



FRIENDLY NOTES

Friends Of The Mounted Police Heritage Centre

Les Amis Du Centre Du Patrimoine De La GRC

NOTES AMICALES

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PROUD
SUPPORTERS
OF/FIERS
D'APPUYER

COMMEMORATIVE PEACEKEEPING EXHIBIT OPENS

By Rhonda Lamb, Manager, RCMP Historical Collections Unit

RCMP
HERITAGE
CENTRE



LE CENTRE
DU PATRIMOINE
DE LA GRC

For 20 years, Canada has deployed police officers to peacekeeping missions around the world. A new exhibit celebrating this 20 year anniversary and honouring these peacekeepers opened at the RCMP Heritage Centre on October 17, 2009. The exhibition will run until March 2010.

This exhibit, titled "In Their Own Words: 20 Years of International Peace" was developed by the RCMP Historical Collections Unit and focuses on the RCMP's involvement in these missions. Tim Hersche, curator of this exhibit, worked with members who have served in missions in bringing this narrative to the public in the first person. He has captured the stories of RCMP peacekeepers through a selection of interactive video clips, photographs and personal memorabilia.

Visitors to the exhibit will be able to write a postcard to RCMP members currently serving in peacekeeping missions. The RCMP Heritage Centre has developed programming for all ages around the exhibit. Entitled "Pledge of Peace", the program's aim is to build engaged citizens with a sense of self and community.

RCMP
HISTORICAL
COLLECTIONS
UNIT



GROUPE DES
COLLECTIONS
HISTORIQUES



Entrance to the
Commemorative
Peacekeeping Exhibit at
the RCMP Heritage Centre
which opened on
October 17, 2009.
Photo by Tim Hersche,
RCMP Historical
Collections Unit

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The twentieth Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Mounted Police Heritage Centre will be held in the Community Programming Room of the RCMP Heritage Centre, 5907 Dewdney Avenue, Regina, Saskatchewan on:

Tuesday, March 30th, 2010

5:30 PM Socializing

6:30 PM Annual General Meeting

7:30 PM Lunch and Refreshments

Details of the Meeting are contained in separate correspondence with this newsletter.

Those Members of the Friends who receive the Friendly Notes electronically will be mailed a form for them to be able to designate their proxy if they are unable to attend the meeting in person.

PRESENTATIONS



On October 2, 2009, on behalf of the Friends of the Mounted Police Heritage Centre. Director Mac MacGillivray presented artist Glen Scrimshaw of Duck Lake, Saskatchewan, a Life Membership plaque and lapel pin. The presentation was in recognition of Glen's generous support to the Friends, the RCMP and RCMP Veterans Associations over the years through his artwork.
Photo by Bob Cocks



On November 10, 2009, on behalf of the Friends of the Mounted Police Heritage Centre, Al Rivard (left), President of the Ottawa Division of the RCMP Veterans' Association, presented a life membership plaque to James Brown of Gloucester, Ont, at Ottawa Division's regular general meeting.
Photo courtesy of Ottawa Division of the RCMP Veterans' Association.



On November 24th, 2009, on behalf of the Friends of the Mounted Police Heritage Centre, Tony Brezinski presented Ed and Renee Steele, a Life Membership Plaque and lapel pins at their winter home in Weslaco Texas. Ed is the great nephew of the legendary Sam Steele.
Photo by Colleen Brezinski

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On October 27, 2009, on behalf of the Friends of the Mounted Police Heritage Centre. President Bill Greenslade presented Frank Richter of Kelowna, B.C. a Life Membership plaque and lapel pin
Photo by Terry Burgess.

RCMP Heritage Centre
Volunteer of the Year Award
- John Worthington
(S/Sgt. Retired) On
November 25th., 2009,
highlighting the Annual
Volunteers Appreciation
night and gala Banquet, the
Heritage Centre's "Volunteer
of the Year Award" was
presented by Robin
Etherington, President and
CEO of the Heritage Centre,
to RCMP Veteran, John
Worthington. John serves
on the Heritage Centre Board
of Directors, the "Friends"
Board of Directors, donating
hours of his time as a docent
in support of employees
and other volunteers, and is a Past President of the Regina RCMP
Veterans' Association.



Congratulations John and keep up the good work!

Photo by Kenn Barker.

FEATURED ARTIFACTS FROM RCMP HCU: PART IV - NINE POUND MARK I FIELD GUN WITH LIMBER AND CARRIAGE - CATALOGUE No. 1992.7.3

This Mark I Field Gun was acquired on the insistence of Commissioner G.A. French in early 1874, when the North West Mounted Police acquired a number of artillery pieces, including this 9lb. Mark I Field gun, for the first action by the newly formed organization on the March West. It took a four-horse team to pull the gun over the wild untamed land of Western Canada in 1874, and by most accounts it was rough travelling over the dirt hills in southern Saskatchewan. During these tough times, two more horses were needed to transport this artillery piece. The artillery was thought to be essential to the success of the journey, as it was believed that at the final destination of the March West, Fort Whoop-up, there would be a large battle with the whiskey traders. However, this proved to be untrue, as the fort was found deserted once the NWMP arrived on October 9th, 1874.

Yet this would not prove to be the end of the artillery. The artillery initially acquired, would finally be used during the North-West Rebellion in 1885. The gun saw action during a battle near Frenchman Butte, Saskatchewan on May 27 and 28, 1885, where positions held by a band of Cree under the leadership of Chief Big Bear, were shelled by the Alberta Field Force with two units of NWMP in support.

This would be the first and last time that the gun would be fired in anger. In 1933 this gun would be brought to "Depot" Division in Regina, Saskatchewan by Assistant Commissioner S.T. Wood. Assistant Commissioner Wood was instrumental in the formation of the RCMP Museum in that same year; when he saw the need to preserve the history of the Force for display and research purposes.

The gun is made primarily of Firth's steel with a wooden carriage frame. The total weight is over 3,800 lbs with a gun length of 183 cm and a bore diameter (calibre) of 7.6 cm. The initial velocity in fps is 1,381 and was manufactured by Sir W.G. Armstrong & Co. in Newcastle-on-Tyne, England in the early 1870s.



Nine Pound Mark I
Field Gun
Photo courtesy of
RCMP Historical
Collections Unit

REMEMBERING MY LIFE IN THE ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE – 1941 TO 1970: ITUNA – PART VI

by James R. Zavitz, Sergeant –Major (Rtd.)

The Winter 2007 Issue of the Friendly Notes invited any retired Members to share their memories about arrival at their first posting or of their first assignment/adventure. In 2002, Retired Sergeant-Major Jim Zavitz, of Ilderton, ON, after years of coaxing from his children, wrote a book of his life and experiences in the Force from 1941 to 1970. Jim then gave his book to family, friends and neighbours. We thank Jim for sharing his memories of his first posting at Ituna, SK and of providing a copy of his book (through a CD) for the library of the RCMP Historical Collections Unit in the RCMP Heritage Centre. This is the sixth instalment from the chapter.

“There was no leeway, though, in the use of purple gas. Gasoline for farm use was not taxed. To prevent its used in trucks and automobiles to get around the gas-rationing law, it was coloured with a purple additive. We were issued with a piece of hose and rubber suction bulb to stick into a vehicle’s gas tank to draw off a sample of gas. If it was purple it was regarded as a serious contravention and carried a heavy fine.

The Greek Orthodox Church was having a big function and cars came from near and far. Jack decided to check for purple gas. We each took our suction bulb and piece of hose and went to work. I had five test tubes for samples and all were full after I had checked the first five cars. I went to Jack for more test tubes but all of his were full. “To hell with it” he said, “we can’t charge everybody.”

Almost all trials were conducted by a Justice of the Peace. These were local residents of good character and standing in the governing provincial party, but they did not know the first thing about evidence, procedure or the law itself. Except for the most routine cases they always asked Jack what the disposition and sentence should be. Now as I look back on 55 years of experience, I realize that a better brand of justice was meted out in this fashion than it is to-day with university trained lawyers and judges, with all the tricks and ploys and emphasis on words and procedure, often at the expense of the truth of the matter. For anything that required a preliminary hearing or trial by indictment, a magistrate came from Melville, but this was required only a dozen or so times during my time at Ituna.

Some trials were carried out under rather unusual circumstances. One of our Justices of the Peace was busy discing a field when we arrived with a prisoner who intended to plead Guilty and we wanted to release him as soon as possible. The J.P. merely stopped his horses, turned around on the seat, we all took off our hats, Jack opened court as if we were in a proper courtroom and the matter was concluded then and there. It proves it doesn’t take a lot of fancy trappings to ensure that justice is done.

Another J.P. was a well-known and prosperous breeder of Aberdeen Angus cattle. Jack and I turned up at his farm needing his services. His wife told us he was down at the barn so Jack stayed chatting with his wife and I went down to the corrals and haystacks to find him. It was the dead of winter and I was wearing my buffalo coat, breeches and moccasins. I have always had an almost pathological fear of bulls, many times if I have a nightmare there is a bull lurking in it someplace. But I try to balance this off with a similarly pathological determination to hide my fear. This particular day I walked around the corner of a pile of hay bales at the identical moment his prize bull came around the same corner from the opposite direction. His head seemed as big as the front of a truck. We startled each other so much that we both seemed frozen. Suddenly, and I don’t know how, I was on top of the stack and the bull was making for a far corner of the corral. I don’t know who frightened the other more. Perhaps he smelled my buffalo coat and thought I was competition to him. After enough time to collect my composure and regain my breath, I determined the bull and I were a safe distance apart for me to slide to the ground and continue my hunt for the J.P.

Jack never was taught how to type by the touch system but he could make a lot of noise by the old hunt-and-peck system. I thought it was a lot faster than my method, judging from the sound, so we decided to give each other a typing test a la “Depot” method. It turned out that he was doing about 15 words per minute while I did 35. That settled any question of who was the faster. From then on Jack sat back in his swivel chair and dictated our reports and I did the typing. This was the only time I could use his typewriter, it was far nicer

to use than my old Imperial. Of course all the monthly returns were my job so were done on my machine.

I did not relish dealing with mental patients and this formed a considerable portion of our work. The population consisted mainly of Russians, Ukrainians and Polish people and there had been about three generations of inbreeding. Most were rather docile but we had some really violent ones too. If they were committed to a mental hospital I had to escort them by train to Regina like a prisoner. This meant leaving Ituna at 4 a.m., and arriving at Melville at 5:30. There I turned my charge over to a civilian guard hired by Melville Detachment and got a few hours' sleep before leaving at 11 a.m. for Regina. A night in Regina Town Station barracks or a hotel (for a bath), leave Regina for Melville, hang around for twelve hours and catch a train for Ituna, getting back at midnight. If a patient was too violent to take by train we could get special permission to go to Regina by car, which took about six hours for the return trip. One was so violent that she tore my jacket and Jack's to pieces. I felt sorry for them but it was a necessary part of police work that had to be done.

Taking fingerprints was part of police work. I hated spreading the messy ink on a piece of glass, rolling a person's fingers in it to make an impression on the fingerprint form and then cleaning up after. The copy of the prints would be sent to the Fingerprint Section at Headquarters in Ottawa. I did it with every person we arrested and I could not see the point of it. Finally we had arrested a chap for riding the rails, fingerprinted him, sent his prints to Ottawa and he was sentenced to seven days in Regina Gaol (the usual treatment). Before he was due for release we received word that his thumbprint matched one lifted from the windowsill of the Post Office in Bridgewater, Nova Scotia when that place had been broken into four years previously. Four years and three-quarters of a continent away and a routine, though distasteful, practise had proved to be worthwhile. Another lesson for me.

Another part of the work I would have gladly passed over was attending autopsies relating to deaths of unknown or suspicious causes. Before joining the Force I had never seen a dead person, not even in a funeral parlour. At the first autopsy I thought I was going to get sick at my stomach until Jack realized how I felt, tossed a pair of robber gloves to me and had me hold the dead man's head while the doctor sawed through the skull. The vibrations of the saw sent shivers up my arms and through my whole body but being involved seemed to quell my queasiness, although I was never very hungry for meat (especially liver) for a week after each experience. On the bright side though, the doctor made it very interesting with his commentary on what he was looking for in each organ, what any discolorations meant, the role each organ played

and how each supported the other. I learned a good deal but thought it was quite a gruesome way to do it, and if I had wanted to know this, I would have been a doctor. We had an average of one autopsy every couple of months or so. I was always happy to conclude whatever kind of a case it was.

Every dead body had to be guarded until the surgeon arrived, usually from Regina, to perform the autopsy and this always took hours. One time I had to stay with a body in an empty grain bin in the middle of a pasture for 56 hours while the surgeon went from Regina to give evidence at an inquest at North Battleford and then come to Ituna. While I was there the cattle snorted and pawed around the bin. It was not bad during the day but at night I would have gladly traded my place for anywhere else.

In that spooky Nanton School area an elderly man was killed in a car accident on his way home (drunken) from a wedding party. He had been taken to his home before we were notified and I had to stay with him until the surgeon arrived. This took the better part of a day and in the meantime the house was filled with the comings and goings of his neighbors, plus his family making meals and trying to carry on as best they could. I noticed his widow peeling potatoes while her nose was dripping into the potato pot. They were very considerate of me and invited me to join them for dinner. I declined.

Another sickening experience was when we received a query about a hermit who had not been seen for several days. It was the dead of winter, he lived in an old granary with only binder canvases for a door in the middle of a field and no smoke had been seen coming from the chimney. Jack and I went there to find him lying on the floor huddled in a bunch of horse blankets. The stench of the place was indescribable. There was no plumbing, the "bathroom" was simply a board across a corner. It could have been a lot worse except that everything inside was frozen. He had gangrene in one leg, he had already squeezed a tobacco tin of puss from it and he was in a very bad way. There were no ambulances or para-medics then, just the RCMP. We used some of his blankets as a toboggan to drag him to the police car and took him to the hospital in Leross. We almost froze driving back to Ituna with all the windows open trying to get the stink of him out of the car. He died a few days later. Police work is not all glamour."

(Continued on Page 6)

LONG-TERM EDITOR STEPS ASIDE AFTER TEN YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE

Bob Cocks, the Editor of the Friends Quarterly Newsletter is relinquishing his duties regarding the “Friendly Notes” but will remain on as a Director of the Friends Board. His holiday will only be a pause as he has already involved himself in assisting the planning and preparation of the RCMP Veterans hosting of the 2010 AGM and Homecoming gala in Regina, in June.

A vote of appreciation goes out to you, Bob, from the Friends and wishes of good luck in your future endeavours on the Board.

The Editorial duties are being assumed by a twenty-six year Veteran and past President of the Regina Veterans Association, Barrie Nowell and wife Pat of Regina. Barrie joined the Force in Winnipeg and spent all his service in Saskatchewan, completing the rounds of every Sub/Division, which he says may be some kind of record.



Barrie Nowell,
New Editor Friendly Notes.
Photo by Kenn Barker.

(The Sub/Div's. were Regina, Yorkton, Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Swift Current and North Battleford, Sask.) Barrie's hobby is writing and he will try and continue the high standard of news, history and member participation that has produced a Newsletter we all look forward to.

THE OUTREACH OF THE MOUNTIES

The **Royal Canadian Mounted Police**, are Canada's Federal Police Force, also known as the RCMP.

The **RCMP Heritage Centre** (RCMP HC) exists to tell the RCMP story, including the critical role the Force plays in addressing contemporary issues. The Heritage Centre

is a unique mix of educational institution, museum and tourist attraction. The Centre is owned and operated by a nationally registered non-profit corporation, the Mounted Police Heritage Centre Inc. The Centre is located on the grounds of the RCMP Academy, “Depot” Division in Regina, Saskatchewan. The RCMP HC leases this land from the RCMP.

The **RCMP Historical Collections Unit** (RCMP HCU) collects, preserves and interprets the RCMP artifacts relating to the history of the Force. All articles are the property of the RCMP. All staff are RCMP employees and are supervised by a Unit Manager who reports to the Support Services Officer, “Depot” Division. The Unit occupies space leased from the RCMP Heritage Centre.

The **FRIENDS** is a non-profit national organization, operated under a Board of Directors and Committee Chairpersons, dedicated to the enhancement of the RCMP Historical Collections Unit and the RCMP Heritage Centre. As members of this organization, we promote the interests of and assist the HCU and HC, and encourage and support research and study into the history of the Force and the preservation of its artifacts.

Membership in the **FRIENDS** is open to the public and your participation is encouraged and invited.

Editor

REMEMBERING MY LIFE IN THE ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE – 1941 TO 1970: ITUNA – CONTINUED

“In the autumn Jack and I made “patrols to outlying areas” of our detachment area. Actually they were hunting trips and we often collected our limit of ducks, partridge and prairie chicken. We saved enough for a nice meal prepared by Elsie and then took the remainder to elderly or needy people around town. It was sport for us, good, useful public relations and helped some people who were having hard times.

There was an Irishman struggling to make a living from his 160 acres north of town. He had come out from the Old Country as a young man and must be in his sixties by now. He and his

wife had a bunch of kids running around in rags, they were typical of what was pictured in stories of the Dirty Thirties on the prairies. We enjoyed stopping in to visit with him, at first I could not understand what he was saying because of his accent, but he was full of quaint sayings and strange ideas and philosophies. We were always invited to the house for a cup of tea—he was the epitome of hospitality. One time going through the woodshed Jack spotted some ducks hanging with their feathers on, from some nails driven into the rafters and was told that ducks had to hang by one leg until the carcass fell to the ground, only then was it “ripe” enough to eat. We never ate any meals there.

The PFRA (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration) and its Community Pastures grew out of the dust bowl days of the ‘30s and was a means of reclaiming land that had been destroyed by raising grain year after year, even with summer fallow. It took this land out of grain production and reverted it to pasture-land which was much less prone to blowing away. Farmers paid a grazing fee to keep their cattle on these pastures but there were no people living on them so all these cattle were unattended except for routine visits by PFRA employees. This presented an ideal situation for cattle rustlers. There was one in the northern part of our area so we made frequent patrols through the pasture. In my time at Ituna there was not a single report of rustling. Since there were so few people in the pasture it was a good place to listen to the World Series games in the fall of the year without being interrupted.

Most of the farms were one or two quarter sections (160 or 320 acres) and anyone with more than a section was a really big farmer. One fellow in the eastern end of our area had thirteen quarters (2080 acres) and was rumoured to be the richest farmer in our area. He had a standing offer to give a whole section of land to whoever would marry his daughter. She was in her early twenties and my curiosity was raised, why would he make such an offer: Jack and I made some pretence for a patrol at their farm. Her father had come out from England after the First World War, built a soddy house complete with earth floor, and was still living in it without any improvements when we visited. He was such a skinflint that the few times he went to town any townspeople he met would offer him a beer, knowing that his reply would be “No, thank you very much. But I will take the dime it would have cost you.” I was not interested in the daughter, but one look at her and I could see why she was up for sale. She was the ugliest human being I had ever seen. She made the Wicked Witch in the Wizard of Oz look like a Playboy centerfold! Jack and I concluded the purpose of our visit and left, our curiosity well satisfied.”

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.

Donor Wall in Memory of:

\$1,000.00

Sheri McConnell, St. John's, NF - in memory of Lillian McConnell

Life Members (\$1,200 to \$2,999)

P. Bryce Christensen, Lyman WY-USA
Carolle and Gord Prawdzik, Regina, SK
Edward G. and Renee Steele, Wymark, SK

Friends (\$500 to \$1,999)

Joe Merten-Feddeler, Moose Jaw, SK
Mrs. Georgina Pelletier, North Bay, ON
Gary Treble, Regina, SK

Troop Reunion Donations

The *Friends* sincerely appreciate all donations. The Troop Reunion donation is an excellent way for troop mates to show their support of the *Friends*, and in turn the RCMP Heritage Centre and the RCMP Historical Collections Unit. With the new electronic 50 inch plasma screen in operation, which is located in the lobby of the Heritage Centre, all donors are easily displayed, whether they be individuals, or individual members of a larger group such as a Troop.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

A warm welcome to the following persons who have become members of the Friends during the period from September 16 to December 15, 2009:

Jack and Diane Fisher, Crescent Valley, BC

Sheri McConnell, St.John's, NL

Carolle and Gord Prawdzik, 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	John Hodgson, RCMP (Rtd.)
Director	Mac MacGillivray, RCMP (Rtd.)
Director	John Worthington, RCMP (Rtd.)
Director	Bob Cocks
Force Observer	Superintendent Dale Erickson
Historical Collections Unit Observer	Rhonda Lamb
Heritage Centre Observer	Robin Etherington
<hr/>	
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