

## WILEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

On March 24, 1909 in Markinch an organizational meeting was held for the proposed Wiley School District.

Mr. Ferdinand Thurmeier was chairman of this meeting with J.R. Brown acting as secretary. The proposed school board consisted of Frank (Franz) Silzer, Jacob Mantz and John Silzer.

Wiley School District No. 2340 officially came into being on April 9, 1909.

The first meeting held after the School District was formed was on April 16, 1909. Elected as the first official School Board were:

Frank (Franz) Silzer - Chairman  
J.R. Brown - Sec. Treasurer  
Jacob Mantz - Board member  
John Silzer - Board member

The school was built during the summer of 1909 and the first classes held in the school were in 1910 with Alex L. Harris as its first teacher.

Two pioneers named Wiley gave the school its name: James Wiley, who lived on Sec. 16-24--2 and Richard Wiley who lived on Sec. 18-24-2.

Some of the early settlers of the district then were:

James Wiley	Ferdinand Thurmeier	Jacob Mantz
Franz Silzer	Richard Wiley	Cameron
J.R. Brown	John Silzer	Hammond

When the school was first proposed, about 20 children attended. In 1915 there was an attendance of 28 children, with more settlers coming into the district. The going wage for teachers was around \$450.00 a year with a slight increase each year.

Two highlights of Wiley were: every year until the 1950's there was a School Christmas Concert put on by the teacher and the Pupils. Each child received a gift from Santa and a parcel of nuts, apples, oranges and candy. Every year, they had their annual picnic in June for everyone where each child got free ice cream.

In those days, the rural municipality had to calculate the mill rate to raise this sum for school taxes. It worked out to two/three mills a year in the 1920's-1930's. In contrast, the rate today is about 60 mills a year.



2340  
Myra Sask  
Small Nov 8th 1909  
Exacted April 7, 09  
Department of Education

Dear Sir No 2540  
The Wiley School house  
is being built and  
won't be ready for  
opening school in this  
year if it will be  
will let you know at  
once if you wish to know  
or want anything done  
on my part or the Trustees  
in the meantime please  
let me know. J. R. Brown  
Secy Wiley School Dist  
No 2540

Will it be necessary to re elect  
new members for the School Board  
for 1910 before the new year

~~2340~~  
~~2497~~

This is a copy from the Saskatchewan Archives of a letter sent to the Department of Education by the first secretary, J.R. Brown in 1909.

The business of operating the school was entrusted to a board composed of a secretary-treasurer and three trustees, one of whom would be elected chairman. Unless some unusual situation arose, meetings were held once a month.

An annual income of around \$1,200.00 had to cover the teacher's salary as well as heating, repair and maintenance of the school. The latter included janitor work such as sweeping and scrubbing floors, cleaning the school barn, and during the holidays thoroughly cleaning the inside of the school. As well, the expenses of maintaining the water supply and lighting the fires had to be included in the limited budget.

The Secretary-Treasurers and Chairmen of the district were:

1905-1915	Jack R. Brown, Sec.-Treas.	Frank Silzer, Chairman
1915-1928	Adam Silzer	Frank Silzer, "
1928-1930	F.M. Silzer	R. Woznikosko "
1930-1943	F.M. Silzer	John Stadler "
1943-1944	Victor Gaschler	John Stadler "
1944-1945	Victor Gaschler	Jake Hassman "
1945-1951	Victor Gaschler	A. Schwartz "
1951-1957	A.J. Schwartz	John Hassman "

Following is a list of the teachers who taught at Wiley School

Alex L. Harris - 1910	Miss Ewald - 1928
R.H. McKinnon - 1911	Mrs. Bertha Gray - 1930
Fredrick Garland - 1915	Arthur H. Black - 1931-33
(3 months)	Alma B. Molder - 1933-36
J.C. Leader - 1915	W.H. Smith - 1937
(1 month)	W.J. Geber - 1938-41
John J. Collins - 1915-17	Leo Thurmeier) --- 1942
Mrs. Cameron	Richard Koch
Susan M. Ehman - 1920-21	<i>Luc Martin</i>
Albert Cann - 1921-22	Theresa Dixson - 1943-47
Jno. A Neate - 1923-26	Irene Matrosky (Ermel) - 1947-50
Miss Morgenroth - 1922-23	Fredrick Bessai - 1952-54
	Michael Downing - 1956-57
Myrtle Griffith - 1926-28	Elizabeth Owerko - 1951
B.M. McMillan	
J.L. Dyke - 1929	

In 1932 there were 132 applications for one teaching position. The School Unit came in 1956 and at the end of the 1957 school term, Wiley was dissolved and the children were all picked up and bussed into Markinch by unit buses. The school building itself was kept and used as a community hall in which the district held whist drives, dances, showers, etc. In 1970, the building was sold to some people from Earl Gray who tore it down and hauled the remains away.

The school yard is now cultivated as part of a farmer's field. There is nothing to indicate that here was once a yard alive with the sound of children's voices, the crack of a bat, running feet, the summons of the old school bell. All that remains of Wiley is

in the memories of those who once called it "our school".

Ferdinand Thurmeier and his wife Emelia, who homesteaded in the year of 1903, appear to have been among the first settlers. They chose farmland north of Markinch because of the slough water, as in those days water meant so much to a settler. As a family, they went through many hardships, especially during the depression years. Ferdinand was a carpenter by trade and so built his own buildings, besides helping to build the Wiley School. While busy with this building, etc., his wife helped to plough the fields with oxen.

They were a family of seven; two children passed away in infancy. The Thurmeier family belonged to the Wiley District, but only some of the older children attended and the rest all went to Markinch. Their father had to pay the Markinch School District in order for the children to attend and he also had to make arrangements with the van driver. In 1938 Mr. Ferdinand Thurmeier passed away and son John continued to farm until 1973.

In 1904 a Mr. Bray and his wife moved from Ontario to the Cupar District, settling on Sec. 4-24-13, one and one half miles south of where the Wiley School was built. Mrs. Bray and a neighbor, Dick Wiley, conducted all the correspondence that led to the organization of Wiley School District, and eventually the building of Wiley School.

Although little is known about the Brays, we are told they raised a family of 10 children. Like so many other pioneers, their farming operations were conducted with genuine horsepower rather than the mechanical kind. Mr. Bray passed away early in 1926 and Mrs. Bray in 1953.

Frank Silzer was born in Austria in the year 1876. After a stint in the military service in the Austrian Army, in which he served as an officer, Frank Silzer's adventurous spirit flowed all the faster through his veins so he set his eyes on "greener pastures". While still a young man he made his decision to move to the U.S.A. Here he found work in a wore factory and spent a short period at this work. He heard about Canada, people taking up homesteads and a land where there were many possibilities. He moved to Canada, the part now known as Saskatchewan, but then known as the North West Territories, and settled around Zehner. Here he met his wife, Eva Leibel, and they were married in 1903. They were blessed with 12 children - 4 boys and 8 girls.

The Province of Saskatchewan was formed in 1905 and homesteads were then available to new comers. By this time his entire family - mother, father, brothers and sisters came to Canada and took up homesteads in the Markinch area.

Frank took his homestead north of Markinch on NE 32-23-17, W2nd. This was the beginning of a long and hard life of establishing himself as a farmer in this new country. he took an active part in the educational field of the community. As a founding member of the Wiley School District in 1909, he became the first chairman of that school district and held that position until approximately 1923. Frank Silzer was active in farming until his health failed. He moved to Regina in 1946 and passed away in July, 1948. Eva, his wife, passed away in October, 1956.

Wiley School District - 1909  
Range 17

V	V	Ed Kreis	L. Hichel	V	V	F. Ashenbrenner	N. Ashenbrenner	V		
19	V	J. Hossman	Demetra Baba	20	21	A. Melizink	P. Rein	V		
Sarah	R. Wiley	V	V	J. Gawley	F. Silzer	V	V	V		
18	H. Bradford	D. Gawley	V	V	17	16	15	V		
V	V	V	V	V	V	J. Huber	A. Verity	V		
7	V	V	8	9	10	11	V	V		
F. kelb	J. Manz	V	V	A. Brodaik	F. Gee	V	V	J. Miller		
6	J. Silzer	J.R. Brown	V	V	5	4	3	2		
Silzer	Silzer	J. Silzer	F. Silzer	V	V	V	V	V		
31	Palmer	Silzer	A. Silzer	F. Thorner	32	33	34	V		

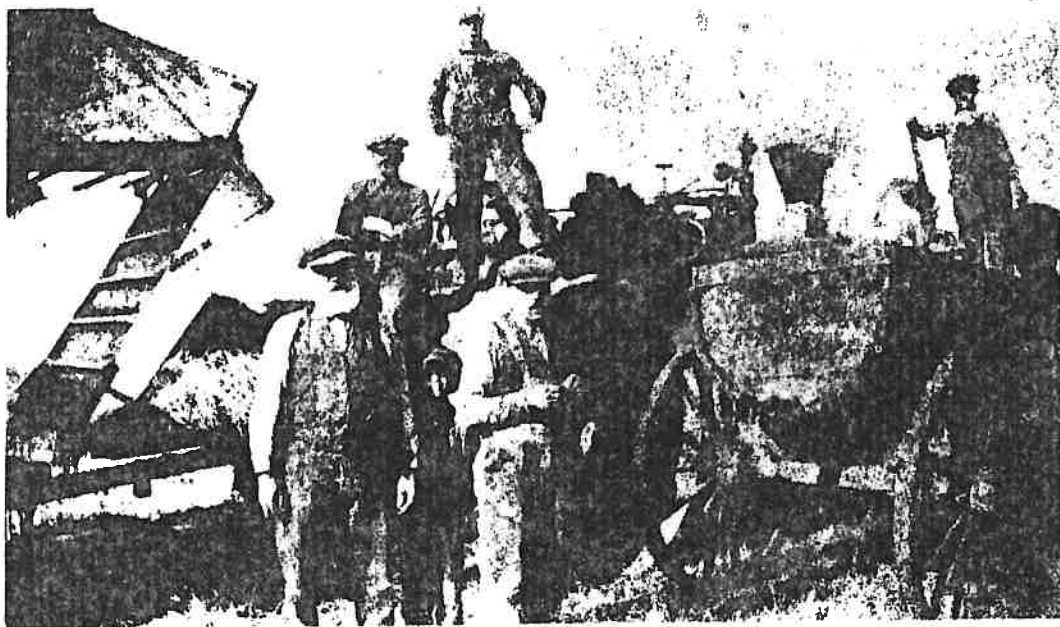
Tp. 24

Tp. 23

V - Vacant at that time



Children of Wiley School



Philip Hassman and his threshing crew