

Town of Ajax History – *Creating a Government*

Politically from 1941 to 1950, Ajax was virtually a "Crown Colony" with no local municipal government of any kind. Then in 1950, as a result of a petition of its citizens, Ajax, by order of the Ontario Municipal Board, became the Corporation of the Improvement District of Ajax with three trustees appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. The first trustees were: Benjamin de Forest Bayly, Chairman; John Mills, Vice-Chairman; and W.W. Rideout. These trustees acted as Council, School Board, Library Board and every other board that a municipality required. The Chairman performed all the duties of a mayor. It fell to these men to enact the first by-law of Ajax and to set up its first municipal administration. Two key men employed by the trustees were Bolton C. Falby, Clerk-Treasurer and Charles H. Reed, Works Superintendent.

By 1953, the desire for full and active participation by the citizens in an elected council and school board was strong. The Ajax Citizens' Association, formed by many civic-minded Ajacians, presented a brief to the Ontario Municipal Board urging that the Improvement District of Ajax become the Corporation of the Town of Ajax. The Municipal Board approved this step. On December 13, 1954, the people elected the first Town Council and the first Public School Board. Ajax had now assumed all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of an Ontario municipality.

The members of the first Ajax Town Council were:

- Mayor - Benjamin de Forest Bayly
- Reeve - John Mills
- Deputy Reeve - Roger G. Conant
- Councillors: William A. Parish, Kenneth Smith, Claude L. Rowland, C. William Scarff, Patrick F. Sheehan, C. William Laycock and Clerk-Treasurer - Bolton C. Falby

The members of the first Ajax Public School Board were:

- Barbara Dunning
- D. John Reid
- Stanley R. Kent
- Jack Hope-Brown
- W. Roy Shepperd
- William Le Gros

Roy Shepherd resigned after the election and was replaced by Bert Hill). Mona Campbell was Secretary-Treasurer.

The first Town Council carried on the work of the Improvement District in charting the future course of the new municipality. A Planning Board was appointed. The Council enacted by-laws dealing with many subjects including: land-use, subdivision control and subdivision agreements.