

FRIENDLY NOTES

Friends Of The Mounted Police Heritage Centre

Les Amis Du Centre Du Patrimoine De La GRC

NOTES AMICALES

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‘SOVEREIGN’S MEDAL FOR VOLUNTEERS’

RECIPIENT

ROBERT COCKS (RETIRED HIGHWAYS ENGINEER)

By Robert Smart (President of the Friends of the RCMP Heritage Centre)

**PROUD
SUPPORTERS
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D’APPUYER**

**RCMP
HERITAGE
CENTRE**



**LE CENTRE
DU PATRIMOINE
DE LA GRC**

**RCMP
HISTORICAL
COLLECTIONS
UNIT**



**GROUPE DES
COLLECTIONS
HISTORIQUES**



Bob Cocks retired as an engineer working for the Department of Highways in the Province of Saskatchewan. In 1999 Bob became an associate member Regina Division of the RCMP Vets Assoc.

and a member of the “Friends of the Mounted Police Heritage Centre”.

Bob was involved in planning & designing the Sask. Route, liaised with Sask Tourism and registered participants for the Re-enactment

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‘SOVEREIGN’S MEDAL FOR VOLUNTEERS’ RECIPIENT ROBERT COCKS (RETIRED HIGHWAYS ENGINEER)

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of the NWMP 1873 March West in 1999. His planning included time-lines for both the North and South routes of the March West (previously reported in the 2015 and Spring 2016 issues of the Friendly Notes). He also issued period uniforms used during the ride, and managed and archived the accounting and records of the ride. Bob gave 2700 hours of to this endeavour from Sept 98 to Nov 2000.

In 2000 he also was secretary of the National Aboriginal Policing Conference held in Regina and devoted more than 500 hours on the work prior to, during and after the conference.

In 2001 the Board of the Friends of the Mounted Police had a vacancy and Bob became the first non RCMP member on the Board. A position he has continuously filled to this date

Bob was editor of the “Friends” quarterly newsletter from 2000 – 2009 and in 2014/15. He had to identify, research and write articles

on a range of topics from artifacts or exhibits; or features of RCMP Depot Division or other RCMP events / issues. The time commitment per publication was 35 hours per newsletters – 140 hours per year. He also prepared our AGM Report during these periods requiring another 18 hours of his time per year.

Bob worked on Board committees such as the “Friends” Junior Membership Program; committee to establish a Logo for the “Friends”; lead role in our conversion to not-for Profit Corporation, aligning our policy with the new legislation; Membership surveys; and our current initiative of “Pillars of the Force”. These initiatives were in place to generate more interest in and attendance at the Heritage Centre, increase our Membership and seek ways to generate financial support and funding.

In 2014 when there was a shortage of volunteers to drive our tours of RCMP Depot Division for tourists, Bob as usual stepped up and took on that added job. This was an average of 2 – 3 hours per week.

Bob also volunteered with the RCMP Vets Assoc. In 2005 he lined up drivers, developed a schedule, and then dispatched for pick-ups and drop-offs when Regina the RCMP Vets hosted a Reunion in Regina. There were more than 1,100 attendees and Bob volunteered over 60 hours of his time.

In 2010 he was secretary for the Vets AGM in Regina giving more than 100 hours of time in the planning & preparation, during the event itself and post AGM review.

The RCMP Veterans Association and Saskatchewan Conservation Officers host an annual Game Dinner. From 2007 to present Bob has served as secretary. He also took on secretary duties for the many bus tours held in 2004, 2007, 2009 Big Muddy Tours, and Newfoundland (2011) and Whitehorse (2009). Each of these required 20 – 40 hours of Bob’s time.

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THE MORE NORTHERLY ROUTE – LOOKING BACK 70 YEARS

(CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE)

By summer of 1943, the eastern Arctic had become important for defence purposes; airstrips and weather stations were being built. But many Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Hudson Bay Company posts had already closed and there was a shortage of ships to carry in supplies. So the *St Roch* was assigned to carry all she could handle. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police had no men to spare for crew. Larsen was authorized to pick up whatever men he could.

The following year (1944), after discussions in Ottawa with the army, navy and air force, Department of Transport and various government officials dealing with Arctic de-fence, Larsen received orders to take the *St Roch* westward to Vancouver through the more northerly Northwest Passage route. This voyage was not intended to be a feat of navigation, but rather to maintain Canadian sovereignty over her Arctic Islands. Over 35 years had passed since Captain JE Bernier, officially patrolling the Arctic on behalf of Canada, had claimed the territory between its east and west mainland borders as well as the entire Arctic Archipelago.² Now increasing numbers of Americans were in the Canadian Arctic without Canadian oversight. Could the Royal Canadian Mounted Police posts at Craig and Dundas Harbours be reopened; and in light of increased German U-boat threat, could the posts be supplied from the west? Might new detachments be established on islands along the more northern route, possibly at Winter Harbour on Melville Island? Larsen was directed to determine the topographical description of the land, and information about tidal ranges, water depth, direction of ice movement and currents, and the possibility of fog along the route. Just as in 1940, the 7295 mile mission was secret, except to a few government and military officials. The route he was to use was into Melville Sound then south through Prince of Wales Strait. The stretch through Melville Sound and McClure Strait had never before been navigated by any ship.



St Roch, now rigged as a ketch, and with a larger deckhouse, leaving Nova Scotia, July 19, 1944. (Larsen fonds VMM) 9

During the winter of 1943-44, the *St Roch* underwent refit at Dartmouth. During the war years, the shipyard was fully committed to work on navy and transport ships and it was a constant struggle to get supplies and equipment for *St Roch*. The American government gave permission for Union Diesel to provide a 300 HP engine to replace the underpowered 150 HP engine. To carry out this work, the small deck house and part of the afterdeck were removed which provided an opportunity for Larsen's other requested alterations to be made. While frozen in at Paisley Bay in 1941-42, Larsen had measured up the ship and made plans for a larger deck house providing space for several cabins, a wireless room, mess room and galley above deck, and allowing for more space below for fuel and provisions. He wanted to replace the original main mast and dangerous sail with a shorter mast near the stern on which to carry a small riding or storm sail.

Larsen faced a shortage of suitable men as crew. Corporal Bill Peters and Pat Hunt, from the 1940-42 voyage, volunteered as engineer and clerk. Seventy year old Rudolph Johnson, a Dane who had traded for years in the Arctic on

several Hudson's Bay Company vessels, signed up as second engineer, and 65 year old arctic trader, Ole Andreassen, who had travelled with Stefansson, joined as mate. The others had never seen the Arctic, but at least two, Frank Matthews and Stan McKenzie, young fishermen from Port Aux Basque, Newfoundland, had been to sea. James Diplock was the only constable the Royal Canadian Mounted Police could spare. Two young fellows recently released from the air force joined them, L.G. Russill as wireless operator and G.B. Dickens as cook. Russill had just finished radio school, but had never sent a ship to shore message. Bill Cashin, barely 17, an assistant to machinist on ships and who had to get his mother's consent to go, made up the complement.



Crew prior to departure. Front L to R: Diplock, Peters, Hunt, Johnson, Larsen. Rear L to R: Owen (for transfer to Pond Inlet), Dickens, Matthews, Cashin, Andreassen. Missing: McKenzie, Russell. July 1944 (Larsen fonds VMM) 10

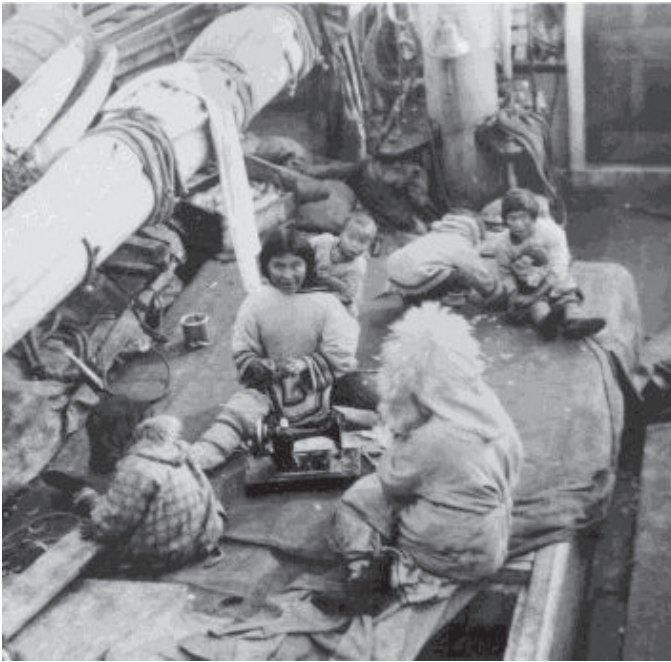
But recruiting crew was the least of the problems. Their canned food which bore the proud legend, "Prepared Especially for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police" proved so salty that even the dogs wouldn't eat it. All the cases were the same. Too late to replace it, and here they were, ready to leave for the Arctic on a voyage that might take a year or two, with their canned meat supply unfit to eat.

On July 19th 1944 Roch departed from Dartmouth shipyard. Larsen wrote: "I would venture to say, that never had anyone prepared

to leave for an Arctic voyage which included the instruction to navigate the Northwest Passage under a more trying condition of unreadiness." They were already late heading out into the Arctic. Sea trials were few and short, with not time enough for defects to show up. Rather, the defects developed a few hours later. The engine didn't run well; the engine cooling system pipes leaked, the joints squirted water, and rubber connections pulsed like bellows. The engine room became flooded. They returned to Dartmouth. Two days later they set off again. The funnel and exhaust silencer extending through the deck became hot and the iron plate they sat on scorched the deck; the pitch in the deck seams around the plate was running. The water hose had to be kept running around it so the deck wouldn't catch fire. Water leaked into the engine room. This time they headed for the naval base at Sydney NS. By the time they reached Curling Cove, Newfoundland for a final refueling, they were over a week behind schedule. After more repairs, they headed north again. A few days later their eggs were found to be going bad; they had not been processed in water glass. The sailors checked the "fresh" vegetables. Potatoes, cabbages, turnips and onions – all rotten!

The usual heavy ice drift hampered them along the Labrador coast while the egg shaped ship rolled considerably. The more powerful engine improved speed, but they shipped more water. Determining their position was "by guess and by God" because it was too foggy to shoot the sun, the magnetic compass wandered all over, usually pointing towards the bow of the ship, and the newly installed gyro fluctuated with changing errors. Fourteen days after first leaving Dartmouth they were only at the south end of Baffin Island in tightly packed ice and burning up precious fuel. Knowing from sealers and whalers that the Greenland coast was usually clear at that time of year, Larsen headed there. It was clear and sunny with open waters except for a few giant icebergs. A bit north of Disco Island conditions looked improved westward. Then, scheduled to call at Pond Inlet, they cut across towards Baffin Island, but heavy ice forced them to shut down and drift with the pack. Thick freezing fog covered the ship

and clung to the rigging. Suddenly a huge polar bear, well over a thousand pounds, loomed out of a fog on an ice flow. Larsen shot the bear; now they had meat. But they were again stopped for 3 days by a huge field of ice, unbroken to the shore.



Inuit family on St Roch hatch cover; Leitia (wife of Joe Panipakoocho) sewing, with baby boy in her amauti, Panikpak (Joe's mother), and three girls (August 1944) (Larsen fonds VMM)

By August 12, they anchored at Pond Inlet and unloaded supplies for the police detachment. In case they had to overwinter, they took an Inuit family on board, Joe Panipakoocho, who had worked for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police at Pond Inlet, his wife Leitia, his mother Paninikpa, three little girls (aged nine, eight and four) and 15 year old step son, Arreak, their belongings and 17 dogs. The family set up a tent over the hatch. Joe had no knowledge of a ship the size of *St Roch*, but Larsen de-scribed Joe and Arreak as natural born seamen. Leaving Pond Inlet in heavy fog, they headed for Dundas Harbour on Devon Island, running into a south-east gale with snow and sleet as they crossed the strong current of Navy Board Inlet and Lancaster Sound. Ice encased the ship; the dogs, gathered into a little cargo scow and covered with a tarpaulin, were so miserable that they didn't even fight.

Footnotes

2. Alan MacEachern, "J.E. Bernier's Claims to Fame", Canadian Journal of the History of Science, Technology and Medicine, 2010, (Vol. 33, No. 2) p. 43 73.



Mary Panegoosho (6) daughter of Joe's older brother Kayak , Anne Padlo (Pallug) (7), Sophi (Sooopi) (4) (daughters of Joe & Leitia (1944) 11



Cylinders containing papers, ordinances and record of voyage were deposited at 9 locations. This one, deposited in Franklin's cairn high on Beechey Island was retrieved HMCS Labrador (1957). (Photo D Riedel , Cylinder in Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Center collection).

continued in the next issue...

LIFE MEMBERSHIP PRESENTATIONS



Garth and Eleanor Hampson receive their Lifetime Membership on October 10, 2017. In the photo from left to right is then Ottawa Division President Michel Séguin, Eleanor Hampson and Garth Hampson.



Bob Smart, President of the Friends presenting a ‘Challenge Coin’ #003 to Gloria Silcox in recognition of her recent donation to the friends.

Photo compliments of Murray Klatt.



In the photo, left to right - Ottawa Division President Michel Pelletier, Christeen Stewart and David Stewart. May 8, 2018.

The photo was taken by Gilbert Bouffard, a member of Ottawa Division.

FRIENDS RECEIVE SUPPORT FROM RCMP VETERANS

During the 2018 AGM held at the Best Western Airport Inn in Winnipeg, with the permission of the AGM Organizing Committee, the Friends set up a small display with the idea of advising Veterans of the work that the Friends do, and with the hope that Veterans would subscribe to join the Friends. Pictured are, Friends Past President Bill Greenslade recruiting Newfoundland and Labrador Division Veteran Trudy (McCabe) Powers. Several new memberships were obtained during the AGM, which indicates that there is tremendous support for the Friends from RCMP Veterans. All RCMP Veterans across Canada are encouraged to join the Friends of the Mounted Police Heritage Center, for it is the Centers roll to record and display the traditions and history of the Force. (Photo Courtesy of Shelley Ulyott)



MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

***FRIEND – \$500.00 +**

John Beasse, Unity, SK
Ron Manser, St. Albert, AB
Steve Smedley, Regina, SK

***LIFE MEMBERS – \$1,200.00 +**

Sheila Duthie, Arden, ON

***LIFE SPONSOR – \$3,000.00 – \$4,999.00**

Bob & Yvonne Cocks, Regina, SK
Boyd C. Lensen, Calgary, AB

***BENEFACTOR – \$5,000.00 – \$9,999.00**

Marilyn Reddy, Regina, SK
in memory of a father & three sons
#9071 S/M Laurence C. Reddy
#12803 Sgt. Clifford P. Reddy
#13260 Cpl. Gerald J. Reddy
#16837 Sgt. Laurence (Larry) J. Reddy

***PATRON**

John & Anne Tokarsik, Regina, SK

IN MEMORIAM

\$100.00 Barbara Black, Woodstock, ON
in memory of Sgt. Michael (Mike) D.W. Black

\$2000.00 Sheila Duthie, Arden, ON
in memory of #16815/0.649 A/Commr.
James Forbes Duthie (Rtd)

*These are cumulative amounts over the years

FRIENDS BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

President	Bob Smart, RCMP (Rtd.)
Past President	Bill Greenslade, RCMP (Rtd.)
Secretary	Ron Ostrum, RCMP (Rtd.)
Director	Bob Cocks
Director	Murray Klatt, RCMP (Rtd.)
Director	Dave Hoeft, RCMP (Rtd.)
Director	Glen Berger
Director	Al Nicholson (Rtd.)
Director	W. Douglas Keam
Force Observer	SM Ben Gibault
Historical Collections	
Unit Observer	Rhonda Lamb
Heritage Centre Observer	Marty Klyne
Membership Committee	Ron Ostrum, RCMP (Rtd.)
Newsletter Editor	Murray Klatt, RCMP (Rtd.)

HERITAGE CENTRE SUMMER 2018 EVENTS

June 19	–	Aboriginal Day	July 29	–	Bike Rodeo
June 27	–	Canadian Multicultural Day	July 31	–	Queen City Parade
June 30	–	Cadet Movie Night	August 6	–	Celebrate Saskatchewan
July 1	–	Canada Day Celebrations	August 18	–	Cadet Movie Night
July 14	–	Child Car Seat Clinic	August 25	–	LPGA Girls Conference.
July 21	–	Cadet Movie Night			

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

- 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.

Total 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 # _____ (Visa or Master Card) Expiry _____

Name on Card _____ Signature _____

Return by Mail:

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

Join or Renew Your Membership Online:

Purchase your membership of the *Friends* with a simple, secure, on-line transaction using Pay Pal. When we receive your payment, a receipt will be sent to you by mail. Visit our website at www.rcmpfcfriends.com and click on "Join the Friends".