



FRIENDLY NOTES

Friends Of The Mounted Police Heritage Centre

Les Amis Du Centre Du Patrimoine De La GRC

NOTES AMICALES

VOLUME 20
ISSUE 2 SPRING 2010

LEGACY OF THE DOLLS

**PROUD
SUPPORTERS
OF/FIERS
D'APPUYER**

**RCMP
HERITAGE
CENTRE**



**LE CENTRE
DU PATRIMOINE
DE LA GRC**

**RCMP
HISTORICAL
COLLECTIONS
UNIT**



**GROUPE DES
COLLECTIONS
HISTORIQUES**

Who would ever have thought that spending a night at a remote Bed and Breakfast, (B&B) would engender an intriguing episode of friendship and historical discovery. To locate this charming secluded retreat one just had to drive “Around the Bend”, and there it was, perched loftily at the top of a winding driveway where the Pacific ocean view completed your expectations.

The location was Sechelt British Columbia, a fishing, logging and tourist town located on a peninsula north-west of Vancouver, where a ferry from Horseshoe Bay delivers you in forty minutes to Gibson’s Landing, and a fifteen minute drive along the coast highway. The highway eventually descends to beautiful oceanfront Davis Bay, then ascends to “Around the Bend”, the title of our B.& B. destination.

Of course the proprietors, Hank and Sylvia Graber, like most of the B.&B. proponents, are accommodating, gracious and natural creators of culinary specialties and hosting pleasures. To this end Hank is a billiards specialist and Sylvia’s hobby is doll collecting.

So naturally, I was invited to try my pool-playing skills in the recreation area while my wife Pat viewed Sylvia’s extensive collection of beautiful and rare dolls, that graced a spacious wall alcove. When, through our conversation Sylvia learned that we were retired RCMP folks, she proudly pointed out two of her prized dolls, an Eskimo couple that were gifted to her mother, in 1954, from a Mountie friend stationed at Port Harrison, P.Q. She then explained that her mother, Bernice M. Tomlin, was employed as a Court Reporter for many years in the Courthouse at Surrey, B.C., and retired in July 1975. During her service in the Courts, she became acquainted with many policemen, lawyers, Judges and other staff. It was through this association that she met a young former constable in the B.C. Provincial Police, who became an RCMP member when the two police forces amalgamated in 1950. The member was Reg. #16593, Cst. Frederick Ross Gibson who was born June 21st. 1922 at Gibson’s Landing, B.C.

F. Ross Gibson, (known by his middle name) befriended Ms. Tomlin, nicknamed ‘Tommy’ and the friendship continued by correspondence after Ross was transferred to Port Harrison & Resolute Bay, Northwest Territories

After the brief back-ground story of the dolls was related to us over coffee and cookies by Sylvia, she brought the dolls out of the display casing for a close examination. The workmanship and materials were superb, obviously crafted by an Artist of Native ancestry extremely knowledgeable in their craft. As one picture is worth one thousand words, I retrieved my camera and Sylvia graciously consented to detailed photos of the male and female

figurines. In our conversation Sylvia inferred that because of their history, the Force would likely be a grateful recipient of them in the future. I discreetly commented that the RCMP Historical Collections Unit in Regina would certainly be interested in the dolls in the event that she may sometime decide to part with them.

To emphasize the deep relationship of the Force in the history of the dolls, Sylvia produced a letter from Constable Ross Gibson to her mother that accompanied the figurines when they were gifted to her. A photo-copy of the letter, which in itself is a marvellous statement of how a dedicated and empathetic young policeman carried out his duties at a remote posting, with performance above and beyond the call of duty. Imagine as you read these carefully typewritten lines, a young man bent over an old typewriter on the kitchen table, writing by the light of a kerosene lamp as the wood-fire crackles in the stove.



Eskimo dolls
circa 1950
Photo by Barrie Nowell



On behalf of Hank and Sylvia Graber of Sechelt B.C., Barrie Nowell presented the dolls to Rhonda Lamb, Manager of the RCMP Historical Collections Unit. Photo by Wendy Kraushaar.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE ...

Legacy of the Dolls	1
Courage in Red	5
Presentations: Cheque to Heritage Centre	6
Friendly Notes by Email	7
Donor Wall of Appreciation	7
Membership Committee Report.....	8
Friends Board of Directors and Committee Chairpersons.....	8
Becoming a Member/Renewing a Membership	8

F. Ross Gibson, R.C.M. Police,
Port Harrison, P.Q.

Dear Tommy:

Here I am alone as usual this evening as I don't want to ~~wear out my welcome among the whites. To date we have all been getting along very well and I hope it will continue for the rest of the winter.~~

There is never a dull moment here and the time seems to be going so quickley. I do miss real police work and long to get back to the old grind instead of all of this Family Allowance and all the thinking one has to do for these people, they are such children in so many ways that they are to be pitied. I do however like the life as I have a liking for the great out of doors, and believe me they are great here in all sense of the word.

I have been away a lot of the time on the winter patrol but that is almost finished for this year. I am now planning on a trip to Richmond Gulf, will organise a hunting party for cariboo. I have never been on such a hunt so am all keyed up about the whole thing.

I have not frozen any of my appendages as yet but old Jack Frost is sure around to do damage. The skin clothing is great protection to the body but the hands face and feet are the ones that seem to suffer the most. The natives are forever coming in with black fingers and toes. Poor devils I do feel sorry for them and there is so little that can be done to make their lot an easier one. I still maintain this " why send things to other countries when we have so many needy in our own. Selfish maybe but it is fact at least as I see it.

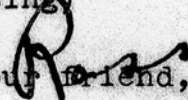
The other day I took off my own shirt and gave it to a needy Eskimo that was wearing four old worn out sweaters that there was still holes through to the skin. I know people would think I am a bit soft, and not a good policeman, but still these people are Gods' children and my lot is more fortunate than is theirs.

Now we are faced with the possible danger of rabbies among ~~the~~ the dogs. This is a terrible thing and nearly all the dog population becomes infected and dies. This is of course natures way of keeping down the animal increase in the country. The disease is carried by the Arctic fox which is this year at its peak. Through an interpeter I have lectured these people on the danger but I am not satisfied with the results. I hope and pray that this area will remain free, this is asking a lot I know.

I could go on and on with this but I feel you are probably really not interested in what I have to prattle about. You will therefore please excuse the spelling and other errors, you will understand this is relaxation and to relax is to relax to my way of thinking. I miss our visits but I guess Mr. HUGH is glad I am not there to keep you from your work. Fabian is a fine person and I feel my life would not have been complete if I had not known and had the opportunity to work with such a fine person, regardless of what he thought of me and some of my short comings.

Do give my regards to all my friends in the hall, I often thi
think of the water department, especially when I have to empty my
rubber bathtub, even the service as supplied by Surrey was better than
that.

In closing for Mr. Harvey's information Mr. KIRK and his
wife are spending the winter in Westminster. He is now retired from the
Force and has a business of his own in Dawson (freighting)

Your friend,


Ross.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

(A second letter, undated, accompanied the former letter and was likely included with the
dolls. It also is an indication that the Inuit creators of the dolls are of the Inuktitut settlement.)

Dear Tommy:

Perhaps you are a little old for dolls but I thought you
would be interested in this pair, it will give you some idea of these
people here.

THE MAN

face of wood, generally of soap stone, but due to cold weather wood
is used.

The parka trimming is made of unborn seal.

Material of parka is duffle Cost \$10.00 per yard.

~~Braided belt of wool to stop draft from going under the garment. This
is of bright wool or even seal skin.~~

Pants made of Grenfell cloth (windproof) \$4.00 per yard.

Boots of moose skin worn in winter only. Generally made of seal skin
(Square flipper).


THE WOMAN:

Parka trimmed with lemming.

Note large hood with strap under the arm (removeable) Babies are
carried in this hood, it is generally lined with cariboo skin. Note
small bumps under arms where the babies feet are while astride the
mothers back.

The long tail on the parka is protection for the women when they
sit on the ice and snow while fishing through the ice or riding on the
kometick.

Hope I have covered all points of interest and any questions
will have to wait until 1955.

Your friend,

Ross.

P.S. Personally I am of the opinion these are very well done and they
will give you a good idea of the attire of the Natives here. (Eskimos)

F.R.G.

EDITOR NOTES:

The above reference to 1955 is an indication that the un-dated letters were likely written in 1954 as Gibson was posted there in July of 1952.

In an effort to locate more information in order to answer questions in my mind concerning the origin of the figurines creator, such as the band or tribe and their location, I contacted the RCMP Webmaster, National Communications Services, Ottawa. I was advised by e-mail on Aug.22nd. 2006 that Port Harrison was then called Inukjuak and is located in Nunavik, Northern Quebec, and falls under the Quebec Provincial Police. Further enquiries therein met with negative results. The Force Historian confirmed the Fort Harrison Detachment closed permanently in 1960.

Further research led to the Obituaries section of the Winter 1994 Edition of The RCMP Quarterly, page 77 as follows:

GIBSON: Reg. No. 16593, ex-Cst. Frederick Ross Gibson, 71, died August 26th, 1993, at Victoria, British Columbia. He was born June 21, 1922, at Gibson's Landing, British Columbia, and became a member of the Force at Prince Rupert, August 15th. 1950, upon amalgamation with the British Columbia Provincial Police where he had been working for a year and a half. Gibson was posted to 'E' Division, British Columbia, and served at Prince Rupert, Masset and Cloverdale. On July 1st, 1952, he was transferred to "G" Division, Northwest Territories, serving at Port Harrison and Resolute Bay. On September 1st. 1958, Gibson was posted to "H" Division, Nova Scotia, serving at Pictou and Truro. On December 1st. 1965, he was transferred to Headquarters, Ottawa, Ontario, where he served until being invalided to pension April 3rd, 1967.

On December 20th. 2010 we departed Regina via our van, for Calgary, Kelowna and Sechelt British Columbia, where all our family were meeting for the Christmas holiday. The weather was great which we gladly traded for a Christmas without snow, except in the high country.

While at Sechelt I took the opportunity to drop in on Hank and Sylvia Graber to pass on compliments of the season over coffee and a brief discussion of the dolls story. I had sent them an e-mail to warn them that I would try and stop for a short visit. They were pleased to see me and before I departed Sylvia enquired if I could take a small parcel with me. They were openly excited and I was thrilled when they told me their decision was made to donate the dolls to the Heritage Collections Unit at Regina forthwith, and that their family had approved wholeheartedly. I expressed my gratitude on behalf of the Friends of the Heritage Centre and assured that I would supply them with an issue of the Friendly Notes wherein I intended to publish their story of the legacy of the dolls. Further, that once officially accepted by the Heritage Collections Unit, an appreciation letter and receipt would be forthcoming to them.

Thus, the delicate and attractive replicas of Inuit art, began the final trek of their journey from Port Harrison North West Territories, to Surrey, B.C., to Sechelt B.C., and on to their permanent and distinctive lodging in the RCMP Heritage Centre, Regina, Saskatchewan, after a sojourn of 2500 kilometres and fifty-six years!

The cover page provides a colourful and detailed view of the dolls which will prompt the viewers to include them in a future visit to Regina and the home of the Mounties.

Barrie F. Nowell.

COURAGE IN RED

On February 23rd. 2010, the RCMP Heritage Centre was the scene of a preview of a documentary film series of on-the-scene, real life action and drama experiences in the RCMP, produced by JenCor Entertainment and presented by Saskatchewan Communications Network, (SCN.) A short preview of several episodes was presented in the Heritage Centre theatre to an enthused gathering of employees, cadets in training from #30 Troop, dignitaries including the Lieutenant Governor, Gordon Barnhart; Minister of

Corrections, Public Safety and Policing, D.F. (Yogi) Huyghebaert; Commanding Officer of Depot Division RCMP, A/Comr. Roger Brown; Jessica Webb, Producer of JenCor Entertainment; C.E.O. of SCN, Twyla MacDougall; Representing Commanding Officer of "F" Division, Supt. Ron Plomp; RCMP Media Relations, Sgt. Patricia Flood; City of Regina Councillors, Mike O'Donnell and Terry Hincks; Grades seven and eight students from Kitchener School in Regina, and several media outlets.

The introductions and program were hosted under the gracious sponsorship of SCN and the master of ceremonies Robin Etherington, President and C.E.O of the Heritage Centre. Following the informative and entertaining program, she invited the guests to view the artifact displays and then gather for refreshments and visiting in the reception area, where SCN provided an information table of pamphlets and brochures to promote the upcoming Documentary releases.

Barrie Nowell, Editor.



Grade seven and eight students from Kitchener School in Regina along with the Commanding Officer of Depot Division, Assistant Commissioner Roger Brown at the Saskatchewan Premiere of Courage In Red
Photo by Kenn Barker

President Bill Greenslade presents donation to President Robin Etherington of the Heritage Centre, on behalf of the *Friends*
Photo by Ken Barker.

PRESENTATIONS

FRIENDS DONATE \$130,000 TO RCMP HERITAGE CENTRE

On February 24th. 2010, the atrium of the Heritage Centre was the scene of a gathering of employees, Board Members, guests and members of the public to witness the presentation of a cheque to the President and CEO, Robin Etherington, by RCMP Veteran and President of the *Friends of the Mounted Police Heritage Centre*, Bill Greenslade, in amount of \$130,000.

President Greenslade commented on the past diligence of the *Friends*, in having contributed \$2,000,000 since 1990 for the enhancement of the functioning of the Heritage Centre and the Historical Collections Unit and expressed pride in supporting such a worthy cause. President Etherington expressed her thanks and appreciation on behalf of the RCMP Heritage Centre and Historical Collections Unit to the *Friends*. She praised the value contributed by the *Friends* to the successful functioning and promotion of the Centre in the preservation of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police' unique History.



FRIENDLY NOTES BY EMAIL

Would you like to receive the *Friendly Notes* electronically? This e-mail delivery allows you to view the *Friendly Notes* online rather than through the mail. If so please provide your email address to **bnowell@accesscomm.ca** and your e-mail address will be added to the mail-out list. The *Friendly Notes* will be sent in the Adobe Acrobat pdf format.

The benefits of taking advantage of this include:

- convenience and timely access to the *Friendly Notes* – you receive the *Friendly Notes* a week to ten days earlier,
- environmentally friendly, and
- reduces costs of printing and mailing.

It's easy! All you need is access to the Internet and an electronic mail address.

Thanks to those Members of the *Friends* who have already indicated they would like to receive the *Friendly Notes* electronically.

DONOR WALL OF APPRECIATION

The following changes/additions to the "Donor Wall" have been made since our last issue.

Life Members (\$1200 to \$2999)

Dan & Marion Carroll, Ottawa, On
Terry & Lucille Lewis, Westbank, BC
Elizabeth Heidt, Regina, Sk.

Friends (\$500 to \$1199)

Gary W.Coulter, Kingston, On
Bill Greenslade, Regina, Sk
James Armstrong, Calgary, Ab
John Graham, Kelowna, BC

Emma Gawthrop, Regina, Sk
Jack Foster, Nanaimo, BC
Kathleen A.King, Brandon, MB
Dale & Rita Lively, St.Andrews, NB
Richard M.Dundas, Mount Pearl, NL
W.G.Salt, Regina, Sk
Wayne Mauthe, Unity, Sk
S.Veronica Peakes, Moores Mills, NB
Thomas E. Russell, Mississauga, ON

Donor Wall - in memory of

\$1000 Shirley A.Dodds - in memory of Phil Dodds,
Regina, Sk

\$100 Irene F.Black, Grand Prairie,Ab - in memory of
18490,A.James Black

\$450 Agnes M.JJamont of Saskatoon, Sk- in memory
of 20302 Kenneth C.Jamont

\$135 Ann Thomson,Coquitlam BC - in memory of
S/Sgt.Hooker, and Ivan Thue

\$100 Wm.J.Smith, Baddeck,NS - in memory of
Lois I Smith

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

A warm welcome to the following persons who have become members of the *Friends* during the period from December 16 to March 15, 2010:

Paul & Maria Myers, Red Deer, AB

Gary Davidson, Regina, Sk

James & Marina Laking, Midhurst, ON

W. Douglas Keam, Regina, Sk

FRIENDS BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

President	Bill Greenslade, RCMP (Rtd.)
Immediate Past President (ODS)	Tom Light, RCMP (Rtd.)
Past President	Kenn Barker, RCMP (Rtd.)
Secretary	Ron Ostrum, RCMP (Rtd.)
Director	Bob Cocks
Director	John Hodgson, RCMP (Rtd.)
Director	Mac MacGillivray, RCMP (Rtd.)
Director	John Worthington, RCMP (Rtd.)
Director	Barrie Nowell, RCMP (Rtd.)
Force Observer	Superintendent Dale Erickson
Historical Collections Unit Observer	Rhonda Lamb
Heritage Centre Observer	Robin Etherington
Historian Committee	Kenn Barker, RCMP (Rtd.)
Membership Committee	Ron Ostrum, RCMP (Rtd.)
Newsletter Editor	Barrie Nowell, RCMP (Rtd.)

YES! I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER/RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP WITH THE FRIENDS OF THE MOUNTED POLICE HERITAGE CENTRE

- Membership One Year (\$35) Three Years (\$90)
- Life Membership \$1,200 single payment or cumulative over several years to \$1,200 level. Existing members will have past membership payments credited towards the \$1,200 level.
- Donation _____ (Any amount is eligible for a Canada Customs and Revenue Agency tax receipt. Canada Only)

American residents please add \$5.00 extra per year and international residents please add \$10.00 extra per year, to cover postage costs.

Enclosed Amount \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Prov./State _____

Postal Code _____ Country _____

E-mail Address _____

My membership/donation will be paid by:

- Cheque/check (payable to the Friends of the Mounted Police Museum)
- Credit Card # _____ Expiry _____
(Visa, Master Card or American Express)

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

Return or Mail:

Friends of the Mounted Police Heritage Centre
5907 Dewdney Avenue, Regina, Saskatchewan
Canada S4T 0P4