

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.

December 1st

1874 - Chief Crowfoot of the Blackfoot nation called on 38-year-old Assistant Commissioner Macleod called “Stamixotkan” or Bulls Head because of the buffalo head over his door. The visit leads to a formal meeting with Macleod and all the chiefs of the Blackfoot nation. After the passing of the peace pipe during the meeting, Macleod remarked, “I come in friendship.” And explained that the police had not come to steal the Indians land. Chief Crowfoot stated “Before you came the Indian crept along in fear,” and expressed his and others approval and stated they were glad the redcoats were driving away the whiskey traders who robbed them of their wives, their horses and their robes.

1898 - The Arctic Express Company was to take over mail delivery in Yukon from the NWMP but the company gave up on the contract on their first delivery to the Stewart River Post. #1818 Corporal Fred Green and his trusty dog team then reassumed delivering the mail.

1912 - Doctor Patrick Doyle was appointed Acting Assistant Surgeon for Yukon and became #O.218 Surgeon Doyle on January 1, 1923. In the early days of the Force there was no rank of Assistant Surgeon therefore appointed doctors were called Acting Assistant Surgeons.

1922 - New Brunswick drivers switch to driving on the right-hand side of the road.

1941 - #13747 Constable Alvin Evans awarded Royal Canadian Humane Society parchment for saving woman from fire at Rose Valley, Sask.

1953 - The rank of “Corps Sergeant Major” is added to the Force.

1968 - Constable Joseph G. Netsena of the Eastend Saskatchewan RCMP was the first adult at the scene of a drowning. Several young boys were playing on the ice on the Frenchman River when a five-year-old child broke through. Eight-year-old Peter Kuystermans jumped in the water and managed to push his brother Arnold to safety but then slipped back into the frigid water and disappeared below the surface. When Constable Netsena arrived, he spotted a blue toque under the ice and rushed into the river and found the boy's body. He immediately began mouth-to-mouth resuscitation on the child as he waded to shore and then to the nearby hospital. Unfortunately, his efforts were in vain because the hospital staff was unable to revive him. For his efforts in the attempted rescue constable Netsena was awarded the Commissioners Commendation.

1969 - Canadian Police forces begin using the Breathalyzer to test for blood alcohol levels of suspected impaired drivers.

1978 - Constables Ken Chislett and Barry Clarke and Mr. Josiah Ittulak of Nain Labrador tried in vain to rescue a man from the icy waters of Nain Harbour after his snowmobile broke through the ice. The trio's efforts were recognized by being awarded Commanding Officers Commendations.

1991 - #40404 Constable Joseph Marc Comeau responded to the complaint of a highly intoxicated man who was armed with a .22 caliber rifle and an axe at Pauingassi Reserve, Manitoba. Undaunted by the violent man's threats; Constable Comeau disarmed him and took him into custody. For his courage and presence of mind he was awarded the Commissioners Commendation.

2002 - While serving with United Nations Forces in Yugoslavia in 1993 Constables #46570 Glenn Peters, #47255 Mark Lundie, #48883 Christian Bichler and #49472 Warren Vogan found themselves in the middle of a combat zone. Their actions under fire were formally recognized on this day when they received the Commander-in-Chief commendation for their courage during battle.

December 2nd

1970 - FLQ terrorists kidnap victim British Trade Commissioner James Cross, is found alive by police after they surround house in Montreal.

1971 - 45-year-old #15600 / O.858 Staff Sergeant Lloyd Stancil Smith and #21226 Corporal William Sanford Hacock age 32, earned Commanding Officers Commendations after they responded to a shooting in Colwood BC. At approximately 3:45 pm the detachment received report that a shooting had occurred in a Canadian Pacific Railways

crew train. The two policemen accompanied by Corporal D. Peterson and Constable B. McCombe rushed to the scene and S/Sgt. Smith spotted a man lying on a bunk in a railway car. When Smith spoke to him, the man rolled off the bunk and yelled, "he's got a gun" as a second man entered the car with a shotgun. Smith yelled a warning to the others as the two men began to fight and then the gunman ran out of the rail car. Then Smith saw that the man from the bunk was suffering from a gunshot wound and was then transported to hospital by ambulance. The gunman advised S/Sgt, Smith that he had no quarrel with the police but he was not going to give-up his gun. As Smith kept him distracted, Corporal Hacock climbed on the roof of the railway car and worked his way in behind the suspect. When the opportunity presented itself, he rushed the gunman and seized him by the legs causing him to drop the shotgun and was arrested.

1974 - Fort MacLeod Alberta, constables #30876 David C. Lock and #31463 James Arthur McGibbon received a complaint that three youths had guns and were firing them into the air. The constables located the trio inside a local restaurant and approached them. The youth then pointed their weapons at the police officers and after talking with the boys for several minutes they succeeded in disarming them. In recognition of their courage and the calm manner in which they handled the dangerous situation both men were awarded Commanding Officers Commendations.

1986 - Special Constable Harvey Russell Black of the Fond du Lac Saskatchewan rescued the life of a fellow member from the waters of Lake Athabaska. The men were traveling across the lake ice in a snow vehicle when the ice gave way and they plunged in to the water. For his valour Constable Black was awarded the Commanding Officers Commendation.

1995 - #43217 Constable S.F. Bruinsma received commendation when he entered burning building and rescued a disabled man at Selkirk, Manitoba.

2003 - It was a busy day for Surrey British Columbia Dog Handler, #41509 Constable Dean Muir and his dog "Lar". They caught four car thieves in three separate incidents in the one-day.

December 3rd

1978 - Former terrorists Jacques Cossette – Trudell and his wife Micheline Lanctôt return to Quebec from exile in Cuba and France. He and members of his Liberation Cell of the Front de libération du Québec (FLQ) had kidnapped British Trade Minister James Cross from his Montreal home on October 5, 1970. When the location of Cossette-Trudel's hideout was discovered by the police, they negotiated his release that included the publication of the FLQ' political manifesto, a demand for the release of 27 convicted FLQ militants and the safe passage to Cuba for he and his wife and four other terrorists.

Cossette-Trudel and his wife stayed in Cuba for four years before seeking asylum in France. In 1977, then Quebec Premier Rene Levesque stated that he was seeking a pardon for the pair. On this day, exactly eight years after the release of James Cross and their flight from justice to Cuba, the two terrorists returned to Canada. They plead guilty to charges of kidnapping and attempted extortion on December 13th 1978, and were sentenced to five years' probation and two years in jail. After serving only eight months of their sentence they were released on parole!

2003 - #44673 Constable James Shields awarded a St. John Ambulance Lifesaving Award for saving the life of a boy who had fallen through ice at Mineville, N.S. A civilian had pulled the child out of the icy water and upon his arrival at the scene Cst. Shields performed CPR until paramedics arrived.

December 4th

1900 - Constable #370 Alexander MacKenzie who served from 1879 to 1900 and was invalided was granted pension by Order in Council of 33¢ per day.

1946 - Honour Roll Number 84.

#12983 Constable Wilfred James Cobble died of injuries he received, when he was struck by a truck on the highway, at Lavoy, Alberta.

At approximately 7:00 pm on December 3rd Constable Cobble #10729 Corporal Augustus A. Cantrill were driving back to Vegreville from Inisfree when they found a truck loaded with coal parked on the side of Highway 16 without any lights on. They located the driver and returned him to the scene and instructed him to either repair the vehicle or tow it away. While Cantrill waited in the police car Constable Cobble went to the front of the truck to write down the licence number. While he was writing his notes Cantrill observed a truck coming towards them and flicked lights to warn the approaching vehicle. The truck drove past the car and then slammed into the coal truck. Constable Cobble was propelled to the shoulder of the road and was found unconscious suffering from a fractured skull. With the help of a civilian who stopped at the scene Cantrill loaded his partner into the back of the police car and rushed him to the hospital in Vegreville. While the medical staff attended to the policeman Cobble's wife Kathleen was rushed to the hospital. He died with her by his side at 4:00 am the following morning.

Wilfred James Cobble had a varied career in the RCMP. He had served on the musical ride and been a dog handler. He was buried at the Riverside Cemetery in Vegreville Alberta.

1973 - The Trudeau government passes a bill outlawing wiretapping and other forms of electronic surveillance except by police forces.

2000 - Constable #49421 Tony J. Vienneau was returning home from a course traveling across the bridge over the Saint John River in Perth-Andover New Brunswick when he observed a 15-year-old boy standing on a 15-inch rail on the bridge in -27-degree weather. After radioing for assistance, he approached the youth and learned that he was going to jump to his death because of family problems. Constable Vienneau then climbed up on the rail and then spent over an hour talking with the despondent boy and eventually convinced him to go with him to the hospital. Due to the extreme cold both Constable Vienneau and the boy had to be treated for hypothermia. On October 27, 2003 Constable Vienneau was awarded the Commissioners Commendation for bravery.

December 8th

1882 - Cree/Saulteaux leader Mistahimaskwa (Big Bear) 1825-1888 finally signs Treaty #6 six years after the rest of his tribe. He grudgingly signed because his people were starving because all the buffalo had been hunted to near extinction. Because he had not signed the Treaty his 114 remaining followers were ineligible for government rations, and were living in cloth and stick tents.

1934 - The crew of the Patrol Vessel "Preventor" is awarded a Commendation for their role in salvaging a crashed seaplane.

1943 - #13068 Sergeant Cecil L. Ray was wounded in action at San Appolinari, Italy while serving as a Lieutenant with the Provost Corps. Ray joined the RCMP in 1937 and returned to the Force after serving in WWII from 1939 to 1946. He retired to pension in 1963.

1973 - After a mentally disturbed youth with a shotgun locked himself in his house with his sister and threatened to kill her and his parents when they returned home. Members of the Stewiacke, Nova Scotia Detachment then surrounded the house and a tense standoff began. It was alleviated when Menzie Stewart, a friend of the gunman phoned him and gained sufficient trust to allow him to enter and take his sister out of the house. When the man found himself alone, he called the detachment and requested that a policeman come inside to speak with him. #26504 Constable Gordon D. Goldsworthy volunteered and went inside but the gunman changed his mind and at gunpoint ordered the constable to get out. Remaining calm, Constable Goldsworthy spoke with the young man and eventually convinced him to drop the weapon and surrender. In recognition of their bravery Menzie Stewart and Constable Goldsworthy were awarded Commanding Officers Commendations.

1984 - Star of Courage, #36355 Constable Laurier Roland Cadieux. SC.

Around 11:00 pm, Constable Cadieux was off duty having a meal at the Keg Restaurant in Langley, British Columbia, when he heard two shotgun blasts. When he investigated, he found a woman brandishing a revolver in the midst of an armed robbery. He quickly overpowered and disarmed her, and then heard another gunshot, turned and saw a man holding a sawed-off shotgun fleeing up a flight of stairs. He then discovered that the revolver he had seized from the female assailant was defective but chased after the other gunman anyway and confronted him. Identifying himself as a policeman, and bluffing him with the defective handgun Constable Cadieux convinced the culprit to drop his weapon. Initially the man complied, but when he realized he had been bluffed, he lunged at Cadieux and a struggle ensued. With the help of restaurant staff and patrons, the gunman was subdued. While this was occurring, the woman was rescued by a third accomplice and they fled from the scene. Shortly thereafter the Police arrived and took the gunman into custody and the two others, along with a fourth accomplice, were later arrested and charged.

On June 26, 1987 Constable Laurier Roland Cadieux was awarded Canada's second highest civilian award for bravery, the Star of Courage.

December 9th

1878 - #O.35 Surgeon Robert Miller along with Constables, #293 William Robertson, #294 William Ramsay, #299 John Wymerskirk, #301 Harry Keenan, #302 Joseph Hanafin, #307 William Davis, #308 Harry Walker, and #355 William Latimer opened the first detachment at Prince Albert Saskatchewan.

1938 - In recognition of his excellent work on murder investigation in Saskatchewan, #12838 Constable William McKayeff received a commendation.

1969 - Constable Stephen William Hryciuk responded to a complaint that a deranged man was threatening a woman with a knife in downtown North Vancouver. When he arrived on scene and found the man walking down the street with his two small children. When Hryciuk approached the man, he began running and then suddenly grabbed his daughter and holding a knife to her throat told the policeman to leave him alone. As he attempted to reason with the man and move closer to him, Constable Franciscus A.E.M. Naaykens arrived on scene and momentarily distracted him. Taking advantage of the distraction Constable Hryciuk pounced on the assailant grabbing for the knife. A struggle ensued in which he received superficial knife wounds to his hand but with the assistance of Constable Naaykens they succeeded in subduing the man. Constable Hryciuk was awarded a Commanding Officers Commendation.

1989 - Honour Roll numbers 214 and 215.

Pilot #S/3367 (**formerly #33112) **Special Constable Nancy Marie Puttkemery** age 34 and #S/1969 **Special Constable Vincent Norman Timms** were stationed in Edmonton Alberta at the time of their deaths. They were working in an aerial surveillance project and were returning to Edmonton in their Cessna 182 after the weather conditions began to deteriorate. Due to the limited visibility and heavy blowing snow, S/Cst. Puttkemery decided to return to Calgary and land there. As she made a left turn at low altitude, the left wing of her plane struck a wire on the Cantel Radio Tower near Crossfield, Alberta. The plane plummeted to the ground and was completely demolished and both officers were killed on impact.

**Nancy Puttkemery was born in Beloit Wisconsin and had originally joined the RCMP as a civilian member in 1975 and later that year converted to a regular member. In November 1986 she was transferred to Air Division and as a pilot converted to a Special Constable. (For specialty pay scale reasons pilot's earned higher rates of pay than various ranks)

Vincent Norman Timms was a native of East Ham, England and joined the RCMP "Special O" surveillance section in 1978.

December 10th

1996 - After responding to a complaint involving a knife wielding at the Nanaimo BC Ferry Terminal, Constables #30652 James Porteous and #41437 Gary O'Brien are confronted by a man high on drugs. When the suspect rushed Constable O'Brien and attempted to stab him with the knife, O'Brien shot him once fatally wounding him. A Coroner's Inquest cleared both officers and ruled the shooting was in self-defense.

2001 - While off duty traveling in his own car near Dundas, Ontario #39112 Constable J.P.G. Bourbonnais observed a vehicle hit black ice and skid off the road and roll over into 2-4 feet of water in the ditch. Constable Bourbonnais ran to assist driver but could not open the vehicles' doors to get to the unconscious driver whose head and upper torso was submerged. Recognizing that he could not rescue the victim by himself, he solicited the assistance of three bystanders and they succeeded in wrenched a door open and then cut the unconscious driver from seat belt. Constable Bourbonnais then gave revived the victim using CPR and first aid and then provided warm clothing and comfort after he was revived. In recognition of his professionalism and quick thinking in the rescue Constable J.P.G. Bourbonnais was awarded the Commissioners Commendation for outstanding service.

December 11th

1911 - Alberta brings in first Motor Vehicle Act and sets the speed limit in towns and cities at 15 mph, and at 20 mph in less settled areas. The Act stipulates that vehicle's outside of urban areas are required to slow down to 6 mph when approaching or passing pedestrians and horses. In addition, drivers are required to assist any horseman who required assistance should the automobiles startle their horse. All male drivers over 16 and young ladies over 18 are required to obtain a driver's license.

1949 - The Canadian Government bans Comic Books!

1961 - The Assistant Military Attaché at Soviet Embassy expelled for receiving secret Canadian documents.

1968 - Honour Roll Number 138.

#26042 Second Class Constable James Alexander Kerr age 21 was killed when he was struck by a passing vehicle near Ste Anne, N.B.

Constable Kerr had only 16 months service when he assisted in the investigation of a fatal motor vehicle accident that had occurred early in the day. At 7:30 pm he was crossing the road in the dark with his back turned to traffic and he was struck and propelled over 235 feet. The driver of the car didn't realize that the police were present because none of the vehicles were displaying their emergency lights except for one car that had a small red portable "fireball" light on its roof. The driver did not see Constable Kerr in part because the policeman's clothing was dark and he was partially blinded by the headlights of an oncoming vehicle.

He was buried near his parent's home in Duart Ontario.

1990 - #28822 Corporal R.A. Nichol and #36785 Constable M.S. Lukca received Commanding Officer's Commendations for the apprehension of an armed suspect at Hanes Junction, Yukon.

December 12th

1899 - An Order in Council finally grants a life pension of 30¢ per day to #992 Sergeant William Perrin who had been invalidated on June 30, 1890 with locomotor ataxia.

1955 - Honour Roll Number 90.

#O.385 Inspector David James McCombe died from exposure while on patrol near Cutknife, Saskatchewan.

#10294 / O.385 Inspector David J. McCombe was the Officer Commanding North Battleford Sub-Division and had left his office to drive to 35 miles to Cutknife Detachment around noon. The weather was clear when he departed but en-route the wind picked up and one of the worst winter storms in history blew in. Before he could make it to his destination, Highway # 40 became impassable due to the blinding snow and heavy drifts. Only two and a half miles from Cutknife Inspector McCombe's car slid into the ditch and became stuck. Abandoning his car, he made an attempt to walk to shelter but the blinding snow prevented him from getting very far. Upon his return to his vehicle, he discovered that he had lost his keys and had to smash a window to get into the vehicle where he curled up in the back seat in attempt to preserve his body heat in the sub-zero weather.

When the severe storm suddenly occurred the members of Cutknife detachment became concerned for the Inspectors safety and Corporal J.K Bird and Constable R.E. Sondergaard made separate attempts to find him on the highway but the driving conditions were so bad that they had to turn back. A third attempt to find him was made at 2:15 pm when Constables A.F. Squair, and C.C. Young went out in a tow truck driven by Mr. Duncan Crone. In their attempt, they became stuck in a snowdrift and had to abandon their vehicle and walk to a nearby farmhouse. On the way, they rescued a stranded family of four who became stuck in the ditch and the entire group had to spend three days at the farm waiting out the storm.

At 5:00 pm #13370 Corporal Eugene V. Matchett, accompanied by Constables #17675 Lester Wall, #18058 James A.J. Laking and #18255 Clarence P. Miskiw headed out in a Bombardier tank tracked vehicle borrowed from the Department of Natural Resources. Even then the driving was so bad that the constables had to take turns walking in front of the vehicle with a high-powered flashlight to illuminate the road. After four hours of searching, they finally found the missing car and Inspector McCombe's frozen body in the back seat of the car.

David J. McCombe had joined the RCMP in 1927 after a short spell with the Royal Irish Constabulary in his home city of Belfast. He received a huge funeral in North Battleford and was buried at the RCMP Cemetery in Regina. One of his sons H. Barry McCombe later joined the RCMP and rising to the rank of Staff Sergeant before retiring in 1994.

1970 - Roy Spencer, father of Toronto Maple Leaf rookie Brian 'Spinner' Spencer was shot and killed by the RCMP outside a Prince George, BC, TV station after he had forced it off the air at gunpoint because it was not carrying a game between the Leaf's and the Chicago Blackhawks and an interview with his son; Brian Spencer was himself shot and killed in June 1988 in Florida.

1991 - Justice Minister Kim Campbell brings in new rape shield law that defines consent, allows case questioning only when crucial to defendant; restores protection lost by ruling previous August.

December 13th

1893 - #2739 Constable Francois Maisonneuve was brought up on charges in the Orderly Room (Service Court) accused of entering the Sergeants Mess and appropriating a leg of mutton for his own use. He was found guilty and sentenced by Superintendent Sam Steele to one month of hard labour. Some members have often wondered if he was sentenced for stealing the mutton or for going into the Sanctum Santorum of the Sergeants Mess!

1991 - Auxiliary Constable J. Schmidt of Mission BC rescued four teens from drowning after they fell through the ice on the Dewdney Slough. For his courage he was awarded the Commanding Officers Commendation for bravery.

1991 - While serving as recruits in French language training in Montreal Quebec, Constables #43639 E.H. Hendriks and #43612 S.C. Hunter were commended for arresting a bank robber.

1997 - The bodies of the 52-year-old Fort MacLeod, Alberta Detachment Commander #24007 Sergeant Roger Sopow and his girlfriend Lorrain McNab age 47 are found murdered and dumped inside horse trailer near Pincher Creek, Alberta. The double homicide case has yet to be solved.

December 15th

1901 - #3136 Constable Charles James Townshend Stewart is granted a Leave of Absence to join 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles for service in the Boer War. He later received a commission in the Imperial Yeomanry. He was killed in action on September 28, 1918, while serving as a Colonel with the Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry during WWI.

1952 - The RCMP in Kamloops British Columbia received a missing person's report concerning Fred and Jean LaBrie and that a man had been selling their furniture and driving their truck.

#16381 / O.489 Constable Wallace 'Wally' Todd was assigned the investigation and interviewed a man calling himself Henry Godin. The Constable was advised that Godin

and the LaBrie's were business partners but they had gone to retrieve more of their personal effects from a storage locker in Kamloops.

While Constable Todd was investigating his story, Godin disappeared. The missing truck was eventually found after it had been sold and a search of the vehicle revealed an empty .32 cartridge casing.

On December 15, 1952 Godin kidnapped the manager of the Bank of Commerce in Williams Lake as he was closing the bank and forced him to drive him around for several minutes and then back to the bank. There he ordered him to open the bank and unlock the safe.

While this was happening, an off-duty employee of the bank along with a friend noticed the open door to the bank and went inside to enquire. Godin was spooked by the fact that he was outnumbered and fired a shot and fled from the building and ran down the street.

Immediately the police were called and Constables #15226 William Pooler, #15627 Ron Winn and #17299 Jack Groves rushed to the scene and began tracking Godin's tracks in the snow. The following morning, they had him cornered, the suspect fired at them and in the ensuing shootout Godin was shot in the chest.

While he was being treated in hospital, Godin's fingerprints were forwarded to Ottawa and he was identified as 27-year-old Henry Seguin who was wanted for the murder of taxi driver Leonard Hurd in Maxville, Ontario.

Sequin was convicted for the bank robbery in British Columbia and then tried for murder in Ontario and was sentenced to hang. Although he was the prime suspect in the disappearance of the LaBrie's he refused to discuss the matter with police.

Moments before he was to be hanged on January 19th 1954 Seguin cheated the hangman by poisoning himself with potassium cyanide that he had smuggled into the prison.

On September 18th 1956 two human skeletons and a dog were found by a hunter in a ravine by Long Lake Road 10 miles south of Kamloops. The remains were examined by Forensic Identification member #16445 Constable Dennis Jobling using superimposed photographs of the skulls and comparing them to photos of the victims he proved the skeletons were the LaBrie's.

1974 - Constables, #28408 Barry J. Mellish and #29497 Howard W. Geldart and civilian received commendation saving 3-year-old child and the attempted rescue of mother from van which had plunged into Folly Lake near Truro, N.S.

1983 - Honour Roll Numbers 171 and 172.

Pilot #S/2706 Special Constable Wayne Graham Myers age 42 and **#25289 Corporal Francis “Frank” Eugene Jones** age 36 were killed in RCMP helicopter crash near Ucluelet BC.

On Thursday December 14th, the weather was perfect for flying so Ucluelet Detachment Commander, Corporal Frank Jones arranged for the RCMP helicopter based out of Courtenay to pick him up in Ucluelet. Cpl. Jones wanted search for some stolen logging equipment along the west coast of Vancouver Island.

As the pilot was entering an abandoned logging camp at the mouth of Cat Ears Creek, his vision was hampered by sunlight and he couldn't see an abandoned suspension cable that was strung across the valley. The Bell Jet Ranger "MP-DXB" flew directly into the cable and when the main rotor blades hit it the helicopter crashed killing both men instantly.

When they did not return as scheduled an immediate search was begun involving Search and Rescue Aircraft, Coast Guard personnel and the RCMP Patrol Vessel "Manyberries" crewed by #29753 Corporal Frank F. LaLear and Constables #32634 Robert J Mollett, #34502 Kim A. Bloy and #35982 Larry Burden.

By daybreak the search was intensified and at 11:15 am the wreckage was discovered. The investigation later determined that no notice to airman had been published and the owners of the suspension cable hadn't bothered to hang warning markers.

Corporal Frank Jones had joined the RCMP in 1966 and was a popular member who had served in several communities in British Columbia over his 17-year career.

Wayne Myers had a varied flying career and had only joined the RCMP in 1982.

2006 - #31796 / O.1643 Beverly Ann Busson COM, (nee MacDonald) was appointed as the interim commissioner. Commissioner Busson has many firsts in her 32-year career. She was a member for the first female troop in 1974; she was the first woman promoted to the rank of inspector in 1992 and was the first woman to command a Division.

Though she was considered for the role of permanent commissioner she chose not to accept the post and served as interim commissioner until July 16, 2007 when she retired and was replaced by Mr. William Elliot COM, the first civilian to hold the post.

December 16th

1919 - The first member of the Mounted Police to be Hanged for Murder!

On this day former Sergeant #6020 John Lindsay Wilson was charged with the murder of a wife nobody knew he had. In 1912 Wilson left his home and family in Scotland to come to Canada to seek a new life after he had been caught embezzling money from the

business, he co-owned with his in-laws. He had promised his wife Molly (“Polly”) Hutchison and their two children that he would send for them once he was established in Saskatchewan, he never did. After drifting through a variety of jobs he enlisted in the Royal Northwest Mounted Police on January 8th 1914 and was posted to F Division (Saskatchewan).

Eventually Wilson stopped writing his wife and family and in 1917 contracted tuberculosis and was sent to the military corps hospital for treatment. There he met and fell in love with Miss Jessie Patterson. For the first time in a long time, life was going along rather pleasantly for him. He had recovered from his illness, been promoted and was making a new life with Jessie, things were pretty good until Polly decided to come to Canada and find her husband.

When she arrived unexpectedly from Scotland and phoned him he didn’t have the courage to tell her the truth so he began living a double life for nearly six months keeping his women separated in different communities and embezzling fine money from the Mounted Police to cover his expenses. When his wife Polly became pregnant he decided that it was time to end their relationship.

On September 27, 1918 Wilson took Polly for a drive in the country and then shot her in the head with his service revolver and buried her body under a culvert near Waldheim Sask. As he drove his car back onto the road he crashed into the ditch, so he burned the vehicle to destroy the bloodstains and any other evidence of the murder. Later the same day he obtained a marriage license and he and Jessie Paterson were married the next day. In an attempt to create the perception that Polly was still alive, Wilson continued to write letters to his in-laws in Scotland. Eventually her family became suspicious and asked the RNWMP to investigate.

Meanwhile the Force became suspicious of Wilson’s activities and investigated him for fraud and on November 7, 1919 he was charged and demoted. While serving his sentence in the Regina Guardroom he attempted suicide and was rescued by the Provost Constable #5833 Constable Ernest Pascoe. After serving his term he was dishonorably discharged from the Force.

By then the Force had assigned #4754/ O.0190 Sub-Inspector Charles John Prime to investigate the Hutchison family concerns and when Polly’s body was discovered Wilson eventually confessed to his crimes. He was convicted and hanged on April 20, 1923. He was buried in the South Hill cemetery in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

In 1994 the story of Wilson’s exploits was recorded by author Lois Simmie in her book “The Secret Lives of Sgt. John Wilson”.

1976 - Dorval Police Dog Handler Constable D.R.J. Jean and his partner “Smokey” were asked by the Canadian Bomb Data Center to assist the National Public Archives Photography section in locating photographic negatives containing a dangerous substance. The problem was the Public Archives collection consisted of over 5,000,000

items in over 10,000 boxes and the negatives containing nitrocellulose base emitted a highly explosive gas when they deteriorated. After providing a sample for the bomb dog to sniff Constable Jean and Smokey conducted a seven-hour search and identified every box containing the potentially dangerous negatives.

1981 - Honour Roll Number 169.

#31787 Constable Barry Flynn McKinnon age 27 was killed in a police motor vehicle accident, near Hamilton, Ontario.

Constables Barry McKinnon and #33242 James Stavert of the Toronto Drug section had been conducting surveillance in a rental car in Brantford Ontario and McKinnon had just dropped his partner off at his home in the Village of Burtch, and was headed home at the end of his shift. As he drove north on Highway #54 he encountered a flatbed tractor-trailer that had run out of gas at the bottom of a blind hill near Cainsville. Constable McKinnon was unable to stop his vehicle in time to avoid colliding with the truck and trailer because another oncoming car was passing the truck in the southbound lane. Unable to steer to the ditch because the shoulder of the road was lined with a crash guard made of three-foot posts and steel cables, he slammed into the back to the flat deck trailer and was propelled through the windshield of his car to his death.

Barry McKinnon was raised in Moncton, New Brunswick and was one of four children from the same family to join the RCMP. He joined the Force in 1974 and was married but had no children. He was buried at Wallace, Nova Scotia.

1982 - North Vancouver member #33603 Constable Dave Senay responded to a report of a distraught man at a bus terminal armed with a hand grenade. During the 45-minute conversation Senay listened to the man's extensive knowledge of military weapons and tactics. He eventually succeeded in convincing the man to surrender and when he was searched, he was found to be unarmed. For his patience and tact in dealing with a potentially dangerous situation Constable Senay was awarded the Commanding Officers Commendation, by the Deputy Commissioner T.S. Venner, CO of British Columbia.

December 17th

1906 - Life in the remote bush can be extremely hard but even more so if you are not equipped with some common sense and basic necessities. After receiving a complaint that a family was destitute and near starvation #O.138 Inspector John Genereux, #1747 Constable Charles Tasker and a Native guide hiked from Battleford Saskatchewan to Tramping Lake to investigate. When they arrived at the run-down cabin, they found Mr. James Tait, his wife, his sister and seven children near starvation. They had no food, no firewood and didn't even have an axe! Leaving all of their supplies the trio hiked back to their detachment and upon arrival on December 27th

Constables #3069 William Burke, #4150 Donald Foster and #4482 Horace Townsend were sent back with additional provisions and clothing so the family could survive until spring.

1964 - Honour Roll Number 127.

#22240 Constable Robert Weston Amey, age 24 became the second Mountie to be killed in Newfoundland when an escaped convict shot him.

Early in the morning of December 17th, Winston Churchill Noseworthy, John Snow, James Thorne and Melvin Young escaped from the Penitentiary at St. Johns Newfoundland and made off in a stolen car.

Forty miles away near the village Whitbourne, they ran through a roadblock that had been set up by Constables #21018 David Keith, #22164 Garry Cluley and Robert Amey. After a high-speed pursuit the fugitives abandoned their car and ran for cover in the village and were cornered by the policemen but refused to surrender. While Constable Amey returned to his patrol car to use the radio to call for help the four men rushed Constable Keith, overpowered him and managed to grab his revolver. When Amey rushed back to assist his partner, 19-year-old Melvin Young fired three shots and hit him in the chest killing him instantly. After murdering Constable Amey, Melvin Young fled into a nearby grocery store and took the owner hostage. By then Constable Keith had grabbed his dead partner's revolver and arrested the three remaining criminals who stayed at the scene. After handcuffing the trio, he attended to Melvin Young and eventually convinced him that he had no chance of escaping and to give himself up.

The four men were returned to the penitentiary and were charged with escaping custody. Melvin Young was convicted of murder and was sentenced to die by firing squad, but had his sentence commuted to life in prison. He only served eight years before he was released on parole.

Robert Watson Amey had only been in the RCMP for five years. His body was returned to his parents at his home in Pondville Nova Scotia near Arichat where he was buried at the Anglican Church Cemetery.

1971 - #17625 / O.958 Sergeant Allen James Richards was awarded a Commanding Officers Commendation for perseverance and dedication to duty after he went undercover to win the confidence of known bank robbers. The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce was held-up by four men who stole over \$81,000. A few hours later #19522 Corporal Gary A. Loeppky and #27142 Constable H.W. Summerfeldt arrested one of the suspects.

Although he was well known to the local criminal community because of his years of work in the safe blowing squad, Sergeant Richards agreed to go undercover and pose as a bail bondsman and try and win the confidence of the bank robbery suspect in hopes that

he would be led to the rest of the crew and the missing money. Suspecting that the police were watching him and not knowing Richard's background, the suspect led Richards around Vancouver taking him into several hotels and bars where he figured Richard's cover would be blown if he was a cop. Sergeant Richards was able to play his role so well that he succeeded in winning the confidence of his target and was able to gather enough evidence to arrest the other three robbers.

1973 - Three Medals of Bravery are earned by #19778 Sergeant Thomas Charlton and Constables #25637 James Adam Bell, and #24636 Brian Leicht.

The three policemen responded to a bank robbery at a shopping centre in Burnaby BC and decided to try and apprehend the robbers without getting into a shootout and endangering bystanders. The officers waited at the side of the bank and when the robbers left Sergeant Charlton pounced on them and grabbed hold of one of the robbers. The second man then pulled his gun and shot at the police, wounding Constable Bell and nearly hitting Constable Leicht. Before any other shots could be fired the policemen knocked the men to the ground and subdued them. Constable Bell was rushed to hospital and later recovered from his wound. In recognition of their bravery in apprehending the two violent criminals without injury or loss of life to the public present all three men were awarded the Medal of Bravery.

December 18th

1961 - Honour Roll # 115

#18200 **Constable Joseph Thor Thompson** age 27, died at Selkirk, Manitoba as result of injuries he received when his police car was crushed by the wheels of an aircraft landing near at Lethbridge Alberta. See September 26, 1957.

1979 - After responding to a motor vehicle collision near Milestone Saskatchewan #33551 Constable Michael J. Boyce rescued two men from burning car that had collided with a tractor-trailer. As he was attempting the rescue the gas tank exploded forcing him to back away from the car. He then rushed back to the vehicle and succeeded in the rescue of the occupants. On My 5th 1981 Assistant Commissioner R.J. Mills, CO of "F" Division presented him with the Commanding Officers Commendation for Bravery.

1992 - Assistant Commissioner #19209 / O.844 W.L. (Les) Holmes was the recipient of a very special honour when Native Elder H. Healy of the Blackfoot Nation bestowed Holmes with a ceremonial eagle feather headdress and gave him the native name of "Chief of all Chiefs" in recognition of his commitment and contribution to Aboriginal Community relations.

2002 - Honour Roll # 243

53-year-old **#27513 / O.1540 Superintendent Dennis Massey** was driving from a Calgary City police station to the RCMP office at Springbank Alberta. While he was traveling west on 16th Avenue, Northwest he encountered an eastbound truck and flat deck trailer loaded with a large propane tank. As the truck approached the propane tank broke free from the trailer and careened across the center line and crushed Massey's police car. Superintendent Massey had to be cut from the wreckage and succumbed to his injuries in hospital later.

Superintendent Dennis Massey had 33 years' service with the force and was survived by his wife, mother, a brother and a sister.

December 19th

1964 - Honour Roll # 128

#23499 Constable 3rd Class, Reginald Wayne Williams drowned, while on patrol, when his police car skidded off of a wharf and plunged into the water. While on routine patrol on the icy streets of Sooke British Columbia Cst. Williams drove onto Government dock and skidded off the end, dropping 18 feet into the frigid water. Although his vehicle was pulled out from 12 feet of water within 15 minutes he had died from drowning. 21-year-old Cst. Williams had joined the RCMP only eight months earlier. He was buried in his hometown of Portage la Prairie, Manitoba at the Hillside Cemetery.

1968 - Four teenagers were cruising the icy roads of rural Prince Edward Island when their car left the highway and overturned in five feet of water in Fullerton's Marsh. Constables #22436 D.R. MacLeod and #24551 D.D. MacDonald responded to the scene and rushed into the water, managing to remove three of the occupants to safety. The driver, Clifford Smith, couldn't be removed because his legs were trapped, and he was suffering from shock. So, the two policemen took turns entering the car and holding the victim's head up in an air space. After an hour in the icy water the vehicle was raised using a crane and the driver was removed. Constable MacLeod had to be treated in hospital for hypothermia. Both constables were awarded Life Saving Certificates by the Honorable J. George MacKay, the Lieutenant Governor of Prince Edward Island.

December 20th

1878 - #18 & 23 Sergeant Edward Carr had to get his rifle and shoot two bears that forced their way into the barracks square at Fort Saskatchewan. Carr had two different regimental numbers because he was issued number "18" when he joined the NWMP in

1873 and was issued the new number “23” when the Force organized its records and renumbering took place in 1878.

1933 - #11201 Constable Thomas Paul received commendation for difficult patrol with two dog teams from Fort Chippewyan to Embarrass Portage, Alberta.

1946 - Four German prisoners of war were hanged at the Lethbridge Provincial Jail for the murder of fellow prisoner Cpl. Karl Lehmann at the Medicine Hat POW camp in Sept. 1944. Note: If you would like to read the in-depth article on this case, send me an email, and I will forward it to you. Larry

2003 - Constable #38731 Cameron Jan Joseph responded to a complaint of a home invasion in Terrace BC where an elderly man was assaulted. While en-route he received a radio description of the suspects involved and then observed a man fitting the description attempting to hide behind a dumpster. As Constable Joseph exited his police car to investigate, the man suddenly rushed him and attacked him with a 6-inch hunting knife slashing him below the chin. Bleeding profusely Constable Joseph fought back and knocking his attacker off balance with the car door he attempted to restrain and disarm him. When constables Barnhill and Lofroth arrived on scene they found Joseph struggling valiantly with his enraged attacker. The man was then quickly subdued and the two policemen applied much needed first aid to their partner and rushed him to the hospital. There he received over 20 stitches to close the 13-cm gash that nearly cut his jugular vein.

On July 15, 2004 in recognition of his bravery and tenacity in the arrest of the extremely violent subject Constable Cameron Jan Joseph was awarded the Commissioners Commendation for bravery.

December 21st

1910 - #2218/ O.156 Inspector Francis J. Fitzgerald, and constables #2127 Sam Carter, #4582 George F. Kinney and #4346 Richard O. Taylor leave Fort McPherson on the infamous “Lost Patrol” in which all four men perish.

See February 14, 1911

1984 - Corporal #24818 Larry P. Bauer and Constable #33630 Byron F. Hodgkin were awarded the St John Meritorious Certificates for using CPR to save the life of a prisoner who tried to hang himself in Kamloops Detachment cells.

2001 - Honour Roll Number 197.

52-year-old #40120 **Constable Dennis Douglas Strongquill** was murdered in Russell Manitoba, by three-armed robbery suspects.

It was a cold quite night in the Russell Manitoba area where Constables Dennis Strongquill and #40759 Brian Auger were patrolling. Both constables were from the newly formed all indigenous detachment at Waywayseecappo Reserve located 210 miles northwest of the City of Winnipeg and twenty miles from the town of Russell.

Like most cold clear winter nights on the prairies there wasn't much happening and the constables decided to headed out onto the highway to look for highway offences but found very little traffic. Around 12:30 am the pair observed a pickup truck with three occupants turn onto Highway 45 without stopping at the stop sign and failed to dim their headlights as they sped past the police car.

As Constable Auger turned his vehicle around neither constable knew that the occupants of the truck were armed and dangerous criminals from Edmonton Alberta, and that two of them were wanted on a nationwide warrant. The trio had been on a ten-day crime spree of break and enters of vacant homes, they had stolen several vehicles that they had changed over to avoid detection and had committed a bank robbery in Thorhild Alberta. In the multiple break and enters they had acquired numerous guns along with a large quantity of ammunition and they had no intention of being arrested on their route to Nova Scotia.

After a mile of pursuing the Chevrolet Silverado, it suddenly pulled over to the side of the road and while Cst. Strongquill was exiting the police car, one of the fugitives, Robert Sand got out of the passenger side of truck and started towards the police car armed with a 12-gauge shotgun and fired four rounds of pellets at the front of the car.

Dennis Strongquill jumped back into the car and Brian Auger slammed the car into reverse and raced backwards and spun the car around and drove off in the opposite direction. As they sped away, they radioed the communication center in Winnipeg and advised them what had happened and that they were making their way to the RCMP Detachment in Russell.

In normal circumstances the shooters would have sped away and would try and put as much distance from the police as they could. But these were not normal criminals. Instead, they turned their vehicle and pursued the police car and when they got closer, they continued to shoot at them and succeeded in shooting out the back window of the police car. When Cst. Strongquill attempted to shoot back with his 9mm pistol the magazine fell out of the bottom of the handgun.

The RCMP had recently upgraded their firearms from a 38-cal. revolver to a 9mm pistol. Unfortunately, the pistol that was chosen only came in a right-handed model. Dennis Strongquill's death may have been averted if he, a left-handed shooter, had been provided with a more appropriate handgun. The reason the magazine fell out of the gun is because the magazine release was activated when it was pulled out of his left-handed holster.

Since then, all left-handed members of the Force have had their pistols modified to move the magazine release to the opposite side.

As the pursuit raced along at speed of 140 kilometers per hour (87 MPH) Cst. Strongquill attempted to recover his magazine from the floor and when they reached the town of Russell and the Detachment, Cst. Auger couldn't make the turn in to the entrance of the detachment because his car slid sideways on the snow- and ice-covered road. He then attempted to drive the car through the snow-covered ditch and onto the parking lot, but they were hampered by trees on the lawn and came to a stop. Then Danny Sand the driver of the Silverado, rammed the police car from behind and then continued to slam the passenger side of the car until it came to a full stop, trapping Cst. Strongquill inside the car.

While they were being slammed Cst. Auger managed to get the driver's door open and subsequently was thrown from the vehicle. Dennis Strongquill struggled to climb over the patrol computer to crawl out the open driver's door, but he never made it.

As soon as the suspect vehicle came to a stop, Robert Sand rushed around the Silverado while the third criminal, 20-year-old Laurie Bell, girlfriend of Danny Sand, yelled repeatedly, "Kill him, Kill him". Robert Sand then fired four rounds from his sawed off shot gun through the passenger side window into Cst. Strongquill killing him. While Robert Sand was blasting away at his victim, Cst. Auger fired 13 rounds into the cab of the Silverado striking the driver twice in the neck. Robert jumped back into the passenger seat and the trio sped away.

Immediately the police in both Manitoba and Saskatchewan went into high alert and roadblocks were setup around the area and general broadcasts were sent out to the public over radio and television. After breaking into another farmhouse, the trio stole another truck and proceeded on to Wolseley Saskatchewan, 60-miles east of Regina and obtained a hotel room. The hotel clerk having seen the news broadcast got suspicious and called the RCMP.

Within minutes, Mounties from several area detachments surrounded the scene and began evacuating homes and business near the hotel. Not long after the thirteen-member Emergency Response Team (ERT) from Regina headed by #37494 Sergeant Robert Bazin were on the scene. Around 1:00 Robert Sand looked out the window and saw several police cars and then kicked out the back window of their room and the trio climbed out. Robert ordered his still bleeding brother to climb up on the roof so he could have a better look at their situation. When Sand was observed aiming his rifle at ERT members, a volley of shots was fired at him and the order was given the snipers to shoot. Sniper #36465 Constable Al M. Lukasewich had Danny Sand in his sights, fired and struck Sand in the upper body, killing him instantly. Shortly afterward, Laurie Bell and Robert Sand dropped their weapons and surrendered.

Dennis Douglas Strongquill had twenty years' service in the RCMP. He left behind six children. After a 48-hour vigil held by the native community, he was buried in Powerview Saskatchewan with over 350 police officers in attendance.

Robert Sand was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to twenty-five years in prison. Laurie Bell received a ten-year sentence for manslaughter.

In 2002 the town of Barrows, Manitoba dedicated the Dennis Strongquill Memorial Park in his memory and in 2016 the Province of Manitoba name a lake 45 kilometers north of Flin Flon, Stronquill after Dennis.

December 22nd

1967 - "There's no place for the state in the bedrooms of the nation." Federal Justice minister and future Prime Minister, Pierre Elliot Trudeau introduced a controversial Omnibus bill in the House of Commons. The bill calls for massive changes to the Criminal Code of Canada. In a media scrum Trudeau makes his famous statement and follows it up with "what's done in private between adults doesn't concern the Criminal Code." In addition to decriminalizing or legalizing issues such as abortion, homosexuality and divorce law. The bill also calls for the legalization of lotteries, new gun ownership restrictions and the right for the police to perform Breathalyzer tests on suspected drunk drivers.

1973 - Author Pierre Berton is quoted in Canadian Magazine as saying; 'A Canadian is somebody who knows how to make love in a canoe.' Many Canadians thought that his Father, Frank was a member of the Mounted Police. He was not, but he was a very interesting man in his own right.

2003 - Commendation to #47571 Constable Brent Elwood who stood in creek for one hour assisting an elderly man who had fallen into the water while hiking along Lynn Creek, North Vancouver. The man was suffering hypothermia and was at risk of being swept away. His actions ensured the man's safety until the Fire Department Rescue Team could remove him.

December 23rd

1971 - Retired Staff Sergeant #14049 John William "Jack" Duggan happened to be in the Hornby Street Branch of the Royal Bank in Vancouver when he saw two armed men enter the building. After the robbers, had grabbed their loot and were preparing to make their exit, the men looked back at the bank manager who had produced a revolver. Duggan then used the diversion to rush the pair and tackled one man who was armed with a handgun and after sending him flying across the room grabbed the rifle from the second

gunman and aimed it at the first who dropped his revolver and surrendered. As Duggan rushed into the fray, he heard a pop and later learned that the manager had fired his gun at them but fortunately missed. After apprehending the robbers, he ordered them into the managers' office and held them at gunpoint until the City Police arrived. For his actions in apprehending the robbers Jack Duggan was awarded a Certificate of Merit from the Vancouver Board of Police Commissioners. Duggan had a varied career during his 29 years with the RCMP serving in several locals and assignments. During his service with the Force, he even played football with the Ottawa Roughriders of the Canadian Football League in the 1940's.

1971 - The Royal Canadian Humane Association Bronze Medal is awarded to #21343 William Nichol for the rescue of a seven-month-old child from burning motel unit, in Perth, N.B.

1989 - While working at the small community of Wrigley, Northwest Territory a satellite of Fort Simpson Detachment, #34924 Constable James E.R. Cook was confronted by an intoxicated man who threatened to kill him with an axe. Constable Cook succeeded in overpowering the man and arrested him. The man was subsequently charged with attempted murder along with several other criminal offences. For his bravery and professionalism Constable Cook was awarded the RCMP's highest award, the Commissioners Commendation.

December 24th

1874 - On this day #56 (Original Series) later #41 (New Series) Staff Constable John Alfred Martin) a member of the "March west" was one of the men moved into the newly constructed Fort MacLeod. He and the other men built the fort out of cottonwood logs on a small island in Old Man's River. The thing about Martin was that he hid a secret from the Force and his son. Married men could not join the Force (unless they were officers) so he signed up using his mother's maiden name and denied being married. His real name was John Alfred MacIntosh and his own son didn't know the truth. The boy went his grave thinking that his father was his uncle! Martin/ MacIntosh served in the NWMP from 1873 to 1898.

1963 - After receiving a report that an Inuit person at Alfred Point on Baffin Island, NWT had been accidentally shot in the leg, #17873 Corporal Robert S. Pilot prepared himself for the 60-mile trip by dog sled. Then the weather closed in and he had to spend two impatient days waiting out the storm. Finally, the weather cleared, and Pilot made the twelve-hour trip to investigate and provide first aid to the wounded man. He found his patient in a weakened state suffering in great pain from the bullet wound to his left buttock. Corporal Pilot then opened, cleansed, and drained a cupful of puss from the wound. After applying clean dressings and administering antibiotics he continued to care for his patient, watching over him and changing the dressings twice a day. Fearing that

gangrene would set in, he sent a messenger by dog sled to Pond Inlet to relay a message by radio to Frobisher Bay requesting an airlift for his patient.

While they waited for an aircraft, Corporal Pilot organized several men from the camp to construct a landing strip on the pack ice. They marked out the runway with homemade flares made from gasoline-soaked rags in tin cans and lit them in the dark so the plane could land safely. When the aircraft arrived on December 30th, they loaded him and his patient and then flew to the hospital.

A month later Corporal Pilot was called on again to assist a pregnant Inuit woman who was hemorrhaging. After traveling eight miles on a borrowed snowmobile, he discovered that the patient who was six months pregnant had lost nearly forty ounces of blood and he could not stop the bleeding. Following instructions from a US Air Force doctor in Thule Greenland over a short-wave radio, Corporal Pilot helped deliver a dead premature deformed fetus and then care for his patient until she could be airlifted to the hospital. Alfred Pilot never received any formal recognition for saving either life; it was just a routine part of the job.

1974 - At 6:30 am Alan Thurbon phoned the detachment in Fort Nelson BC and stated that he had just shot a man at his motel room. #18432 Sergeant Vincent J. Hollingsworth and Constable #29733 R. Alan C. Jones rushed to the scene and when they knocked on the door of Room 11, they heard three shots fired from room 12 at an unoccupied vehicle in the parking lot. Sergeant Hollingsworth then provided cover for Constable Jones as he rushed to move their police car out of the line of fire and radio for backup. When Hollingsworth entered room 11, he found one man dead and two women, one of whom had a bullet wound to her leg. Then Constable Jones and #26327 Joseph Schalk rushed into the room with a stretcher and carried the wounded woman out to safety and returned for the uninjured wife of the assailant. After the women, had been removed the members at the scene they fired a tear gas grenade into the gunman's room and shortly thereafter he surrendered. A search of the room resulted in the seizure of a 7mm Husqvarna rifle and 18 empty shell casings. Alan Thurbon was convicted of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. Sergeant Hollingsworth and Constable Jones were awarded the Commissioners Commendations for courage and presence of mind and Constable Schalk received a Commanding Officers Commendation for bravery.

1977 - Constable #29852 D.L. West earned a Commanding Officers Commendation for bravery for his arrest of a gunman who went on a shooting spree in the community of Moose Lake Manitoba.

1998 - On this day retired World War II Provost Corps veterans #10980 Sergeant George Cutting (served 1931 to 1958), #12888 Staff Sergeant Jack Phillips (served 1937 to 1963) and #13901 Sergeant "Pick" Ivan Pickerill (served 1938 to 1967) along with 25 other Canadian war veterans who served at the Battle of Ortona, Italy sat down for a reconciliation Christmas dinner with German war veterans.

Fifty-five years earlier the Canadians ate their Christmas dinner in shifts in the bombed-out Santa Maria di Constantinopoli church on Christmas Eve 1943. The battle of Ortona was one of the hardest fought and bloodiest battles of the war to liberate Europe.

December 25th

1874 - #247 Sub Constables Frank Baxter and #228 Thomas D. Wilson were granted leave for Christmas and were traveling by horseback back to Fort MacLeod from Fort Kipp. Both men had celebrated the season in style and had consumed their share of beverages were on their way back to their post when they were caught in a sudden blizzard and the temperature dropped. The severely frost-bitten men struggled on and in hopes of finding shelter but did not make it. A search party found them and transported them to the hospital at Fort MacLeod, but they died on New Year's Day and were buried at Fort MacLeod.

1906 - #4205 Constable Charles Hayter was charged in Orderly Room because shot the barrack room clock at Battleford Detachment. He was fined \$10 and ordered to pay for new clock. When asked for explanation of his actions, is alleged to have said "just killing time, Sir."

Hayter served from 1904 to 1912 retiring as a Sergeant.

1934 - #10711 Constable Alexander Unia lost all his effects in detachment fire at Forty Mile, Yukon.

1935 - #12745 Constable Paul Dessureau won the 30th Annual Calgary Road Race completing of 6.147 mile run in a time of 35 minutes, 57 seconds.

1997 - #42007 Constable Gerald Fortis of the Sumas Highway Patrol was on duty in Chilliwack, BC and had arranged to travel home to begin his break so he could watch his three young children open their presents. En-route in his patrol car, he encountered a patch of black ice and skidded off the highway and smashed into a cement barrier. His seat belt and the airbag were not enough to protect him because of the angle of the impact. He died from multiple injuries. His Funeral in Chilliwack was one of the largest the town had ever seen.

He survived by his wife and 3 children. Sadly, he is not on the Honour Roll.

December 26th

1901 - While on patrol from northern British Columbia three constables were paddling their canoe down the Stikine River in Alaska. The canoe was loaded with all of their personal gear and their sled dog. While attempting to paddle the river the boat was swamped, and everyone went into the river

Constables #2972 Norman Malcolm Campbell and #3463 Spencer Gilbert Heathcote drowned while #3617 constable Michael J. Fitzgerald escape the raging river to live on.

Norman Campbell was from Brandon Manitoba and had joined the Force seven years earlier. His body was never recovered.

30-year-old Spencer Heathcote joined the Mounted Police on January 1, 1900. Originally from England he was raised in Toronto. His body was found five months later, and he was interred in the village of Wrangle, Alaska.

Ironically, Cst. Mike Fitzgerald (Honour Roll 40) the only one to survive continued to serve in the Mounted police for another 12 years until he was killed while working a dragline on a steamer on the White River when he was hit in the head with a sweep handle and knocked overboard. The crew succeed in retrieving his body from the river, but he never regained consciousness and died from a fractured skull. The 37-year old son of Nova Scotia was buried in the cemetery in Dawson City, Yukon.

1980 - Winter rainstorms on coastal British Columbia can cause rivers to rage and overflow. After several days of rain, the Cheakamus River at Squamish spilled over its banks threatening the Geue family home. #32558 Constable Martin A. Thompson attempted to drive through the floodwaters to rescue the family but was unable to reach them, so he called for a military Search and Rescue helicopter to assist. When the helicopter arrived Constable, Thompson went aboard the helicopter and flying in dangerous winds located the partially submerged house and assisted the crew in rescuing six people from the home. In recognition of his quick thinking and courage he was awarded the Commissioners Commendation for bravery.

December 27th

1901 - The first annual winter patrol between Dawson and Fort McPherson was undertaken. #2628 Sgt. Harry Mapley and a guide on dog sled carried the mail over the Mackenzie Mountains and arrived at Fort McPherson on February 2, 1902.

They traveled a distance of 475 miles and enduring bone chilling temperatures of over 50 degrees below zero. The patrols became an annual event and continued for many years.

1969 - Constables # 24696 John K. Paterson and #27387 Richard Lawrence responded to a complaint in North Vancouver BC where an intoxicated man had threatened his wife with a gun. Unknown to the policemen the man had also blown a hole in the wall with a shotgun. After positioning junior Constable Paterson to the side of the house Constable Lawrence approached the front with his revolver drawn. When he knocked the man opened the door to the house and carrying the shotgun in one hand pointed a loaded revolver with his other hand at the chest of Constable Lawrence. Constable Paterson then raised his handgun and ordered the man to drop his weapons. After he hesitated, Patterson then pulled back the hammer on his revolver and repeated his order. Realizing the young policeman was prepared to shoot him the gunman he dropped his weapons and surrendered. In recognition of his coolness and presence of mind Constable Paterson was awarded a Commanding Officers Commendation.

1980 - The detachment at Old Crow, Yukon caught fire as a result of a faulty hot water heater. #26320 Corporal Don G. Pittendreigh and Constable #34655 Mike S. Statnyk did their best to fight the blaze with fire extinguishers. With the help of local residents, they managed to confine the blaze to the furnace room thereby saving the rest of the detachment.

1985 - Honour Roll 183

#37421 **Constable Joseph Eddy Mario Tessier** was shot and killed near Gatineau, Quebec.

While driving to work in Ottawa from his home in Angers, Quebec dressed in civilian clothing; constable Tessier stopped at a minor motor vehicle and picked up the driver Andre L'Heureux to drive him to a garage. While enroute, L'Heureux pulled out sawed-off .22 and shot Tessier nine times. After the murder, he dragged the body out of the car and continued on to Gatineau and robbed store. He was later arrested and pleaded guilty and was sentenced to sentenced to life in prison.

Mario Tessier was born in Joliette Quebec and joined the Force on December 21^{stand} posted to British Columbia ('E" Division) until he transferred to the nation's capital.

1993 - Constables #32487 / O.1712Pierre-Yves Bourduas, #32996 Tom Spink and #38116 J.G. Richard earned commendations after they entered a burning house in Kings County New Brunswick to subdue a mentally disturbed person who had barricaded himself in the burning building.

December 28th

1943 - Honour Roll Numbers 76,77,78,79.

Constables #13064 Terence Graham Newcomen Watts, #12856 Edison Alexander Cameron, #13157 David Charles Gardner Moon and #12965 Gordon Evan Bondurant were killed in action near Ortona, Italy, while serving with No. 1 Provost Company in Italy.

1966 - Commendations were issued to #15036 Corporal Wilf Reibold and #24344 Constable Robert Swann for the arrest of Fritz Riederer who, still armed with his weapon, had just shot his wife, in St Albert, Alberta.

1970 - Police capture the suspect FLQ terrorists, kidnappers and murderers of Quebec Labour Minister Pierre Laporte. Paul Rose, his brother Jacques Rose, and Francis were captured at 04:30 a.m. in a tunnel under the farmhouse near Montreal where they had been hiding out.

1988 - Commanding Officers Commendations were earned by Constables #31076 W.J. Bussey, #36167 E.P. VanOuwerkerk and #38712 J.G.D. Leydier for disarming a mentally disturbed man at Stettler, Alberta.