
CHRISTIAN EINFELD

Chief of Police, East Kildonan (1951-1974)

*Written & researched by John Burchill
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Born in Haarlem, The Netherlands, on June 15, 1908, Chris Einfeld came to Canada with his family at the age of three. He spent most of his life in East Kildonan, attending Salisbury, Kitchener and Lord Selkirk schools. As a young man, he worked with his father in the family's bakery "Einfeld and Sons."

On May 22, 1935, Chris joined the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, Non-Permanent Active Militia. At the outbreak of World War II, Chris enlisted for active service, but he was later discharged on account of a defect in one eye.

After his discharge, Chris joined the Winnipeg Police as a war replacement officer on January 6, 1942. He remained with the Winnipeg Police until June 21, 1943.

When Chris left the Winnipeg Police in 1943, he joined the Wartime Prices and Trade Board and remained there until 1947. He worked as an investigator for the Board until 1945, after which he was appointed Assistant Chief Investigation Officer, working alongside the RCMP doing black market investigations.

The Wartime Prices and Trade Board was initially established under the War Measures Act by Prime Minister Mackenzie King with the outbreak of World War II. The Board was created to stop prices and wages from spiralling out of control as they had during the First World War.

The Board was composed of 13 regional offices and 100 local offices. Initially, the Board placed partial limits on rent, coal, sugar, timber, steel, milk and other goods. However, by 1941 the cost of living rose by almost 18%, and the government announced a freeze on prices and also fixed wages and salaries. While the controls were not popular, the Board was very successful in curbing inflation, keeping it below 3% between 1941 and 1945.





With Chris' background in the retail sales and distribution of produce, he made a suitable candidate for the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, whose mandate was very broad and included the:

- Investigation of costs, prices and profits,
- Licensing of persons who dealt in any way with the necessities of life,
- fixing maximum prices and markups,
- regulating the sale and distribution of the necessities of life,
- buying and selling goods, and taking into possession any stocks that were being withheld,
- recommending embargos on exports, and later on including import and export controls, and
- regulating rentals and housing, and wage controls.

Upon leaving the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, Chris joined the United States Senate Special Committee to Investigate Crime in Interstate Commerce in California to investigate inter-state organized crime in the United States. The committee became popularly known as the Kefauver Committee because of its chairman, Senator Estes Kefauver.

The Kefauver Committee held hearings in 14 major cities across the United States. More than 600 witnesses testified. Many of the committee's hearings were televised live on national television to large audiences, providing many Americans with their first glimpse of organized crime's influence in the U.S. The entire Kefauver report and hearings are available on the [U.S. Senate website](#).

Many of the Kefauver Committee's hearings were aimed at proving that a Sicilian-Italian organization based on strong family ties centrally controlled a vast, organized crime conspiracy in the United States. While the committee never came close to justifying such a claim, it uncovered extensive evidence that people of all nationalities, ethnicities, and religions operated locally controlled, loosely organized crime syndicates at the local level. The committee's final

report, issued on April 17, 1951, included 22 recommendations for the federal government and seven recommendations for state and local authorities.

After returning to Canada, Chris moved back to East Kildonan and applied for a position with the East Kildonan Police Force. On December 26, 1951, Chris was appointed as the fourth Chief Constable police force, replacing Gilbert Russell, who took a position with the fire department.

At the time, the East Kildonan Police consisted of six officers plus the Chief working out of the newly opened municipal hall at 755 Henderson Hwy. The police shifts were:

Day Shift – 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM, two constables and the Chief.

Night Shift – 6:00 PM – 4:00 AM, one constable

8:00 PM – 6:00 AM, 1 constable

10:00 PM – 8:00 AM, 2 constables

Two constables were assigned to work in a cruiser car during the night shift while the other two were on foot patrol. A desk constable was required to be on duty at all times on top of the constables on patrol.

In January 1952, North Kildonan asked East Kildonan to take over all policing duties for North Kildonan. An agreement was signed in February 1952, and East Kildonan handled all the administrative duties, and the North Kildonan police officers became part of the East Kildonan police department. The force increased in size to eight officers plus the Chief. This arrangement lasted for just over one year, until July 1953, when North Kildonan reformed its own police department rather than pay East Kildonan \$5000 for this service.

Although the East Kildonan municipal council told Chris to reduce staffing now that he was not patrolling North Kildonan, he did not reduce his staffing. Instead, he hired three new clerks to keep up with the growing population, which increased from 12,542 in 1951 to 14,746 in 1953. In addition, a second police car was purchased at the cost of \$2093.08.

In 1955 a new combined police and fire station was built at 545 Watt Street. At the time, there were 14 police officers and eight firefighters. In April 1955, the municipal Council passed a motion to disband the fire department as of June 30, and termination notices were sent to all firefighters. The police department took over all fire protection duties as of July 1, 1955, and all police officers were trained in fire fighting procedures.

In 1957 East Kildonan passed 20,000 people and was incorporated as the City of East Kildonan, making it the fourth city in the metro area – following Winnipeg, St. Boniface and St. James – and the sixth largest city in Manitoba. At the time, there were 32 men of all ranks in the police department, operating two radio-equipped police cars, one ambulance and two fire trucks.

The East Kildonan police department remained responsible for providing fire protection until 1963 when the two departments were separated, and Deputy Police Chief Henry G. Williamson was appointed Chief of the new fire department. Ambulance service, which had also been provided by the police, was tendered out by Council and the department's 1953 Cadillac Ambulance was sold for \$600.00.



Combined Police and Fire Departments at 545 Watt Street, 1959. Photo shows the East Kildonan Council Members, Administrative Staff and Police Officers in front of the building.

By 1963 the population of East Kildonan had reached 28,092 people. With the creation of the fire department, the police department was allocated a budget of \$179,950 and reduced to 32 men. However, Council authorized 35 men plus Chief Constable Einfeld.

The most significant accomplishment for Chris and his police department was its traffic safety program. Year after year, the department was recognized for having no fatalities. In fact, for 8½ years, from the beginning of 1961 until July 1969, there were no traffic fatalities. A feat not matched by any department of a similar size in North America.



POLICE CHIEF HONORED: East Kildonan's chief of police, Chris Einfeld, was honored Saturday afternoon when he was presented with a plaque by J. H. Delaney, president of the Prince Edward Branch, R.C.L., on behalf of the members. The plaque commended the

chief and members of his department for their efforts in attaining seven years without a traffic fatality. Looking are Constable Norman Rimmer (left) and Sgt. R. S. M. Mackay (right).
—Photo by Napoleon Photo Studio Ltd.

In 1969 Chris was elected President of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP), becoming the fourth Chief of Police from the Winnipeg metro area to head the organization.¹



In his inaugural address to the CACP, Chris stressed that the protection of life and property and the preservation of law and order was the proper role of the police. Some citizens, he said, tend to forget that the men in blue are their representatives and act on their behalf. It is little wonder that police departments find it challenging to recruit and retain personnel when some elements of the population are influenced by agitators to take an unsympathetic, or even hostile, attitude towards police – similar [comments that are echoed today](#) by Danny Smyth, Winnipeg’s current police chief and CACP president.

Chris continued that it was necessary to aim for a higher educational standard for peace officers. *“For the fearful, change is frightening; for the confident, change is exciting – a chance to make things better.”* We need to be willing to re-examine our role, he said, and change it when advisable. We must be confident – and energetic in opposing proposals which would weaken the hand of law enforcement.

While Chris became embroiled in controversy when he was critical of “liberal” legislation which, he believed, made it harder for the police to do their work, including his opposition to the legalization of homosexuality, reduced penalties for the possession of drugs, and criminal rehabilitation programs when more attention should be paid to the victims of crime, they were also views held more broadly by the CACP membership of the time.

In August 1971, Bill 36, creating a unified City of Winnipeg, received Royal Assent. Effective January 1, 1972, East Kildonan, along with the old City of Winnipeg and eleven other municipalities in the Greater Winnipeg Area, amalgamated to form the City of Winnipeg.

However, unlike most other civic departments, the police remained as separate community police departments until October 1974 – although East Kildonan and North Kildonan police departments pre-amalgamated into a single East Kildonan Police Department with a combined total of 49 officers under Chief Einfeld until 1974.

In October 1974, the East Kildonan police station at 545 Watt Street was closed and amalgamated with Transcona, relocating to 730 Pandora Ave., West, as Winnipeg Police District #4.

Former Transcona Chief of Police Joe Teres became the Superintendent of Winnipeg Police District #4. As Chris had already reached the mandatory retirement age of 65, he was given the rank of Inspector under Teres, and he officially retired to pension on September 30, 1975. Chris died in Winnipeg on August 13, 1977, and was buried in the Elmwood Cemetery.

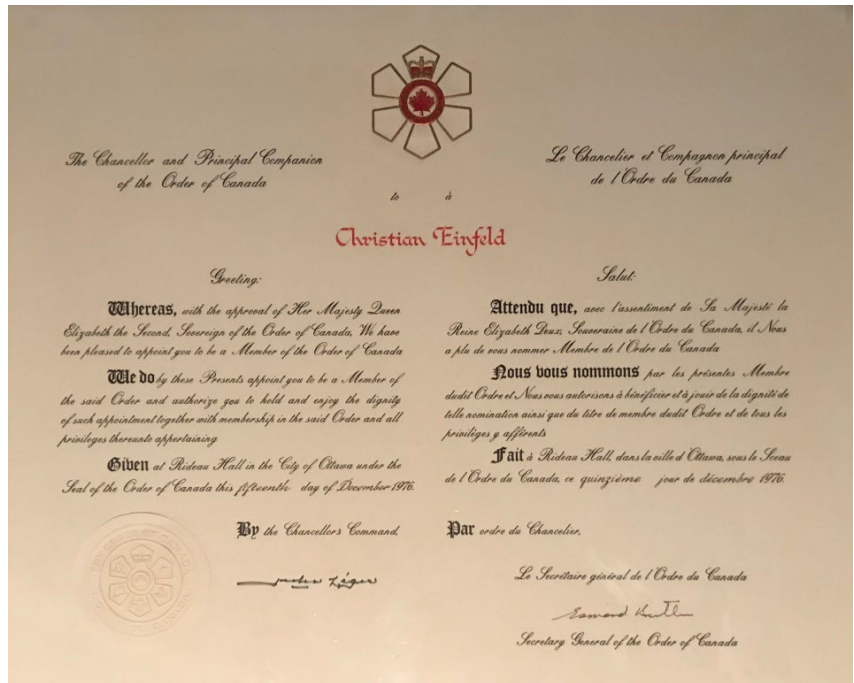
¹ The others were Chief Chris Newton (1923-24); Chief George Smith (1940-41); and Chief Charles Maclvor (1950-51), all with the Winnipeg Police. Since Chief Einfeld, there have been four other Chief’s from Winnipeg – Chief Norman Stewart (1977-78); Chief Herb Stephen (1989-90); Chief Jack Ewatski (2005-07); and Chief Danny Smyth (2022-24).



Throughout his life, Chris was active in the Masons. He was President of the East Kildonan YMCA for three years. Chris was also the President of the East Kildonan Kiwanis Club, serving on the Board for five years, during which time he chaired the Boys & Girls, Public Affairs, and Underprivileged Child & Welfare committees. He was also responsible for creating the Elmwood, Transcona and Selkirk Kiwanis Clubs.

In recognition of his civic and humanitarian services, Chris received a Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal in 1977. Shortly before he died in 1977, Chris was inducted into the Order of Canada.

I am grateful to Chris' daughter Alison Mendres for all the pictures in this article.



NOTE: Anyone wishing to recognize a police member they feel made sustained and substantial contributions to policing in Winnipeg and its surrounding municipalities during the past 150 years is asked to send me their name and (if known) a brief description of their accomplishments.