

THE WINNIPEG POLICE

K9 UNIT



Article from files supplied by the WPS K-9 Unit

From 1971 to 2018, a total of 64 Police Service Dogs and 53 handlers have served with the Winnipeg Police Canine Unit and contributed to its immense success over 47 years of operations.

The Winnipeg Police Canine Unit was established in May of 1971 with the purchase of three German Shepherd pups who were to begin training with their handlers under the supervision of an outside trainer being Lawrence Anonychuk of Canisphere Kennels.

The three chosen K9 teams consisting of Police Service Dogs (PSD) and handlers were:

Cst. Don McLennan and PSD Aro;
Cst. Mike Davies and PSD Caesar; and
Cst. John Martin and PSD Axel.

Aro and Axel were the first two canines to complete their training, and officially commenced working the streets on Wednesday January 12th 1972. PSD Caesar never finished his training because of a hereditary health problem and was later replaced.

PSD Aro initially worked with Cst McLennen until October of 1973 when Cst. Len Johnson became the dog's new handler. Aro continued with his new partner until August of 1977 when the canine retired.

PSD Axel worked continuously with Cst. Martin and went on to become one of the Service's most famous Police Service Dogs. He was awarded the *Canadian Bankers Association Award* after saving the life of his partner during a shoot-out with an armed bank robber in February of 1975. Axel remains the only police dog in Canada to have ever been given this honor. He later retired in January of 1976 due to health issues.

For numerous years, the Canine Unit operated out of the District 4 Police station having kennels and a training area located on the property. The unit later moved with other units to the East District Station where its own K-9 building was eventually constructed at the back of the property.

The Winnipeg Police Service officially opened the doors to its new state of the art, 4,500 square foot, high-security K-9 Facility at 77 Durand Road on June 21st, 2013.

The building featured a large community classroom and common area for demonstrations along with office space for the unit members and to 11 air-conditioned indoor kennels with attached dog runs. This new facility also included a whelping kennel and indoor puppy run as part of the Winnipeg Police Service's in-house breeding program which began in 1999.

The Winnipeg Police Service K-9 Unit currently employs 12 teams consisting of 12 uniform officers and 14 canines who offer 24-hour coverage, seven days a week, to protect the safety of citizens in Winnipeg. Aside from tracking, the K-9 teams are also cross trained in other disciplines which include narcotic detector dogs, explosive detector dogs, and tactical support dogs.

K-9 Memorial – the Planning Begins

The location of the new K-9 Kennels also presented an opportunity to move forward with another long-term project to build a memorial honoring the unit's canine members.

Since the unit's inception, Winnipeg Police canines have worked alongside their handlers to apprehend criminals and keep officers/citizens safe. The passing of these hard working dogs has a significant impact on their handlers and the public where a large support group exists. The Winnipeg Police Canine Memorial Fund was established to eventually fund the construction of a proper monument and columbarium solely dedicated for the Winnipeg Police Canines. The memorial site design will feature a life-size bronze sculpture of a Police Service Dog standing guard in front of a columbarium wall containing the cinerary urns of past Police Canines.

The current practice with the passing of Police Service Dogs is cremation with the cinerary urns being returned to their respective handlers. Throughout the unit's history however, the public has consistently demonstrated vast support for these service animals. Countless phone calls,

messages and other correspondence are regularly received when a WPS Canine is lost. The landscaped memorial site will also be accessible to the public, and become a place to visit, pay respects, and honor the Police Canines who have served the city with so much distinction.

Costs for building the memorial are being covered through fundraising efforts being undertaken by the Canine Unit members, and predominantly consist of:

1. Canine Unit Calendar Sales
2. Donor Brick Fundraising (memorial walkway)
3. General Donations from the Public and Corporate Sectors

Individuals or corporations wishing to donate to the Memorial Fund can do so by accessing the unit's web site and using the link to a printable donation form with submission instructions.

CANINE UNIT WEB PAGE:

www.winnipeg.ca/police/canine/donate.stm

PRINTABLE FORM:

www.winnipeg.ca/police/canine/donationform.pdf

Concept drawing of the future Canine memorial site. The site will be home to a life size bronze sculpture of a Police Service Dog standing guard in front of a columbarium wall containing the cinerary urns of past Police Canines. The site will also allow public access to the citizens of Winnipeg who wish to visit and pay their respects.





Cst Boris Luhowy and Marco at Police Expo May 9th, 1977.



Mayor Steven Juba meets Aro. Below: Cst. John Martin, PSD Axel and Det. Leonard Daniel are presented with the Bankers Award.



Working Dogs 1971 - 2018

PSD Caesar #1	German Shepherd	1971	1972	**Training Incomplete
PSD Aro #2	German Shepherd	1971	1977	
PSD Axel #3	German Shepherd	1971	1976	*CDN Bankers Award
PSD Shane #4	Doberman	1973	1975	
PSD Baron #5		1974	1977	** Replaced Caesar
PSD Marco #6		1975	U/K	
PSD Shane #7	German Shepherd	1976	1983	
PSD Ace #8		1977	1979	
PSD Kinver #9		1977	1979	
PSD Rex #10		1978	1983	
PSD Hobo #11		1979	U/K	
PSD King #12		1981	1988	
PSD Appollo #13		1982	1989	
PSD Prince # 14		1982	1986	
PSD Mitch #15		U/K	1991	
PSD Kaun #16		U/K	1988	
PSD Goliath #17	German Shepherd	1987	1993	
PSD Buddy #18	German Shepherd	1987	1990	
PSD Raider # 19	German Shepherd	1989	1993	*Mestic Root Torsion
PSD Zeke # 20	German Shepherd	1990	1994	
PSD Rocky #21	Belgian Malinois	1990	1990	
PSD Tron #22	Belgian Malinois	1990		**Replaced Rocky
PSD Enzo #23	German Shepherd	1993	2000	
PSD Olaf #24	German Shepherd	1993	2001	
PSD Art # 25	German Shepherd	1994	2001	
PSD Buddy #26	Belgian Malinois	1996	2004	
PSD Joker #27	German Shepherd	1997	2005	
PSD Denver #28	German Shepherd	1997	2007	(Explosives)
PSD Theo #29	Chocolate Lab	1999	2000	(Narcotics)
PSD Vinnie #30	German Shepherd	1998	2005	
PSD Grim # 31	German Shepherd	1999	2002	
PSD Reno #32	Belgian Malinois	2000	2008	
PSD Utah #33	Belgian Malinois	2001	2007	
PSD Bandit #34	Belgian Malinois	2001	2008	
PSD Cinder # 35	Belgian Malinois	2002	2013	
PSD Jazmin #36	Black Lab	2002	2013	(Narcotics)
PSD Bali #37	Belgian Malinois	2004	2012	
PSD Judge #38	Belgian Malinois	2004	2014	
PSD Nitro #39	Black Lab	2004	2013	(Explosives)
PSD Ike #40	German Shepherd	2005	2007	
PSD Asia #41	Belgian Malinois			** SAR via OFC
PSD Deuce #42	Belgian Malinois	2006	2013	
PSD Lacy #43	Belgian Malinois	2008	2017	(Explosives)
PSD Diesel #44	Belgian Malinois	2008	2015	
PSD Hondo #45	Belgian Malinois	2008	2013	
PSD Reya #46	Belgian Malinois	2009		
PSD Griffin #47	German Shepherd	2009	2018	
PSD Juno #48	Belgian Malinois			
PSD Niko #49	Belgian Malinois	2005	2010	(Explosives)
PSD Dante #50	Belgian Malinois	2008	2017	
PSD Rane #51	Belgian Malinois	2012		
PSD Riley #52	Belgian Malinois	2012	2015	
PSD Mya #53	Belgian Malinois	2013		(Narcotics)
PSD Bailey #54	Belgian Malinois	2013		
PSD Vedy #55	Belgian Malinois	2013		
PSD Wika #56	Belgian Malinois	2013		
PSD Banner #57	Belgian Malinois	2014		
PSD Hector #58	Belgian Malinois	2015		
PSD Xandra #59	Belgian Malinois	2015		
PSD Jade #60	Belgian Malinois	2016		
PSD Jester #61	Black Lab Mix	2017		(Explosives)
PSD Nero #62	German Shepherd	2017		(Explosives)
PSD Ivy #63	Belgian Malinois	2018		(Narcotics)
PSD Billy #64	Belgian Malinois	2018		