



NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER
NOVEMBER, 2006

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police Veterans' Association Mission Statement

“The Royal Canadian Mounted Police Veterans’ Association, proud of our traditions, commits to promote the physical, social and economic welfare of former members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and their immediate families and to be of service to our communities and Canada when required or requested through rendering assistance to the Police, especially the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, in matters of common concern.”

FROM THE DESK OF THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Rick MORRIS

It has been six months since the Halifax AGM and it is hard to believe how much has been accomplished. The Modernization Committee lead by Ron Pond has worked extremely hard and the fruits of their labours are starting to flow to the Division Modernization Representatives (DMR) and to the membership. It will be through dialogue that we can look at possible changes and see if this is the way we wish to go. Let’s work together to make a sounder and more appealing association.

We are approaching the Christmas Season and I would like to extend to each and every one of you on behalf of the National Executive Committee a happy, healthy and festive Christmas. Try and remember some of our Vets who may not have company over this period and the widows and widowers of our Vet members who could use a friendly acknowledgement. The December Newsletter will be posted just after Christmas.

I am very pleased to have a short article written by Assistant Commissioner Rod Smith in our Newsletter this month. Rod’s comments are very timely.

The month of November started out with a trip to Regina for meetings with the Mounted Police Foundation (MPF). The meetings took all morning of November 7th. This is the first board meeting that I attended as Director of this board. The meeting was very interesting because of the quality of top end business people in attendance. The business of the MPF was well attended to. In the afternoon we were invited to attend the pass-out of Troop 8 at Depot Division. The Pass-out Ceremony was very professionally done and you could see the pride in the eyes of the Cadets as they marched together for the last time. A tour of Depot Division was made available to the Board and they were totally impressed. After the tour one Board member said; “I am hooked. I will try and

generate as much money as I can for these people (RCMP members) to do their work in the communities.” We were also invited to the Pass-out Dinner and the President of MPF gave the keynote speech and did a great job. The next day I was invited to tour the Heritage Centre that is currently under construction with the Executive Committee of the Regina Division. The Force’s historical artefacts will have a great new home. Curator Bill MacKay seems pretty excited. Many thanks are extended to Depot Division staff and Regina Division members for the hospitality extended to me personally and to the staff of the MPF. Many important bridges were built on this trip.

On November 10th I drove to Ottawa to attend at the National Memorial to place a wreath the following day at the Remembrance Day event. It just so happened that on the 10th there was also a celebration of the Canadian Police College’s 30th Anniversary. I was able to meet a lot of people and talk about the Vets and to congratulate the staff of the college for a long and distinguished service to police in Canada. The following day was very rainy and we all got soaked during the program. The RCMP Vets marched with the serving members to form a troop. The troop was lead ably by Assistant Commissioner Bernie Corrigan. I see laying the wreath on the Vet’s behalf as very important. After the cenotaph program most of the troop returned to the RCMP Mess and enjoyed a light meal and a libation. Commissioner Zaccardelli attended the Mess and was in fine form and I confirmed my support through this difficult time. At this event Vet and retired Sgt. Major Mel Gilbey mentioned that he had never heard the bell rung in that Mess. I offered to pay for the drinks if he wished to ring it. He did and his smile was worth the cost of a few drinks. Now we have all heard it. This month I flew 5,300 kms and drove 1,000 kms on Vets business. This was a productive but tiring month.

It appears that the Force is getting out of the business of running Canteens. Depot’s Canteen is winding down and Ottawa Headquarters Canteen has been given notice. It is expected that new Canteens will be developed with new operators. Crested articles will soon be available again.

One of the many things that our Executive Director takes care of in our National Office is connecting people together and distributing information to families of retired and former members who have passed on. This month Bill was able to help the grandson of a former member, whose grandfather was in the #1 Provost Corp, to connect him with his grandfather’s former buddies who were “39ers”. Norm Muffit, George Cutting and Peter Morris (*no relation to my knowledge*), of Edmonton Vets Division, were connected to Graham Hall who is the grandson of Scotty William Henderson, Reg # 11226. Scotty passed away in 1978 and his association with Norm, George and Peter was 60 years earlier. Thanks Bill for continuing to bring comfort to families of former and retired members and it is another job well done.

Bill Gidley found the article written by Don Taylor and made it available for us to read. There has been a lot of talk about this topic and the article may assist us in putting it into perspective.

IT PAYS TO KNOW - The Pension “Clawback” Myth

Don Taylor
Chair, Pay and Benefits Committee

Over the last several months there have been numerous articles and e-mail messages to members looking for support for Bill C-221. Bill C-221 is a Bill which was introduced by

MP Peter Stoffer which would eliminate the clawback of military and RCMP pensions at age 65. In reality, there is no ‘clawback’ of our pensions, but there is an ‘offset,’ which I will attempt to explain here in our first ‘It Pays To Know’ column.

In 1966, the government introduced the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) for all working Canadians. The RCMP already had a pension plan when CPP was introduced. The government did not wish to disadvantage anyone or place financial hardship on anyone so they introduced an integrated pension plan. The integrated plan, which the RCMP has, combines CPP and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Superannuation Act (RCMPSA). Since 1966 members have paid one premium at 7.5 per cent which includes both the CPP and the RCMPSA contributions. The contribution is then split with a portion going to CPP and the remainder to RCMPSA. When the maximum amount has been paid into CPP, which is usually late June or July, then the entire deduction amount after that date goes into the RCMPSA. The pension contribution rate has been set in legislation to protect the contributors, which has been very good for our members. As the amount of the CPP contribution increased, the premium has not increased, which means members have paid less into the RCMPSA and the employer’s contributions have increased dramatically. This CPP increase has resulted in the present employer/employee contribution rate of 75/25, which is very generous and unheard of in most pension plans.

When a member reaches the age of 65 and starts collecting CPP, the RCMP pension reduces by roughly the amount of CPP received. The reduction is called an “Off Set,” NOT a “CLAWBACK,” because of the method of payment for our pension benefit. If members paid maximum CPP contributions and maximum RCMPSA contributions then they would collect a stacked pension but members of the RCMP have paid for an integrated plan and will receive that benefit. The RCMP pension plan is rated number two in the police universe and is considered exceptional by comparison to the private sector.

If Bill C-221 was to pass, the benefits of this bill would only apply to those members who contribute to the plan after the bill was introduced. Retired members would receive no benefit from this legislation since they have already retired to pension. The new benefit would also be prorated so any enhancement would depend on how long a member contributes after the legislation changes. Any changes or enhancements to a pension plan must be paid for by someone, and who will pay for these changes proposed in Bill C-221? Mr. Stoffer has given no indication how these changes to the RCMP Pension Plan would be paid for. Enhancements to our plan would be paid by you and I, the members of the RCMP.

This article first appeared in the fall issue of the Staff Relations Representative National Magazine "Frontline Perspective" and was reprinted with permission of the author and SRR Don Taylor, Chair of the RCMP's Pay and Benefits Committee.

--

**Assistant Commissioner Rod Smith
Ethics Advisor for the RCMP**

“Scarlet – Then, Now, and Forever!”

Earlier this fall, Rick Morris asked me to contribute a short article on ethics for his National President's Newsletter. In considering this piece I was quickly reminded that once part of the RCMP family, we all wear the colour scarlet proudly. Regular members wear their scarlet tunics openly in formal settings such as official receptions or dinners and of course when on parade. Other employees "wear their colours on-the-inside" through words and deeds in service to Canada. Serving or retired, we are indeed, ... *"Scarlet – Then, Now and Forever!"*

Despite recent media attention, the reputation of the RCMP remains sterling around the world. For the second year in a row, the *Canada Employment Weekly* has recognized the RCMP as one of the top 100 employers in Canada and we continue to enjoy high satisfaction ratings from clients and partners both domestically and abroad. Many of our personnel are recognized leaders on numerous law enforcement issues and, after our National Flag, "The Mountie" remains the second most popular image of Canada around the globe. This is the proud legacy which YOU, as Veterans of the RCMP, have contributed to our organization, to the Canadian public, and to the 24,000 + employees who continue to strive daily for *Safe homes, Safe communities* for all people in Canada.

As part of this proud legacy, employees of the RCMP are generally considered "ethical". But what does being "ethical" really mean? Many believe that being ethical means respecting and following the rules. However, following the rules is merely compliance. Acting ethically means going beyond rules and regulations; it means "doing the right thing" regardless of personal or professional consequences; it means pro-actively demonstrating the values that we represent and uphold.

The vast majority of RCMP employees are, of course, honest, law abiding citizens who take their special role in society very seriously. Unfortunately, recent scandals have cast a shadow over many institutions and the public's trust has been eroded by a number of inappropriate, corrupt or illegal activities. Sadly, despite a sworn duty to *Maintiens le Droit*, even the actions of some RCMP employees, past and present, have come under scrutiny. This is evidenced by headlines such as... *"Mountie Accused of...."* and *"Former RCMP Officer fined for..."*. I know we all prefer it when we see more positive press such as... *"RCMP Member Named Citizen of the Year"* or *"Former Mountie and UN Peacekeeper Appointed to..."*.

Recognizing a need to "do more on ethics", the Office of the RCMP Ethics Advisor was created in the mid-1990's to promote the Mission, Vision, Values and Commitments of the RCMP (www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/about/mission_e.htm). Within the Force today, we are focused on attracting, assessing, and hiring only the best of the best! We are committed to then providing pro-active adult learning opportunities on values and ethics to cadets, field-coaches, supervisors, and executive leaders; in effect ensuring that values and ethics are everyone's responsibility. We are committed to promoting, monitoring and rewarding ethical conduct, and to holding accountable those who engage in unethical behaviour.

Robert Service may have described it best in his memorable poem...

"Clancy of the Mounted Police"

*In the little Crimson Manual it's written plain and clear,
That who would wear the scarlet coat shall say good-bye to fear;
Shall be a guardian of the right, a sleuth-hound of the trail –
In the little Crimson Manual there's no such word as "fail" –
Shall follow on through heavens fall, or hell's top-turrets freeze,
Half round the world, if need there be, on bleeding hands and knees.
It's duty, duty, first and last, the Crimson Manual saith;
The Scarlet Rider makes reply: "It's duty – to the death."*

So, as former employees, can YOU help? Absolutely! Recognizing that your actions continue to impact the RCMP is the first step. The rest is to simply continue living ethically and promoting ethical behaviour in all those you come into contact with. Through such an approach, you will uphold our mutual legacy; because, like it or not, you are still part of the RCMP family; you are.... "*Scarlet – Then, Now and Forever!*"

--

Larry Power – Senior Vice-President

There is not a lot of activity at the Senior Vice-President level at this time. There is lots of work being done by your National Executive Committee (NEC) but at present most of it is being done by your President and other members of NEC. Your Modernization Committee has been very active as reported in past Newsletters.

During the past month I have traveled to the Western and Central areas of Newfoundland & Labrador Division with Division President Ken Ellis and other members of the Division Executive and members of the Division. Dinner meetings were held in both districts with Division members, prospective members and serving members of the Force present. I brought greetings from our President and members of NEC. There was some lively discussion on the amalgamation of our Superannuation and Canada pension at age 65 and the proposed changes to Veterans Affairs policy for serving and former members. The Bills prepared for Parliament by NDP member Peter Stoffer were thoroughly discussed. The publication of the monthly President's Newsletter was discussed and the most recent October Newsletter was reviewed with favourable comments from members present. Ed Lutz, Newfoundland and Labrador Division representative of the Modernization Committee and I explained the proposed changes and aims of the Committee and discussed them with members.

The same aforementioned group also visited the Clarenville area of the Province on Armistice Day and paraded with members of the Bonavista/Clarenville District of the Force and Association members. A wreath was laid at the local War Memorial.

I of course continue to attend local Division meetings and give reports and answer questions on the day to day workings of NEC. During the past month I have also been interviewed by a reporter from our local daily newspaper concerning my election to the position of National Vice-President and at that time I took the opportunity to explain why our Association was formed and what our Purposes and Objectives are. That newspaper, The Telegram, has a Provincial wide distribution and is also on the WWW. Hopefully that will give us some National coverage as quite a number of former residents of Newfoundland and Labrador work and live in areas of Central and Western Canada.

This month I presented President Ken Ellis with Newfoundland and Labrador Division President's Medallion at a regular meeting. The Medallion was very well received by Ken and the division.

--

Bill Gidley – Executive Director

Subject: Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) Assistance Service.

In November 2003, VAC announced that an emergency crisis intervention counseling service is now available to ALL former RCMP members and their families. Notification of this service was initially transmitted through a "Pension Stub" insert and I want to remind you of this benefit.

Discharged RCMP members and their families who are experiencing personal or work-related problems can now get help through this VAC Assistance Service.

This free program is offered through VAC in partnership with Health Canada.

Please note; there is no requirement for you to be receiving neither a Pension Act pension from Veterans Affairs nor an RCMP pension, for you to be eligible for this VAC Assistance Service!

Former RCMP members or their dependents that need help can call 1-800-268-7708 (or 1-800-567-5803 if you have difficulty hearing). This is a bilingual service operating 24 hrs. a day, 7 days a week. The VAC Assistance Service can help you identify your issue or problem and refer you to specialized services within your community. The program has helped people who want to talk to someone about physical or emotional health concerns, family or marital problems, drug or alcohol problems or violence and abuse. Referrals are made within seven days or within 24 hours if the problem is urgent. All calls are kept private unless it is a matter that must be reported by law.

Bill Gidley

Bill Gidley, Executive Director

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Veterans' Association

"The RCMP will be enclosing the above mentioned information in another "Pension Stuffer" shortly with our pension stubs."

-

The Adobe attachment is from the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions Canada, Office of the Chief Actuary and is dated 31 March 2005. A forwarding letter is enclosed to Honourable John Baird, PC, and President of the Treasury Board, dated 16 June 2006. The title of the report is "Actuarial Report on the Pension Plan for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as at 31 March 2005".

--

Ron Pond – Director, Chair of Modernization Committee

Over the past month I was working with the Modernization Committee members on a number of fronts including responses to various inquiries and concerns, information to be distributed to the DMRs and the development of specific draft policies and questionnaires. We held a video conference on the 17th of this month in which Supt Greg Peters and a couple of his key staff participated further to exploring the potential for our Association to develop a licensing program including a line of merchandise supported by the RCMP Foundation. Another meeting is scheduled in December to follow-up on what could be described as a very positive first step. I have also been coordinating an informal visitation I will be making on the Alberta Divisions on route to the NEC meeting in Ottawa in early December. At the Yukon level I have been following up on a number of items related to the organizing of the 2009 AGM in Whitehorse and to various Divisional efforts including our own AGM, the Annual Christmas Party and meetings in conjunction with Estate Planning. Organizing involved with the 2007 Canada Winter Games in Whitehorse is eating up a great deal of my time and I can't say I won't be happy when this event is over on the 10th of March.

--

Bill Maxwell – National Secretary & on Modernization Committee

During the past month, I have spent a fair bit of time on the Modernization Exercise, participating in a teleconferencing session with other Committee members and assisting them with communication articles and developing a communication strategy. I am also preparing for the next NEC meeting scheduled for December 6th here in Ottawa and in ongoing preparations for the AGM in Kelowna in 2007. I will also be working with our National Office to ensure that the resolutions passed at previous AGM's are included in the Constitution and communicated to Divisions. I look forward to a busy few months as we move forward on the Modernization Exercise and draw closer to the AGM 2007. As I will be away over the holidays, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you good health and happiness in 2007. I look forward to associating with many of you in the new year and hopefully seeing many of you in Kelowna.

--

Nick SHAIGEC – Director

My wife Joyce and I had the privilege of accepting South Okanagan Divisions invitation to their annual general meeting and luncheon on 28 October 2006. A large gathering of Veterans and spouses were in attendance. Many new friendships were created and the opportunity to renew old acquaintances.

On 4 November 2006 Okanagan Division held their Annual Remembrance Service at the Royal Canadian Legion. A large turn out of Veterans and spouses and regular members participated in the service presided by Bishop Fraser Berry and Rev. Bob Thompson. Wreaths were laid honouring the Army, Navy Air Force, Merchant Marines, RCMP Regular Force and Veterans. The celebration of Remembrance commenced at 11:00 AM.

Following lunch the Division held their Annual General Meeting and the election of Officers for 2007. I had the honour of inducting the President elect.

On 11 November 2006 RCMP Veterans through the Okanagan Valley in various communities joined with regular Force members on a march to the cenotaph. I laid the wreath on behalf of the RCMP Veterans at Vernon. A large crowd of over 1200 spectators viewed the ceremony in the confines of a comfortable hockey rink.

I have contacted all the present British Columbia division presidents and have facilitated a meeting with the chair person of the Vets Modernization set for Dec. 8th at Vancouver, following Ron Ponds return from the NEC meeting. The response to this meeting could not be determined at this time. The purpose of the meeting was one of information and discussion while Ron was in the area, or any other concerns the DMR or Presidents may have.

On 21 November 2006, as a member of the Organizing Committee AGM 2007, I attended the monthly meeting at Kelowna.

--

Dale Lively - Past President, Chairman of Board of Governors and on Modernization Committee

During the Month of November I have been busy with the Modernization Committee preparing information at hand toward changes to the Governance of the Association. The members of the committee have had many phone conversations and one video conference. Plans are underway to have one or more position papers leading to a resolution for the NEC meeting on December 6th. I touched base with more Governors during the month and look forward to seeing many of them in Ottawa on December 6th.

--

Cal Small – Director, Insurance & The Quarterly

The RCMP Insurance Committee held its Annual General Meeting in Ottawa on October 30th. It was the first opportunity I had to present the resolution that Manitoba Division presented to the Halifax AGM in June. You will recall that this resolution had to do with the RCMP Basic Group Life Insurance Policy being amended to include retired members as participants under the master policy and thereby eliminate the supplemental agreement for retired members. In the resolution, it was indicated that the objective in question had actually been agreed to by the Insurance Committee in 1988 or 1989 and accepted in principle by Great West Life but never carried out. In view of this, the Insurance Committee has undertaken to review the circumstances involving the earlier recommendation and then decide what action to take.

I will represent the Veteran's Association on an RCMP Insurance Modernization Working Group. At least initially, this working group will have the responsibility of reviewing a report from a Treasury Board commissioned study on an insurance related matter.

The next meeting of the Quarterly Magazine is scheduled for December 12th. With regard to the Quarterly, I am pleased to say that C/Supt. Pierre Menard, C.O. Depot Division has responded very positively to our request for assistance in helping to bring the magazine to the attention of the cadets.

--

Mel Cheavins – Director, on Modernization Committee

This month I have been in contact with the Division reps in Saskatchewan and volunteered to join them at a meeting if they so request to deal with modernization.

I travelled to Regina to hear our President and two members of the RCMP Foundation. As with a large portion of the members they learned what the RCMP Foundation was all about. It was very enlightening.

I organized a veterans meeting in Yorkton at the request of Assistant Commissioner Rod SMITH from Ottawa who is in charge of the Ethics Branch of the Force. He was here to talk to a large gathering of serving members. We enjoyed his presentation and he brought us up to par about this topic in the Force.

I attended a Regimental Dinner (app 150 members) as a representative of NEC.

I wish one and all a great Holiday Season.

--

Tim Hoban – Director, Benefit Trust Fund

I have the following files open at this time;

2 N.S. Widows

1 N.B. Widow -

Concluded the 1 NL file as she now is able to care for herself.

1 Ottawa file concerning what to do with a scooter we provided some time ago.

We are still in the process of getting the revised application form OK'ed by the RCMP BTF Committee.

--

John Religa - National Treasurer

The RCMP Benefit Trust Fund

An Act of Parliament created the RCMP Benefit Trust Fund (BTF) on September 13, 1923. The Government established it primarily for the benefit of members, former members and their dependents. Initially, the Act allowed for the accumulation of revenues from fees for crown timber permits, game laws, fur export taxes and court costs. The Fund received a significant injection of money from Miss Audrey Cardin who died in London England on December 26, 1936. She left thirty thousand pounds to be divided equally between the Professional Fire Brigades Association in Birkenhead, England and the RCMP. The Force received the money in instalments over a period of years. The delay was due to a relative contesting her Will, the War between England and Germany and the types of investments in which she had placed some of her money. The first payment was received in August 1939 and the last in October 1958. The total amount received, after settling the litigation, was \$46,781.60.

In 1988, amendments to the RCMP Act and Regulations led to the BTF Advisory Committee giving a grant of \$50,000 from the Fund to the Association. The Committee felt that the Association, rather than itself, could play a more immediate role in helping former members of the Force and their dependents who were in financial difficulty and

who had no other sources to which they could turn for assistance. The Association was to look after all former members of the Force and not just those in the Association. As money from the grant is given out, it is replenished periodically by the BTF.

When the grant was given to the Association, the BTF Advisory Committee agreed that the money also could be used to purchase a wreath or flowers on the death of a former member of the Force at a cost not exceeding \$75. The intent was to ensure there was a visual recognition of members and their service in the RCMP at the Funeral Home.

On October 19, 2000, as the request of the Association, the BTF Advisory Committee agreed to increase the amount to purchase a wreath or flowers to \$100. The Committee also agreed to the giving of a donation of \$50 to a registered Canadian charity when requested by the former member's family instead of a wreath or flowers. The BTF Advisory Committee recently turned down a request by the Association to increase the \$50 to \$100. One reason is that the value of the Fund has decreased over the years as the interest paid on the money in it has gone down and money paid from it, for all of the projects in which it is involved, has gone up.

For those of you who can remember, the Benefit Trust Fund provided the moiety cheque to you in December each year until it was discontinued.