

LAST WALK ACROSS THE SQUARE

By Dan Lemieux - Guard Coordinator

Thanks to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Chaplains at the RCMP CHAPEL, located at the Training Academy ("Depot"), a ceremony known as the "Last Walk Across the Square" is a unique tradition officiated by one of the Chaplains from the Chapel. **This special service is for members, retired members, spouses, and dependent children and only pertains to members whose cremains are secured in an urn.** The ceremony begins in the Chapel on the Square with a pre-designated service and ends in the beautiful Regimental Cemetery located in the northwest corner of the base.

If you know of someone who would be interested in this ceremony or you would like to plan something like this, we offer the following information. You have a few options:

A family can have any combination of the following:

- A memorial and interment at "Depot".
- A memorial elsewhere and interment at "Depot".
- The interment service in the Chapel, followed by a graveside service at "Depot" or elsewhere.
- Family and friends can simply gather at the graveside/columbarium for the committal.

FULL SERVICE: Following the formal chapel service, family and friends are led by the Chaplain across the Square to the cemetery. Family members walk directly behind the person carrying the urn and are followed by friends and invitees. The Chaplain will place the urn in the columbarium and conduct a brief graveside service. The cemetery is 1/2 mile (800 meters) from the chapel and some may wish/need to travel by car.

GRAVESIDE SERVICE: Another option is to have a commitment service only. The Chaplain and the family gather at the columbarium or graveside where the Chaplain conducts a brief commitment service prior to interment. Vehicles can be driven into the cemetery which is convenient for those unable to walk long distances, or during inclement weather.

The following procedures are required for the "**Last Walk Across the Square**" ceremony.

PLANNING A MEMORIAL AND/OR INTERMENT SERVICE

Contact the Administrative Coordinator, Compensation Section "E" Division, Human Resources Branch, RCMP "HQ" at 604-264-2772 (Note - this telephone number may change in **2013** when headquarters move to Surrey, BC). On making contact, explain your wishes concerning interment of a **SERVING OR RETIRED MEMBER, SPOUSE OR DEPENDENT CHILD** at the RCMP Regimental Cemetery in Regina. Please note you must have authority to speak for the family concerned regarding memorial or interment arrangements. The Coordinator can be advised of what service is desired by the family.

SUBMITTING THE MEMORIAL/INTERMENT REQUEST:

The person making the request for the deceased member (executor or family member) must fill out and submit the "Funeral Request" form to the Chaplain at "Depot". The form should indicate the Administrative Coordinator, Compensation Section, Human Resources Branch - "E" Division Headquarters (Vancouver/Surrey) has approved your request for burial at "Depot". This form can also be submitted by fax to: 306-780-7520 - Attn: "Depot Chaplain", or by mail to: RCMP Training Academy "Depot", Attn: Chaplain, Box 6500, Regina, SK S4P 3J7 or by e-mail to: chapel.depot@rcmp-grc.gc.ca

COSTS: There is no cost for the columbarium or for a plot. There is also no cost for the use of the Chapel. There are no opening or closing costs related to cremains in a columbarium. (There is, however, a fee for excavation, opening and closing a grave for a casket. The basic fee for excavation is \$460.00, and this cost can fluctuate depending on weather. A fibreglass maintenance shell is required for all casket burials.) For a casket burial, your funeral service provider can discuss costs and details. **Contact the Chaplain for further details.**

Regarding interment using an urn, there are two options.

OPTION #1 – Burial of the urn in the ground with either a regimental (standard) grave marker or with a non-regimental (custom made) grave marker.

OPTION #2 – Burial in a columbarium niche with either a regimental (standard) grave marker or a non-regimental (custom made) grave marker.

Chapel Service and interment arrangements must to be made through the "Depot" Chaplaincy Office. Contact Chaplain Jean Morisset 306-780-7848 or cell 306-502-1170

It is necessary to provide the following records:

- a Death Certificate,
- cremation documents,
- obituary notice,
- And a brief biography of the member's service:

The biography is only used during the commitment service in the Chapel. It should include the following information.

- When and where the member joined the Force,
- where he/she trained,
- where they were stationed,
- and what he or she did after retirement, etc. (For spouses and dependent children, the biography is optional).

A Funeral Request Form is required and will be supplied by the Chaplain. If communication is by mail, the address is Chaplain's Office, RCMP Training Academy, Box 6500, Regina, SK., S4P 3J7. The cremains can be shipped by mail to that address if the family is unable to attend or for convenience.

If family members are going to Regina, a reception can be held in the Officer's Mess after the commitment service. Details regarding costs and catering arrangements are available through the "Depot" Chaplain on request.

Bring or arrange to have the cremains (ashes) placed in an urn that will fit in a niche at "Depot". **(SEE BELOW FOR SUGGESTED SIZES OF URNS.)** If you are planning a service in the Chapel, bring an 8 x 10 photo of the deceased in uniform, a copy of the death certificate and/or cremation certificate. If you would like a small personal memento to go in the niche, feel free to bring it with you.

For local assistance in British Columbia, contact Ron Budd at 604-535-5960 (rmbudd@shaw.ca) or Dan Lemieux at 604-988-7421 or (deebeel@telus.net)

HOW TO GET CREMAINS TO REGINA

The first step is for a family member to contact the Benefits Administration Centre in the Division in which the member was serving at the time of retirement. In "E" Division, contact Human Resources at 604-264-3111. Indicate that you would like to arrange to send or take cremains of a deceased member to Regina to be placed in a columbarium or grave in the Regimental Cemetery. The columbarium can hold a single or double urn, so cremains of the spouse can also be added, when their time comes.

ADDITIONAL ADVICE:

Prior to leaving for Regina for the memorial or interment ceremony, request confirmation from the "Depot Chaplain" that the grave marker has arrived and has been installed. Grave markers are shipped to the "Depot Works Unit" and then at the request of the Chaplain, installed at the grave site.

URNS:

IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAKE CERTAIN THE URN WILL FIT IN THE NICHE. IT IS ALSO VERY IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THAT IF A DOUBLE URN IS USED, CREMAINS OF THE SPOUSE CAN BE PLACED IN THE SAME URN AT A LATER DATE....USE SMALL DROPS OF SILICON (one drop in each corner) TO TACK THE LID ON THE URN. DO NOT USE GLUE.

It is imperative that "outside" urn measurements be less than the openings.

The openings of the new columbarium niches in the RCMP Regimental Cemetery in Regina are slightly smaller than before. (They are now 11" x 11" x 11"). [Barn and Stable Regimental Trunks & Urns](#) provide a selection of hand-crafted single and double urns specifically designed for the columbariums, bearing the RCMP Crest and are fully licensed by the Mounted Police Foundation. For additional information contact retired member Russ Lefler at 604-574-2764, (email - info@barnandstable.com) or visit www.barnandstable.com)

STANDARD REGIMENTAL GRAVE MARKERS:

Regimental grave markers are manufactured by an RCMP-designated company and the markers contain the following information:

- Full name of member
- Rank of member at time of retirement
- Regimental number
- Date of birth and date of death
- Crest and letters of RCMP.

NO OTHER INFORMATION CAN BE ADDED TO REGIMENTAL GRAVE MARKERS.

As noted above, a regimental grave marker is provided free-of-charge to the estate of a deceased member. The RCMP supplier for the granite and bronze markers is unable to custom-manufacture markers for columbarium niches. If one is desired, family members will have to contact a private company to have a grave marker custom-made.

At the request of the family member (or executor of the estate) the Administrative Coordinator, Compensation Section, "E" Division, HR Branch, RCMP HQ - Vancouver (Surrey) will make all the arrangements for the manufacture, transportation, and installation of the regimental grave marker.

It will be necessary to provide the full name, regimental number and rank at the time of retirement. If the plan is for cremains of the spouse to be in the same urn or named on the marker when their time comes, the spouses' name will be included with space left for time of passing.

NOTE: YOU HAVE TO CONSULT THE RCMP CHAPLAIN IF YOU PLAN TO VARY ANYTHING THAT ISN'T NOTED ABOVE.

A non-regimental grave marker is a custom-made grave marker made by a private company and paid for by the estate of a deceased member. All the arrangements for the manufacture, transportation, and installation of the non-regimental grave marker must be arranged by family members or by the executor of the estate.

The design and wording of non-regimental grave markers must be approved by the RCMP "Depot" Cemetery Staff. The estate of the deceased member is entitled to a maximum of \$220.00 reimbursement on condition that the non-regimental grave markers contain at least one reference to the RCMP (e.g., the letters "RCMP" or an RCMP Crest is on the grave marker). **NOTE** - Markers in the Regimental or National Cemeteries must be a certain size for uniformity. There is no size restriction for markers for private grave sites.

As indicated above, spouses of deceased members are also entitled to be buried at "Depot". If the family wants to have a common (non-Regimental) grave marker with both names on it then that family and/or spouse has to make prior arrangements to have the non-regimental grave marker installed.

Dimensions of grave markers:

- 1) Flat granite (gray). 12" x 20" x 3" or (30.48 cms x 50.8 cms x 7.62cms)
- 2) Upright granite (gray). 30" x 18" x 3" or (76.2x 45.72 x 7.62 cms)
- 3) Flat Bronze (with special anti-oxidation coating). 12" x 20" x 3" or (30.8x50.8x7.62cms).

When ordering a non-regimental grave marker, there are four monument companies in Regina that can provide this service:

- Regina Memorial Gardens - 1-306-791-6789 (www.regina-memorial.ca)

- Remco Memorials (1-800-667-5994) - (www.remco-memorials.ca)
- W.P. Monumental Co. (1-877-352-5253) (www.wpmonumental.com)
- Young's Memorials (1-866-352-7372) (www.youngsmemorials.com)

The monument company will want a confirmation of the engraving indicating the spelling and information are all correct. That can be done by fax; e-mail or you can mail back a confirmation of the wording, spelling and dates. The company will guide you through the process.

The estate will be reimbursed up to a maximum of \$220.00 on conditions the marker has at least one reference to the RCMP (either letters or crest). Please note: if a second gravesite or columbarium is involved, the RCMP will only pay for one marker.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Chaplain's Office, RCMP Academy, "Depot" Division, Box 6500, Regina, SK S4P 3J7 - The current Chaplain is Jean Morisset. (jean.morisset@rcmp-grc.gc.ca)
Office 306-780-7848 or 306-502-1170.

For additional enquiries or assistance, contact Vancouver Veterans' Division
Guard Coordinator Dan Lemieux at deebeel@telus.net or 604-988-7421.

ADVISORS:

Chaplain Jean Morisset - Regina. Bill Greenslade - Regina. Russ Lefler - Surrey,
David Calum - Regina.