

Turmoil, Strife Stray Dogs Still Dominate Police Time

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on its authority to control the city's finances, set the attorney's salary at \$1 per year.

This act brought on another explosion as Ashmore immediately brought suit in Circuit Court against the entire council membership. After a wild three-day session, Judge George Edwards ruled in Ashmore's favor and re-instated the \$12,500 salary that had been paid to previous attorneys.

But the turmoil didn't stop.

Mayor Hartom's appointee in the water department, a chap named Remaley, charged that many places were getting water without the benefit of a tap-in meter. Among these was the Felician Sisters Convent that, for years, had been given water-free on orders of the County Water Board. Other places didn't use a sufficient amount of water to require a meter. But the charges were made and many a battle raged in city hall until the matter was straightened out.

THE tumultuous Hartom years came to a close when "Old Bert" was defeated in his bid for a second term and William Brashear, the former city attorney, took over.

For the next six years things ran smoother, but there still were rumblings and charges of one kind or another as the city really was suffering growing pains.

All the while the various subdivisions, springing up all over the police, were forming civic associations and gaining political power.

Seizing this opportunity Harvey Moeke, a real estate man, and one of the guiding lights of the civic association group, banded them altogether and developed a political machine that carried him to the mayor's chair in 1962.

This didn't quiet the troubled waters and it wasn't long before a continuous battle sprung up between the mayor and the city council. For six long years this went on until Edward McNamara, then president of city council, broke Moeke's spell and took over as mayor last spring.

Meanwhile, through the years Livonia kept growing until the population has reached a point above 117,000 and the school system has encompassed 40,000 students in more than 30 buildings.

The City of Livonia has survived all of the turmoil and is headed for even greater heights.

For, like apple pie, you can do many things to it, but you can't spoil it.

City Roads Galore

Aside from the state and county roads there are 287 miles of streets in the City of Livonia. Of this number 120 miles are gravel.

The streets not under the city's jurisdiction include all of the mile roads, Inkster, Merriman, Middle Belt, Farmington, Haggerty, part of Newburgh and Wayne Rd., south of Plymouth.

"Things haven't changed too much," Bill Newstead, Livonia's first police officer, chuckled while recalling his debut as a law enforcement officer.

"Long before we became a city," he said, "Jess (Zeigler, the supervisor and later the first mayor) came to me and asked if I'd be interested in a policeman's job and start rounding up stray dogs that were infesting the entire area."

In those days it was a common thing for residents of Detroit and east side regions to drive to Livonia and drop off unwanted dogs. They were a drag on the neighborhood.

"I took the job," Bill recalled, "and would you believe it, things haven't changed much. Rounding up stray dogs still is one of the biggest jobs for the department. We get more 'runs' on dogs than anything else."

OF COURSE, Bill was partially kidding when he said "things haven't changed much."

From Bill's "one-man gang," the department now has grown to more than 100 men, and through the years has gained the reputation as one of the best law enforcement agencies in the state.

And Bill, the first officer, still is on the job. He's now in the licensing division and still getting a "kick" out of the job he took chasing dogs way back in 1940.

With him is Robert Baumgarten, another veteran, who has done an outstanding job. First with juveniles and then in the department of weights and measures, Officer Baumgarten has worked on many outstanding cases and often is called up for advice by other cities.

Now housed in its own home on Farmington Rd., the Livonia Police Dept., can look back over the past 20 years to a record of which any young city could be proud.

Starting with the one man in May of 1950 when the city incorporated, it was boosted to five officers during the first year and George Harmon, now dead, who had built up a creditable reputation on the Detroit force, became the first "chief."

It was Harmon who set the pattern for the force and each new chief, in turn, has added to the reputation of the force.

It is a staff of which the city, on its 20th birthday, can well feel proud.

And one of the proudest on this birthday is Bill Newstead, the city's first policeman who spent most of his time chasing dogs.



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