

# **S/Cst. Puttkemery N.M.**



**PUTTKEMERY NANCY - S/CST. Regimental No. S/3367**

**December 9, 1989, Crossfield, Alberta Age: 34**

Nancy Puttkemery was born on June 2, 1955, in Beloit, Wisconsin, USA. She moved to Thunder Bay, Ontario with her parents in 1961. Nancy attended secondary school at Selkirk Collegiate Vocational Institute, Thunder Bay, Ontario, where she graduated with honours on July 24, 1974.

When she learned the RCMP began accepting female applicants, she applied to the Force in earnest in November, 1974, seeking an adventuresome career in law enforcement. Whilst awaiting acceptance she was engaged as a Civilian Member with Security Services, at Winnipeg, Manitoba on September 29, 1975. C/M Puttkemery converted to a regular member on December 1, 1975, completing Depot training as a member of the fourth female Constable troop in the Force.

Cst. Puttkemery was posted to Manitoba from 1976 to 1987, where she served in general duties at Steinbach, Emerson, Portage la Prairie and Flin Flon City. While at Portage la Prairie, Nancy obtained her private and commercial pilot's licenses. Flying became very much a part of her life and in the words of her Detachment Commander, she was "obsessed with entering our RCMP Air Division." Two of Nancy's brothers were pilots, which compelled her even more.

Given her slight build, the Director of Air Services held some reservations over the ability of women acting as RCMP pilots. Over and above the flying, the pilot's role included loading and unloading heavy freight, especially in the far reaches of the Arctic. Despite the reservation, Nancy's maturity, confidence, authoritative nature and perseverance throughout her career won her the distinction as the first female pilot posted to RCMP Air Services.

Nancy accepted her conversion to S/Cst. Status with Air Services in June, 1987, and was transferred to Edmonton, Alberta. She received certification as captain on the Cessna 182 and Single Otter aircraft and was promoted to an AC 02 in July, 1987. By April, 1988, S/Cst. Puttkemery was fully trained and qualified to fly the DHC2 Beaver, Turbo Beaver and Twin Otter. She was permanently posted to Air Services (West) Relief Crew at Edmonton, and relieved air crews throughout Canada.

Nancy's lifetime ambition to serve with Air Services was tragically brief. She had been flying a Cessna 182 in Calgary, assisting on an operational file. On December 9, 1989, at 3:49 p.m. she was on a return trip to Edmonton with her spotter, S/Cst. Vincent Timms. The weather conditions were poor and deteriorating. In limited visibility and heavy snow, S/Cst. Puttkemery opted to return to Calgary. In making a left turn at low altitude, the left wing of her plane struck a guy wire of a Candel Radio Tower near Crossfield, Alberta. The plane fell to the ground and was completely demolished. S/Cst. Puttkemery and S/Cst. Vincent Norman Timms were killed immediately on impact.

**Nancy is survived by her parents, Donald and Marie Puttkemery of Vickers Heights, Ontario, and three brothers. David is a captain with Air Canada, Daniel flies for Korean Airlines, and Douglas resides in Nova Scotia, where he works as an aircraft mechanic for Skylink.**