

*The Maple Ridge –Pitt Meadows Gazette, 14 January 1938*

Solomon Mussallem's address to 1937 Maple Ridge Council:

Gentlemen---With this meeting the 1937 Municipal Council becomes nothing but a memory. What it has done is recorded in the minutes, and in a few years' time will be regarded as history by the few who may be interested in the archives of Maple Ridge. Perhaps, once or twice in the next year or two reference may be made to the minutes of 1937, but after that there will be no general interest taken in them. But we, who have served during the past year, will remember and I feel sure that the memory of 1937 will be a pleasant one. We have all carried out to the best of our abilities the responsibilities with which we were entrusted, and we have had a year of splendid co-operation in the interests of the municipality. We have nothing to reproach ourselves for and the year's work has been one of the most progressive and satisfactory that I can remember....

## Fired Cop

*Robert Mussallem, grandson of Solomon, remembers:*

Once Grandpa Sol fired a town policeman for not doing his job in a responsible manner. A day or two later the copper showed up with a judge hoping to get his job back. The judge addressed the Reeve with the question, "Isn't it correct that you told my client that you'd have his head on a platter?" Reeve Mussallem shot back, "First let me remind you that you are in my court room and not in yours and second let me tell you that you are incorrect. I told him that I'd have his whole damn carcass on a platter."

Solomon and his wife Hanny raised six children, who all were overachievers. Their son George entered provincial politics and became the Social Credit Member of the Legislative Assembly for the Dewdney Riding for several years. Another son, Nicholas, became a provincial court judge while their daughter Helen became the head nurse for all of Canada.

Solomon Mussallem died in 1963 at the age of 81.

## BC Municipalities vs BC Electric

During one of his terms as mayor Solomon Mussallem represented Maple Ridge in the Union of British Columbia Municipalities and in 1949–50 was elected as its head. The organization had been set up to bring municipal reeves and their councils to a single meeting place to discuss mutually shared problems that included dealing with provincial and federal politicians. The following story is told about one particular gathering of this group.

The reeves had learned that BC Electric was charging more for power to some municipalities than others and decided to invite the heads of the company to a council meeting to be held in Langley, but they didn't reveal who would be in attendance or the purpose of the meeting. The BC Electric heads came over on the ferry from Victoria. The Langley council asked them to explain why Langley was paying more for electric services than some of the other municipalities, and in the end the visitors agreed to lower their rates. Then a council member asked whether the lower rate shouldn't be made retroactive and the surcharge paid back from the time it had first begun. Anxious to leave to catch a ferry back to the Island, the visitors agreed to a refund. They stood up to leave, but now more questions came from the audience, which comprised reeves from throughout the Fraser Valley. Each and every reeve asked for and was granted the same deal, which left the "power heads" to go home with their tails between their legs.



## Fire Trucks, 1946

On the left is a 1930 Triple A Ford left over from the Second World War Air Raid Protection program. A Bickle Seagrave pump featured between the two trucks was towed behind the Triple A Ford. On the right is a 1946 2-ton Ford with a second Bickle Seagrave 500-gallon per minute pump mounted on its front. The newer truck was purchased from Vancouver Dominion Motors in Vancouver. Ironically, Roger Harris, owner of Haney Hammond Freights, had purchased an identical truck for his hauling business between Haney and Vancouver. His truck was a fire engine red while the original truck that the Fire Department ordered was green. They decided to switch vehicles.

Several volunteer firemen, headed by Jack Stanyer and George E. Sayers, spent two months or more working in the Port Haney Brick and Tile machine shop to build a 300-gallon water tank, hose beds, ladder racks, and places to put various other equipment such as axes and shovels that were incorporated into the back body of the truck. The truck had two 12' long suction hoses that could be dropped into a pool, well, or creek. A 500-gallon maximum output pump mounted on the

front of the truck would then extract the water to put out the fire. The truck had two 20' and 24' ladders mounted on its top.

The volunteer Fire Department tried to persuade either the school board or Maple Ridge council to spend the money and run a 6" water line from the Lougheed Highway to the Dewdney Trunk Road to accommodate two fire hydrants near the Maple Ridge High School in the event of a fire. Neither the school board nor the municipal council took their advice, so when a fire broke out at the school at 5:10 A.M. on 21 June 1953, the entire school went up in flames and all was lost. Damp coal was blamed for the cause of the fire due to spontaneous combustion. The fire department managed to save the three-storey-high north wall of the school, which in turn saved the original McLean High School from going up in flames as well. The McLean High School later became the RCMP Police Detachment, court house, and the Motor Vehicle Branch.

The photo was taken at the Agricultural fairgrounds in downtown Haney. The high school is visible on the middle left-hand side while the Agricultural Hall is visible on the middle right. The school annex for grades 1 and 2 is in the middle rear.