



Historical Account

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

"K" DIVISION WALL OF HONOUR

The "K" Division Wall of Honour of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police is dedicated to those members of the Northwest Mounted Police, Royal Northwest Mounted Police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police that have paid the ultimate price in carrying out their duties in the territory of Alberta since the force marched west in 1874. The force brought about the peaceful and orderly settlement of the west and has been present in the Alberta territory for one hundred and thirty-three years in one form or another. Each member who has lost his or her life is recorded on the wall on individual bronze plaques which show the badge of the force he/she was serving under, their name, regimental number and the date and location where the death occurred.

The circumstances of each incident is recorded on the "stand alone" computer located adjacent to the wall. At the time of this writing there are forty-eight plaques mounted on the wall. It was originally dedicated on January 5th, 2001, as a joint millennium project between the Edmonton Division of the R.C.M.P. Veterans' Association, the R.C.M.P. March West Re-enactment Committee and the serving force. It was also the subject of an article in the R.C.M.P. Quarterly in the summer edition, 2001 (Page 40) submitted by Jim and Jean McCormack. Jim McCormack was Reg. No 15668, Ex. Cst. He is now deceased.

In the spring of the year 2000, the committee began work on the Wall of Honour display which consists of a memorial slab of simulated grey marble, bronze name plaques and "reversed arms" silhouette figures in both current and period uniforms located on either side of the display. The design allows for additional plaques to be added as circumstances require. A swag of R.C.M.P. tartan is draped around the marble slab. A plaque bearing the words "Memoria in Aeterna" (in Eternal Remembrance) is located below the name plaques. The slab itself rests on a walnut base bearing the motto of the Force. "MAINTIENS LE DROIT". The base also has built in flood lights which are directed up the wall.

The wall is topped by the four badges of the Force and the various flags relative to the display and history of the Force.

The original committee consisted of the following people:

A/Commr Gordon J. Greig (RTD) Chairman
Sgt. John M Hilash (RTD) Designer and Artist
Ex.Cst. James McCormack Member and Historian
C/M Donald A. Watson (RTD) Member and Website Manager
Ex. Cst. M.W. (Mac) MacKenzie Member

There were many others who acted in support of the committee.

The dedication of the Wall of Honour on January 5, 2001, was officiated by Reverend Bob Harper, "K" Division Chaplin, Lt. Governor Lois Hole, A/Commr. Harper Boucher representing Commissioner Zaccardelli

and A/Commr. Don McDermid, Commanding Officer "K" Division.

The dedication was attended by an overflow crowd of Veterans of the Force, serving members and civilians.

In 2005, the Edmonton Division Veterans approved the replacement of the original wooden silhouette figures located on each side of the main panel of the wall with bronze figures similar to the ones in the stained glass windows located in the R. C. M. P. chapel in Regina Depot Division. Each figure is six feet tall and the detail is as accurate as possible. The artist of this initiative was ZAZO HAJOV of Sherwood Park, Alberta and the casting was the work of Behrends's Bronze Inc. of Edmonton.

RCMP MEMORIAL HORSE

On November 11, 2006, a carved wooden Memorial Horse was added to the Wall of Honour display in "K" Division Headquarters. This was the result of a unique effort by a group of thirteen volunteer carvers from the South East Edmonton Seniors' Association and a donation of material and tools from various sectors of the community.

Following the Mayerthorpe murder of four members of the R. C. M. P., the members of the South East Edmonton Seniors' Association (S. E.E.S.A) contacted the R.C.M.P Veterans - Edmonton Division to ask if they could proceed with a carving of a memorial horse to be dedicated to the fallen members of the force, as well as to other police forces. The meeting took place in April, 2005, between now Deputy Commissioner Sweeney, W. M., Commanding Officer "K" Division, Asst/Commr. G. J. Greig(Rtd), Mr Richard Bechtel, artist and Inspector Jules Rawlyk, Edmonton Police Service(Rtd). Insp Rawlyk was the coordinator for the project, liaising with the community to acquire materials, tools and sponsors. The team of carvers with Richard Bechtel as artist/technician developed scale drawings and managed the carving team. Over the months that followed a close bond developed among the entire group and some time during this period the Memorial Horse received the name "Spirit".

The Memorial Horse agreed to was to be a half sized replica of an R. C. M. P. horse complete with ceremonial tack with reversed riding boots in the stirrups. The horse is mounted on a hollow wooden base which contains a twenty year time capsule. The wood used in the base has been collected from all parts of Canada making it truly representative of all Canada. The tradition of the "CAPARISONED/MEMORIAL" horse is one of the oldest traditions and is a tribute honouring a fallen warrior. The horse is led in a funeral procession behind the casket to honour the deceased with an empty saddle and with the rider's boots reversed in the stirrups. It is a symbolic part of a full-honour military funeral now, but has roots dating back hundreds of years and has almost a religious connotation. It is a solemn reminder that the horse's rider has fallen as a warrior and will ride no more.

During the year and a half several social events were held which also served to cement lasting relationships. During the life of the project a video digest was kept by Jo and Terry Postings of St. Albert which resulted in an excellent C. D. now available for purchase by the public (e-mail memorialhorse@shaw.ca). The proceeds of any sales would be shared between the "K" Division Wall of Honour maintenance account and the South East Edmonton Seniors' Association. The twenty year time capsule located in the base of the Memorial Horse will contain a journal compiled by S. E. E. S. A. members, as well as, a binder and package from the R. C. M. P. Veterans - Edmonton Division.

It is also intended that this account of the project would be entered on the computer at the Wall of Honour site in "K" Division Headquarters, as well as on the web site www.rcmpveterans.com maintained by Mr. Don Watson (C/M Rtd.)

There were so many people involved in the overall project it becomes impossible to list them individually. However, a close examination of material available will indicate the role played by all those involved. It is fitting, however, that the actual carving team be recorded here as a record of their unique role in this project, as well as their outstanding ability in their craft and as an expression of the deep appreciation of the R. C. M. P. Veterans' Association and all serving peace officers across Canada.

South East Edmonton Seniors' Association Carvers

Mr. Richard Bechtel - Artist/Manager Mr. Noel Constantin - Carver
Insp. Jules Rawlyk (EPS Rtd.) Coordinator Mr. Eric Kleinke - Carver
Mr. Dave Antoniuk - Carver (Boots, Spurs, Stetson Hat) Mr. Doug Lyons - Carver
Mr. Murray Barber - Carver Mr. Mel Miller - Carver
Mr. Barry Benson - Carver Mr. Don Newton - Carver
Mrs. Fran Berry - Carver Mr. Lyle Ozouf - Carver
Mr. Ray Bossert - Carver

It is also fitting that, Miss Julie Peter, age 16, the granddaughter of Insp. Jules Rawlyk, be mentioned for the poem "Spirit", which she wrote and recited from memory, at the dedication ceremony - a truly outstanding effort on her part.

In closing, R. C. M. P. Chaplin Bob Harper's comment that the "K" Division Wall of Honour has become a focal point for many people, both members and non members, as it serves to re-enforce the support and recognition of the Canadian people for those who have made the supreme sacrifice while on duty and for those still serving everyday.

They will be remembered.

Gordon J. Greig A/Commr. (Rtd.)
R. C. M. Police
January 8, 2007