

## **Larry Burden's – This Day in the RCMP**

Former RCMP Larry Burden, Sgt. (Rtd. #35982), has spent over ten years researching and summarizing these achievements/events by specific date.

In an effort to share his research to a large group, Larry has agreed to permit the RCMP Veterans' Association, Ottawa Division to share his work on our digital platforms (Facebook and our website).

If you wish to contact Larry Burden or provide additional information about his research, please email him at larryburden8@gmail.com.

### **JUNE**

#### **June 1**

**1875** – The sod is turned at Fort William Thunder Bay Ontario and construction begins on the Canadian Pacific Railway. The new rail line heads west to Winnipeg running on the left bank of the Kamistiquia River. The construction of this railway opens the west and eventually goes all the way to the Pacific Ocean. The original troop of Mounties had the arduous task of trekking by horse and on foot to Winnipeg that lasted several weeks. Had the rail line been available their trip would only have taken hours.

**1915** – #5199 Cpl Clifford Weight was awarded \$25 from the Fine Fund for his meritorious service into the investigation of “theft of wheat” that lead to the conviction of the accused, Arthur Lohn.

**1928** – RCMP absorbs the short-lived Saskatchewan Provincial Police due allegations of political interference and the fact that province was near-bankruptcy during the Great Depression.

**1935** – The Royal Canadian Post Office releases a new 10-cent postage stamp depicting a Mounted Policeman on a horse. This is the first ever postage stamp to include a Mountie on it, several more will be produced over the next 80 years, including one in 1999 that is a reproduction of the original.

**1969** – During their “bed-in” at suite 1742 in the Queen Elizabeth Hotel in Montreal, singer John Lennon and wife Yoko Ono record “Give Peace a Chance” with friends Tommy and Dick Smothers, Derek Taylor, Murray the K and Timothy Leary. Earlier a brash student union president from the University of Ottawa named Allan Rock talked his way into the room and suggested he take John Lennon back to Ottawa to meet Canada’s new Prime Minister. John Lennon agreed and accompanied Allan Rock to Ottawa, but Pierre Trudeau wasn’t interested.

Two weeks later Lennon and Rock gave a press conference at the University and held a panel discussion on world peace. Afterwards Rock drove the Lennon’s around Ottawa and stopped by the Prime minister’s residence, but he wasn’t home.

Over twenty-five years later the same Allan Rock is the Federal Justice Minister and is instrumental in pushing through sweeping legislation imposing tighter restrictions on handguns.

Shortly thereafter the RCMP upgrades their handguns from a 38. Caliber to a 9mm semi-automatic. Even though he was quoted as saying “I came to Ottawa with the firm belief that the only people in this country who should have guns are police officers and soldiers.” when the members of the Force asked for permission to purchase their old revolvers as mementos of their careers, the request was refused and they are advised that because of the new legislation the weapons have to be destroyed. The RCMP then offers to have the handguns laser cut in half so they can be mounted on plaques at the members expense they are informed that wasn’t permissible either. Alan Rock then went on to a new post as Canada’s Health Minister and over the objections of the Canadian Medical Association he pushed through legislation legalizing “medical” marihuana in 1993.

## **June 2**

**1967** – The first recruit sworn in, as a member of the RCMP in Canada’s centennial year is #25366 Constable Eric James Suley of St. Johns Newfoundland.

**1977** – The Guidon leaves Canada for the first time to be paraded in the 25th Jubilee Parade for Queen Elizabeth II. The Guidon colour party was made up of #15548 Sergeant Major John Walker Maquire, and sergeants # 21310 J.E. Dunn and # 20541 G.S. Olgivie.

**1977** – The Saint John Ambulance Meritorious Certificate is awarded to #27639 Lindsay Jacobs for reviving an infant that had stopped breathing.

**1991** – The Governor General of Canada, the Right Honourable Raymond J. Hnatyshyn presented the new RCMP Ensigns to Commissioner Inkster at a ceremony held at the Training academy in Regina. The new Ensign along with seventeen divisional and section Ensigns were designed for use in a variety of different public events. Check out the different division ensigns here. Prior to the creation of the new Ensign the Force only has its “Guidon” or Regimental Colour. (See April 13, 1935)

## **June 3**

**1980** – Thirty-five years ago today, #35982 Constable Larry Burden was sworn in as a member of the RCMP in Moncton, New Brunswick.

**1912** – Honour Roll Number 38.

**#4837 Cst. Francis Walter Davies** age 23 was killed by an Indian known as Mike Running Wolf, near Brooks, Alberta, while trying to arrest him.

After three drunken Indians in a wagon fired a rifle at two local men, the victims reported the event to the local RNWMP. Upon hearing the description of the assailant, Cst. Davies

recognized him as Jim Ham a local member of the Blackfoot Nation who went by the name Mike Running Wolf. Davies saddled up his horse and tracked the wagon to the Canadian Pacific Railroad station and learned from the station agent that Running Wolf, his brother Pretty Young Man and a woman named Red Face who was carrying a baby had headed south. When Davies caught up to the trio he confronted Running Wolf and ordered him to turn the wagon around and head back to Brooks. When Running Wolf ignored him and drove off, Cst. Davies drew his revolver and fired a warning shot and galloped ahead of the team. When he turned his horse back towards them, Running Wolf fired at him with his rifle but missed. His second shot killed the policeman and knocked him off his horse. Running Wolf then climbed down from the wagon and stripped the constable of his gun belt, chaps and took his hat and horse and then rode it back to the reserve.

When the drunken murderer boasted about killing the policeman the residents of the reserve were shocked and appalled. They waited until he fell asleep and then tied him up and delivered him to the police still covered in Cst. Davies blood and wearing the items of kit that he stolen. Running Wolf was later convicted for the murder and was sentenced to life in prison.

Frank Davies had only served in the RNWMP for three years having immigrated from Hampstead, England. He was buried with full honours at the Mounted Police Cemetery in Calgary.

**1935** – King George V knighted James Howden MacBrien, the eighth Commissioner of the Force.

Commissioner MacBrien was one of the most accomplished men in Canadian history. Having retired in 1927 from a distinguished military career, Major General MacBrien was recalled to duty by Prime Minister R.B. Bennett who asked him to serve as the Commissioner of the RCMP. He led the RCMP from August 1, 1931 until March 5, 1938 when he died while still in office at the age of 59.

MacBrien was born at Myrtle, Ontario and first joined the North-West Mounted Police on April 7, 1900. He took a free discharge to join the South African Constabulary in February 1901 and upon returning to Canada in 1906, he joined the Royal Canadian Dragoons. In the First World War he fought in France and Belgium with the 1st Canadian contingent and was twice wounded at the battle of Ypres and at the Drocourt-Queant line. At the age of 38 he became the youngest Canadian to be promoted to the rank of Brigadier-General and was placed in charge of the 12th Canadian Infantry Brigade. In 1923 he was appointed as Canada's first Chief of Defence Staff.

When he retired in 1927, he pursued his interest in aviation and became a founder of the Canadian Aviation League is considered to be one of builders of air travel in Canada.

Commissioner, MacBrien's term as the head of the RCMP was just as impressive as his military career. Under his leadership the RCMP nearly doubled in size and became a truly national police force. He instituted the Aviation section, the Police Service Dog Section, the first Crime

Detection Laboratory and a museum for RCMP based in Regina. He introduced the RCMP Long Service Medal and created a Reserve Force of 300 men across Canada trained to be ready for service in the event of a national emergency.

It can be argued that no Commissioner before or since had as much of an impact on modernizing the RCMP and preparing it for an ever-changing world. His service to King and Country both as a soldier and a policeman was exemplified by the numerous awards he received over the course of his life and included; being decorated with a Distinguished Service Order in 1915, awarded the Companion of St. Michael and St George in 1918, and given both the Companion of Bath and the Chevalier of the Legion of Honour in 1919 as well as becoming a Companion of Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem in 1934.

Three years after his death, his 23-year-old son, Flying Officer Michael Desmond MacBrien was killed in a flying accident in Manitoba while training with the Royal Canadian Air Force.

**1936** – Columbia Pictures release “Secret Patrol” staring Charles Starrett (best known for his role as the Durango Kid) as Corporal Alan Barclay. Filmed on Vancouver Island, the 60-minute movie has our hero go undercover to solve the case after his best friend is murdered.

**1967** – Honour Roll Number 134.

**#25214 3/Constable Terry Eugene Tomfohr** was killed on duty at Burnaby BC

Constable Tomfohr had only been out of basic training for three weeks after being posted to Burnaby BC. He along with Constable #22949 R.W. Yakubchuk attended a late night complaint of boys throwing rocks at houses. While looking for suspects, Tomfohr heard some movement in the bush so the two members split up to search. Unfortunately Constable Tomfohr was unfamiliar with the area and when he ran after them, he unknowingly ran over 100-foot cliff in the darkness and died as a result of the fall.

On June 3, 2002 Constable Leigh Tomfohr attended the unveiling of a monument dedicated to his older brother and placed a rose on the monument.

**1969** – The Masset Detachment on the Queen Charlotte Islands off the coast of British Columbia had to call in the assistance of members of the Royal Canadian Navy and United States Navy to detonate a Japanese WW2 ship mine. The mine had drifted in the Pacific Ocean for over 25 years and washed up on the beach on the west coast of Graham Island. Local helicopter pilot Jim McDougall was flying by and spotted the mine lying in a pile of logs. The Naval demolition team used a ten-pound charge of explosives to detonate the mine. After the smoke cleared all that remained was a crater 25 feet across and 15 feet deep.

**1972** – Commendation awarded to #26946 Constable Gordon Manson of the Faust Detachment, in Kinuso District Alberta. Manson responded to a family disturbance where a man had ordered all of his family members from his house with shotgun. He was able to calm the suspect down and convinced him to surrender without anyone getting injured.

**2005** – Honour Roll Number 218.

**#37655 Constable Jean (Joseph) Minguy**, age 46, drowned when he fell overboard from an RCMP patrol vessel into Okanagan Lake at Vernon BC.

At approximately 3:00 pm, Cst. Minguy launched the detachment rigid hull inflatable boat on Okanagan Lake near the Vernon Yacht Club and as he increased the power to the engines he was thrown overboard and did not surface. He was wearing full uniform with kevlar vest, sidearm, ammunition but no personal floatation device. Members of the underwater recovery team recovered his body the following day. He had 23 years service with the RCMP.

#### **June 4**

**2014** - Honour Roll Numbers, 232, 233, 234, 235.

**#55685, Cst. Fabrice Georges Gevaudan, #49269, Cst. Douglas James Larche** and **#54868, Cst. Dave Joseph Ross** are killed in the line of duty while responding to a call of an armed and dangerous man on June 4, 2014 in Moncton, New Brunswick.

#### **June 5**

**1895** – First Detachment to be established in the Yukon

On this day #O.79 Inspector Charles Constantine departed from Seattle Washington on board the steamer “Excelsior” with the first squad of NWMP to establish a NWMP detachment in the Yukon.

The squad was the result of a previous trip he and S/Sgt. Charles Brown had made the year before to investigate the situation in 40 Miles, the largest community in the gold fields. As a result of his report to Ottawa recommending a detachment of at least forty to fifty men be established and he was sent back to 40 Mile with 17 officers and men. Departing by CPR train from Broadview Saskatchewan to Victoria with:

#O.99 D’Arcy Eward Strickland  
#O.102 Assistant Surgeon Alfred Wills,  
#869 Murray Hayne,  
#1694 Charles Brown, #2247 Henry Jenkins,  
#2323 Everett Ward,  
#2400 Frederick Webster,  
#2498 Stanley Newbrook,  
#2632 John Murray,  
#2649 John Brothers,  
#2876 John Thornton,  
#2884 Donald Sinclair,  
#2898 Stanley Churchill,

#2930 Angus McKellar,  
#2949 Eldon Jenkins,  
#2559 Philip Engel,  
#2973 Arthur Pinkerton &  
#2989 Matthew Gowler

A month later the group began a 1000-mile journey up river enduring incessant flies and heat finally arriving at their destination on the Yukon River at Forty Mile Creek on July 24, 1895. Then they had to unload their supplies from the riverboats and begin constructing a post before winter. By November they had built eight log buildings with sod roofs that they named “Fort Constantine” and settled in for the winter with temperatures dipping to -73 degrees!

## June 6

**1874** – Commissioner George French, along with 15 other officers and 201 constables and sub-constables with 244 horses departed Toronto on two Grand Trunk Railway cars en-route to Camp Dufferin (Emerson) Manitoba to begin the march west. Some men fearing being scalped by Indians shaved their heads and were mistaken for “jail birds” by civilian populace because the members were traveling in civilian clothing because the train traveled through the United States.

**1944** – D-DAY: Canada’s part in Operation Overlord’s includes 14,000 Canadian soldiers storming Juno beach between Courseulles and St-Aubin-sur-Mer, one of four coordinated attacks involving Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and the Free French Forces across a 60-mile front on the beaches of Normandy launches the allies newest campaign in Europe following the advance on Italy. Clearing the approaches to the beach minesweepers from the Royal Canadian Navy swept the sea for mines as Lancaster bombers and Spitfire fighters attacked Nazi defences.

The Canadian Army is tasked with pushing through the Germans and forcing a gap between Bayeux and Caen. Preceding the attack on Juno Beach were the men from the British Paratroopers and 514 men of the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion who jumped into the darkness the night before and rushed forward to capture a bridge near Caen. Hitting the beach under heavy enemy fire, the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division along with the 2nd and 3rd Armoured claw their way to higher ground. By 9:30 am the 8th Brigade capture Bernières-sur-Mer but the advance inland is held up by determined German anti-tank guns hold, who create a traffic jam in the village that slows the Canadians until evening. The Canadian 7th Brigade finally takes the communities of Courseulles, Ste-Croix and Banville but the cost is high in losses of Canadian soldiers. As the push continues on, the 9th Brigade forces its way to Bénét and then onto Villons-les-Buissons, four miles short of their objective.

By the end of the day the good news reaches command HQ, Canadian casualties are less than expected only 715 wounded and a mere 359 sons of Canada are dead. Scattered amongst the various Canadian units are serving and former members of the RCMP. History fails to record how many men left their defence of Canada and gave service in the Armed Forces to fight against tyranny in Europe because the official record only kept tract of those who served with the RCMP overseas, not those who took a discharge to serve in the regular military.

**1972** – Around 2:30 am, a man walked into the Nanaimo BC Detachment office claiming that he wanted to lay a charge for assault against some kids on bikes that had given him a rough time and damaged his car. He then invited #27210 Constable Donald E. Grudgefield to come outside and inspect the damage to his vehicle. As Grudgefield walked around a file cabinet he saw that the man had suddenly raised a shotgun. The constable attempted to dive for cover between two desks but was hit by a shotgun blast in the abdomen and leg. Constable Grudgefield managed to return fire with his revolver but could not get a clear shot at his assailant. For several minutes the two men talked back and forth with the gunman ranting on about how the police had ruined his life for arresting him for impaired driving, while Grudgefield tried to convince him to give up his shotgun.

After a while Grudefield began to feel faint from the loss of blood and shock and told the gunman that he needed to get to the hospital. The gunman agreed and then offered to drive him there. Declining his offer, Constable Grudgefield suggested that it would be better if another policeman took him to the hospital. The gunman agreed and then left the building. Grudgefield was then able to call for help and was rushed to the hospital, three hours later the gunman who was identified as John Stanley Puff was arrested.

Puff was convicted of attempted murder and sentenced to five years. Constable Donald Grudgefield was awarded a Commanding Officers Commendation for bravery and he eventually returned to work. He retired to pension as a Corporal in 1994.

**1975** – At approximately 2 am, Constables #30576 Glenn Brian Calder and #31983 Ronald David Noye of the Unit “B” Freeway Patrol in Coquitlam, BC, received a report of an overturned car burning in the ditch on the Lougheed Highway at the Cape Horn interchange near the Port Mann Bridge.

When they arrived on the scene, they discovered that the driver was trapped inside the vehicle screaming “God help me – God save me.” After fire extinguishers failed to douse the flames, Constable Calder went into the ditch and attempted to pry open the car door but was forced back from the vehicle by the intense heat. Constable Noye then joined him, and the pair of police officers made repeated trips into the ditch and as the flames spread towards the fuel tank. They finally managed to pry open the door and pull the badly burned victim out. As the two men were helping the injured man up the bank to the road, the flames ignited the fuel tank and the vehicle exploded. Both constables and the victim suffered severe burns and had to be treated in hospital.

For their bravery both men were awarded the Commissioners Commendation on August 16, 1975 and on February 11, 1977 both Constables were presented the Medal of Bravery by the Governor General.

**1978** – On this day Mr. Gordon Hemminger made a false claim that he had been assaulted by #33701 Constable Robert Needham after being stopped in his car at Beausejour, Manitoba. The complaint resulted in the constable being charged criminally.

At a later date Hemminger admitted that he had lied about the assault and he was then charged with public mischief and dangerous driving. Upon being convicted he was sentenced to \$1,500 in fines and Constable Needham sued him personally and received an out of court settlement.

Robert Needham joined the RCMP in 1976 and died while serving on duty in 1985.

## **June 7**

**1927** – The largest ever rally of the Ku Klux Klan in Canada is held at Moose Jaw Saskatchewan.

**1958** – Honour Roll Numbers 92, 93, 94, 95, 96.

While on patrol, five members of the RCMP, **#14588 Corporal Herbert Milton Smart, and constables #19469 Maurice Melnychuk, #19478 Glen Frederick Farough, #19879 David Melvyn Perry and #19915 George Herbert Edward Ransom** drowned in Lake Simcoe, near Georgina Island, Ontario.

Earlier in the day 33-year-old Corporal Herbert Smart and his four-member patrol had arrested four men for offences under the Indian Act. Around 10:30 pm that evening the five policemen were observed launching a 14 foot (4.25 meters) police boat with 35 hp outboard motor, on Lake Simcoe near Jackson's Point, in calm weather. While the members were on the lake, a sudden and violent electrical storm swept across the lake swamping the boat.

When the patrol had not returned, a search was undertaken the next day and the boat was found mid-lake floating upside down. The body of Cpl. Herbert Smart was found later that day. On June 26th, the bodies of Maurice Melnychuk and Glen Farough were found while the body of David Perry was located on June 30th. Constable George Ransom's body wasn't located until July 9th.

The purpose of the late-night patrol was never determined, but it was believed to have been connected to the arrests earlier that day. The disaster occurred so fast that none of the members was able to get a life jacket on.

Herbert Smart was buried in the Maplewood Cemetery at Windsor Nova Scotia he was survived by his wife Reta and their two daughters.

Maurice Melnychuk also 21 had just completed two years' service in the Force. He was buried in his hometown of Price George BC. Glen Farough was only 21 years old and had two years' service. His body was returned to his home in Stockton Manitoba where after a funeral at the Stockton Church he was buried at the Glenbow Cemetery.

David Perry's at 19 was the youngest member of the group had 14 months service. His remains were returned to his mother in Vancouver and interred at the Forest Lawn Cemetery in North Vancouver.

George Ransom age 21 was the junior constable in the squad having only served 14 months service. His remains were taken back to Melville, Saskatchewan and his parents buried in the town cemetery.

## June 8

**1889** – Honour Roll Number 136.

Twenty-year-old **Constable #2181 Alfred Perry** drowned in the Belly River, near Lethbridge Alberta.

On Thursday June 6th Constable Perry left Lethbridge Alberta to ride 20 miles to his detachment on the west side of the Belly River. Due to the high water in the river Constable Perry chose to take the ferry across but could not locate his detachment so he returned on the ferry and told the ferry operator that he would ride down river and find a shallow crossing. When he did not arrive at his post by Saturday a search party of 18 men was organized and dispatched to scour the area. In the process they learned that he had spent a night at the “Fixely and Weir” Ranch and had set out the following morning. The search team found signs that he attempted to ford the river in several different locations and after splitting the team in two, they located a spot where his horse tracks entered the river but did not come out on either side. Shortly afterwards his horse was located on the other side of the river still saddled. Additional searching revealed that Perry had spoken to a local farmer who had warned him of the treacherous conditions of the river in that area and had offered to put him up for the night. It was concluded that his horse had thrown him while crossing the river and though he was a good swimmer, he had not made it out alive. Ten days later his badly damaged body was located downstream. Alfred Perry had emigrated from England and had only been in the Mounted Police eleven months. He was buried at the Mountain View Cemetery, Lethbridge, Alberta.

**1906** – Honour Roll Number 29.

While on patrol, **#4119 Constable Thomas Robert Jackson** age 34 drowned when fording Six Mile Creek in Saskatchewan.

On June 6th 1906, Constable Jackson left Maple Creek Saskatchewan to ride to his detachment at Ten Mile. A witness had seen riding on the west bank of Six Mile Creek on June 8th but he never reached his detachment. On June 10th a local farmer found Jackson’s exhausted horse still saddled struggling to get up the bank of the creek. A search party was quickly organized and Jackson’s body was found a half-mile downstream the following day. It will never be known why he attempted to ford the swollen creek instead of traveling further upstream and crossing at Spangler’s Bridge. Cst. Jackson was single and had immigrated to Canada from his home in Brighton England where he had worked as a laborer and served in the British Army with the Royal Engineers. He was buried in Plot 5 of the RCMP Cemetery at Fort Walsh.

**1912** – American Arctic explorer Harry V. Radford is murdered near Baker Lake resulting in the longest manhunt in the Forces history conducted by Inspectors. J. Beyts and F.H. French.

**1935** – Ambassador Pictures release the 60 minute “Code of the Mounted” starring Kermit Maynard in his 5th of nine Mountie movies. In this role Maynard plays Sergeant Jim Wilson, in a tale of captured murderer who is broken out of jail by a woman who is a ruthless killer and leader of the criminal gang.

**1944** – #12392 Constable Howard Fitzallen is wounded in action, while serving with the Provost Corps in Italy during WW2. Fitzallen joined the RCMP in 1934 and transferred to the military on November 1st, 1939 and served until June 8th 1944. After the war he returned to work and served in the RCMP until he retired as a Corporal in 1954.

**1962** – In protest over the laying of criminal charges of intimidation against 71 members of the sects Freedom Council, 50 naked Doukhobor Freedomite women burned their homes to the ground in the area around Trail BC. The women then threw rocks at the RCMP and media. Later that month a group of Doukhobor women disrobed in front of Prime Minister John Diefenbaker as he is making a campaign speech in Trail.

**1968** – Honour Roll Number 139.

**#19508 Cpl. Terry Gerrard Williams** age 32 drowned in boating accident, in Sheet Harbour Passage, Halifax County, N.S.

Corporal Williams accompanied by school principal Hilary Brown was conducting routine Small Vessels patrol in Sheet Harbour. Around 10 am the seas became rough and witnesses observed the two rowing their small boat. Though the stern of the boat was low they did not seem to be in any difficulty. At approximately 1:50 pm, a local fisherman found the empty boat swamped. A search was conducted and Corporal William's body was found at 5:30 pm, Hilary Brown's body was recovered 3 days later.

Cpl. Williams had served in the RCMP for 13 years, and saw lots of the country in his short career having been posted in Ottawa, Newfoundland, Yukon and Nova Scotia. After his funeral his wife and three children scattered his ashes at sea.

In 1971 the “Corporal TG Williams Memorial Trophy” was established in his honour for highest score obtained in annual Division shoot.

**1975** – The Saint John Ambulance Meritorious Certificate was awarded to #29458 Constables Allan B. Wellwood and #28672 Graham L. Geddes for saving the life of Mrs. Ferguson by performing cardio pulmonary resuscitation at Lynn Lake, Manitoba.

**2000** – 99-year-old former Mountie drives his first police car!

Former RNWMP Constable #8740 Ernest Gibson had served in the RNWMP and the RCMP from 1919 to 1921. His career was cut short when an armed suspect that he was chasing in 1921

shot him in the knee. The wound led to his being medically invalided and forced him to retire from the Force. To celebrate his 99th birthday, members of the Central Vancouver Island RCMP Veterans Association arranged for him to drive a police car, this was the first he had ever driven one, haven only rode a horse while a member of the Force.

Ernest Gibson died on January 20th, 2004 at Comox, B.C. at age 102, then the oldest known veteran of the Force.

## **June 9**

**1934** – Seventeen men lead by Inspector H.M. Howell parade on horseback through the streets of Portland Oregon at the Rose Festival. Where at the Multnomah they gave an exhibition of mounted drill. The event was recorded in the Portland Oregonians editorial where the writer commented on the thunderous applause along the entire parade route.

**1976** -Four members receive Commanding Officers Commendations for their role in the rescue of a pilot and two RCMP passengers near Richer, Manitoba. The four members; #16752 Fabian Pavelick #18788 Donald Belfry, #26417 Alexander Graham and #27583 Brian Montemurro responded to the scene where a traffic observation plane had crashed. The pilot and his two passengers survived.

**1985** – At approximately 11:30 pm Constable Bert Schmidt observed a car traveling at a high rate of speed. When he went after the suspect vehicle it became involved in a collision and caught on fire. The suspect driver then ran from the car leaving his passenger trapped inside the burning vehicle. Without hesitation, Constable Schmidt ran over to the burning vehicle and unable to open the passenger door, he smashed out the window and pulled her to safety. For his courage and quick thinking in saving the woman's life he was awarded a Commanding Officers Commendation.

**1987** – While serving at Mission, British Columbia, #37087 Constable Terry Betts responded to an incident where an armed mentally deranged man was threatening the life of another policeman. Constable Betts distracted the suspect thereby drawing his attention away from the other member and preventing the death of his coworker. Betts was awarded a Commendation for bravery.

## **June 10**

**1929** – Due to concerns over its sovereignty the Canadian government clamps down on foreign access to the Canadian Arctic. From this day forward foreign Arctic explorers are required to register with the RCMP.

**1940** – The following members of the RCMP became part of the 3rd reinforcement draft to Provost Corps in WWII:

#8470 Sgt Frank Smith,  
#9423 Constable Thomas Fisher,

#10292 Constable James Greene,  
#10351 Constable Thomas Jones,  
#10794 Constable Robert Gammie,  
#11063 Constable Reginald Duff,  
#12527 Constable John Acland

**1996** – On this day, constables, #36470 D.M. Bishop and #36738 Dennis Esayenko responded to a complaint involving a glue sniffing youth who was armed and barricaded at a house in Pond Inlet, NWT. Upon their arrival the suspect fired shots into their police car. The members took cover and called in backup. Due to the remote location their backup had to fly to the scene and arrived 12 hours later. After the plane stopped in Clyde River, six additional members #36070 Robert Elliot; #37512 Thomas Raine, #37786 Larry Sharbell, #40559 Lorne Adamitz, #36396 Howard Eaton and #35784 John Ennis arrived. The members decided to prepare a drugged sandwich for the suspect to eat but in the interim the suspect began firing more shots at the police. They responded by firing tear gas into the house and the youth finally surrendered. A hungry fireman who was on standby at the scene saw the sandwich and ate it. Shortly thereafter he fell into a very deep sleep!

**2003** – Honour Roll Number 202.

**#40876 Constable Joseph Leo Ghislain “Gus” Maurice**, age 35. Died as a result of a police motor vehicle accident, on Highway 21 near Sherwood Park, Alberta.

Constable Maurice was working traffic enforcement on Highway 21 on the eastern side of Edmonton and was in the process of conducting a u-turn in his unmarked police car so he could catch a speeding vehicle. Unfortunately the driver of a gravel truck that was traveling behind him didn't expect him to cut across the road in front of him and couldn't stop quick enough to avoid crashing into the police car. The gravel truck smashed into the drivers' door and demolished the police car killing Cst. Maurice instantly.

Over 1200 people attended the 14-year veterans funeral in Sherwood Park and many others attended a second service in his hometown of Hull Quebec, including the Commissioner of the RCMP. Over the course of his career Gus Maurice served in the Albertan communities of Evansberg, Cardston, and Sherwood Park and participated in a United Nations Peace Keeping mission in Haiti. Seven months after his death his wife Kathy gave birth to their second child.

## June 11

**1940** – Four of the members, who transferred to the military in the 3rd reinforcement draft to Provost Corps on this day, were subsequently wounded in action.

#12919 George Rose was injured in a motor vehicle accident in Italy. #11939 Reginald Rance and #10292 James Greene were wounded by shellfire, Ortono, Italy. #13234 Frederick McCutcheon lost a leg in motorcycle accident in England.

Three of the four members transferred back to active service with the RCMP after the war. George Rose joined the RCMP in 1937 and retired a Corporal in 1959,

Reginald Rance served from 1932 to 1953 retiring a Sergeant and James Greene served in the Force from 1927 to 1947 as Constable. Constable Fred McCutcheon served from 1939 to 1945 and received a medical discharge.

**1953** – On this day in 1953 two members of the Royal Canadian Air Force parachuted into the remote community of Copper Mine NWT one thousand miles north of Edmonton, to provide emergency medical assistance to #15068 Constable Victor Patrick Cormier who was gravely ill.

Cormier had recently returned to his two-man detachment after an extended 30-day dog sled patrol and the next day while investigating a complaint of a theft he fell through the sea ice. The ice was beginning to melt and foam on the surface of the water appeared as snow and ice making it extremely difficult to tell solid ice from mush. Fortunately for Vic Cormier, when he fell through the ice, he was able to catch solid ice with his elbows and managed to pull himself out of the water but after taking a few more steps he fell through the ice a second time. Pulling himself out again, he managed to crawl and stagger back to the detachment nearly frozen. He dried himself off and changed into dry clothing and had a couple of glasses of rum from the bottle that was kept for “medical emergencies” and then crawled into bed. Due to his weakened state from both the arduous 30-day patrol he had finished and falling through the ice he became sick and developed a very high fever.

The community nurse could not get his 104-degree temperature to come down so she contacted the radioed the nearest doctor, 550 air miles away at Fort Radium who ordered that Cormier be evacuated to a hospital.

Unfortunately, due to the local ice conditions neither a ski or pontoon plane could land, so a request was made to the RCAF for assistance. The air force responded by flying Dr. John R. W. Wynne from Vancouver who picked up Cpl. Jack Strachan in Edmonton and they carried on to Copper Mine. When they arrived over the settlement, they first dropped medical supplies by parachute and then both men parachuted to the scene. As they drifted downward, a local Inuit woman seeing men floating to the ground, was so shocked that she fainted.

After gathering up their equipment, the medical team rushed to their patient’s bedside and after quick examination Dr. Wynne asked Cormier if he knew any prayers. When Vic said yes and asked why the good doctor advised him that he was going to insert a large needle into Cormier’s chest and if puss came out, he was going to die because there would be little the medial staff could do for him. Fortunately, only fluid was extracted and the doctor was able to drain the fluid from between his lung and chest cavity. This procedure continued for six days until the river ice cleared and they were able to airlift constable Cormier to Yellowknife. Vic Cormier spent nearly a year in hospital and a sanatorium in Quebec because they discovered that he had been exposed to tuberculosis, which was rampant in Inuit communities at the time.

Vic Cormier was finally able to return to active duty and was posted to Montreal and retired as a Sergeant in 1966.

Cormier joined the RCMP in 1947 after serving in the Royal Canadian Navy in WW2 as the only native Cape Breton'r aboard the HMCS Glace Bay. After retiring a second time he moved back to his hometown of Belle Côte on Cape Breton Island and became involved as a community volunteer in the annual Terry Fox Run and did his last run at the age of 78 shortly after recovering from surgery. His support of the Terry Fox Runs was recognized when on June 16, 2004 the Governor General honored Vic Cormier by awarding him the "Caring Canadian Award". Just before he died of cancer in 2006, Terry Fox's brother Darrell Fox traveled to Cape Breton Island, to personally thank him for raising more money in Nova Scotia than any other single person. By the time Darrell Fox arrived Vic's battle with cancer had put him in the hospital in Cheticamp so Darrell went to his bedside and spent some time with Vic. A few days later, Victor Patrick Cormier the man who cheated death in the Navy and in the RCMP succumbed to cancer, but by the time he died, Vic Cormier had single handedly raised \$125,167.70, for Terry Fox Run over 22 years, quite a feat for a man who lived in a remote village on the eastern shore of Cape Breton Island.

Amazing as his story was it gets better, for 52 years after Dr. Wynne saved his life in the Arctic he and Vic reconnected and in the renewal of their friendship they discovered that Vic's granddaughter and Dr. Wynne's grandson had been going to the same schools together in North Vancouver and known each other most of their lives and if not for the doctor saving his life in 1953, Vic's granddaughter would never have existed let alone gone to school for twelve years with Dr. Wynne's grandson!

## **June 12**

**1940-** Constables #10297 Thomas Brown, #11003 Charles Patterson and #13170 Howard Puffer transferred to the military 3rd reinforcement draft to Provost Corps in WWII.

**1947-** The first broadcast of the popular radio show "Sergeant Preston of the Yukon" was made this day from New York City. The radio drama was about the adventures of a Canadian Mountie and his trusty dog, King. The show continued to be broadcast on radio until 1955 when it became a television show that ran until 1958. In addition to creating Sgt. Preston, the writing team of George W. Trendle and Fran Striker also created The Lone Ranger and The Green Hornet dramas.

**1985-** While on patrol in Surrey BC, Constable Jack Saunders encountered two men fighting outside of a local hotel. As he got out of his patrol car, he caught sight of one man hiding a knife in his clothing while the second man lay writhing on the ground. He quickly examined the fallen man and discovered he had been stabbed in the chest. He immediately placed him in his police car and rushed him to the nearest hospital applying pressure to the wound as he drove. The victim was then rushed into emergency surgery where they repaired a punctured aorta. The assailant was later arrested and convicted of assault and Constable Sanders was awarded a Meritorious Certificate from the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem for saving the man's life.

**2003**– Canada Post releases a new 65¢ stamp commemorating RCMP Depot Division in Regina Saskatchewan as part of a series of stamps on Canadian Tourist attractions.

#### **June 13<sup>th</sup>**

**1939**- 20th Century Fox releases the 78-minute movie “Susannah of the Mounties” starring Shirley Temple. It is loosely based on the novel written by Muriel Denison in 1936. In the movie Susannah is the sole survivor of an Indian massacre in the Canadian west and she is taken in by the Mounties and watched over by Inspector Angus "Monty" Montague played by Randolph Scott and his girlfriend the commanding officers' daughter. In typical Shirley Temple style, she wins the hearts of everyone at the post and makes peace between the Mounties and the Blackfoot Indians.

**1977** - Constable #33041 Allen R. MacDougall rescued two youths from the Ottawa River and received a Commanding Officers Commendation.

**1996** - Canada Post releases four new stamps honouring the Yukon Gold Rush. One of the 45¢ stamps features Superintendent Sam Steele of the NWMP. A second stamp featuring Sam Steel is released on November 11, 2000.

#### **June 18th**

**1907**-On this day #3159 / O.133 Inspector Arthur Duffus used his personal car to transport his royal Highness, Prince Fushimi of Japan while on his visit to Calgary Alberta. This is believed to be the first time the RNWMP used an automobile on duty.

**1944**- The Chapel at Depot Division in Regina Saskatchewan was built in 1883 and has seen many items and memorial plaques dedicated over the years.

On this day, the two stain glass windows at the back of the Chapel were dedicated. The windows were the gift of the Maritime Provinces Association of Regina and were “dedicated to the men of Maritime birth who died while in the service of the Force.” The window on the right depicts a trumpeter-sounding reveille and is symbolic of the Resurrection. The biblical quotation at the bottom of the window reads, “For the Trumpet Shall Sound.” The window on the left is a standing Constable in Review Order with his head bowed and his rifle reversed. Its quotation reads, “Blessed are They that Mourn.”

The windows were commissioned in 1941 and were designed and created by Mr. William Edward Briffett who worked for the Robert McCausland Company of Toronto. The design was based on a series of photographs taken of #13143 Corporal John Roy Fraser who posed in Review Order. The Cost of manufacturing the windows in 1941 was \$600.

**1962**- Honour Roll Numbers 116, 117, 118.

Three Constables #19233 Elwood Joseph Keck age 25, #20215 Donald George Weisgerber age 23 and #20865 Gordon Eric Pedersen age 23 were shot and killed while investigating a complaint near Kamloops BC.

Around 9:00 am, on the morning of June 18, 1962, disgruntled thirty-one-year-old former mental patient George Booth, was upset about the reduction of his welfare payments took his rifle and headed into the Provincial Welfare Office in Kamloops. When he arrived at the Provincial Administration Building, he encountered two Provincial Game Wardens and when challenged about having a sheathed rifle, Booth responded in a threatening tone and told them in no uncertain terms to “get the hell out of there”. The Wardens then phoned the RCMP City Detachment. Constables Keck and Pedersen advised the Detachment Commander #12544 S/Sgt. Bernard d'Easum about the complaint and as they were about to go to the scene Constable Weisgerber who working in the office on his day off, decided to accompany them in plain clothes and unarmed.

The members quickly located the suspect walking away from the Welfare Office carrying a rifle in a sheath and as they tried to approach him, he made a threatening gesture towards them and it quickly became clear that he wanted nothing to do with the police and he refused to respond to their demands to drop the weapon and kept walking away from them. As Booth proceeded towards Peterson Creek, he frequently looked over his shoulder to keep track of officers and occasionally turned towards them leveling his sheathed rifle at them.

As numerous witnesses watched the event unfold, the three constables attempted to close the distance and they followed him onto a dirt road where the gunman removed the sheath from his rifle and began displaying it in threatening manner at the policemen.

Constable Weisgerber who was dressed in civilian clothing and unarmed, picked up the scabbard and tried to persuade the suspect to come to him to retrieve it, but the suspect ignored him and kept on walking away.

When the suspect came to a small wooden bridge over a dry creek bed he turned again and realized that one of the policemen was not following him and then he spotted Constable Pedersen crouching in the creek bed and it became clear to him that the police were trying to corner him. Without warning the gunman raised his rifle and shot at Pedersen, wounding him across the back. Constable Pederson returned fire at the suspect and struck the gunman on his right side, momentarily knocking him to the ground.

Finding himself without cover, Constable Keck in an attempt to get under the bridge for cover drew his revolver and began shooting at the suspect as he ran towards him. Before he could make it to the bridge the gunman managed to get back to his feet and shot three rounds at Keck and killed him, he then fired another shot at Constable Pedersen, killing him as well.

When the shooting began Constable Weisgerber who was unarmed took cover behind a large gravel hopper but when his friends were killed, he decided to try and run to the only radio available to call for backup which was in their police car parked two-city blocks away. He only made it a few steps before he too was fatally shot. The gunman then calmly continued up the dirt road and disappeared into the trees in Peterson Creek Canyon.

When people heard all of the gunfire, they began phoning the police detachment, and word filtered in that a policeman had been shot. Complicating the matter was the fact that Constables Keck and Pedersen were the only constables working the dayshift and they had taken one of the only two police cars with them. Then Staff Sergeant d'Easum raced to the scene after he instructed the office staff to call out every available member to assist and learning the fate of his three young constables, d'Easum contacted the Officer in Charge of the Sub Division and soon a large posse was organized.

Around 9:30 am, plain-clothes members of the Kamloops Sub-Division, General Investigation Section were advised that a city member had been shot. #16721 Corporal J. W. 'Jack' White #15596, Constables Ab Willms, and #18791, J.A. Norm Belanger decided to go to the top of the Peterson Creek Canyon in an attempt to cut off the gunman's retreat. Due to the fact that the detectives only carried only snub-nosed revolvers Corporals Willms and White raced home to get their hunting rifles and armed with a full-sized service revolver for Bellanger the three officers headed to the canyon.

The three members drove to the open grasslands above the Peterson Creek Canyon, 1,000 feet above the city until they could go no further because of the deep traversing ravines. They left their car behind and began walking towards the canyon without portable radios. Meanwhile a manhunt was organized below and was being assisted by a rented Bell 47 helicopter that was sweeping back and forth along the hillsides ahead them. The three officers decided to spread out about 150 feet from each other and move in a triangle formation towards their prey. They had to use extreme caution when crossing the gullies, they encountered because they could not see into the deep shadows or under the pine trees. By noon, the men were nearly at their intended position and could see and hear the several members searching far below working their way up the canyon toward them.

Constable Bellanger then heard something suspicious, and suddenly began backing away from the crest of the hill back towards Cpl. White with his revolver leveled and suddenly then the suspect appeared at the crest of the hill and began shooting at them.

Cpl. White fired his rifle and hit the ground midway between the suspect and the policemen, and the gunman's shots missed both White and Bellanger. As the three officers sought cover, the gunman dove to his right and took cover behind a two-foot-thick pine tree. The gunman was well protected and had a tactical advantage, laying behind the tree with his adversaries down slope. As the three policemen pondered their predicament their situation was further enhanced because their suspect was so close that they could hear the action of his rifle as he worked the bolt to reload.

Cpl. Jack White then decided to take the offensive and hoping to hit the gunman's elbow or flush him out, White shot at the dirt to the side of the tree the suspect was hiding behind but the suspect didn't panic and when White heard the gunman's bolt slam home again, he took cover as another bullet slammed into and adjacent tree spraying his forehead with slivers of wood. Keeping his wits about him Cpl. White raised his head and

saw the gunman roll onto his left side to reload and as he did, he exposed the back of his head. Corporal White aimed, fired and shot him dead.

Cautiously the three policemen approached the body of the slain gunman and confirmed he was dead and then waited for the posse to arrive. It was only after the arrival of the ground search team did the three detectives learn that three of their brother officers had been slain.

Three days later a joint funeral was held for the three slain policemen and over 1500 people attend the service at the Kamloops Memorial Arena. Constables Keck and Weisgerber were buried with full honours at the Hillside Cemetery in Kamloops and Constable Gordon Pedersen was buried in the Pleasant Valley Cemetery in Vernon BC.

All three men were married, and Joseph Keck and his wife Ann had a two-year-old son, she was expecting their second child. Seven months after the murders, Betty Pedersen gave birth to a son. Later a memorial Cairn in memory of the three fallen officers was erected at Peterson Creek and the three policemen who hunted down the killer were all awarded Commissioners Commendations for Bravery.

**1987-** After responding to a break and enter complaint involving the Hudson's Bay Store in Cartwright, Newfoundland, #33957 Constable R.A. Campbell was shot and wounded by the youth who had stolen 20-gauge pump action shotgun. Despite his wounds Constable Campbell was able to subdue and arrest the culprit and was later awarded Commissioners Commendation for bravery.

**1987-** #34921 Constable Peter David LaPorte actions in assisting the quelling of a riot at Drumheller Institution earns the Medal of Bravery.

On the evening of June 18, 1987, some 350 prisoners at the Drumheller Medium Security Institution in Drumheller, Alberta rioted. Constable LaPorte attended to the scene to assist and for over two hours he helped disperse inmates who were attempting to break into the institution's hospital and ensured that staff members inside were safe.

Then Constable Laporte helped the staff of the institution disperse groups of angry inmates, fight fires that had been set in many of the prison buildings and help evacuate both prisoners and staff members from flame and smoke-filled structures while other rioters threw rocks and other debris at them. Despite the fact that Constable Laporte's presence at the institution in his police uniform made him an easy target for the mob, he continued to perform his duties faithfully, and he was considered by prison staff as being instrumental in maintaining control of the dangerous situation.

## **June 19th**

**1841-**The first permanent commissioner of the NWMP George Arthur French was born on this day at Roscommon, Ireland. He died in London, England July 28, 1921.

**1874-** Two hundred new NWMP recruits arrive at Fort Dufferin, Manitoba.

**1877-** Honour Roll Number 2.

#409 Sub Constable George Mahoney age 20 drowned when crossing the Red Deer River on patrol from Battleford to Fort Walsh, N.W.T.

Sub Constable George Mahoney and a Metis scout were traveling from Battleford to Fort Walsh with a wagon team. When they arrived at the Red Deer River the two men discovered that the river was too deep to ford, so they decided to leave the team and wagon and cross the river in a small flat bottom boat. During the crossing the boat capsized and they fell in the water. Initially Mahoney was not concerned because he found himself in shallow water but when he attempted to wade to shore, he realized he was stuck in quicksand. As Mahoney was being sucked into the quicksand and recognizing his fate, he dictated his last will and testament verbally to his Metis scout who had managed to swim to shore. He drowned shortly afterwards and his body was never recovered.

Constable Mahoney was only twenty years of age and had served in the NWMP for two years.

**1914-** Coal mine explosion at Hillcrest Alberta leaves 189 men dead or missing.

At 9:30 am an explosion ripped through the No. 1 mine of the Hillcrest collieries at Hillcrest Alberta bringing death and destruction to the community of 1500 people creating 130 widows and 400 fatherless children. When the explosion occurred 1,600 feet underground there were 236 men at work in the mine and only forty-one men were recovered in the early stages of the rescue attempt. The force of the explosion was so strong that the engine house building located over 100 feet from the mouth of the pit was demolished. The eight-inch concrete walls of the building were smashed and its roof was blown off, sending debris over forty feet away.

By ten o'clock that evening, only sixteen bodies had been recovered due to the mass of debris hampering any rescue attempt. Included in the rescue attempt were Constables #5117 Frederick Mead, #4554 Arthur Grant and #5201 William Hancock all of whom worked tirelessly throughout the entire rescue attempt and investigation into the disaster.

On June 21st, a mass funeral service was held beneath Turtle Mountain for the dead who had been recovered to that point. Counted among the 189 dead was former Constable #5365 Frank Moult Bostock who had left the Force in 1912. The actual cause of the explosion was never fully determined, but investigators believed that methane gas and coal dust was ignited by a spark, causing Canada's worst coal mine disaster. The mine was eventually reopened but on September 19, 1926 a second underground explosion killed two miners.

All three members received commendations for their work.

Frederick Mead joined the RNWMP in 1910 and served until he retired as a Deputy Commissioner in 1947. Arthur Grant joined in 1907 and retired a Sergeant in 1920 and William Hancock joined the Force in 1911 and served until 1946 retiring an Assistant Commissioner.

#### **1943- Constable Roderick Ball, the Great Survivor.**

Very few people ever lived a life half as adventurous as the life of #10740 Constable Roderick Jerome John Ball, who joined the RCMP in 1929 and served until 1941 to serve in the military during WWII and returned to the RCMP in 1946.

In 1936 he received a commendation for completing a 2,400-km dog sled patrol between Stony Rapids Saskatchewan and Thelon, NWT and in 1938 he received a second commendation for his role in investigating an accidental drowning.

But his most famous adventure came after he resigned from the RCMP in WW2 to serve in the Royal Canadian Air Force as a tail gunner in a "Halifax" bomber. In 1943 during a bombing run with the 403 Squadron, his plane was shot down over Caen, France, and being unable to bail out Ball rode the plane to the ground and crashed. During the crash the ball turret he was in broke free of the fuselage and he survived, suffering a broken arm and leg. Taken prisoner he was moved to Stalag Luft III near Sagan Germany, where he recovered from his injuries.

While a prisoner of war, Ball participated in "The Great Escape" when on March 24, 1944 after months of digging a 340-foot tunnel, seventy-six of 220 prisoners managed to flee in a mass escape. Most of the escapees were easily tracked in a sudden snowstorm resulting in most of them being re-captured. Fifty of the escapes were summarily shot by Gestapo. Fortunately for Ball he was not one of the men who made it out of the tunnel. He remained a POW until he was finally freed on May 2nd, 1945. Of the 76 men who managed to escape nine were Canadian Airmen serving with the RAF and RCAF. Of those, Flight Lieutenants Patrick W. Langford, George E. McGill, James C. Wernham and George W. Wiley along with Flying Officers Henry J. 'Hank' Birkland, and Gordon A. Kidder, were executed. Only Flight Lieutenants Bill Cameron, A. Keith Ogilvie (RAF) and Alfred B. Thompson survived.

Hollywood immortalized the event with a movie based on this escape starring Steve McQueen and Richard Attenborough in 1963.

After his release from a POW camp at the end of the war Constable Ball returned to duty with the RCMP and continued with his career as a Mounted Policeman and retired in 1951.

**1983 -** The new 60,000 seat domed stadium in Vancouver was opened to the public. The government held a contest to name the new \$126 million facility. The winning name "BC Place Stadium" was proposed by several people including, #19037 S/Sgt Ihor Yaroslav (Hank) Dedish MB, NCO i/c of Kitimat Detachment. He along with the other winners received an all-expenses paid trip to Vancouver for the official opening.

**June 20th**

**1932**—Monogram Pictures releases the movie “Honor of The Mounted” starring Tom Tyler as RCMP constable Tom Haliday. The 57-minute movie tells the tale of a Mountie who is framed for a murder he didn’t commit. After being disgraced, our hero decides to clear his name and reputation by heading to the United States to get the real killer and bring him to justice. The movie is based on the 1914 silent film of the same name starring Murdock MacQuarrie.

**1942 - Japan Attacks Canada**

A Japanese submarine fired shells at the isolated Estevan Point on Vancouver Island, doing very little damage. This is the only time Canadian land territory came under attack during World War II. There were several submarine attacks against ships in Canadian waters during the war, including the sinking of HMCS Charlottetown Sept. 11, 1942, one km from Rimouski that resulted in the death of 44-year-old RCMP Master J. Willard Bonner (Honour Roll #73)

**1945-** Commendation is awarded to #14596/ O.515 Constable Henry Peter Tadeson for his investigation into the Black Market in Alberta.

**1964-** Honour Roll Number 126.

#17644 Corporal Ervin Jack Giesbrecht age 31 drowned when his patrol car plunged into the water at Hybord, Manitoba.

Cpl. Giesbrecht was patrolling the construction site of a new dam and was driving on the temporary Cofferdam prior to scheduled blasting to ensure that there was nobody near the area prior to scheduled blasting. For unknown reasons, his car drifted slowly to the right and slipped over the edge of the dam, and rolling onto its roof in 20 feet of water. Local fisherman made a rescue attempt and a heavy crane was used to retrieve the vehicle within 25 minutes, but Giesbrecht had drowned.

Giesbrecht joined the RCMP on March 25, 1952 and had been a former heavy-weight “Golden Gloves” boxing champion. He had been married for only 14 months and had an infant child. He was buried at the Garry Memorial Park in Fort Garry Manitoba.

**1967-** On this day, #24676/ O.1160 Constable Richard H. Bennett rescued three adults from St. Lawrence River after their boat had overturned near Caughnawaga Quebec. The heroic rescue occurred when Cst. Bennett dove into the swift water carrying life jackets to the four victims who were clinging to their overturned boat. Bennet had to dive underwater to rescue Mrs. Lise Lavallee and afterwards returned to the boat and rescued Emile Taillefer and Jen-Guy Lavellee. The fourth victim Romeo Girard was carried away by the current and drowned before he could be rescued. As a result of his bravery Constable Bennett received a commendation from the Royal Life Saving Society on October 11, 1968.

## **June 25**

**1938** – Commendation issued to #11037 Alfred Chad for his excellent investigation of a motor vehicle accident in Manitoba.

**1982** – The Medal of Bravery was awarded to #34920 Constable Mark Frederick Oliver for his role in saving two lives on this day in 1982.

Constable Oliver and BC residents; Norman James Lesage, Norman Stanley Walker, Peter Marochi and Peter Robinson of the Manning Park Emergency Services participated in a four-hour ordeal rescuing a man and a woman in danger of drowning in the Similkameen River near Princeton BC.

The driver of a motorized camper lost control of his vehicle and rolled down the embankment and landed on its wheels in the raging river near Manning Park. Though injured, the driver and his wife managed to pull themselves up onto the roof of the vehicle and wait for help. Cst. Oliver was the first to arrive on the scene followed by Park Rangers Marochi and Robinson who secured a rope from shore to the vehicle, and then waded chest-deep through the icy, swift-flowing waters, to render immediate assistance to the stricken couple. Cst. Oliver tried to use a rubber raft to make two separate rescue attempts, but the force of the current overturned the raft throwing him into the treacherous river. After the failed attempt with the life raft the rescuers convinced the driver to try and pull himself to shore using the secured line. As he attempted to do so, Peter Marochi entered the water to assist the man, but the current and the cold water had sapped the driver's strength, so he returned to the roof of the vehicle.

Peter Robinson then entered the water and after reaching the vehicle assisted the man in a second attempt to make it to shore. As they pulled their way along the rope, the force of the water pulled Robinson under the surface several times nearly causing him to lose his grip each time. When they were near shore Cst. Oliver helped both men to safety. Then Robinson returned to the camper to assist the woman but by then was in a state of shock and couldn't be rescued in the same manner.

Shortly thereafter a Mr. Norman James Lesage, had landed his helicopter nearby volunteered to try and airlift the woman from the river even though he was untrained in canyon rescue techniques. Mr. Norman Stanley Walker, an onlooker in the crowd who was experienced in helicopter rescue operations, came forward and volunteered to assist the pilot.

After surveying the scene from the air, Walker then took a position on the ground and guided the helicopter approach into the ravine. Then Rangers Marochi and Robinson secured a rescue collar on the woman while the helicopter hovered above. Relying on hand signals from Walker, the helicopter lifted her from the roof of the vehicle and carried her to a waiting ambulance, and then returned to recover the two park staff rescuers.

**1982** – Former Soviet Embassy cipher clerk Igor Gouzenko died this day having lived out his life under a new identify in the witness protection program. On Sept. 5, 1945 Gouzenko, defected to Canada taking with him documents and proof concerning Soviet espionage activities in

Canada. His cooperation and testimony lead to several arrests and criminal convictions for espionage.

**1989** – #29816 Sergeant R.J. Vardy responded to a disturbance complaint at a local church vicarage in Wabasca, Alberta. When he arrived he found an intoxicated man wielding a gun and at great risk to himself successfully disarmed the gunman and took him into custody. In recognition of his actions he was awarded the Commissioners Commendation for Bravery.

**1995** – The United States Army Meritorious Achievement Medal was awarded to #31553 Sergeant Robert LeMay for his participation in Haitian election process. His dedication to duty was also recognized by the United Nations, which awarded UNMIH Certificate and Medal. He joined the RCMP in 1971 and died while serving in 1997.

**1995** – Joseph Philip Robert Murray becomes the eighteenth Commissioner replacing Norman D. Inkster. During his term in office he implemented many community orientated programs and policies such as establishing town hall meetings to improve communication between the RCMP and local communities. In 1997 he ended to the RCMPâ€™s responsibility for airport security, thereby requiring local police agencies and private security to provide it. He adopted and instituted the Forceâ€™s Mission, Vision, and Values Statement, which became a pillar in the management structure of the RCMP. He served as until his retirement on September 1 2000, and was followed as Commissioner by Giuliano (Zack) Zaccardelli.

**1997** – Queen Elizabeth II admitted #26090 Sergeant Robert Humes into The Royal Victorian Order by presenting him with the Royal Victorian Medal in recognition for his coordination of the Royal visit to Newfoundland in 1997. The Royal Victorian Order was established by Queen Victoria on April 21, 1896, as a reward for extraordinary, important or personal services performed for the Sovereign or the Royal Family.

Robert Humes joined the RCMP in 1967 and retired as a Sergeant in 2003.

## June 26

**1939** – The Commissioners Commendation was awarded to #12179/ O.473 Robert C. Butt as master of the RCMP Patrol Vessel “Acadian” for rescuing two men from their broken down boat during storm. The âœAcadianâ€ was transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy in 1939 and renamed âœHMCS Interceptorâ€ and was decommissioned after WW2.

Robert Butt joined the RCMP in 1932 and was transferred to the Royal Canadian Navy On October 1st, 1939. During his service in the Navy he received a Naval Commendation for a rescue at sea. At the end of WWII he transferred back to the RCMP on September 27th, 1945 and served until he retired as an Inspector in 1970.

**1970** – Parliament revises Canada Elections Act and lowers the voting age in federal elections from 21 to 18. Now young Mounties who sign up at age 18 and had been serving their country and enforcing the law can vote.

**1988** – Sixty years after he transferred out of Old Crow, the Yukon Territories most northerly posting, retired Mountie #8716 Arthur B. Thornthwaite returned for a visit. He first enlisted in the RNWMP on September 4, 1919 having immigrated to Canada in 1911. He helped build the original detachment barracks in 1926 when the community moved there from Rampart House because of an outbreak of smallpox. Thornthwaiteâ€™s career in the far north took him on many adventures spending most of his time on snowshoes and traveling by dog sled investigating illegal trapping, smuggling and the occasional murder. In 1932 he participated in the manhunt for the Mad Trapper of Rat River. (See January 1932) On his visit to Old Crow he actually found people who remembered him!

**1990** – Justice Minister Kim Campbell introduces gun control legislation banning automatic assault weapons. The new legislation imposes a five-year jail term to anyone convicted of converting a weapon to automatic fire.

#### **June 27**

**1915** – #5098 Constable George Akrigg is awarded \$25 from the Fine Fund because of his good work and ability to interpret German, during enemy alien investigations.

**1925** – #4125 / O.199 Inspector George Fletcher lost all his personal effects when the detachment at Fort Smith, NWT burned to the ground.

**1990** – History was made in the North West Territories when Corporal P.A. Harrish assumed command of Arviat Detachment, thereby becoming the first woman to become a Detachment commander in the NWT.

**1995** – After over 120 years of businesses using the image, likeness and symbols of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for commercial purpose without paying royalties an exclusive marketing license is contracted to the Walt Disney Canada Company for five years. From then on copyright infringement issues are enforced and royalties are paid to the RCMP and used for charitable purposes. At the end of the contract the RCMP established its own Intellectual Property Office to manage the RCMPâ€™s commercial image, and deal with issues related to copyright, trademarks and patents related to RCMP technology.

#### **June 28**

**1915** – #5098 Constable George Akrigg is awarded \$25 from the Fine Fund because of his good work and ability to interpret German, during enemy alien investigations.

**1925** – #4125 / O.199 Inspector George Fletcher lost all his personal effects when the detachment at Fort Smith, NWT burns to the ground.

**1925** – Honour Roll Number 47.

**#9818 Cst Leo Francis Cox** age 33 drowned when his canoe struck a log near La Sarre, Quebec.

After completing his investigation in Abitibi Quebec, Constable Cox was invited to travel back to La Sarre aboard a large motor launch owned by the Abitibi Pulp and Paper Company. When the vessel was one mile from La Sarre it was forced to stop because the boat was unable to pass under a bridge because the water level in the river had risen too high. All of the passengers got off the vessel and began to walk the rest of the way to the town. Instead of walking, Cox decided to join three others in a canoe that had been tied to the larger vessel and paddle the rest of the way. As they were paddling the canoe, they struck a sunken log with such force that all four of them were thrown into water. Only one person made it to shore alive. When Constable Cox saw that Mrs. Gauthier was in trouble, he swam over to assist her but the two of them were pulled under water and they drowned. The following day RCMP members conducted a dragging operation in the area and recovered the bodies of the three drowning victims. His remains were transported to Ottawa where his wife and three children attended his regimental funeral.

**1933** – Commissioner MacBrien established the RCMP Museum at Depot Division.

**1958** – #19474 Kenneth Coburn receives a Commendation for disarming a Doukhobor bomb that is left in hotel at Vernon, BC.

**1963** – Responding to a burglar alarm at 03:15 am at the St Joseph Co-op in Altona, Manitoba, #15970 Cpl. John Ewashko and #20777 Constable Ralph Wride called the neighboring detachment for backup as they raced to the scene. Upon their arrival at the scene, they saw a man standing in the shadow of the nearby ice rink and ordered him to stay where he was.

Instead, the man yelled at them, ordering them to stay back and then he shot at them with a small caliber handgun. The policemen returned fire and during the gun battle the officers made their way back to their patrol car and radioed for help. Then the suspect fled the scene in a dark colored car and the policemen followed in pursuit while the suspects continued to shoot at them. The chase continued towards the town of Letellier where the criminals encountered a roadblock and were ordered out of the vehicle at gunpoint. The two American criminals; William Haldane and Ed Welsh were arrested and Welsh was treated for a bullet wound he received in the gun battle.

When the policemen searched the suspect vehicle they found several loaded guns, explosives, extra license plates and survival gear. When they returned to the scene of the crime they discovered that the criminals had moved a 400-pound safe to the rear of the building and had drilled a hole in it so they could blast it open.

The two accused were charged with 19 criminal offences and received sentences of seven years for shooting at the police and five years for the break, enter and theft. On November 30, 1963 Cpl. John Ewashko and Constable Ralph Wride bravery and perseverance was recognized when they were awarded Commissioners Commendations.

**1985** – Canada Post releases two new 34-cent postage stamps depicting two historical NWMP forts; Fort Whoopup and Fort Walsh.

**1996** – The new Commissioner Class high-speed catamaran Patrol Vessel “Inkster” is commissioned. The 72-foot/19.75-meter 36 knot aluminum vessel has a full time crew of four, and is a floating detachment posted out of Prince Rupert BC. The new vessel (hull number 256) was built by Allied Shipbuilders of North Vancouver, BC and named in honour of former Commissioner Norman Inkster.

**2005** – The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) announces that the first twenty-two regular members and one civilian member will be invested into recently created “Order of Merit of Police Forces”. This Order within the Canadian Honour System is equivalent to the Order of Military Merit.

## **June 29B**

**1935** – After Doukhobor protestors threw rocks at the policemen who were attempting to prevent members of the radical Russian sect from disrobing during their celebration of their exile from Russia in 1895. #12034 Constable Jack Love had to be transported to hospital in Prince Albert Saskatchewan by aircraft after he was severely injured when hit in the head with a large rock.

**1972** – The Supreme Court of Canada rules that motorists can seek legal counsel before taking breath tests in impaired driving investigations.

**1986** – Honour Roll Number 184.

**#36152 Constable Scott Gordon Berry** age 27 was killed when he came in contact with a live power line near Clandonald, Alberta.

At 4:40 am Constable Berry was dispatched to a serious motor vehicle accident three miles south of Clandonald, Alberta. Upon his arrival he discovered that a pick-up truck had smashed into a power pole and a 14,400-volt power line was lying on top of the truck and was suspended waist high across the highway.

He noted that a young woman, Christine Yaceko, had been electrocuted after she was tried to assist the three injured individuals in the vehicle. Yaceko was lying in the ditch beyond the crashed vehicle was still alive but was injured and in shock. Constable Berry decided to try and to assist her, so he crouched down to go under the hydro wire hanging across road, but he accidentally brushed against the live power line.

The first electrical jolt hit him so hard that he was thrown back against the live wire and set off a series of electrical shocks to his body that left him stunned and barely breathing. He was rushed to the Vermilion Health Centre by ambulance but died enrolee.

Constable Berry joined the RCMP on July 21 1980 and was married. He was buried at the Cedar Valley Memorial Gardens in his hometown of Nanaimo British Columbia.

**1992** – Commendation is awarded to #40241 Cst. Brian Arcand for saving the life of a two-year-old child caught in mechanism of security gate at Ottawa air show.

### **June 30**

**1912** – A tornado roars through the downtown core of Regina Saskatchewan. The five-minute rampage kills 28 people, damaging or destroying several buildings including three churches, the new Carnegie Library. Over 2,500 people are left homeless.

**1992** – As part of Canada's 125th anniversary celebrations, Queen Elizabeth II unveils a new statue on Parliament Hill depicting Her Majesty riding on the horse "Centennial" that was presented to Her Majesty on her visit to Depot Division on July 4, 1973 as a gift from the RCMP by then Commissioner W. L. Higgit. The statue was created by British Columbia sculptor Jack Harman and took two years to complete and is the only equestrian monument to the Queen in the entire Commonwealth. "Centennial" was the grandson of the famous racing horse "Man O' War". "Centennial" was actually chosen by the Queen during a visit to the stables at "N" Division.

**1993** – Canada Post releases a new series of 43¢ Postage Stamps commemorating famous Canadian Parks. Included in the series are two stamps that have a significant historical connection to the RCMP; Herschel Island Park, in Yukon and Cypress Hills Park in Saskatchewan. American whalers initially used Herschel Island as a wintering station from 1890. Over concerns of national sovereignty the RNWMP established a detachment on the island and maintained a presence there until the detachment was closed in 1964. The Cypress Hills is an area steeped in history, and once was the hunting grounds of Cree and Metis. The massacre of local Indians by American whisky traders led to the creation of the North West Mounted Police and was the location the NWMP's Forts Whoop-up and Walsh.