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Editor: Gord Schumacher, Layout: Andrea Yuen, Advisors: John Burchill, Danny Smyth, Jane MacLatchey and Mark Anderson

# Message from MACP President Danny Smyth



**WHAT A YEAR.** Police leaders in Manitoba have been resilient and committed to the professionalism required in a year full of uncertainties. Through record-breaking snow and cold, the albatross of COVID loomed large. We all had to deal with the difficulties of vaccine non-compliance inside the workplace, but it was outside our walls where our unified front was tested the most. Non-compliant radicals, protesting truckers, and the southern blockade at the border, to name only a few, were all issues where reasoned and strategic police leadership was required and where that leadership helped steer Manitoba back from two years of public concern, confusion, and disruption – well done. So now we slowly move on.

The MACP has some big plans this year. Continuing with our in-person training sessions, speaker series, and bulletins, we are committed to bringing quality leadership training to our members. We will be hosting the 2023 National Police Leadership conference here in Winnipeg next April, an event that should not be missed. We are also rolling out an Organized Crime public outreach initiative using mainstream and social media to further our goal of being leaders in public safety. Our committees continue to work hard through legislation changes and shifting priorities to ensure that members are well informed of emerging issues. We are just getting started; the MACP is dedicated to being a champion of innovative police leadership and will work hard to provide members with the tools needed to succeed.

As a final note, I want to congratulate our Vice President, Assistant Commissioner Jane MacLatchey, on her retirement. She is a good friend and has been steadfast in her support of the MACP – time to have fun.



# Canadian Police Mission in Ukraine (CPMU)

By Superintendent Bruce Prange, CPMU Contingent Commander



**The following article was completed in January 2022. On February 24, 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine. The operations of the Canadian Police Mission in Ukraine have been suspended. It is unknown at this time in what manner the CPMU will operate in the future. Our thoughts and support are with the brave Ukrainians who are trying to keep themselves and their families safe while fighting for their homeland.**

In February 2014, protesters and riot police clashed in the Ukraine capitol of Kyiv in what is known as the Revolution of Dignity. This resulted in the then President of Ukraine, Victor Yanukovych, fleeing to the Russian Federation to avoid impeachment. This allowed for the creation of a new government and the start of many institutional reforms. Many of these reforms centered around Judicial reform with a priority on transparency and accountability, with a focus on police, prosecutions and the judiciary.

The Militsiya, which was the national police service since the 1950's, was replaced by the National Police of Ukraine (NPU), and a Patrol Police component was created.

Through the Canadian Police Arrangement (CPA), short-term training deployments started in 2014. This led to the creation of the Canadian Police Mission in Ukraine (CPMU) in 2016 via a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Canada and Ukraine.

This bilateral mission's purpose is to enhance the safety and well-being of Ukrainian citizens through creative,

relevant, sustainable training and development of the NPU. In addition, Canadian police officers support the European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) in Ukraine. The EUAM work with the local authorities to bring about reform of the civilian security sector.

The MOU allows CPMU to have a maximum establishment of 45 Canadian police officers. There is an essential component of Locally Engaged Staff (LES) comprised of administrative and financial management support, interpreters, drivers, IT support, and a strategic analyst. The LES are relied on heavily in almost all aspects of the mission.

The CPMU office is located in central Kyiv. The police trainers, along with interpreters, attend training facilities across the country, delivering training courses, seminars and workshops. Under normal operating conditions, the training teams are on the road delivering training for two weeks, then return to work in the Kyiv office for a week.

One of the largest challenges to the CPMU is delivering training within the pandemic environment, together



with the security concerns on the eastern border. As a result of another wave of COVID-19 infections in Ukraine, and the associated health and safety concerns, the Mission temporarily shifted to online training delivery in mid fall of 2021. This required procurement and utilization of new state of the art technology in the form of a production software program called Wire-Cast/ Rendezvous. This pivot in program delivery required a transition of duties for two of the LES from the role of interpreter to IT support in order to assist with the technical online presentations.

In late October 2021, a full time IT specialist was hired to convert training courses on AGORA, the RCMPs internal on-line training platform, into the Ukrainian language. This project identifies existing online courses that fit within the Ukrainian policing context and makes them available to the Kyiv Patrol Police Academy. Once the course library is established, the goal is that this concept will be expanded to the Patrol Police Learning Management System (LMS), and eventually the NPU LMS. This will be a longer-term project for the CPMU and, upon completion, will be a significant achievement for the Mission, leaving a legacy of accessible training for cadets as well as experienced police officers.

### **Training is delivered under four main pillars:**

- Introductory Criminal Investigation, including Domestic Violence
- Leadership, including Facilitating Adult Learning
- Community Policing, including Juvenile Prevention
- De-escalation, including the Academy Liaison role

The mission also includes a Gender Advisor, established in 2018, whose role is to promote and strengthen the profile of women police officers and to support integration of Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) considerations in all aspects of police training.

Networking and nurturing relationships with host organizations, as well as international and domestic partners, is crucial to mission success and to ensure contributions from the European Union and United States do not cross over or conflict with Canadian



training delivery materials. CPMU trainers routinely collaborate with other government agencies and NGOs in the creation and delivery of training to the NPU.

CPA missions are managed by RCMP International Peace Operations (IPO). There are currently 33 provincial, regional, municipal and First Nations police agencies that contribute police officers to IPO missions. Those agencies don't incur any financial costs related to the deployment of their personnel, as all salaries, benefits, and administrative costs are reimbursed through the CPA.

Manitoba RCMP continues to provide police trainers as well as the current CPMU Contingent Commander, cognizant of the large Ukrainian diaspora within Manitoba. Contributing police agencies acknowledge the enhanced operational capacity of deployed officers to carry out their domestic duties upon return. These police officers grow professionally while on mission, utilizing and honing skills such as problem solving, resourcefulness, flexibility, leadership, technical knowledge and cultural awareness. The vast majority of participants on missions view the experience as the highlight of their policing careers. IPO welcomes interested police agencies to contact them to initiate mission contributions of personnel via a MOU process.

Canadian police officers continue to enhance the capacity, effectiveness, and sustainability of Ukraine's police services. This, in turn, supports police reforms and institutional development, ensuring a strengthened rule of law in Ukraine.

SOME LESSONS FROM

## A NEW MODE OF PROTECTION:

# Redesigning Policing And Public Safety For The 21st Century

By Rick Linden, University of Manitoba



In March, 2022 the UK's Police Foundation released a strategic review of policing in England and Wales. The Report concludes with a warning: "Policing is at a critical juncture. If it does not embrace reform it will likely be overwhelmed by the scale and complexity of the demands coming down the track" (2022:171). The authors believe the current state of policing is at a point as critical as it was in 1829 when Sir Robert Peel established the London Metropolitan Police.

The Report describes the challenges currently faced by the police and presents recommendations the Police Foundation says are necessary for the police "to develop

the conditions in which our people can continue to live freely and safely in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and to renew... a form of policing that serves rather than oppresses the people..."(2022: 171).

Some of the issues faced by the police in England and Wales differ from those faced by Canadian police, and government and police governance structures are quite different from ours. However, much of the analysis and many of the recommendations are relevant to Canadian policing and can provide guidance to police leaders who are preparing their departments for the future<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This is a brief review of a lengthy report. One important area not discussed here is a chapter on legitimacy which, among other ideas, proposes a switch from the model of rapid response, random patrol, and reactive investigation to a model of problem solving, partnership and prevention.

## *Future Public Safety and Security Challenges*

- **A significant drop in traditional crime from 1990s levels.** This pattern is common to most developed countries including Canada where total crime rates dropped by about 50% between 1991 and 2020. The greatest reduction was for less serious offences.
- **Technological change.** While traditional crime declined, a very different pattern was found for fraud and computer-related offenses which made up 53 percent of total crime in England and Wales as measured by victimization surveys – but 99.9 percent of these did not result in charges. The vast majority of these offenses are never even reported to the police. The Canadian victimization survey did not measure cybercrime but there is no reason to expect the pattern to be different from that of England and Wales. Bass (2015) obtained data on credit card and debit card fraud from the Canadian Bankers Association which showed that in 2013 nearly 900,000 of these offences were reported to the banks. The average loss was \$550 and less than 1 percent of the offences were reported to the police. If these offences had been reported, the 2013 total crime rate would have risen by 42 percent.

Policing cybercrime is challenging. It is technically complex and because the Internet has globalized crime, local enforcement is impossible (Could a Canadian police service deal with a ransomware attack from North Korea?). Also, conventional criminals such as organized crime groups are using technologies such as encrypted communications and cryptocurrencies to facilitate their crimes.

Dealing with cybercrime will require changes in policing. For example, the police will have to upgrade their own technology and make major organizational changes to employ people with



specialized technical backgrounds. These members may remain in a specialized role for their entire careers and may require higher salaries because of their skills. The Report predicts that if the police do not fill this need, the work may be done by cybersecurity companies and by cyber-vigilantes.

- **Environmental Changes** Global warming will lead to major climate events requiring the services of emergency personnel including the police. Canadians will recall that in 2021 B.C. and other provinces were affected by severe forest fires and later massive flooding and similar events are likely to continue.
- **Social Tensions and Public Disorder** Climate change fears will likely lead to increased numbers of protests requiring a police presence, as will other social tensions such as pandemic restrictions. The Report recommends police receive more training in communications, local knowledge, and conflict management skills as well as an organizational shift to neighbourhood policing models. We have learned in Canada that protests can turn into major disruptive events which require significant numbers of police to keep the peace. Social tension is also evidenced by an increase in hate crimes which have risen in both England and in Canada.



- **More Complex Social Needs** The police are being asked to deal with more complex social demands. In 2015, non-crime incidents accounted for 84 percent of calls in England and Wales and an increasing number of these calls involved mental health issues. These issues require more training as well as integration with other agencies that specialize in working with people living with addictions, mental health issues and poverty. The Report notes that “Social needs have become too complex to be dealt with by single agencies operating in professional silos” (2022:170).

The past few years have been difficult ones for Canadian police and particularly for chiefs of police. Pandemic policing has required a difficult balancing of rights and liberties as well as significant risks to officers’ health. Defund policing groups exist in almost every large community and many school boards have ended school resource officer programs. Researchers have documented systemic racism in several police departments, particularly in activities such as street checks and traffic stops. Departments are recognizing the need to attend to the mental and physical health needs of their members.

The Report sets out a challenge for police leaders. The Police Foundation states that change is coming whether or not the police and other institutions adapt. In deciding whether or not to act quickly, police leaders should consider the words of Peel Regional Police Chief Nishan Duraiappah: “If we don’t like the idea of change, we’re going to hate being irrelevant even more” (Toronto Star, Jan,6, 2021).

Bass, Gary. Presentation to the International Association of Financial Crime Investigators. Burnaby: Simon Fraser University.

The Police Foundation 2022 A New Mode of Protection: Redesigning Policing and Public Safety for the 21st Century. The Final Report of the Strategic Review of Policing in England and Wales. <https://www.policingreview.org.uk/>

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# SO, YOU THINK YOUR AGENCY IS FREE OF SYSTEMIC RACISM? **THINK AGAIN**

HOW MANY OF US REMEMBER HEARING THE PHRASE “FORGET ALL THAT CRAP THEY TEACH YOU AT THE ACADEMY”?

In Canadian Police College training sessions delivered in-person across the country, almost every class of officers I’ve put that question to, collectively raise their hands.

It’s summer of 1992, and I’m standing in a one-bedroom apartment in Winnipeg’s North End. My field trainer and I are on a domestic dispute call. The occupants of the suite are a common-law male and female couple, both Indigenous. Finding obvious signs of an assault on the female by the male, we’ve separated the two and I’ve been taking a statement from the woman. Following my training, I am writing down exactly what she says in the order that she provides it. This had incensed my FTO as he stated “Are you seriously writing down everything she says?” He quickly handcuffs the male to a radiator in the other room and storms over to us and takes the clipboard out of my hands.

“What is this dog’s breakfast? You can’t submit her statement like this. The Sergeant Reader will bounce it and we will be right back here taking her statement properly. Clean it up.”

I’m stumped because I believe I had been taking her statement properly. My instructors (one of whom went on to lead the CPC’s national polygraph training program) taught us of the critical need to capture any statement verbatim. If done in this manner, these statements can be sent for statement analysis to detect deception. They had provided a great deal of evidence, including videos, to show us how it works with the



caveat “Only if you write down EVERYTHING they say, how they say it.”

With this in mind, I relent and tell my FTO that I was doing as taught at which point he gives me the classic line “Forget all that crap they teach you at the academy.” He followed this up with “She’s jumping around all over the place here, clean it up. All we need to know is what happened before the assault, what happened during the assault and her injuries sustained as a result of the assault.”

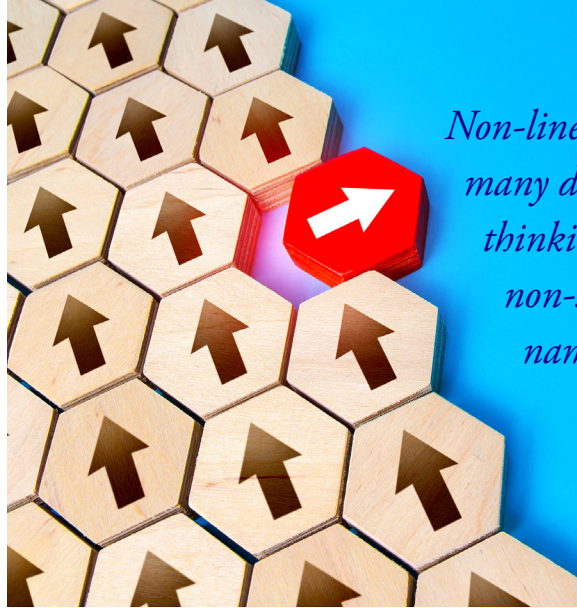
...and just like that I was indoctrinated into systemic racism in policing.

At this point some of you might be asking yourself, “Whoa – where does he get off on calling us all racists?”. You may even stop reading this article because you feel personally attacked.

The pervasive logic, even though never clearly articulated, follows through as “I’m a good person therefore I’m not racist and as such I would never work for a racist system.” That’s not true. There are many fine people working in many fields that have been proven to be systemically racist, policing is not alone in this.

I’m sure many of the social workers who apprehended Indigenous children, myself included, and adopted them out to white families during the Sixties Scoop were seen as decent people by their peers. I’m also sure that the doctors and nurses performing involuntary sterilizations on Indigenous girls after the passing of the Sexual Sterilization Act in Alberta in 1928, and B.C. in 1933, were seen as upstanding members of society.

This is why you have to drop the “It’s unfortunate that a few bad apples make the rest of the fine officers in our organization look bad” line in your media scrums after one of your officers gets into legal trouble. Time and again I have heard from Indigenous leaders, advocates and activists that the bad apples theory doesn’t hold water with them as, in their view, a barrel full of perfect apples will be tainted if the barrel has been hauling what amounts to poison for their people for centuries.



*Non-linear thinking has many different names; lateral thinking, cluster thinking, non-sequential thinking to name a few.*

The problem in policing is exactly what the problem was with my Field Training Officer back in 1992, you just don’t know what you don’t know. Let me explain.

My FTO, a proud Scotsman, much like most settler descendant Canadians, was indoctrinated into linear thinking from a very young age. Growing up in a country where most people think this way, it is easy to be unaware that other nations, cultures and societies’ non-linear thinking are very different from your own. This is magnified when you consider that he started at a time in policing in Winnipeg when most officers were of either British, Irish or Scottish descent.

Non-linear thinking has many different names; lateral thinking, cluster thinking, non-sequential thinking to name a few. This manner of thinking is very common amongst African, Asian, Middle-Eastern, South American, Pacific Islanders and North American Indigenous people. With this in mind, you can see that linear thinking is very much Eurocentric.



To give you a Hollywood example of each style of thinking, linear thinking is “Pretty Woman” where we watch Julia Robert’s story unfold sequentially whereas non-linear thinking is “Pulp Fiction” or basically any Quentin Tarantino movie where the story is told out of sequence and from many different perspectives. Neither is the right or wrong way of telling a story, they are just very different.

My Indigenous domestic victim very much was a non-linear thinker. In telling her story, she jumped around the past-present-future (before the assault, during the assault, injuries sustained as a result of the assault)

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timeline that was being so rigidly imposed by my FTO and the Sergeant Readers of 1992. After being reminded that he would be writing my evaluation, I gave in and rewrote the statement in the linear manner the system demanded. In doing so I changed the words, context and meaning of my victim's statement. I contributed to systemic racism. In doing so, I victimized her further.

My FTO and the Sergeant Readers, through no fault of their own, had been contributing to systemic racism throughout their careers because cleaning up a statement was very commonplace I soon learned. Police leadership was also not to blame because they too did not know any different. Back in 1992, no one was doing anti-racism or cultural competency training; in fact, police agencies were just starting to do Native Awareness training as a result of the recommendation for training from the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry.

*"Well that was a very long time ago. We've come a long way since then."* I've heard statements like this many times.

No, it's not a reality of a far-gone time. I spent 4 of my last 5 years before my 2017 retirement working general patrol in downtown Winnipeg as Patrol Sergeant to a shift of 28 constables. They were still cleaning statements up. They were still coaching each other to clean statements up. My last year was seconded to the Independent Investigation Unit where I consistently heard from victims, witnesses and accused persons that the police "changed" their statements. It's still happening.

This is but one of many examples of how systemic racism is prevalent in your organization. Even now. Even with your Reconciliation efforts.

You didn't know what you didn't know...but you do now.

**So, what are you going to do about it?**

**Cecil Sveinsson** is a former member of the Winnipeg Police Service and is currently Manager of the Indigenous Relations Branch of the City of Winnipeg.



### Airbus Helicopters Canada

Airbus has been a proud member of Canada's aerospace industry since 1984. Headquartered in Fort Erie, Ontario, Airbus Helicopters Canada is the leading supplier of helicopters used throughout Canada in various roles.

In the last 15 years, 100 per cent of aircraft deliveries to law enforcement in Canada have been Airbus Helicopters. Currently, 85 per cent of helicopters used by airborne law enforcement are Airbus Helicopters.

#### Key Metrics

- 100%** OF DELIVERIES TO LAW ENFORCEMENT IN THE PAST 15 YEARS
- 85%** AIRBORNE LAW ENFORCEMENT MARKET SHARE
- 760+** IN SERVICE AIRCRAFT
- 220+** OPERATORS ACROSS CANADA
- ~250** EMPLOYEES

By James Follette BPE, High Performance Specialist, RCMP D Division

# WELLNESS

# & You



## DDIV RCMP

**P**olice officers often navigate difficult challenges in their profession. At any given moment, they may have to respond to an emergency or stressful situation that requires all of their physical and mental strength. As these stressors accumulate, it is hard to imagine the toll it takes on an officer's well-being. Therefore, it is important for them to work on both their physical and mental health as they progress through their career.

This also applies to all employees that work in the law enforcement community, as many positions are shift-work oriented and can be quite sedentary. Some employees sit for long periods of time during every shift. Studies have shown that sedentary jobs can increase the chances of developing chronic illnesses such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and obesity. Employees can also end up lacking the motivation to engage in a proper fitness, nutritional, and sleep routine – all of these factors can have a negative impact on their overall wellness.

Officers on the front-lines may be required to react to a situation with no warm up or preparation. These explosive movements can quickly turn into knee, hip,

shoulder, and back injuries. This is why it is important for law enforcement officers to train and prepare for any type of situation/altercation to ensure longevity in their careers.

Regardless of category of employee, the goal for everyone should be to retire as healthy as possible, both physically and mentally. As such, it is imperative for law enforcement employees to focus on a balanced fitness strategy. The RCMP, for example, promotes programs to support their law enforcement officers to move more, eat well and sleep better.

As an employee's years of service accumulates, the importance they put on their own physical and mental health may lessen with time. Many of these employees can suffer from shoulder, hip, knee and low back injuries. On top of the musculoskeletal injuries, employees may also suffer from mental health conditions such as PTSD. If untreated these type of injuries can lead to weight gain, depression and sleep disorders. Seeking medical advice from a qualified medical practitioner is the first step to getting back to a healthier lifestyle.

Participating in a fitness program and taking part in other activities/hobbies such as geocaching, hiking, golfing, etc. are all great ways for employees to stay healthy. Keep it simple! Remember, the more complicated you make your fitness regimen, the easier it is to make excuses to stop doing it.

### **TIP #1: MOVE MORE**

Canada Physical Activity Guidelines recommends a minimum of 150 minutes of moderate activity, in addition to two strength-training sessions per week. Employees can achieve this goal by joining a fitness group, training with a partner, or hiring a personal trainer to keep them on the right path.

Mobility is very important to employees of all ages. Without it, basic movements become challenging and for many people debilitating. This can lead to many other issues if it goes unchecked over the course of a career.

### **TIP #2: EAT BETTER**

Employees are encouraged to follow **Health Canada's recommendations on healthy eating**. Take your time to eat, make water your drink of choice, limit your intake of processed foods, and use food labels. For more information go to:

<https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/healthy-eating-recommendations>

For shift workers, finding a balance regarding proper nutrition is always a challenge. What might work for one person may not be necessarily be right for another. People are often confused as to when and if they should eat, especially during night shifts. Seeking the advice of a certified dietician or nutritionist is recommended to help navigate these complex and challenging scenarios.

### **TIP #3: SLEEP BETTER**

Most adults need 7-9 hours of good quality sleep each night. Tips for law enforcement employees to consider include taking a warm bath/shower 1-2 hours before bed, making sure the bedroom is quiet and dark, and avoiding coffee and/or alcohol close to bedtime.

Getting enough sleep is not only about total hours of sleep, it is also important to get good-quality sleep so you feel rested when you wake up. When people get the sleep they need, they will feel better, and increase their odds of living healthier.

#### **Additional resources:**

Canadian Sleep Society [www.css.to/sleep/links.htm](http://www.css.to/sleep/links.htm)

Centre for Sleep and Human Performance  
<https://centreforsleep.com/about/about-us.html>

Sleep and Health – Harvard University (2008)  
<http://healthysleep.med.harvard.edu/need-sleep/whats-in-it-for-you/health>

Mental health, resiliency, and stress management initiatives are vital when looking at an employee's overall wellness. To ensure an employee's health and wellness requirements are being met, programs of this nature should be offered and delivered by a qualified instructor.

It cannot be overstated that good physical and mental health is vital for an employee to have a long and healthy career. This will ensure that they transition into what should be the most important phase of their lives: enjoying retirement.

*The goal for everyone should be to retire  
as healthy as possible, both physically and mentally*

# A Career After Retirement?

By Gordon Perrier



A career in public safety is fulfilling to say the least, but at some point, retirement, or the idea of a new profession enters your mind. For those considering changing jobs, timing and other serious questions need to be thought out to ensure your skills and interests land you in a place that is rewarding.

If this is you, taking inventory of your skills, experiences and value to the broader workforce is a good exercise. It's a little harder than first imagined and thumbing through the career boards you get a glimpse of personal gaps; however, critical evaluation of your previous work is indispensable.

Police managers and executives have vast experience when you start to ponder all the business streams we encounter in law enforcement, policing, and public safety. Outside of the obvious police or law enforcement specific skills, human capital, technology, labour, governance, business intelligence and crisis management are only a few streams that most of us have touched in a police career. When thinking about these areas and law enforcement or specialty unit experiences, it may be a fair

question to ask yourself, how do I decode or represent sought after skills for those who know very little about operating a police service.

## *Do you think this hurdle is real?*

Let's use the simple example of a resume. If you are a police leader and list all of the sections or units you have worked in, it is not likely obvious to a layperson what transferable skills, experiences or talents you have that link to another industry or even a related one.

Well worded descriptions of day to day or specialist work including notable accomplishments that relate to key parts of the job you are seeking are vital to a successful job search. Recently, I was asked by a few colleagues who were near the end of a full career about resume content, interview strategy, preparation and these concerns were top of mind.

It also brought about thoughts of interview questions and critically thinking about problems we have all addressed, solved, and managed. Expressing these important accomplishments and clearly sharing

your story in a job interview outside of a police environment is immensely different and something we need to consciously turn our minds to.

The fact is, and we own this as public safety agencies, we are not the best at telling the story of how our agencies run, what kind of talent we have and how we move as an organization. On the flip side senior police leaders bring built-in integrity and trust. All organizations and businesses are competing for the perfect fit of experience, skills, and authentic leadership.

By looking at your professional life carefully or working with an experienced career consultant, coach, or human resource professional you will gain that competitive market edge.

The intricate journey from the police environment or "way of life" is a little bit bumpy, but as seasoned professionals we have a lot to offer if we reach for those next opportunities.



**G.T. (Gord) Perrier**, M.O.M., MLShip & Mgt (Policing & Security), Society for Human Resource Management—Senior Certified Professional (SHRM-SCP)

The MACP website includes a careers section. If you have advertisements that may be of interest to the membership, please connect with MACP Executive Director or Website Manager.

# UNIT PROFILE

## RCMP Manitoba North District Relief Team

Northern and isolated detachments have traditionally been difficult to staff for the Manitoba RCMP. These detachments are in areas that are often remote, with some only accessible by winter roads or by air. To ensure there are always members available to assist in remote communities, detachments can rely on officers from the RCMP's Manitoba North District (MND) Relief Team.

The MND Relief Team routinely travels to different detachments in the north, based on operational needs. Duties can include general policing, assisting during a special event, or being extra members on hand in case they are needed. Relief team members are typically scheduled to work in different detachments months in advance, and generally operate on a schedule of eight days on, six days off. When away from their home base, members are on travel status.

"Personally, what appealed to me the most was being able to explore the north. I've gained a new appreciation for members and northern communities," said Corporal Jenelle Hulan, a former member of the MND Relief Team. "No community is the same, and the members all face their own unique challenges. You are able to gain this experience without being required to live in the community full time."

For Cpl. Hulan, one of these experiences involved working as a team to safely evacuate a community quickly due to sudden forest fires in 2019.

"It was a hot, beautiful, sunny, July day in Lynn Lake, when out of nowhere, a large black cloud made its way to the community. Within minutes, 11 lightning strikes had occurred in the surrounding area," she explained. Working quickly with other detachment employees, Leaf Rapids detachment, and fire and conservation officers, a decision was made to evacuate Black Sturgeon Falls.

"We couldn't reach Black Sturgeon Falls due to the smoke and highway conditions, so we asked Leaf Rapids to assist. There's no cell service in Lynn Lake, so all communication was done by radio." At one point, Cpl. Hulan and her partner were stuck between two fires as they tried to return to the detachment.

While Cpl. Hulan remembers the experience as "adrenaline pumping, mixed with fear," what really stood out for her is the teamwork. "Not once did I stop to think that we could be doing more. Everyone came together and worked through what seemed like an absolute nightmare. The level of professionalism was unbelievable."



*The opportunity to explore northern communities, and see how different detachments operate without needing to live in the community full-time is one of the advantages of being a part of the MND Relief Team.*

Cpl. Hulan also believes she was able to gain a better work-life balance while being on the relief team. "I needed a break from the fast pace of Thompson Municipal. I found that I was going in on my days off to catch up on files. I did some relief work on my days off when I wasn't in the office, and found that going to the smaller detachments felt like I could make a real difference and the pace was more enjoyable. So when I found out that MND was creating a relief team, I knew I had to apply." As there isn't an expectation to retain files (members advance files as much as they can while they're providing relief and then hand any open files back to the detachment), Cpl. Hulan found that she didn't have to work on her days off, and in return, felt a lot less stress.

With all the positives, Cpl. Hulan acknowledges that it's not for everyone and there are some challenges. "It's a lot of time away from home. And depending on the request of the detachment, you could be away for a long period of time. If you have children or pets, it can be difficult because you aren't usually able to bring them along. Being flexible is really important."



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# Northern Manitoba Living

## AN OFFICER'S FIRST-HAND PERSPECTIVE

By Constable Peter Tearle

*Churchill Detachment is the northern most posting in Manitoba for RCMP police officers. It's also one of the most sought-after. Within a few months of living here, I saw why.*



Churchill is my first posting in Manitoba, but like many RCMP officers, I'm used to moving around. When you join the RCMP, you're told that you can be posted anywhere in Canada. During a shift at my prior posting in Morinville, Alberta, I happened to glance up at a map and saw Churchill. After doing a bit of research on the town, and talking to the Detachment Commander, I thought it would be interesting to live somewhere remote, and on a whim, added it to my career development plan.

I arrived in Churchill in March 2020 (yes, I moved at the beginning of a global pandemic). Moving with a family is always difficult, but the pandemic made it even more challenging. I was separated from my wife and children who initially stayed behind in Alberta. Due to public health restrictions, we couldn't gather with people outside of our immediate household, so I was pretty isolated. But despite all of this, I was able to settle in fairly quickly and felt very welcomed by my colleagues and the community.

One of the reasons Churchill is appealing to police officers is because it's a relatively quiet town. During peak tourist season (late June/early July for beluga whales, and October/November for polar bears), the town's population more than doubles. But even with the increase of people in the community, the call volume remains pretty much the same. My previous post in Morinville was a very busy detachment, and as an older police officer who loves to be involved in community events, it's been very reinvigorating to have a slower pace for a little bit. It also means that our officers can play a bigger part of the community, besides being the local law enforcement. Like many small towns, RCMP officers wear many hats in Churchill. This winter, I coached hockey alongside another colleague, and another officer coached baseball last fall. It's so important to be out in the community and to build relationships with the youth. We also need to volunteer when we're able to, to help keep programming running. The more programs there are for youth, the less likely they'll get into trouble.



Like many small communities, the RCMP often works with other community organizations to help keep residents safe. We have coordinated search and rescue efforts to help locals who have capsized in the river, or have fallen ill while at their cabins which are hours away. It has to be a team effort, and we rely on our great community members including guides, the Canadian Rangers, local helicopter operators, medical staff, and Manitoba Conservation. Nothing is more satisfying than being a part of a community that can come together for a greater cause.

Another reason Churchill is so appealing is the sheer beauty of the landscape. It's known as the Polar Bear Capital of the World for a reason. Halloween is one of our busiest days. The RCMP is part of a larger team including Manitoba Conservation, and local fire and ambulance to ensure there aren't any bears in town so kids can safely go trick or treating. Sometimes, we're asked to assist to help transfer bears

to a safer location. You truly can't understand how large these animals are until you're just mere feet away from a 1000-pound polar bear.

I try to never take this opportunity to live in Churchill for granted. I remind myself that tourists spend thousands of dollars to visit for a few days and I get to live here. True, the winters can be long and harsh, and when the snow finally melts, it's bug season. Mosquitoes, bulldogs (very aggressive deer flies), and my least favourite, the dreaded sand flies, make it impossible to be outside without bug spray and bug jackets. It's also an isolated community, which isn't for everyone. But, where else in the world would I be able to go kayaking with a pod of belugas on my days off, walk along the shores of the Hudson Bay with my dog, and witness the dancing Aurora Borealis first hand?

I know that when my posting comes to an end, it will be difficult to leave because Churchill is a place that's easy to call home. I was an outsider, but the community never made me feel like one. And for that, I will be forever grateful.

Thank you, Churchill.



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## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

### 2022 Mental Health Service Award



**MACP**

The Manitoba Association of Chiefs of Police / HealthIM Mental Health Service Award honours an individual law enforcement member serving in the province of Manitoba who has made a difference in their community for those suffering from mental health challenges.

#### Nomination Criteria

1. Reducing stigma experienced by people with mental illness.
2. Providing support or care to people with mental illnesses, their families and/or caregivers.
3. Advocacy for issues related to mental health (including individual needs, family needs, service delivery and systemic issues.)
4. Dedication to elevating the profile of mental health awareness.
5. Advancing local knowledge in the area of mental illness/health research.
6. Through their tireless commitment and work has shown excellence in their service and support around mental health and addictions.

**For nominations email:  
[gschumacherMACP@winnipeg.ca](mailto:gschumacherMACP@winnipeg.ca)**

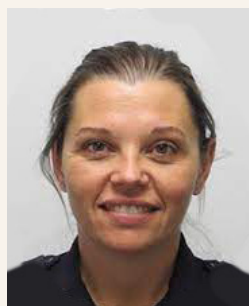
**Deadline: Friday Sept. 30th, 2022**



# 2021 Award Winners

## MACP HealthIM Mental Health Service

First awarded last year, the MACP HealthIM Mental Health Service Award honours distinguished service from a member who in the course of their duties made a significant contribution to those suffering from mental health challenges in the community. The award celebrates advocacy for issues related to mental health, dedication to elevating the profile of mental health awareness and working to destigmatize the challenges of coping with mental illness. In 2021, two members received the award for demonstrating excellence and for going above and beyond.



The first winner, a seven-year member of the Brandon Police Service (BPS), was Constable Amanda Conway. Cst. Conway continually makes significant contributions to the mental health of both the citizens of Brandon and the wellbeing of her fellow members at BPS.

Building on her previous education and experience with Probation Services and Westman Crisis Services, Cst. Conway led the development of the eight-person BPS employee wellness team. Providing education, training and support to members, the employee wellness team was so successful that Cst. Conway began fielding requests from other first responder groups in the Westman area. This eventually led to the development of “Project Resilience 911”, a partnership between multiple policing agencies in Manitoba, Emergency Medical Services providers, fire fighters, Manitoba Corrections, Canadian Forces and communications personnel. Cst. Conway’s caring leadership and countless hours of her own personal time ensured the success of both the BPS Employee Wellness Team and Project Resilience 911.



The second winner was Corporal Annelisa Dey Thomas, RCMP. Cpl Dey Thomas contributed greatly to those suffering from mental health challenges across the Westman area. She served as the RCMP representative to the Westman Community Mobilization hub and worked with numerous

community agencies to proactively serve individuals suffering from unmanaged severe mental illness and substance use issues.

While carrying out this work Cpl Dey Thomas was able to complete a Master’s Degree in psychology, performing her practicum in the Brandon area. Last year she also served as the acting “D” Division wellness coordinator, promoting healthy lifestyles and mental health strategies for members coping with stress. In this position, Corporal Dey Thomas advocated for healthy lifestyles, provided members with strategies to cope with stress and support for operational stress Injuries. Some of her work included sending welcome emails with a Health and Wellness Resource Guide, a Peer to Peer Reference Guide and a Critical Incident Handout to all new members of the “D” Division. She also reached out or ensured that employees that had been through a critical incident or traumatic event were contacted.

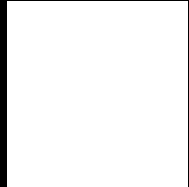
Both Cst. Conway and Cpl. Dey Thomas demonstrated excellence and strived to advocate and care for those suffering from mental illness in their communities.

***Nominations for the 2022 MACP HealthIM Mental Health Service Award open this summer with a deadline to nominate of September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022.***

# MACP Conference & MB Justice – Excellence in Law Enforcement Awards

The awards were presented to Manitoba Law Enforcement officers who made an “Exceptional and Important contribution for the betterment of their Community, their Police Service or to Manitoba Law Enforcement.”





# Building Community Trust

By Assistant Commissioner Dennis Daley and Inspector Jason Boutcher

Since the Autumn of 2020, the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Chiefs of Police from across Canada have been working together through a Chiefs Roundtable on issues of critical importance to Canadians and the policing community. As a result, a De-escalation and Crisis Intervention Task Group was established with police services across Canada. The goal is to move toward standardizing and improving police response and training.

The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP), Manitoba Association of Chiefs of Police (MACP), and other provincial Chiefs of Police associations have become integral allies demonstrating leadership, advocating for operational change and promoting investments in research, policy frameworks, equipment, and crisis intervention training across Canada that emphasize the preservation and sanctity of life and a human-centric policing approach.

## Winds of Change

As CACP President Chief Bryan Larkin remarked in his 2021 *CACP President's Message*: "Change may be inevitable, but progress is not. It's up to us to make it happen. With passion and purpose comes progress, and the CACP is moving decisively forward to 'put the wind at our back' and put our association and policing in a positive position."

There have been important advancements to support evidence-based, police-led reforms that meet the demands of Canadians and increase police professionals' awareness of issues that might impact crisis interventions, including explicit and implicit biases. As Carleton University's Director of the Police Research Lab, Dr. Craig Bennell, noted, "Working together to resolve these and other issues related to police use-of-force will likely result in positive outcomes for the police and the communities they serve, including a better understanding of the use-of-force, enhanced police performance, improved citizen and officer safety, and increased public trust and confidence in the police."

The Task Group is moving towards a modern, standardized de-escalation and crisis intervention model to strengthen police training and public trust in the police.



# Re-imagining De-escalation and Crisis Intervention

## Police Interactions

While use-of-force responses only represent a small percentage of intervention incidents when compared to calls for service (over 99 per cent of interactions are de-escalated or resolved naturally), these responses significantly impact the community's level of confidence in the police. Therefore, it is critical to consider diverse views. Efforts are underway with the CACP and provincial associations to collaborate on issues of trust and confidence with stakeholders and public representatives (the provinces and territories, and Indigenous and racialized communities) to ensure police improvements in de-escalation.

By developing and adopting a public/police de-escalation and crisis intervention hybrid framework, and by increasing the focus on de-escalation emphasizing preservation/sanctity of life and increasing public awareness of the frequency and complexity of police interactions, the MACP and Canadian police services can help enhance public understanding of the decision-making processes involved in police interventions. Winnipeg Police Service's Supt. Chody Sutherland shared that: "While existing models remain viable options to guide internal officer training efforts, there still exists opportunities to modernize these models. WPS members have taken a proactive interest in looking at the possibilities of future crisis intervention training aids in support of all Canadian police officers."

This framework is described as hybrid because it would consist of a police training aid component and service to the public component. The police training aid component could involve enhancing the standards in the current use-of-force framework as well as enhancing officer de-escalation and less-lethal training. If not already, police training would combine de-escalation and crisis intervention together.

Canadian police are also working to increase consistency across the country while enhancing training to apply de-escalation techniques. As stated by Dr. Simon Baldwin of the RCMP's Operational Research Unit, "Tangible, operational change will be driven by promoting investments in evidence-based policy and officer training in de-escalation across the country."

Canadians understand that situations may arise that call for use-of-force. That said, we believe they also deserve a greater understanding of the efforts police make to avoid harmful circumstances. This hybrid model could involve additional communication to increase the public's understanding of use-of-force and why it is an option during police/public interactions. The goal is to help communities better appreciate the decision-making process officers go through to maintain officer and public safety while dealing with individuals in crisis. There is also a critical need to increase awareness of the low frequency of interventions by the police –



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Canadians appear to believe that the rate of use-of-force is considerably higher than it actually is, likely due to mainstream and social media.

In support of these efforts, the CACP passed the following 2021 Resolution to support its advocacy and advancement of this important work:

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACAP) hereby urges the federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) Ministers responsible for Justice and Public Safety to support preservation of life and a human-centered policing approach, by:

- *modernizing the current use-of-force intervention models with a hybrid, public facing crisis intervention de-escalation decision making model governing all police/public interactions that will support police training and decision making;*
- *increased evidence-based training standards to ensure officers receive the necessary de-escalation knowledge, skills and abilities;*
- *investing in equipping police officers with the necessary less lethal intervention options so police officers can more effectively and safely resolve interactions with minimal harm;*
- *continued enhancements for de-escalation policy and procedures, public awareness and education, and after-action review initiatives that enhance police oversight, accountability, and transparency.*

## Moving Forward

Canadian police services are attempting to move towards more human-centered terminology and police response that emphasizes increased verbal communication, articulation of efforts for de-escalation, and consideration of all options when dealing with people in crisis. A development group of subject matter experts and academics is being formed to lead this important work.

This important and necessary work is being pursued while recognizing provincial/territorial leadership and their responsibility for the administration of justice, including the important governance work of police service's boards across Canada. Canadian police, with on-going MACP advocacy, can demonstrate leadership for tangible, operational change to drive the promotion of investments in evidence-based research, policy frameworks, training, and equipment for improved de-escalation and crisis intervention across Canada.

For additional details and work of the Task Group please feel free to watch CACP ON-Demand video: <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/670865189>



Assistant Commissioner Dennis Daley,  
Royal Canadian Mounted Police  
[dennis.daley@rcmp-grc.gc.ca](mailto:dennis.daley@rcmp-grc.gc.ca)



Inspector Jason Boutcher,  
Waterloo Regional Police Service  
[jason.boutcher@wrps.on.ca](mailto:jason.boutcher@wrps.on.ca)

Assistant Commissioner Dennis Daley, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and Inspector Jason Boutcher, Waterloo Regional Police Service are Co-Chairs of the National De-escalation and Crisis Intervention Task Group



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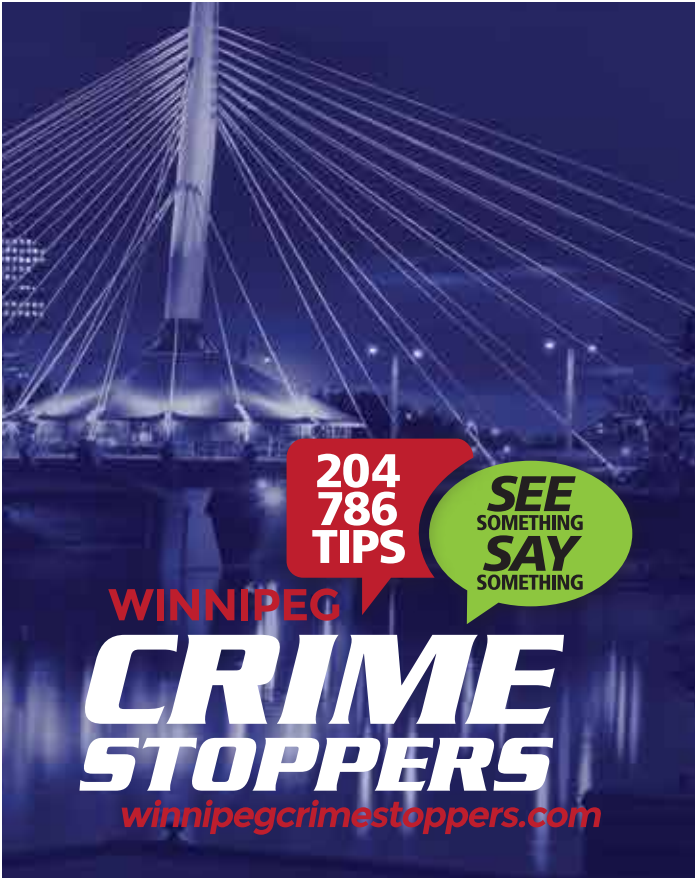
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– Deputy Chief Randy Lewis

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# SUPPORTING OFFICERS IN RETURNING TO BASELINE

How Police Leaders Can Assist with Reintegrating Members Back into the Workplace

Dr. Kyle Handley



As the waves of COVID-19 have risen and declined over the past few years, many employees across the globe have had to bounce between working in the office to work from home and back again. This circumstance has raised awareness across many industries of one of the most challenging issues employees and leaders can face – effectively reintegrating employees back into the workplace. Police leaders, of course, have been aware of these challenges long before the pandemic. With physical and mental health injuries being more common than in other workforces due to the inherently stressful and dangerous nature of the job, police services have been dealing with the pressures of staffing shortages due to extended health leaves and the many complexities that come with returning members to operational duty for decades.

Despite this, research and best practices on how to reintegrate members successfully has been limited, leaving police leaders with little direction on how to best support their returning staff. Fortunately, there have been programs and approaches that have emerged in recent years that have been gaining traction across the country that have shown promise in easing the transition back to work for both those involved in critical incidents and those returning from extended leaves of absence. In exploring these practices, police leaders may gain some insight into how to develop a reintegration approach that is appropriate for their service.

## Reintegration Following a Critical Incident

There is little doubt that critical incidents such as police vehicle collisions, attending or listening to violent calls for service, and officer involved shootings (OIS) are some of the most stressful situations that a member can experience in the course of their career. Even in circumstances where the member is coping well psychologically with the situation, it is very common for there to be physical reactivity to triggers or reminders of the event in the days and weeks following a critical incident such as an OIS.

For example, their body may “rev up” higher than they are used to the first few times they handle their firearm or hear gunshots. This is a normal and expected reaction to being involved in a high intensity event, but it is one that members in many cases are not aware of until the next time they are faced with a call or situation that is similar to their critical incident. Providing officers with the opportunity to experience these reactions in a safe and supportive environment, learn to manage them appropriately, and understand how they can best support themselves and others in the field is essential to effective reintegration after a critical incident. To this end, police services can leverage the principles of Prolonged Exposure Therapy (PET), an evidence based therapy used to treat Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and other mental health concerns, to inform a structured and controlled approach to building member awareness and confidence following a critical incident.

One example of such an approach comes from the Edmonton Police Service, who pioneered a short term reintegration program that saw specially trained peers guiding officers involved in OIS and other critical incidents through a progressive set of exposures to sights, sounds, and sensations that they encountered during their incident. This may involve gradually building the officer’s comfort and confidence in handling, drawing, and dry firing their pistol, listening to the sounds of gunfire on the range, or running through drills and scenarios that incorporate elements of their critical incident. The goal of these exposures is never performance, but rather on improving the member’s awareness of any physical or psychological reactions they have to the triggers, reinforcing the skills and strategies they can utilize to help manage these



reactions, and improving their confidence that they will be able to keep themselves and others safe if confronted with those triggers when they return to duty. Though it is crucial to consider when and how to best implement this type of an approach in the context of any investigations or other administrative issues, feedback from Edmonton Police members who participated in this program was very positive, with internal evaluation revealing a high degree of member satisfaction with the program and reductions in lost time following critical incidents. While the sample size is small, the early reported success of this approach suggests it is worth exploring further.

## Reintegration Following an Extended Leave

Though critical incidents may be the most obvious application for this type of reintegration approach, extending this framework to members returning to the workplace after an extended leave may also prove beneficial. Being away from the workplace for a long period of time, be it for a physical or psychological injury, suspension, COVID restrictions, maternity leave, or any other reason, often creates a sense of anxiety, both for the returning member and for the leader. Members may worry their skills have deteriorated, that they have missed key changes to staffing, processes, or procedures, or that their coworkers may question their absence or be frustrated with them for leaving. Leaders may be uncertain how to welcome the member back, what they can or should ask, or how they can best support the member to feel comfortable being back in the work environment.

Though every province and territory is different in how it manages worker compensation and every individual is different in terms of their needs and wishes, effective communication and providing opportunities for safe and supportive strategies for building member confidence ahead of their first day are both important aspects of promoting successful reintegration. For example, leaders can ensure that members off work have the option to stay connected with the social environment of the workplace by keeping them included in things like charity events, baby announcements, retirements, if they choose. Members may also be given the opportunity, based on the recommendation of the member's clinician and worker's compensation case manager if applicable, to gradually reintegrate back to the workplace prior to their return to work date by doing things like visiting the building, arranging their workspace, connecting with coworkers, or anything else they feel will assist with reducing the stress of their first day. Similar to how the short term reintegrations are conducted, these exposures can be done with the support of a trained peer to assist the member with recognizing and addressing any reactions they may have.

## Preparing for the First Day

Regardless if the member is returning after a critical incident or an extended leave, the first day is considered by most to be the biggest hurdle to overcome during reintegration. There are so many unknowns that the member must face, such as where they will be assigned, where their workspace will be, what tasks they will have to catch up on, and how their coworkers and supervisors will react, that they often describe feeling exhausted and overwhelmed. To help ease these concerns, leaders should ensure that as many of these questions as possible have been answered by the time the member walks through the door on their first day back. One way to accomplish this is to host a roundtable discussion with the member, their supervisor, their return to work or disability management specialist, and possibly a peer supporter or association rep if desired by the member. The goal of this meeting is to ensure that all parties are aware of the member's needs and requirements before their return. If the member is not comfortable with this structure or would prefer not to share any details of their absence with other individuals, the supervisor may offer to meet with the member one on one to discuss

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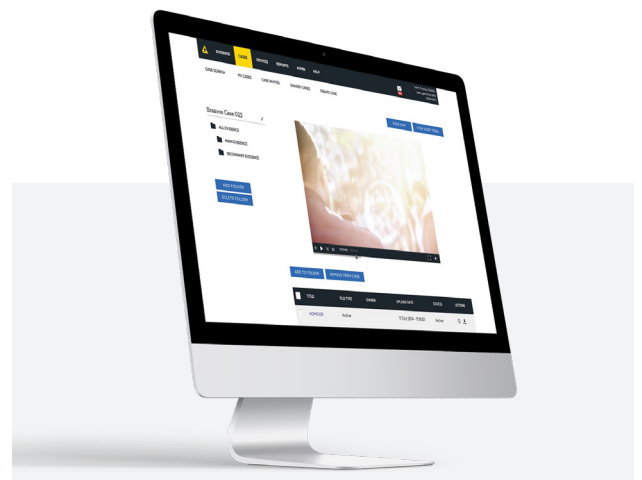
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common considerations such as how they would like to be reintroduced to their coworkers, what information, if any, they would like given to their colleagues about their absence or return to work plan, or any other way they can support them on their first day. Demonstrating an investment in the member's wellness and successful reintegration in this way may help the member feel more confident and comfortable in their return, which in turn could prove beneficial in shortening the timeline to the member returning to their full operational capacity.

## Research and Next Steps

It is important to note that reintegration practices like the ones mentioned here are just one part of an effective organizational response to member wellness. A strong supporting structure of wellness services, compassionate leadership, and effective communication are also essential to promoting a safe and healthy workforce. In bringing these elements together, police services can ensure that members can return to the workplace with a sense of confidence, support, and awareness that will assist them in their ongoing work to keeping our communities safe.

For leaders interested in learning more about reintegration programs, the CACP Psychological Services Committee has published a brief information document on reintegration and provides some direction for developing a shared set of evaluation criteria for these types of programs to support the development of best practices for reintegration. This document can be found on the CACP's Member Portal.

Special thanks to the Edmonton Police Service for their leadership in building and sharing their reintegration process with services across the country.

Dr. Kyle Handley is the Chief Psychologist for the York Regional Police and Chair of the Psychological Services Committee.

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An individual walks into the front desk of the police station and states that they want to file a report because they were assaulted in the Metaverse.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

# POLICING THE METAVERSE

By Ritesh Kotak



In 2021, Facebook announced a name change to “Meta” and significant investment in the Metaverse, their version of virtual reality.<sup>1</sup> With a \$400 VR headset, you can be transported into another dimension with individuals from all over the world. The pre-cursor to this gamified world dates back to 2003 with the popular Second Life platform. Now one can have a physical presence in a virtual world.

This technology is not a gimmick and goes beyond games and social interaction. The platform is already being used for work purposes, education, and entertainment. It is simple to create a space where your team can meet, collaborate, and train. It truly feels as though everyone is together in one space. Virtual Reality brings many opportunities and challenges. Inevitably, crimes will present themselves virtually and members of the public will want their local law enforcement agency to assist them in finding a remedy.

## Scenario

An individual walks into the front desk of the police station and states that they want to file a report because they were assaulted in the Metaverse. What would you do?

Well, this has already happened. A female in the UK posted in a blog post that when in Horizon Worlds, a VR app developed by Meta, three to four male avatars virtually gang-raped her.<sup>2</sup> Sexual assault and harassment in VR are going to be a thing. What if the victim is a child?



Teenagers Meet with Police Officers on Metaverse to Discuss Public Safety Policies <http://koreabizwire.com/teenagers-meet-with-police-officers-on-metaverse-to-discuss-public-safety-policies/195020>

There may also be other scenarios as this technology continues to become more readily available and accepted by the public. Microsoft has announced the development of Mesh which is Teams in VR.<sup>3</sup> Avatars will be able to meet, whiteboard and present in a virtual space. Location will no longer be a barrier, which inevitably creates jurisdictional challenges for police agencies.

Let's take a court order or conditions that require an individual to refrain from directly or indirectly communicating with a victim. How will a violation be investigated and enforced in virtual reality? To further complicate matters, there will be thefts of virtual goods (items that don't exist in the real world) and trespass to digital property. Virtual real estate is a real thing, and individuals are buying in the Metaverse, with sales projected to be over one billion dollars in 2022.<sup>4</sup> The currency of choice is crypto and most likely will be Libra in the future Meta's currency. It is only a matter of time where court orders will be violated in these spaces, and enforcement will have to occur.

<sup>1</sup> CTV News, “Facebook building a ‘Metaverse’” (18 October 2021), online: *CTV News* <https://www.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=2303671>

<sup>2</sup> *Sexual harassment in the metaverse? Woman says she was virtually raped* (usatoday.com)

<sup>3</sup> John Roach, “Mesh for Microsoft Teams aims to make collaboration in the ‘metaverse’ personal and fun”, (2 November 2021), online: *Microsoft* <https://news.microsoft.com/innovation-stories/mesh-for-microsoft-teams/>

<sup>4</sup> Alex Cyr, “Virtual real estate is so hot, investors are selling off Toronto holdings to get in. Should you get in too?” (26 February 2022), online: *Toronto Star* <https://www.thestar.com/business/2022/02/26/virtual-real-estate-is-so-hot-investors-are-selling-off-toronto-holdings-to-get-in-should-you-get-in-too.html>



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## It was Social Media a decade ago, now it's VR

If this seems far-fetched, think back to the introduction of social media within policing. There was a time when a Police Service having a Facebook account or a Twitter account was implausible, and now the opposite is true. Policing adapted and pivoted to where communities were communicating and congregating. If personal usage is a pre-condition to comprehension, perhaps we need to see a Service make its way into the Metaverse by creating a virtual Police Station. This virtual station can be staffed remotely with officers who can take complaints and address victimization within the space.

Our world is no longer physical, it has converged into a hybrid model. We must invest in learning more about the opportunities and the challenges that novel technology will present. Playing catch-up is no longer an option. One can only imagine the challenges the Metaverse possesses from an investigative and intelligence perspective. New tools for evidence preservation will need to be envisioned and constructed. However, there are ample opportunities for Police Services to leverage this innovation to connect with communities, and pioneer new approaches to training and community policing. In South Korea, a Police Service leveraged a virtual platform to deliver presentations to students on crime prevention.<sup>5</sup> The ability to create realistic scenarios and be virtually in a place but physically somewhere else will be the next evolution in communication. The possibilities are endless! It is crucial that the technology not be ignored, doing so would be Meta-mistake.

**Ritesh Kotak** is a cybersecurity and tech analyst who frequently appears in mainstream media as a subject matter expert. He has worked with Police Services and Tech organizations globally. He holds a BBA, MBA and is completing his JD.

<sup>5</sup> Korea Bizwire, "Teenagers Meet with Police Officers on Metaverse to Discuss Public Safety Policies" (21 July 2021), online: [Korea Bizwire](http://koreabizwire.com/teenagers-meet-with-police-officers-on-metaverse-to-discuss-public-safety-policies/195020) <http://koreabizwire.com/teenagers-meet-with-police-officers-on-metaverse-to-discuss-public-safety-policies/195020>



# DEEPENING ROOTS

## The Batchelor Tree of Manitoba

By John Burchill

The roots start to take hold with Joseph Batchelor, who immigrated to Canada in 1870 from Lincolnshire, England. Originally landing in Port Perry, Ontario, Joseph came to Manitoba in 1874 with the opening of the West, settling near the new community of Emerson.

A customs house had operated at this location since 1871 which, by 1872 also served as a telegraph, express, and post office for what was then known as North Pembina and later West Lynne (which amalgamated with Emerson in 1883). Emerson became a trading centre for an area that stretched 200 miles westward along the international boundary which, by 1878 was accelerated by the arrival of the railroad.

In 1876 Joseph obtained the homestead rights to 160 acres of land at SE 22-1-2 E, just 2½ miles north of West Lynne, bounded today by section roads 10 E and 3 N, near Highway 75. After improving the land Joseph was given patent or title to it on October 12, 1881. Joseph worked the land and raised his family on the homestead until shortly before his death in 1919.

It is from this homestead that the Batchelor tree began to grow with the birth of Donald Archibald (“Archie”)

A tree symbolizes the generations of our families; a tree sprouts from a seed, grows and branches out, and then creates a new fruit that gives life to the next generation, to begin anew. The Batchelor tree of Manitoba is one that has set down deep roots in our law enforcement community, bearing new fruit every generation.

Batchelor on July 14, 1893. Five months after Canada entered World War I, Archie signed up with the 44th Manitoba Regiment. According to family folklore Archie skated from his home in Emerson up the Red River to enlist with the Canadian Expeditionary Force at the newly built Minto Armory in Winnipeg.

As a sharpshooter, Archie was recruited by the 29th Vancouver Battalion (Tobin’s Tigers). After additional training in England, his unit was sent into the reserve lines at St. Eloi, France, where Archie saw action in the battles at St. Eloi and Mount Sorrel until he was removed from the front lines for having a kidney disease. Archie returned from the frontlines to a Winnipeg hospital.

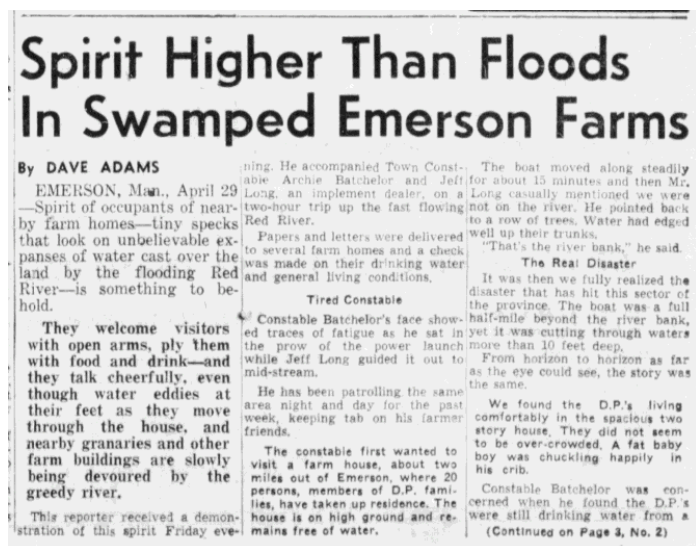
After a slow recovery Archie was discharged from the military on January 4, 1917, as no longer fit for active service. He returned to his home in Emerson where he married Ethel “Mamie” Watson on May 8, 1918. In July of that year Archie joined the Department of National Revenue’s Preventive Service at Emerson. He worked closely with the Provincial Police stationed in Emerson to stem the flow of illegal contraband into Canada from the United States.



Archie Batchelor (above and right)

On April 1, 1932, when the RCMP absorbed the provincial police forces for Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, as well as the Department of National Revenue's Preventive Services, Archie became a member of the RCMP

From 1932 to 1936 Archie was stationed in Emerson as a constable. With his promotion to Corporal in 1936, Archie headed up the detachment in Gretna until 1947 when he returned to Emerson as the Sergeant-in-Charge. On March 31, 1949, Archie retired from the RCMP and took up the position as Chief Constable in Emerson – just in time to take the helm (literally) as the 1950 flood swept through the Red River Valley.

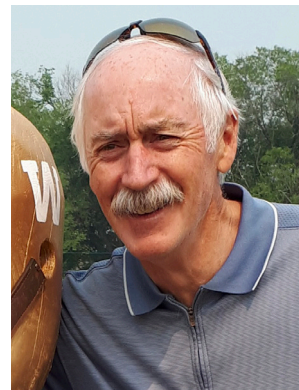


In March 1954 Archie accepted the position as Chief Constable for the Municipality of North Kildonan, taking over the position vacated by William Simpson who had contracted polio. Archie was paid \$250 per month. At the time the constable's home served as the police office. However, that month the municipality built an office for Archie in the municipal garage on Essar Avenue.

Unfortunately, Archie didn't stay long and he was forced to resign by council in April 1954 as they felt he did not spend enough time dealing with traffic violations, which bring in revenue. As a result a large group of residents came to council complaining about Archie's resignation (dismissal). There was a very angry discussion during which residents charge council with only wanting the police to give attention to collecting fines. During the meeting Archie gave a severe lecture to council particularly the mayor, charging him with gross interference in police matters. Suffice to say Archie did not return as the Chief of North Kildonan.

After a lengthy illness Archie died at the Deer Lodge Veterans Hospital in Winnipeg on November 17, 1977.

Archie and Mamie had nine children including Norman, William, Blake, Donald and LaDelle whose roots continue to spread throughout our law enforcement today (the other four children – Alan, Glen, Clair, and Joan – all had strong military backgrounds as well).



## BRYON BATCHELOR

Bryon was born in 1948, son of Norman Batchelor. Norman served with distinction alongside his brother Donald during World War II. Like his father and grandfather before him, Bryon joined the military with a career spanning from 1968 to 1981, which included service in Canada, Germany (NATO) and Egypt (UNEF). He left the military in 1981 and joined the RCMP in an IT capacity. He spent his entire RCMP career in Winnipeg in support of the CPIC network. After retirement in 2005 and a short return under contract, he retired from the RCMP for good in 2008.



## ROBERT (“BOB”) BATCHELOR

Robert is the son of William Batchelor. Like his grandfather he joined the RCMP in February 1988. He served as the Staff Sergeant (Detachment Commander) in Norway House from 2008 to 2010, before being

transferred to Alberta. He retired from the RCMP in 2013. Bob’s daughter Kelly Bignell (Batchelor) is married to Corporal Brett Bignell. Brett joined the RCMP in 2006 and is presently posted in Campbell River, BC.



## BLAINE BATCHELOR

Blaine was born in 1962, son of Blake Batchelor. Like his grandfather he joined Canada Customs at Emerson in 1989. He was transferred to Winnipeg in 1997 and currently works as the Regional Programs Officer with Corporate Programs in Prairie Region on Main Street.



Thomas Batchelor

Blaine has two sons, Thomas and Robert. In 2014 Thomas graduated from the U.S. Marine Corp Recruitment Depot in San Diego. In 2015 he completed his military police training and joined the 4th Law Enforcement Battalion Marine Corp. reserve unit at Wahpeton. He returned to Canada after discharge and is currently working with Commissionaires as a Sergeant at the Community Corrections Facility on Main Street.



Robert Batchelor

Robert successfully passed the Canada Border Service Agency (CBSA) summer

student training program and joined the CBSA in a clerical position in 2021.



## DONALD BATCHELOR

Donald, Archie’s son, was born in Emerson in 1921. Following in his dad’s footsteps he served with distinction alongside his brother Norman during World War II as a member of 13th Field Battery Royal Canadian Artillery. While serving overseas he met his wife, Gwen, and convinced her to move back to Canada.

Donald was discharged as a Sergeant from the army on April 5, 1946. Four days later he began work with Canada Customs and Excise in Gretna.

During his time in Gretna, Donald and two other Customs Officers served as members of the Gretna Police Department in the mid-1970, taking shifts during their off-duty time from Customs. Perry recalls the police phone was in their house. It was red and hung on the wall beside their home phone. This dual role of customs/police officer lasted about two years until all three resigned. Donald’s Gretna Police uniform is proudly displayed in Perry’s office in Altona.

Donald retired from the Customs and Excise office in Gretna after 37-years of service in 1984. Donald died on November 11, 1999, the day set aside to remember all veterans after a long battle with cancer.



## PERRY BATCHELOR

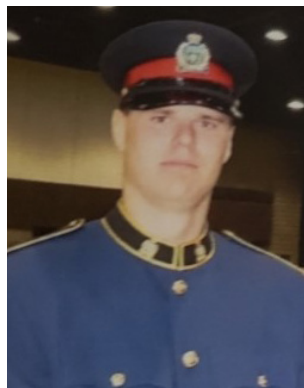
Perry was born in 1960, son of Donald Batchelor. Like his father and grandfather before him Perry joined the Canadian Army in 1980 and served for 17 years with the Princess Patricia’s Canadian Light Infantry (one tour in Cyprus, one tour in Yugoslavia and 4½ years in Germany).

Perry left the army in 1997 as a Warrant Officer and was hired as a constable by the Altona Police Service. At the time Altona’s recruit training was done through the

Winnipeg Police. Perry graduated from Recruit Class #128 at Winnipeg Police Training Academy in 1998. He was promoted to Sergeant in Altona in 2000 and Chief in 2010.

During his time as Chief, Perry has overseen the expansion of the Service and the formation of multiple partnerships, keeping pace with a growing community. One such agreement was with the City of Brandon to provide his members with 24/7 dispatch. Altona also became a founding member of the Regional Support Tactical Team and later, the Regional Crisis Negotiation Unit. He also served as Chair of the Strategic Issues Committee with the Manitoba Association of Chiefs of Police.

In 2012, Perry was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, and in 2017 he was awarded the 20 Year Police Exemplary Service medal. After 25 years with the Altona Police, Perry will retire from duty on September 1, 2022.



### **MACKENZIE (“MAC”) BATCHELOR**

Mac, son of Perry and Archie’s great grandson, joined the ranks of the Winnipeg Police in September 2010 as a Cadet. He was subsequently taken on strength as a constable and graduated two years later as part of Recruit Class #152.

### **LORNE JOHNSTON**

Lorne was born in Emerson in 1921 and married Archie’s daughter LaDelle. In 1939 Lorne enlisted and was taken on strength with the Fort Garry Horse and served overseas during World War II. After arriving home from the war he was employed with Canadian National Railways for a few years. In 1950 he joined the Canada Customs Service retiring 33½ years later as a Custom’s Superintendent. He died in 2005.



### **DAVID JOHNSTON**

David, Archie’s grandson, is the son of Lorne and LaDelle. David joined the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service (WFPS) and worked along with Sergeant Shane Cooke in developing a Tactical Emergency Medical Support (“TEMS”) team for Winnipeg

in 2011. Supporting the Winnipeg Police Tactical Support Team, TEMS recruited its members from existing WFPS paramedics. Since its formation, the tactical paramedic program – which runs out of the WFPS Station No. 11 at Portage and Route 90 – has expanded from the initial 14 advanced care paramedics to 22 active advance care paramedics.





**AINSLEY JOHNSTON-WEISS**

Ainsley, daughter of David and Archie Batchelor’s great granddaughter, joined the ranks of the Winnipeg Police in February 2017 and graduated as a constable from Recruit Class #160.



**GENE BOWERS**

Gene is the son of Dawn Johnston, the brother of David, and the great grandson of Archie Batchelor. In 1986 Gene was a summer student with the RCMP stationed at The Pas. However, he chose to join the Winnipeg Police instead in November 1989. Gene graduated from Recruit Class #115 in 1990.

Rising through the ranks, Gene served in a variety of capacities from uniform operations, administrative sections to criminal investigations. On April 5, 2022, it was announced that Gene would be the new Deputy Chief, Investigations, of the Winnipeg Police.

Gene is the recipient of the Police Exemplary Service Medal from the Governor General of Canada and the Province of Manitoba’s Excellence in Law Enforcement Award. He is a member of the Manitoba Association of Chiefs of Police.

With Mac Batchelor, Ainsley Johnston-Weiss and Gene Bowers firmly planted in the Winnipeg Police; Thomas and Robert Batchelor working with the Commissionaires and CBSA respectively; and Kelly Bignell married to an RCMP officer, we are looking forward to seeing where the next seed grows in our Manitoba law enforcement community.



# William Michie Stalker

## First Chief Constable, R.M. North Kildonan

By John Burchill, E.S.O., Manitoba Association Chiefs of Police

**W**illiam Michie Stalker was born to a single mother on April 6, 1884, in Tillicoultry, Clackmannanshire, Scotland. He would live with his mother and grandfather, a retired miner and handloom weaver, in Tillicoultry until he was 8.

On September 18, 1890, his mother married John Redpath in Glasgow, Scotland. They immigrated to Canada in 1892, just a few months after the death of William's grandfather.

The Redpath's eventually settled on parts of Parish Lots 69 & 70 in the Municipality of Kildonan, which today would run parallel to McLeod Avenue from Henderson Hwy to Lagimodiere Blvd through Rossmere Golf Course.

On April 16, 1908, William married Annie Robertson at the Elmwood Presbyterian Church, which would be located in the area of Henderson and Riverton today. Together the couple would have nine children, two of which died in infancy.

William and Annie lived on a farm occupying the east part of Parish Lots 70 & 71 in the Municipality of Kildonan near Birds Hill Road (now Molson/De Vries). The children went to nearby Rosewell School, a one-room schoolhouse on McLeod Avenue, then to Lord Kitchener School (now John Pritchard School) on East Kildonan Road (renamed Henderson Hwy in 1928).

The family farm consisted of mainly market vegetables with a few animals; horses, cows, chickens, and at one time or other, a goat, rabbits, and later mink.

From 1876 to 1914, the Municipality of Kildonan covered a large area on both sides of the Red River, just north of the original City of Winnipeg. In 1914 the municipality was divided, with the area of Kildonan east of the river becoming the R.M. of East Kildonan, and the area west of the river becoming the R.M. of West Kildonan. In 1924, residents in the primarily rural northern part of East Kildonan said to be burdened by high sewer and water taxes from the built-up area to the south asked

*Constable William Stalker*





to be separated from East Kildonan. The provincial government granted the request, and the R.M. of North Kildonan came into being on January 1, 1925.

The east part of Parish Lots 70 and 71, where William farmed, fell into North Kildonan. The west, bisected by the CPR Mainline with Raleigh on one side and Gateway on the other, remained within East Kildonan.

At the time North Kildonan was created, sections 759 and 760 of the Manitoba *Municipal Act* stated that every rural municipality could appoint one or more police constables for the municipality and that every constable so appointed would have the same powers and privileges and be subject to the same liability and to the performance of the same duties as a constable appointed by the provincial government. Until such time, investigation of any serious crime would be the responsibility of the Manitoba Provincial Police out of either Winnipeg or Selkirk.

As the sparsely populated community was more in need of someone to corral runaway farm animals and prevent the spread of noxious weeds into farmers' fields than it was to appoint a police officer, William was initially appointed as the Poundkeeper for North Kildonan on June 15, 1925 (By-law 15), followed by the Noxious Weed Inspector and Dog License Inspector in 1926. He was paid .70 cents per hour and compensated for the use of his car (a Model-T Ford) for his work. It wasn't

until August 1926 that William was appointed as the Constable for North Kildonan as well – a duty for which he was to be paid at a rate of .50 cents per hour.

William's appointment as constable coincided with the planned expansion of North Kildonan, which subdivided 20 acres of land into 21 lots near what is now Edison Avenue along Henderson Hwy. The lots were sold to a developer (W.J. Wilson Co.), then to Mennonite settlers in 1928. William was also elected as School Trustee for Lord Kitchener School (renamed John Pritchard School in 1967), a position he held until 1933. His tenure as Trustee likely concluded when the last of his children graduated from school.

William was the embodiment of the early police constable in Canada. Besides being the only regular police constable for the Municipality of North Kildonan, he was also the Public Works Foreman, Relief (Welfare) Investigator, Sanitary Inspector, Noxious Weed Inspector, drove the municipal tractor on occasion, looked after bicycle licenses, was the pound keeper, helped fight fires, and if no one else was available he repaired bridges, sidewalks, and roadways.

While the police as an institution are relatively new, the activity of policing or the enforcement of common standards within a community is not. As noted by Patrick Colquhoun in his "Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis," published in 1796, there were various laws in England tending to regulate the comfort and convenience of the inhabitants of civil society in the City of London. From paving, watching, lighting, cleansing, and removing nuisances in the streets; to furnishing water, building houses, extinguishing fires, and regulating hackney coaches, carts, and other carriages. Colquhoun later added to this list the maintenance of sewage systems, and signs and signposts, among others.

Indeed, the word "police" comes from Old French *policie*, meaning civil administration or government. It is the Latinisation of the ancient Greek *polítia*, from *polítēs* (citizen) and *polis* (city). The word was adopted across Europe in the 15th Century – 'Police,' 'Policei,' 'Pollicei,' 'Policey,' 'Pollicey,' 'Pollizey,' 'Pollizei,' 'Politzey,' 'Pollucey,' and 'Pullucey.' While the spelling varied, the meaning encompassed citizenship, administration, government, civil polity and public order. It defined the ordering and regulating of a city.



*Stalker Bay in North Kildonan was named after William Stalker in 1960*

For his multifarious duties as a public servant in helping to maintain and regulate the health, safety and welfare of the residents of North Kildonan, William is memorialized today as the namesake of “Stalker Bay,” just a short distance from his old family farm.

As William was hard to reach without a telephone when he was needed, the Municipal Council asked him to have a phone installed in his home in August 1927. William eventually asked that Council pay the entire cost of the phone in his home as he felt that it was for the benefit of the municipality and not him personally. His wife, Annie, would also be paid an annual bonus for answering the phone until 1955 when she passed away.<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding his public safety duties, it wasn’t until August 1929 that Council provided William with a revolver for his police duties. Although he had requested the proper equipment earlier, it wasn’t until he had to arrest Brown Durnen of St. Andrews at 3 a.m. on July 28, 1929, for theft of gas that the municipality issued him with a revolver.<sup>2</sup>

In September 1927, after a woman fell off the sidewalk on East Kildonan Road and broke her ankle, William was given the additional task of fixing the municipal sidewalks and bridges when necessary to ensure the public’s safety. In September 1929, he received .75

cents per hour for acting as the Foreman on all special construction work in the municipality.

In 1933 Council appointed William as a Special Investigator for relief matters during the Depression, for which he was to receive \$1.00 for each investigation tip. In July 1935, he was asked to investigate a large number of hospital accounts that had accumulated to the municipality and to go after the individuals responsible.

In October 1936, William was given the job of looking after a resident’s livestock while the owner was in jail in Transcona. In November 1937, he received permission from Council to establish a mink farm on his property in North Kildonan.

In December 1940, a hat and badge were purchased for William to create a more “official atmosphere” when carrying out his police duties. He was subsequently given a flat salary of \$60 per month for all his various duties. However, in December 1941, he was paid an extra \$180 because of the extra work that was required for the Cordite Drainage project.<sup>3</sup>

In March 1942, William was given the additional responsibility of issuing bicycle licenses. In 1943, Council reappointed him to the positions of Police Constable, Works Superintendent and Inspector of Licenses, Health and Noxious Weeds at \$1,000 for the year. Around this time, William disposed of his farm and moved into a new house at 1394 Henderson Highway.<sup>4</sup> The Council bought all of William’s tools for \$157 so the municipality would have their own tools. In addition, Council paid the annual insurance premium on William’s car of \$26.73.

*William Stalker’s Police and Cap Badges and Jail Key, c 1940.*



<sup>1</sup> In an interview with John Urchenko, who worked for the North Kildonan Police from 1954-1972 and was its Chief of Police from 1968-1972, the police phone was in the Stalker residence when he started. In the early years phones were in members’ homes until they hired Telephone Answering Services to take calls and dispatch. There was a business phone for the R.M. of North Kildonan at their Municipal offices.

<sup>2</sup> Durnen pled guilty to theft on August 19, 1929. Due to his lack of previous record, Durnen received a suspended sentence from Police Magistrate Herbert R. Welsford.

<sup>3</sup> During the Second World War the Transcona Cordite Plant was built to produce acid, nitroglycerine, and guncotton (nitrocellulose) as ingredients in cordite for the war. Over the course of its operational life, the facility turned out 30,000 tons of guncotton, 14,500 tons of nitroglycerin, 75,000 tons of nitric acid, and 167,000 tons of sulphuric acid, and packed a total of 65,300 tons of cordite. Drainage from the plant ran into North Kildonan along what is now Cordite Road.

<sup>4</sup> On March 13, 1945, Council passed By-Law 710 to accept the transfer of property from William Stalker and Annie Stalker. It is believed this is the land at 1394 Henderson Hwy, and not the farm.

In February 1944, John Stalker, William's son, was given the job as a highway patrol officer on Henderson Highway within the municipality of North Kildonan. Like his father, John had to use his own car and was paid \$1.50 per hour when he patrolled the highway.

In 1945 William's salary increased to \$1,200.00 per year, along with a \$25.00 per month car allowance. However, as William's duties increased with the growing population of North Kildonan – which almost tripled between 1925 and 1945 – his responsibilities were divided, and his son John was appointed Chief of Police effective April 23, 1946.

At that time William became the Superintendent of Public Works but also continued with his duties as Weed and License Inspector. In 1947 he was also appointed Fire Guardian for the municipality and, in 1955; he was assigned the additional responsibility of municipal Water Meter Installation and Services Inspector.

As William was now 70-years old, there was a general expectation he would retire. However, Council agreed to keep him on until November 1957, when Frank J. DeGraff was hired as the Superintendent of Public Works. William was given a retirement allowance of \$900 per year.

It is believed the municipality took possession of the land at 1394 Henderson Hwy from William in 1945 as municipal property in exchange for him living there. Council paid for a number of upgrades to the house including the addition of a basement, adding a furnace, and plumbing and septic field in 1952. In 1956/57, the municipality constructed a new municipal building next door at 1400 Henderson Hwy., which was opened to the public in February 1957.

With his retirement the municipality allowed William to lease back the house at 1394 Henderson Hwy for \$50 per month for the next five years until the land was required for further development. Council also retained William



*Annie Stalker, pictured with William c1950, would answer the phone at their home for any police calls in North Kildonan until her death in 1955.*

as the Public Work's Yardman for \$50 a month, basically off-setting the cost of his lease payments.

In 1960 the municipality named Stalker Bay after William (changing the name from Stalker Avenue as it had been originally laid out in the municipal zoning plans).

After five years, in November 1962, William's services as Yardman were no longer required by the municipality and his lease on the house was not renewed. However, he was allowed to stay in the house until the land was needed. In March 1965, William was given a \$500 severance payment and three months' notice to vacate the house at 1394 Henderson Hwy, which had been sold to Mr. Martin J. Goffard for a price of \$155 and was being removed for future development.

William subsequently moved into a house with his daughter at 160 Essar Avenue. He died on May 7, 1967, and was buried at Elmwood Cemetery alongside his wife.

In 1972, less than five years after William's death, the North Kildonan Police would merge with the East Kildonan Police as part of Unicity. The East Kildonan Police would in turn amalgamate with the City of Winnipeg Police in October 1974.

Over the years little attempt was made to record the histories of these old municipal police departments that today make up much of the City of Winnipeg. With the 50th Anniversary of the 1974 amalgamation fast approaching, along with the City of Winnipeg's own 150th Anniversary, the Winnipeg Police Museum is looking for more stories and memorabilia to remember these forgotten public servants and the impact they had on the early days of Winnipeg's history.

I want to thank the family members of William Stalker from across Canada who, along with Winnipeg Police Sergeant Jeff Stalker, the great-grandson of William Stalker, shared pictures, police artifacts, and some interesting tidbits for this article.

By John Ormondroyd

# RETIREMENT LIFE IS GOOD *in Roatan*



*“Roatan, where is that? Honduras? Why would you move there? Are you crazy?” is what family and friends would say when Shelley and I told them we were giving up living in Canada. But three and a half years later, we’re still here.*

**R**oatan is an island about 65 kilometres off the northern coast of Honduras in the Caribbean Sea, and while considered part of Honduras, it is nothing like the mainland.

The island is about 77 kilometres long and less than 8 kilometres at its widest point. It is surrounded by the Meso-American Barrier Reef, the largest in the Caribbean and second largest in the world after the Great Barrier Reef. The reef, in most areas, is about 100 meters offshore. This means the water, scuba diving, and snorkeling are easily accessible and spectacular—but it is so much more.

The weather is relatively consistent with temperatures ranging from 24°C to 32°C. The rainy season generally runs from November through to February. It doesn't mean it's going to rain every day, and for the most part when it does rain it is at night or short bursts during the day. If the temperature does drop below 20°C the government will usually issue a weather warning and people pull out the long pants, winter coats (yes, winter coats) and wooly hats. You can always tell who the

tourists are when this happens. The best part is that Roatan is not in the hurricane belt. You also don't have to shovel—snow and wind chill is swapped out for the humidity factor.

Although Spanish is the official language, English is the first language of most native islanders and Spanish is spoken second, so communication is not usually an issue. The people are genuinely friendly and think nothing of inviting you to their house once you get to know them. The national currency is the Lempira, but the U.S. dollar is accepted everywhere. ATMs are in abundance and credit cards and PayPal are widely accepted.

There are hospitals, medical clinics, dentists, and opticians throughout the island staffed with well-trained and experienced doctors and nurses. Many medically trained expats volunteer time during the week at these clinics. There is no waiting, and if you choose to take out health insurance chances are the cost won't reach your deductible. If you require more complicated care, a \$100 plane ride takes you to one of the major cities on

the mainland. Over the years the infrastructure has been modernized, the roads have gone from mud or asphalt to being paved. Power is expensive so they are installing solar farms throughout the island to reduce the cost, although our yearly cost is a lot less than what we were paying in Manitoba.

Living on a Caribbean island was never in our retirement plan. We were going to live in Canada in the summer and travel through the southern United States, Mexico or elsewhere in the winter.

Roatan is an island that draws you in. When you approach by air it is a striking sight – jungle covered mountains and rolling hills rise from the island. As you get closer you see the dozens of white sand beaches, many deserted, lined with palm trees and surrounded by crystal clear blue water and the reef.

We came by cruise ship the first time; it was the only destination on our trip we did not want to leave. We came back the next year, then again, each time staying longer. The merchants on the streets would remember our names from year to year and it began to feel like home. So, we decided to sell everything and take a leap of faith. And we did sell everything – house, vehicles, all the toys, things we thought we needed but really didn't. What wasn't sold, like keepsakes, was condensed into a small storage locker. Even that we will dispose of next time we are back in Canada. We came here with everything we needed—each other, excitement, trepidation, and 17 suitcases. We haven't looked back since.

The island is very laid back. We discovered there is such a thing as "Island Time" and it starts as soon as you get off the plane. Nobody is in a rush; it's relaxed and



casual. You can feel your stress level drop. Dress of the day is a bathing suit and sandals, and if you want to go to a nice restaurant make that shorts/skirt and add a top. The only people wearing watches are usually from North America and the watch is probably a dive watch.

In addition to the people vacationing or the cruise shippers that come and go, there is a large active ex-pat community (mostly Canadians and Americans). Depending on what lifestyle they prefer, they are spread throughout the island. The West End of the island is more developed and touristy, with an abundance of restaurants and shops, while the East End is less developed, for now, and tends to be not as busy but still very active.

There is always something to do, sometimes too much, and you must remember you live here. You don't have to fit everything into a few weeks. We both volunteer with different organizations on the island – helping in the tourism sector, with the schools, or the yearly music festival that helps fund a free clinic. We are both scuba divers and I have taken up underwater photography. We have an active social life between our friends here and those that come to visit. Some days we just sit on the beach and enjoy, but it all depends on what you decide when you wake up in a morning as you are on island time.

**John Ormondroyd** is a retired Winnipeg Police Officer.



# PENSION

## *When is the best time to start collecting your* **CANADA PENSION PLAN?**

By Agnes Balcerzak

**T**he Canada Pension Plan is a contributory retirement pension plan administered by Government of Canada. Its purpose is to provide Canadians with a monthly income stream for life. Your payments are based on how much you have contributed to the plan during your working years and the age you want to start receiving your retirement benefit.

Deciding on when to start collecting CPP payments is an important part of retirement income planning and a concern of many Canadians. It involves many considerations and should include a complete analysis of your financial needs and resources in your retirement years.

### **How much and when?**

CPP payments can start as early as age 60 or as late as age 70. At age 65, you qualify for your full CPP payment amount.

If you start taking CPP before age 65, your pension will be reduced by 0.6% for each month you begin before your 65th birthday. So, if you start your CPP as soon as you are eligible, your pension will be reduced by 36% of the amount you would receive had you waited until you were 65.

On the other hand, postponing your pension until after age 65 will result in increase by 0.7% per month until a cap at age 70. If you wait until you are 70, your pension will increase by 42% of what you would have received had you started at age 65.

### **When should I start collecting CPP?**

There is no perfect answer to this question, as everyone's financial picture is different. The following factors should be considered when deciding when to take your CPP.

### **You may decide to start receiving your CPP earlier if:**

- You are planning on retiring before 65 or reducing your working hours and relying on CPP to supplement your current income level.
- You might appreciate the extra income earlier when you are still healthy and can enjoy a more active lifestyle.
- You have a shortened life expectancy or greater potential for health issues based on family history.
- You don't need the money to support your lifestyle, you could consider investing your CPP payments taken early. Keep in mind the expected rate of return and compare it with the guaranteed, inflation indexed CPP payments that you would collect if you waited to age 65 or later.

### **You may decide to delay receiving your CPP pension if:**

- You have sufficient income or resources to support a comfortable retirement, such as employment or business income or the projected income from substantial investment portfolio.
- You have substantial registered assets that you want to draw on while you are in a lower tax bracket.
- You are in good health and your family health history suggests a long life expectancy.
- You want to receive increased monthly payments.
- You are reporting a higher level of income and don't want to trigger a claw back to your OAS.
- You are in a higher tax bracket and by delaying your CPP, your payments will be higher and you may be in a lower marginal tax bracket by then.



## Final thoughts on collecting CPP

Even if you are eligible for the maximum CPP payment when you retire, most likely it won't be enough to support comfortable retirement. You can't ignore other forms of savings for retirement. Make sure that you are contributing to your RRSP and TFSA and that you are part of company pension if it is available to you.

It is highly recommended that you consult with a retirement planning professional who can help you create custom plan to achieve a comfortable retirement.



**Agnes Balcerzak** BA, CFP,<sup>®</sup> PFP,<sup>®</sup> RIS  
Wealth Advisor  
Winnipeg Police Credit Union  
Tel: 204-926-3146  
agnesb@wpcu.ca

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**Greg Hebert, Inspector, Brandon Police Service**



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