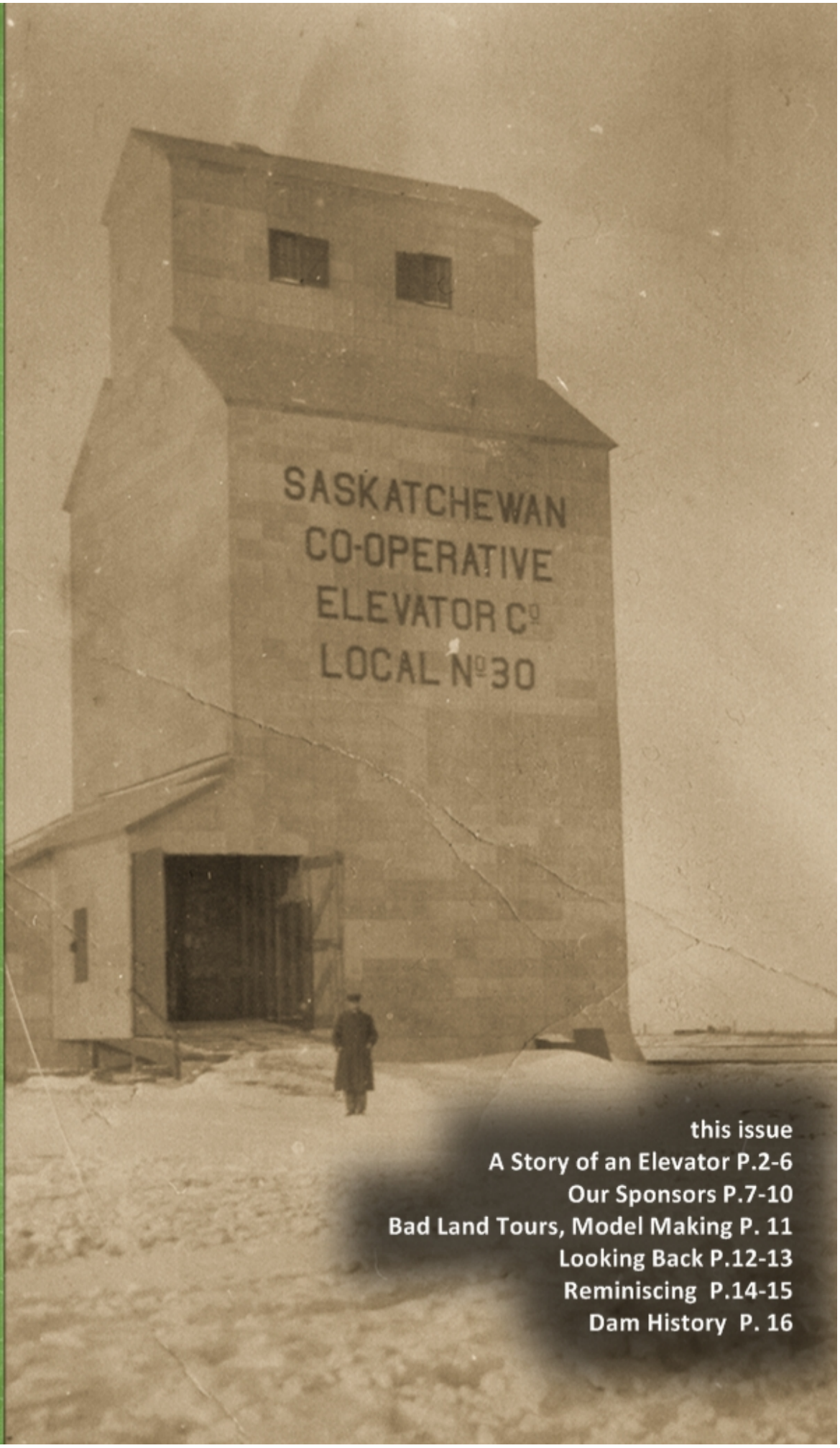
Avonlea Heritage Museum, Box 401, Avonlea, SK S0H 0C0 306-868-2101 www.avonleamuseum.ca



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A STORY OF AN ELEVATOR

by Darlene Watson

Blue Hills Pulse LTD after 2013 expansion

Looking along the railway tracks west to the hills is the Blue Hills Pulse Plant. It seems like yesterday and yet it seems like it's always been here, a pulse plant, where four grain elevators once stood. How can that be? It is a story of the changing face of agriculture and the determination of farmers to survive.

Since our pioneers first turned the sod the focus was on wheat. It was something Saskatchewan would come to do well. As the railway came so did towns and their grain elevators. Avonlea had four owned by the North Star Grain Co., Will Grant, Southern Grain Co., and Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company (SCEC) company. The first three elevators were owned by American based companies that later became Canadianized but that's another story. Let's focus on the 30, 000 bu. Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator, built in 1911, that would eventually become the Blue Hills Pulse Plant.

Established in 1911, the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company was a farmer-owned enterprise in partnership with the provincial government. The first year it built forty elevators and leased six more; in 1912 it built ninety-three. By 1916 the SCEC had over 190 elevators in operation; by 1917, 230. With 318 licensed elevators in 1920, SCEC had edged out UNITED GRAIN GROWERS (UGG) to become the operator of the largest elevator system in the prairies. It was with reluctance in 1926, that SCEC agreed to the buyout by Saskatchewan Co-operative Wheat Producers Ltd. (renamed the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool in 1953). Thus Avonlea's fourth elevator became a Saskatchewan Wheat Pool elevator.

Former Operators of the Avonlea SCEC were Fred Fanning, Louis Golden

circa 1912; from left to right: Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, Southern Grain Co., Will Grant, North Star

An Act to Incorporate The Grain Growers Elevator Company of Saskatchewan

NOTE.—This is the bill under consideration by the Saskatchewan Legislature for the establishment of a line of co-operative internal elevators.

His Majesty by and with the advice and consent of the legislative assembly of Saskatchewan enacts as follows:

1. In this Act the term "local" unless the context otherwise requires means the body of shareholders who support an elevator organized and established at any point in the province, and the term "local board of management" means the board of managers elected at any such local according to the provisions of this Act.

Incorporation, Powers, Etc.

2. (Names of the members of the G. G. executive) and all such persons as shall become shareholders of the company shall be and are hereby declared to be a body corporate and politic under the name and style of the "Grain Growers' Elevator Company of Saskatchewan" with power to construct, acquire, maintain and operate grain elevators within Saskatchewan, to buy and sell grain and generally to do all things incidental to the storing and marketing of grain.

3. The capital stock of the company shall consist of such amount as shall from time to time be fixed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and shall be divided into shares of fifty dollars each to be sold only to agriculturists:

Taken from the The Grain Growers' Guide, February 22, 1911, Page 20

Let's diverge for a moment for a brief history of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. It was originally formed in response to the Federal government's reluctance to reinstate the Canadian Wheat Board. Farmers convinced by the success of the wheat board during WWI felt pooling not the speculative system was the best way to market grain. Some Avonlea farmers, such as George McDougall, C. T. Babcock, Frank Schnitzler, Thomas Miller, John Miller, Reg Miller joined others as they pledged their deliveries of grain to a provincial wheat "pool." All farmers who joined the "pool" would receive the same price for each grade of grain regardless of when they delivered. The SWP worked with the Alberta and Manitoba pools selling directly to overseas markets by-passing the Winnipeg grain exchange. All went well until the 1929 stock market crash when multiple-crop-year carryovers, an overpayment on the 1929 crop among other things forced the federal government to step in and liquidate the agency's stock. Contracting through the prairie pools was abolished and SWP became a grain handling (elevator) company. Interestingly in 1935 the Federal Government brought the Canadian Wheat Board back.

Meanwhile the Avonlea Sask Wheat Pool continued to operate successfully buying grain from local farmers. The elevator remained as was with minor repairs and upgrades until 1952 when it was torn down and replaced with a 75,000 bu. wooden elevator. In 1966 a 100,000 bu. annex was added. A boxcar puller was installed in 1975 and in 1996 the 1948 frame annex was dismantled.

Through the years the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool continued to serve its members well returning millions of dollars to members in the form of patronage refunds and acting as the farmers' voice on agriculture policies. In 1971 the SWP reached a peak with 1,224 elevators, 67% of the province's grain handling facilities. Change was coming though. As they had from the beginning grain companies continued to buy each other out or merge. The SWP bought out Federal Grain LTD who had just merged with Searle in 1967. This left it with a monopoly in 217 locations including Avonlea. Even more changes were on the horizon. Removal of the Crow Rate and rail line abandonment forced the Pool to consolidate its grain handling to stay competitive. Six hundred elevators were closed between 1971 and 1982. Avonlea was still operating but for how long. CN rail was threatening to cease services. Determined not to lose our elevator a number of farmers joined forces and in 1989, Southern RAILS Co-operative (SRC) became the first common carrier short line of the modern era.

Saskatchewan Premier Says Wheat Pool Is Godsend to That Province

The address on "The Wheat Pool" delivered by Premier James A. Gardiner, of Saskatchewan, at the International Wheat Pool conference at Kansas City, Mo., was one of the feature speeches of the conference.

Premier Gardiner said:

Measured by cost of shipment and percentage of crop which is exported, Saskatchewan is farther removed from its market than any other of the great wheat producing areas of the world. We are one of the great wheat producing areas. The Province of Saskatchewan has produced as much as 271,600,000 bushels of wheat in one year with a population of 800,000 and an acreage of 12,700,000. That is an average of 21 bushels per acre or 340 bushels per head of population. Of that amount 241,500,000 was exported from the Province; the greater part of it going to Liverpool. The total exportable surplus of the United States during that same year was 156,500,000 bushels. With our 800,000 people we produce more than one half of all the wheat grown in the Dominion of Canada and every bushel of it is hard spring wheat.

About 80 per cent of our farmers and about the same percentage of our acreage is signed up in the contract Wheat Pool. Ever since the Wheat Pool was formed I have marketed all my own wheat through the Pool. The Government has signed up the institutional farms in the Pool. In other words our people are sold to the contract Pool and their Premier and Government agree with them that it is necessary to continued prosperity within our Province.

POOLING METHOD ESSENTIAL TO SASKATCHEWAN

I admit, Mr. Chairman, that our Province is so situated that it will find the pooling method more essential to its continued prosperity than any other wheat growing Province or state. Allow me to explain. We are situated in the very heart of a great continent, two thousand miles from the sea in any direction where a port can be found from which to ship our wheat to Liverpool which is 5,000 miles away. We are completely shut off from what otherwise would be the natural market in your country by a tariff which

duction increased so rapidly that the elevators would fill to the roof immediately. Great storage elevators were built at the head of the lakes and each fall there was a mad rush to get wheat to the lake front. Elevators were constructed at Buffalo, Montreal, Port McNicoll and elsewhere east. There was a rushing of wheat down over the lakes before the freeze-up. But in spite of all this mad rush wheat is in storage many months of the year somewhere between our farmers and the water front.

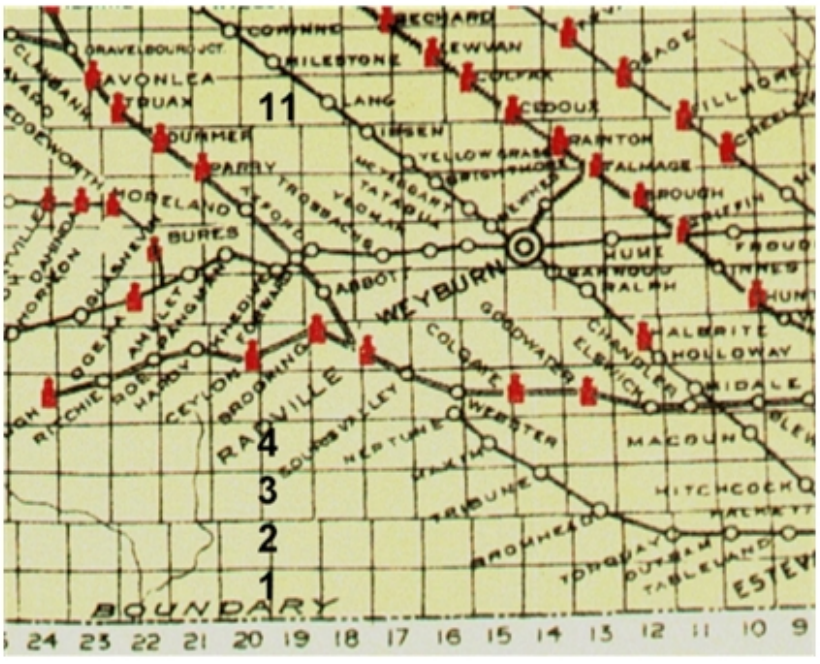
THE SITUATION OF THE PIONEER FARMER

Our country is new. During the twenty years spoken of, from 1905 to 1925, our Province was populated with new comers from all over the world. Most of them were young people, willing

SASKATCHEWAN'S PREMIER

HON. J. G. GARDINER

Taken from the The U.F.A, June 1, 1927, Page 16



1924 map of the Saskatchewan Elevators in the Weyburn area

AVERAGE ANNUAL WHEAT PRICES AND INDEX NUMBERS OF WHOLESALE PRICES IN CANADA, 1914–23

Year	Average annual price per bushel, No. 1 Northern, Fort William and Port Arthur (cash basis)	Index numbers of wholesale prices (1914 = 100)
1914	$1.00	100.0
1915	1.28	107.5
1916	1.38	128.6
1917	2.20	174.5
1918	2.22	194.5
1919	2.37	200.4
1920	2.51	238.0
1921	1.65	167.9
1922	1.23	148.5
1923	1.08	149.0

SOURCE: Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

THE SASKATCHEWAN WHEAT POOL

The Proof of the Pudding

"I believe that co-operative marketing must be more economically performed than that system which it replaces, if it is to succeed."—*Extract from letter from J. R. Howard to L. C. Brouillette, Secretary of Wheat Pool.*

Within will be found Mr. Howard's own reported figures regarding the costs of operation of certain United States Wheat Pools.

These total costs average about 12 cents per bushel.

According to the investigations of the Federal Trade Commission, as shown in its report to the United States Congress, dated September 26th, 1923, the total average costs of the old line companies, including their profits, amount to 18.89 cents per bushel.

READ THE FACTS

And then make a bee-line for the nearest Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Canvasser—he has the contracts.

May 1929; The new Wheat Pool Building, on Main street, Winnipeg, will be occupied by the staffs of the Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Albert wheat Pools and the Central Selling Agency or the Canadian Wheat Pool.

Avonlea Wheat Pool Elevator Managers:

R. A. Swan.....1929-32
W. S. Bell.....1932-45
J. E. Hayes.....1945-54
C. B. Feader.....1954-64
G. Granger.....1964-81
J. Meyers.....1972-75
H. Greenman.....1972-
Clarence Caswell....19??-19??

Terry Hanson.....1987- 2000

Wheat Pool Map 1984

November 2000; Avonlea Wheat Pool closes

2009; Blue Hills Pulse Limited commences operations 2003

SRC was created and owned by farmers along two Saskatchewan branch lines. These were the Colony subdivision: a former CP line running from ROCKGLEN to Killdeer, and the portion of the CN Avonlea subdivision from Parry to Avonlea. In 1996 Southern Rails abandoned operations on its money-losing Colony subdivision but continued to operate from Truax to Avonlea later expanding to Moose Jaw when CN ceased to operate on this line. Some felt that when SWP closed the elevators on the Truax, Avonlea (2000) and Briercrest it would also mean the end for Southern Rail but not so. Thanks to many determined farmers Southern Rail operates today providing a cost-effective rural transportation system. A group of Truax farmers bought their elevator and use it to load producer cars. Briercrest also bought their elevator and formed the Briercrest Grain Ltd., providing producer cars, grain cleaning and other grain related services. Avonlea formed the Blue Hills Processors Ltd.

The Sask Wheat Pool elevator had a new purpose, processing pulses. The face of farming had been changing. No longer was it just wheat and durum. Pulses played a major role in Saskatchewan's economics. With that in mind local farmers came through with a realistic business plan that would put the elevator to good use as a pulse processing plant. About 75 farmers and investors took the Blue Hills proponents up on the offer to invest in a $5 million, 140,000 tonne per year capacity facility using the former elevator. Construction began in 2002 and started operation in 2003. BHPL's primary focus is sourcing and processing (cleaning, sizing, bagging and bulk/container loading) field peas, lentils and chickpeas. They also process flax and have an agreement with the new CWB to allow them to act as an agent for cereal grains.

Blue Hills Pulse Plant now in its 11th year of operation has weathered many storms that other plants never. It employs approximately 20 people. It handles an average 2.4 million bushels of product a year with the capacity of 5 million since the expansions. Its best year so far was 3.5 million bushels compared the best year of the Avonlea Wheat Pool just over 1 million bushels.

BHPL is one of Canada's largest and most innovative special crops processing facilities. They ship all over the world including Europe, Asia the Middle East and a lot off growth into China and India. The company is built on the foundation of three fundamental values:

* Quality - in the product we ship;
* Integrity - in our dealings with customers;
* Service - that exceeds expectations.

Well done! Sometimes it seems like the "good old days" might be in the here and now.

Thank you for supporting Local Businesses that make this newsletter possible.

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Thank You

to the turkey pot pie ladies
Bernie Sanderson ,Betty Jelinski, Betty McRorie Cathy Geisler, Darlene Watson, Dorothy Daniel Dorothy Johnson, Jean Kincaid, Joyce Holland Larraine Sudom, Lorna Phillips, Lorraine Dombowsky, Louise Forer Pat Allen, Jan Day, Randi Edmonds, Karen Dombowsky, Lee Holland *to all those who bought pies. Eat up there will be more in June at the farmers markets.*

to Sean Giesler for *all the computer work*

to Val Krumenacker for *trapping the museum skunk.*

to Mrs. Kuffner & the gr. 7's & 8' s *for spring clean up at museum*

to JR Printing *for the fantastic job on the newsletter*

to Kevin a& Karen from Doorn's Greenhouse

to Art Daniel & Nelson Motors *for use of their trailers to haul plants even though we didn't use them this year.*

We will remember and miss friends who have passed away recently

Elizabeth Petruic
Nick Litowski
Charlie Dombowsky
Herb Greenman
Heather May (McDougall) Thompson
Roberta Monkhouse,
Melva Aikens
Irene Nestman

AVONLEA HERITAGE MUSEUM TOURS

In 2013, our museum met with landowners of the Avonlea Badlands to set up and organize scheduled tours. This arrangement has been beneficial to both the museum and the landowners. The museum benefits by welcoming interested individuals who often tour both the badlands and the museum. Landowners benefit because tours are now more controlled and have tour guides who ensure that the land and property are treated respectfully. It also means that landowners are now covered for liability issues by the Museum's (Village's) insurance when visitors are on a museum guided tour. Liability is a concern for landowners as the amount of visits increases. Visitors should be aware that the land we are visiting is used primarily to earn income; it is very gracious of the owners to share these sites. It is also important to be aware of and respectful of potential dangers. Cattle and horses are often found in or near the vicinity of the Badlands tours.

The badlands tours have been a big hit. The Avonlea Badlands are truly a remarkable and unique environment. It is interesting to see how the seasons, weather, and time of day change this unique habitat. Visitors in the early morning are treated to a variety of bird songs. The shadows of evening are a photographer's dream. The stifling heat of high noon is astounding on a hot day as you drop into the desert-like bottom. June is an awesome time to tour as plant and bird life abound, but anytime is great. Contact the museum for tours.

A very big thank you to the tour guides and landowners who have made this possible. I won't thank everyone individually for fear I forget someone, but you know who you are...THANK YOU!!. I do want to give special thanks to Ron Watson who has agreed to take on the leadership of the Badlands Tours and to the Avonlea School for helping us out with a clean-up of the area.

For years, the Museum has been taking school groups to the Ceremonial Circle and the Effigies. The Village has very graciously extended the liability insurance to include the landowners of these areas as well. Besides, cattle and horses in these areas, there is also a hunt farm. Hunt farms operate under different rules than the hunting season most people are familiar with. The safety of all must be observed at all times.

Joyce Holland

Coal Dock

Water Tower

Garry Hubbard working on model of station for train diorama

Note the tiny shingles

Stock Yards assembled by Carter Kirkpatrick

Looking Back...

snippets from Heritage House Happens through the years

NEWSLETTER - "HERITAGE HOUSE HAPPENINGS"
Vol. 7, Issue II
Oct. 30, 1987

It always seems appropriate to mention something in our newsletters about 'our town'. Again there have been several projects, some small and some large which are a definite asset to the town. Many favorable comments have been heard on the controversial pavement; from visitors back for the fowl suppers to newcomers here for weddings, etc., on how nice the streets look and how impressed they were with Avonlea, visually as well as socially. It is a monetary burden for many on something that may not be considered a necessity but in this day and age it is hard to define 'necessities'. In the early '60's residents were burdened similarly, with' the installation of sewer and water and natural gas but in time it was all paid for and I'm sure no one would want to go back to the days before. We also have a beautifully paved road coming into town from Corinne. Besides the benefits to Avonlea and area residents, this should attract many outsiders for business reasons or pleasure, to take a pleasant drive to Avonlea. Many of the young people are not aware that until 1965, when what is now Highway 334 was graveled, we were unable to get to Regina in rainy weather. In 1971, 334 was black-topped to 6 miles East and complete to Avonlea in 1972 and now after 15 years of wear it has been widened and reblacktopped.

Jean Kincaid

SUMMER DISCOVERY PROGRAM 1987—··A success!!!!!

The first of two programs was the BARBER SHOP DAY, held during the first part of July. **Russell Howse** was persuaded to come out of retirement for .the day! After four haircuts he was ready to retire again but the announcement brought tears to one little fellows eyes. Russell soon consented to cut his hair too. Russell made the comment that "they used to cry after I cut it, not cry to have it cut"! Mabel king, experienced in the art of marcelling, demonstrated favorite styles of days gone by. Janet Day was kept busy french braiding. Evelyn Robertson bravely used the old style curling iron that had been heated in a coal-oil lamp, .to curl her granddaughters hair. This curling iron with no way to control the temperature was noted for the many hairs it had singed! Joanne Miller had no trouble finding a volunteer to demonstrate a hair cut on. The latest hair styling tool "the Crimper" was demonstrated by Rhonda Watson. "The Crimper" crimps the hair in tiny waves and gives a busy appearance when done to the whole head. This style is popular with the younger generation.

John Dalrymple, Russ Howse

Russ Howse, Calvin Watson

Russ Howse, Mark Watson

Mary and Jack Hubbard, Russ Howse

Merna Muc, AimeeSudom, Jayme Muc, Mabel King

Evelyn Robertson, Aimee Sudom

Janet Day, Tracey Day

Isobel Meyers, Jo-Anne Miller

The second program held the end of July, was the tour of our local Pool Elevator. Clarence Caswell, the new pool agent, hosted a group of 12 through a step by step tour of what happens to the grain after it enters the elevator. The meal following the tour consisted of many grain products including wheat chili, alfalfa sprout salad, five types of bread, puffed wheat cake and oatmeal cookies. This meal was supplied through the compliments of Watson-Stang Seeds and Harold V. and Wayne Watson. Thanks to all who participated or were spectators in this year's Summer Discovery Program. Plans for next year's program are already under way. The Ranch Tour is scheduled for the spring. If you have any suggestions for 'the S.D.P. please contact Darlene Watson

Reminiscing

Wheat Pool Radio Broadcasts 1939-1941

Transcripts from Shortwave radio broadcast by the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool from 1939-1941

Avonlea

Broadcast number 241, October 24, 1940

Here is the Saskatchewan village history broadcast. We are visiting today at the village of Avonlea in south central Saskatchewan, which was established in 1912. Among the first to settle in the district were John Huggard, John A.Frost, William J. Bedford, John Leepart, Joseph Quark at the old New Warrens, who arrived in 1903. The name of the village was chosen by the Canadian National Railway. Members of the first council were John A. Frost , overseer, and L. E, Arnott and George Monson councillors. The present overseer is William J. Armstrong and councillors are William L. McRorie and C. I. King. The secretary-treasurer is H.A, Cathro. Avonlea has a fine four room brick school, three churches, a Masonic temple, a curling rink and open skating rink, a bank and the office of the Rural Municipality of Elmsthorpe, No. 100. There are four grain elevators at Avonlea and the present Pool Elevator bears the number 161, which was one of the early Co-op elevators. The Pool agent at this point is William Stanley Bell. Avonlea has fine facilities for social and recreational activities. In 1938 a **community hall** was started and it is now valued at $7, 000 and Avonlea believes that this structure is not excelled by any village in the province. A publicly owned 18 acre sports field includes four ball diamonds, booths and office buildings and is being improved with trees. Railway improvements include a coal dock and a gravity flow water tank with a pressure dam three miles distant. All classes of business are well represented in the village.

Aerial Photo Avonlea 1940

Truax

Broadcast no. 94, March 27, l94O

Here is the village history broadcast. We are in the village of Truax, which was established in l9l2. Among the first to settle in the district were Martin Schuett, John Schuett, Val Schuett, Joe Schuett, J. J. Beingesnner, C. D. Speed, John L. Killorin, E. J. Davis, H.A. Hiles, E. Nichol, S.W. Hollands, Frank Kirkpatrick, E.H, Huffman, E. Lafoy, P. Demerse, H.D. Bowles, W.Miller, T. Roddy, F. M. Schnitzler, Mike Schnitzler, and T. C. Taylor. '

The village was named after Ruben Truax, M. P. , who now lives in Ontario.The first head of the council was John L. Killorin. The 1.939 council consisted ofThomas Newman, overseer, with W. Harbor, and H. D. Bowles as councilors. The secretary-treasurer was J, D, Porter. Truax has a skating rink and a bathing beach. The highway runs from Dahinda to Corinne. There is a bank, three churches, a real estate office, hardware store, schools, three implement agencies, a community hall, three elevators, loading platform, a lumber yard, a blacksmith shop, a garage, restaurant and boardinghouse. Saskatchewan Pool Elevator at Truax bears the number 359 and the agent in charge is Charles Meyers.

From Truax we will travel to the village of Theodore.

Briercrest

Here is the village history broadcast. We are visiting today at the village of Briercrest, southwest of Regina, which was established on May 24, 1912. Among the first to settle in the district were C.A. Jaques, J, Hillson, A. Turnbull, W. A. Gallaugher, D. Findlay, G. Coward, G. Adrian, A. J.Walker, A. Fraizer, W. Armstrong, and Mac McNaughton.Mrs. C.A Jaques named the village after the family homestead. The Jaques had the first post office and when the town was built, the post office moved and the name went with it. The members of the first council were J, H, White, overseer, W. W.Duglass, and B.C. Jaques, councillors, and W. C. Thomson, secretary-treasurer. The present council is composed of F, L, Healey, overseer, and M. West and W. Hillson, councillors. G. C. Atkinson is the secretary-treasurer, J. Steward homesteaded the quarter section on which the village is built and broke the land with oxen, Briercrest owns a large hall. There is a four room brick school, two churches, United and Presbyterian. Briercrest has also a Bible Institute which is attended by well over one hundred students who are in residence during the winter. S. Whittaker is the president of the Institute. Briercrest streets are gravelled and well kept up and there is a good lighting system. The village has a curling rink with two sheets of ice and owns its own park where there are two ball diamonds and a tennis court. The park has a double row of trees around it and they are doing well, as are the trees which were planted on the streets. Residents are proud of their gardens, which add greatly to the beauty of the village. Saskatchewan Pool Elevator at Briercrest bears the number 139 and the agent is Clyde Murray Jaques.

Spring Valley

Broadcast no. 135, May 27, 1940

Here is the village history broadcast. We are visiting today at the southern Saskatchewan village of Spring Valley, which was incorporated on January 1, 1921. Among the first to settle in the district were the late A. H. Buchanan, C. Hawley, the late Joseph Hughes, William Kemp, L. B. E. Lowe, R. T. Paton, the late E. J. Reimann, Scheller, and S. Wilson.

The village name was suggested by Mr. Reimann, an early settler and the first Pool delegate for the subdistrict. One of the best of the many springs in the vicinity was found on the Reimann farm. First head of the council was R. J. McElroy, who now resides at Ormiston and councillors were C. Hawley and August Fuhr. The 1940 council members are W. Hanoski, overseer, and H. J. Fuhr and P. F. Reimann, councillors. The secretary-treasurer is F. C. Hanover. Building of homes began about 1910 and continued rapidly for the next few years. The village is situated in the Dirt Hills, is served by the Canadian National Railways, and is about 40. miles south of Moose Jaw. At the present time, the school district operates a three-room school named Artesian No. 3213. Spring Valley had two churches, one Roman Catholic and one Lutheran. 1 Crop conditions have been difficult during the past tenyears but the district has worked hard to maintain its position. Much pride is taken in the boys and girls softball teams of Spring Valley, which are considered the best in the south. Saskatchewan Pool Elevator at Spring Valley bears the number 68 and the agent is Paul Ferdinand Reiman.

From Spring Valley, we will travel to the village of Abernethy, east of Regina.

Rouleau

Broadcast no. 48, July 2, 1941

Here is today's town history broadcast and our point of call is Rouleau, which boasts the name of the "friendly town". It is situated on the C, P. R. S00 Line 30 miles southeast of Moose Jaw and 32 miles southwest of Regina. The town of Rouleau was incorporated in 1906 and was named after Judge Rouleau. A. E, Westbrook was the first mayor of the town and the present officials are mayor Andrew King and councillors W. Hannah, A. Merrikin, H, S, Craig, B, L, Seaman, E. Charles, and J. R. Walsh. The town clerk is R. H, Carter. W. H. and S. R. Johnston opened the first store in Rouleau and it is interesting to note that W. H. Johnston was postmaster in the town for forty years. In the past year he was succeeded by his son Stan. Early settlers and homesteaders in the district were Arthur Rennick, D,A. Kingsbury, Ed Kingsbury, J. S. Montgomery, J.E. Wilson, Arthur Hart, Andrew, Frank, and Alex Nolan, T. J, Hart, and Nels McEwen, most of whom came from North Gower and Kemptville, Ontario. Rouleau has the "Enterprise Show Printing Press", specializing in carnival and fair printing. It is the only one of its kind in Canada. The local paper, "The Rouleau Enterprise", is also published here. Rouleau has a town hall, a skating rink which cost $21, 000 to build in 191? and which is regarded as one of the finest rinks on the Soo Line. Many of their curlers, including Aubrey Cochran and Byron Seaman, have taken honors at bonspiels. The town also has a good hockey team. The town residents enjoy a nine hole golf course situated in the exhibition grounds. The town is served by 5 churches, a public and high school, and a ten-bed hospital. Rouleau also came into prominence in the earlier years, at one time being called the million dollar town, having sold in 1911 the grand total of $1,025,000 worth of grain. Saskatchewan Pool Elevators operate two elevators at this point, Nos. 11 and 913, one built in 1924 and the other built in 1928, where the agent, R, H, Kerr, is able to give the farmers of the Rouleau district the full advantage of co-operative marketing. The Co-op oil, under the management of Earl Fox, has steadily increased its volume of business since its beginning.

"Dam" History

So what does a dam and history have in common? It might not be what you are thinking about but this is a special landmark for the Avonlea Dam because it was completed 50 years ago. It would be hard to imagine our area without the dam and reservoir which is essential for water supply, recreation and much more so it is a good reason to celebrate. As part of a special project this year there will be a display at the museum featuring the many aspects of the dam and reservoir. For example you might wonder where does Avonlea Creek begin? How big is the drainage area? What was the largest flow passed through the spillway and what year? Was it from a snowmelt or a rainfall event? Why was a new spillway and other modifications made in 2003? There will be tables, graphs and maps to help answer those questions but perhaps that may not interest you. Pictures from original construction are also available - they are so old we only have black and white! There will be information on how the dam was built in some challenging conditions. So after 50 years you might be wondering how the aging process is going - there are 2 islands in the reservoir that have been shrinking but how much? You might be surprised to find these answers and much more. Please come and check out the display and our hope is that it will trigger your memory for some of your own stories to share. "

Hope this is the type of "seed" material you are looking for; provide feedback or just use as is if you think it is "good to go". I have attached a photo of the embankment nearing completion but can provide others if you wish.

Charles Sudom

Join us for a "*Dam Good Night*" June 16
6 pm Weiner Roast * Mortgage Burning
Annual Meeting (short) * Avonlea Dam Presentation

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