



Scarlet and Gold

March 2018 Royal Canadian Mounted Police Veterans Association, Vancouver

President's Message:

This year marks the 30th Anniversary of the Bruce Denniston Bone Marrow Society, and the RCMP Veterans', Vancouver Division, will be marking this special year by honouring the work of the Society and helping to keep Bruce Denniston's legacy alive.

The following article was documented in 2014 by Danita Senf, the Society's National Executive Assistant (with work by writer Kathy Northrup and photographer Paul Galinski). The article not only details Bruce Denniston's long fought battle against leukemia but how the RCMP and the community came together in the hopes of finding a cure.

(Note: Permission was received to republish the article in the March 2018 Scarlet and Gold.)

CAPTURING THE HEART OF A COMMUNITY

The Life of Constable Bruce Denniston

David Bruce Denniston arrived on December 13, 1951 in Victoria, BC, one of four children born to Jim and Ethel Denniston, including brothers Drew and Ian together with sister Janice.

While growing up Bruce made and kept many childhood friends. Ian Hooey and Denniston were preschoolers together and grew up as best friends in Esquimalt in the 1950s. Hooey recalls that Bruce had "the type of personality that everyone wishes he could have a share in."

Bruce served as a member of the Auxiliary in the Victoria area, which spurred his interest in police work. He started his career with the R.C.M.P. in November of 1972 (regimental # 30106), and was transferred to Vegreville, AB in May of 1973. A series of transfers followed, which were commonly referred to as the "\$35.00 plan" because that is the amount the Force gave members to move. In December of 1973 he was in Elk Point, AB; May of 1974 he was in Provost, AB; in September of 1974 he was in Hinton, AB and then in March of 1976 he decided to see the world and tried out for the RCMP Musical Ride. While waiting to get into the Ride he was stationed in Wainwright, AB before joining the Ride in December of 1976.

Detachment spent many days buried in sawdust as they cut cedar planks for the rec room that was to become a second home to many of them. They also built a pool, hot

tub and deck. If the rec room was their second home, the hot tub became their third. Bruce and his colleagues spent many hours there solving the problems of the world generally and the R.C.M.P. specifically.

Cst. Denniston wanted to do it all, and he did. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge (Powell River) and Westview Flying Club, a past Kinsmen, and active community worker. Bruce had more hobbies than most. His days were filled with fishing, golfing, scuba diving, and flying, while trying to finish the house, the pool, and the yard. He squeezed in running every day at lunchtime. Yet he always had time for his friends. There were countless occasions when someone called him from out of town to arrange fishing trips, diving expeditions and hunting forays. Somehow he managed to pull them off. His coworkers wondered how Bruce and his family coped with the constant telephone calls and large number of people that just dropped in at all hours of the day and night.



Most people can count the number of close friends they have on one hand, but Bruce was different. Bruce collected "best friends." He was faithful to his friends. One of them was having a real tough time with alcohol and got to

the point where he needed to go to the dry-out center in Vancouver. Bruce was sick at the time but got up and flew him to Vancouver. It was important to him.

Bruce was more than the average member. To him being part of the R.C.M.P. wasn't just a job. He was dedicated

to the Force. When the Force first started they hired men who could ride and shoot, and Bruce could do that. Whether it was cars, trucks, horses, motorcycles, boats, hang gliders, airplanes or helicopters, Bruce had to ride them. And shoot. He was an expert shot, receiving his Crowns with both the rifle and handgun. One day he successfully shot the course blindfolded. He qualified for his crossed revolvers that way as well.

In the words of former Powell River RCMP **Cpl. Frank Shedden**, "Bruce epitomized what we would like to see in a member. He was dedicated, tough when required, tenacious when needed but compassionate when necessary. He was a traditionalist. He was what the Force was really meant to be."

"Although Bruce was a 'policemen's policeman' who goes out of his way to assist other members both on and off the job, he also enjoyed a good laugh. Bruce reveled in getting others to perform many of his jokes. He was the behind-the-scenes man when the pie in the face craze hit the Powell River office."

By the fall of 1987 Bruce and Joanne's family had grown to include Kari age 7, Krista age 6, and Matthew who was almost 3 years old.

Leukemia is cancer of the blood-forming organs of the body. The disease causes bone marrow to be flooded by abnormal white blood cells that pass on to the spleen, the liver and other sites, seriously reducing the body's ability to fight infection.

The news left Bruce reeling, unable to comprehend what the future held for him and his family. In an interview with **Kathy Northrup** of the Powell River News published on February 17, 1988 he said, "You sort of get a numb feeling, then your mind starts to race and you think what if you really do; and you start wondering what kind (of leukemia) and what is it going to mean?"

Wife Joanne was also hit hard by the news. "At first I didn't believe it. It was just unbelievable." Sitting in the oncologist's office in Vancouver she could not accept the diagnosis. "I didn't want to be involved with it." When she entered the bone marrow clinic at Vancouver General Hospital and talked with Dr. Michael Barnett, Joanne finally realized the severity of the illness. "He told me there is an average of 3 ½ years before it turns acute. I started thinking that Mattie would only be 6 and Bruce wouldn't be 40. Then it hit me."

Bruce had never really considered illness or death, although danger is a known quantity in the work he had chosen. "If you hear some complaint going on, or gun fire, you don't think twice whether you are going to jump

in there, you just go. It is not as if you look for it but it is something that is there." But the doctor's words that November day presented a new kind of danger. "It puts a completely different perspective on my life," he said. "It makes you use each day to its fullest value instead of wasting time."

Bruce was still feeling few effects of the leukemia, and even then he and others found it hard to believe he had a fatal disease. His appearance gave no indication of his illness. Joanne said, "I have people say to me, 'He doesn't look sick.' If he was sick in bed it would seem real. It all seems like a big dream."

Since the diagnosis, some aspects of Bruce's life had, surprisingly, improved. "I actually feel better than I did before because a lot of the stresses of life have been lifted, like succeeding at work. It was so important – not to say that work is not important now – it certainly is, but it has been put back into perspective." Bruce admitted he was so dedicated to his job that work sometimes took precedence over time with his family. Now, he said, "family definitely comes at the top of the list where possibly in the past things I thought were more important and had to be done really aren't all that important in the end. You certainly appreciate the simple things such as a fishing trip, a hunting trip or just a weekend camping with the kids." He did worry about the future. "The hardest

part is thinking ahead," said Bruce. "You think you want to be around for your kids to graduate or to teach them to drive. Those things hit you probably the hardest."

Bruce was told the best chance for recovery was a bone marrow transplant. Bone marrow, the pulpy tissue inside bones, can be taken from a healthy individual and take over the job of producing blood cells in the body of a patient with leukemia or another blood disease such as aplastic anemia. The donor need not be related to the patient but must have similar HLA (blood tissue type) antigens.

Facing the Odds – Waiting for a Miracle

None of Bruce's three siblings had matching HLA antigens. The Red Cross in Vancouver had recently

established a bone marrow donor bank, but financial constraints were limiting the number of potential donors involved in the program, which was still in its embryonic stages. One technician worked out of a cubbyhole of an office typing 10 to 20 samples per week, a time-consuming, complex and expensive process.

Bruce always ignored fatigue, as well as the obvious mental trauma his condition caused, to grant media interviews and assist in whatever he could to publicize the importance of citizens registering for the Canadian Red



His Colleagues Respond

John DeJong and Bruce Denniston were jogging companions and it was during a run late in 1987 that Bruce told John routine tests prior to eye surgery revealed he had leukemia. In January of 1988 **Cpl. John DeJong** teamed up with Bruce's partner of four years, **Cpl. Pete Jacques**, and set out to find a donor for Bruce. They learned that people could join the registry only after attending an information seminar held at the Red Cross in Vancouver on a weekly basis, and that only 50 people could be accommodated at each session.

The team of Jacques and DeJong contacted Red Cross in Vancouver and invited Director of Transfusions, **Dr. Noel Buskard**, to travel to Powell River to tell local residents about the organization's bone marrow donor bank, and how they could join. Jacques and De Jong hoped at least 200 people would register as a result of the seminar. Everyone, especially the Red Cross, thought this was a very ambitious goal.

In addition Jacques and DeJong spearheaded a separate drive throughout their RCMP subdivision, which they hoped would eventually spread across Canada. On February 17, 1988 communication was sent out via Telex:

RCMP Organizing Manhunt to Save Life of Brother Officer

POWELL RIVER: THE RCMP HERE HAVE STARTED A MANHUNT, BUT THIS TIME THEY'RE LOOKING FOR THE MAN OR WOMAN WHO CAN SAVE THE LIFE OF THEIR BROTHER OFFICER, CONST. BRUCE DENNISTON, WHO HAS CHRONIC LEUKEMIA. CONST. DENNISTON'S ONLY HOPE LIES IN FINDING AN UNRELATED BONE MARROW DONOR WHOSE TISSUE TYPE MATCHES HIS. A FOURTEEN YEAR VETERAN OF THE FORCE AND FORMER MEMBER OF THE MUSICAL RIDE, DENNISTON HAS SPENT THE PAST 8 YEARS IN POWELL RIVER AS A PLAINCLOTHES INVESTIGATOR SPECIALIZING IN DRUG ENFORCEMENT. HE IS 37, MARRIED AND HAS THREE CHILDREN RANGING IN AGE FROM 2 TO 8. ACCORDING TO DR. NOEL BUSKARD, PROVINCIAL MEDICAL DIRECTOR FOR THE RED CROSS, THE ONLY CURE FOR LEUKEMIA INVOLVES A BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT FROM A LIVING DONOR. "THE DIFFICULTY LIES IN THE FACT THAT THE DONOR'S MARROW HAS TO CLOSELY MATCH THAT OF THE RECIPIENT," SAYS DR. BUSKARD. MOST BONE MARROW TRANSPLANTS INVOLVE BROTHERS OR SISTERS OF THE VICTIM. EVEN IF THE VICTIM HAS SIBLINGS THERE IS ONLY A 30% TO 40% PERCENT CHANCE OF A MATCH. EACH YEAR OVER 300 CANADIANS DIE OF THIS DISEASE BECAUSE A MATCHING DONOR CAN'T BE FOUND." Bruce felt honored by his colleagues' search for bone marrow donors, not just for him but for others who need

help. **"I am certainly inspired by my workmates, by the program they have got together and the committee that has been formed." Support from his co-workers and from the community has made a difference, he said. "It just helps you from day to day to keep a really positive attitude."** Joanne added, **"It gives you hope to feel like everything is going to be all right again and it is because everybody is behind it. How couldn't they find a donor with all this enthusiasm?"** Bruce said hundreds of RCMP officers all over the province had been offering their support. **"I now realize what a strong brotherhood we really are. Until now, the only time I'd ever noticed this was when an officer got killed in the line of duty and thousands attend the funeral. But in this case, my fellow officers are lining up to support me. ... It's just amazing."**

Community of Powell River Rallies Behind A Member in Need

MacMillan Bloedel sent their aircraft to Vancouver to bring the Red Cross team to Powell River for a presentation to the community on February 22, 1988. Half an hour before the program started, there was standing room only. More than 1000 Powell River residents crowded into a room with seating for 800, to learn how to help Constable Bruce Denniston fight leukemia.

The community's kindness surprised Bruce. He had always thought police officers were somewhat unpopular in communities, but he was overwhelmed by the kindness of Powell River Residents. **"As a cop, you have to do a lot of things people don't like you for, and you begin to think that a lot of people are against you, but tonight the response of the community was so unbelievable. It showed me that people really do appreciate us. They just don't always have the opportunity to show it."** Denniston said he feels a little more comfortable about the fact he doesn't work in the traffic division. **"I think if I was a traffic cop, I'd have a hard time after all this dropping tickets on people."**

That night 900 people signed forms pledging to donate blood samples to determine if they were a suitable match to Bruce for a bone marrow transplant. Six hundred of those who signed pledge forms had not previously been regular blood donors. The outpouring of community support from the town of 18,000 astounded the Red Cross, whose unrelated bone marrow transplant program had been labouring in relative obscurity.

Bruce's parents travelled from Victoria and his sister from Gold River for the seminar. He said later he could not describe his feelings as he watched the support shown by his community. "It was really an indescribable type of feeling. You feel you could use hundreds of words to describe it, but you have to feel it. I was very touched that people would come out."

Bruce wrote a letter to the editor of Powell River News:

After the event volunteers organized lists and called donors to notify them of their appointment times for tissue typing; local lab technicians donated their time to take samples; samples were driven to the airport by RCMP and flown to Vancouver free of charge by **Air BC** and then taken to the Red Cross by RCMP members. Red Cross reported they had been swamped with calls from people across BC wanting to join the Registry, which at that time held just over 300 names (1500 across Canada).

Encouraging Results

Meetings organized by the RCMP to publicize the program had brought 1500 new prospective donors to the Bone Marrow Registry, 900 from Powell River. The Red Cross advised that the weekly information sessions in Vancouver about registering as a bone marrow donor were booked until the middle of April, and there were over 500 people in Vancouver itself, not including the rest of the Lower Mainland, waiting for the orientation session. The Red Cross was averaging 15 phone calls daily after news of Denniston's illness and the bone marrow registry surfaced.

The Vancouver Red Cross promised to test a few Powell River donors each week, but cited the lack of adequate funding. RCMP members and Powell River volunteers who had taken on the task of finding potential donors for the registry, then promised to provide funds for expanding the program, which operated solely on donations.

The community of Powell River became a beehive of activity, with seemingly every business and service club raising money for The Bruce Fund, as efforts were undertaken to raise \$30,000 so another lab technologist could be hired to tissue-type the additional blood samples at the Red Cross testing unit in Vancouver.

The RCMP also got involved in fundraising activities:

Hockey-playing Mounties from Western Canada battled each other at the RCMP Western Canada Hockey Tournament in North Vancouver to help the Red Cross. Proceeds from ticket sales went in part to the Red Cross Unrelated Bone Marrow Registry, where it was used to register and catalogue volunteers who offered to donate marrow. North Vancouver RCMP Const. Cliff Doherty was quoted as saying, "There's no doubt that the RCMP are like a big family."

In a grudge match between two rival RCMP hockey clubs, the Powell River detachment got their man in November, 1988 with a 7-4 win over the Campbell River detachment, and the contest raised money for the Bruce Denniston Bone Marrow Society.

Later on, Smithers members of the RCMP challenged the Smithers Old-timers hockey team to a benefit game

to raise money for the Red Cross Unrelated Bone Marrow Registry.

Port Hardy RCMP pledged \$5000, while the RCMP throughout BC pledged \$30,000.

Birth of Bruce Denniston Bone Marrow Society

On March 29th, 1988 Form 1 of the Society Act was signed to form the Constitution. It reads as follows:

1. The name of the Society is **BRUCE DENNISTON BONE MARROW SOCIETY**
The purpose of the Society is to raise funds for the Red Cross Bone Marrow Transplant needs

On April 11th Form 1 was filed and registered with the Registrar of Companies and a Certificate of Incorporation under the Society Act was issued on that date.

Other members of the Society were **Const. Luc Quenneville**, and **Joe Girard** who served as a liaison with the Red Cross.

By May of 1988 donated funds (\$20,000 from Powell River plus \$32,000 from the RCMP) were sufficient to pay the salary of a new technician (Patti Bihun) hired by the Red Cross to test blood samples of potential donors. Surplus funds were used to purchase equipment for tissue typing, or to provide additional technologists. There were now 1320 potential bone marrow donors on the BC Registry.

RCMP spokesman Cpl. John De Jong announced that in the future all activities would be handled by the Bruce Denniston Bone Marrow Society (BDBMS), as both he and Cpl. Peter Jacques would be leaving Powell River for other postings, De Jong to Inuvik and Jacques to Victoria.

At that time there were about 300 Canadians, including 50 British Columbians, waiting for a bone marrow donor to be found through the Red Cross Unrelated Registry. The first recipient of a bone marrow transplant from the registry in Vancouver was doing well, as was the donor who was up and about, back at work in a couple of days, more than willing to donate bone marrow again if called upon to do so.

By August the BC Registry held 1600 names and would grow by 150 a week as tissue-typing was completed. There was a lengthy back-log of people wishing to attend information seminars and register to donate bone marrow.

At the end of September Bruce was hospitalized for removal of his spleen. Doctors said publicly that he would need a transplant within six weeks.

Since February, about \$80,000 had been raised by the RCMP and approximately \$70,000 by the Society. The funds went directly to hiring more staff and buying new

equipment so the BC Registry could process more people into the bone marrow bank.

Thanks in large part to the efforts of **MLA Harold Long**, on October 26th it was announced in The Vancouver Sun that the Province of British Columbia was committing \$300,000 from the lotteries fund to help the Society in their quest for a donor for Bruce by building the Red Cross unrelated bone marrow donor registry. It was determined that \$65,000 would immediately be turned over the Red Cross for a new computer system to hold data for the bone marrow registry, which would link into existing registries in the United States as well as to a national registry in Canada after it was developed. The remaining \$235,000 would be used to help recruit marrow donors.

By November Bruce's leukemia had become acute. He was undergoing both radiation and chemotherapy. Bruce was tough and strong-willed. He knew he should be saving his strength but he felt it was important to be involved. He realized the work of the Society was providing a chance not just for him, but for everyone who faced a similar problem. He wanted that to be the mainstay of the Society – that it wasn't just for him.

There were now 2400 names on the registry, but none of them were a match for Bruce. However, the size of the registry now entitled Canada to access registries in the US and Britain. Fundraising in Powell River continued, to cover the cost of a computer search of those registries. BDBMS member Luc Quenneville explained that as money was sent to the Red Cross, the matching grant from the province would kick in. That is, for each dollar the Society could provide, the province would provide a dollar, up to a figure of \$300,000.

By November Bruce's leukemia had become acute. He was undergoing both radiation and chemotherapy. Bruce was tough and strong-willed. He knew he should be saving his strength but he felt it was important to be involved. He realized the work of the Society was providing a chance not just for him, but for everyone who faced a similar problem. He wanted that to be the mainstay of the Society – that it wasn't just for him.

One Saturday in December four cents a litre from all of the gas sold at **Doug's Chevron**, went to the Society. The "Gasoff" also saw employees of Doug's Chevron donating their day's wages to the Society. The regular staff was joined by members of the Powell River RCMP in uniform, checking oil and washing windows. Proceeds from the sale of baseball caps also went to the Society. More than \$2,500 was raised at Doug's Chevron. **True to his character, Bruce visited the station for an hour during the event.**

A Donor is Found!

A donor was found for Bruce on the registry in England, three days before Christmas. Denniston's Colleagues were elated. Denniston had spent the day with former co

-worker John De Jong shucking oysters at Southview, discussing progress that had been made on the Red Cross Unrelated Bone Marrow Registry and whether a donor would be found in time to cure Bruce's leukemia. De Jong, who was visiting from where he was then stationed in Inuvik, returned to the home of friends in Powell River, to receive a call from Denniston. "He was really calm about it, but I got really choked." De Jong returned to the dinner table to tell his wife, Marion, and **Linda and Rick Crozier**, with whom they were staying. "Everyone burst into tears." Since De Jong's transfer, he and Denniston had kept in touch by weekly Sunday morning telephone calls, even when Bruce was hospitalized at Vancouver General for chemotherapy and radiation after the chronic myelocytic leukemia progressed to the acute stage. "Sometimes it was a real effort for him to talk to me, but we always did it and it became a ritual," said de Jong.

Pete Jacques, contacted in Victoria the next day, was just as excited. "I just got the best Christmas present I ever got," said the excited officer. "He now has a light at the end of a tunnel where he didn't have one before."

Denniston's physician, Dr. Bill Barclay, said he was "thrilled" at learning a donor had been located. "We have known for a week or so there was a potential donor," he said. All the testing turned out to be right on and the patient agreed, so it is a go. "We are really thrilled. It is the best Christmas present I could have had."

Learning a bone marrow donor had been found for Denniston left the chairman of the Bone Marrow Society hard put to express his emotions. "It is pretty wonderful, isn't it?" said John Tremblay. "Everybody is going to be grateful. It couldn't have happened at a better time." Tremblay earlier told the News his only wish for 1989 was to see a donor found for Bruce. "I don't have any other wishes," he said. "For a man who was so heroically got this far with it, I think he deserves to have that transplant."

"It's kind of funny how it worked out," Bruce later said from the home of a family friend on the Lower Mainland. "I came back home from shucking oysters with John and as soon as I walked in the door my wife Joanne told me the news that a donor had been found in England." Bruce said it didn't take long for the word to get around. "I telephoned a few people and before I knew it the phone was ringing off the hook."

In January a Red Cross representative noted that probably the best piece of news that year was that a matching unrelated bone marrow donor has been found for RCMP Constable Bruce Denniston of Powell River. Donations had allowed the registry to hire two lab technicians to test blood samples to determine the HLA characteristics which serve as the basis for matches, and Bruce Denniston was not the only one to benefit from the registry, as a total of 12 Canadians had been matched with unrelated bone marrow donors. Two of those



recipients were from BC. The donors matched to Canadian recipients came from the U.S., The Netherlands and Britain as well as Canada. Unrelated bone marrow donor registries had been established in Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Ottawa as well as Vancouver. By that time over 4500 people were on the registry and six had matched as life-saving donors.

The bone marrow for Bruce was collected in London (Britain's registry was at that time the largest in the world with 160,000 potential donors, while the U.S. registry had just 27,000 participants) from British donor **Pauline Humphreys**, and flown back to Vancouver in the care of **Dr. Bob Crossland** of Powell River. Crossland made his own headlines a year earlier when he became the first Powell River resident to be selected as a bone marrow donor through the Red Cross Unrelated bone Marrow Registry.

Bruce had an erasable message board in his room on which the days prior to his transplant were marked off in felt pen. January 27th featured the letters BMT along with a bright orange and red "blast" sign.

For BDBMS news that a donor had been found was a mixed blessing. Society president John Tremblay expressed his concerns. "The primary goal of the bone marrow society is to raise money to better the facilities and the bone marrow bank so that the registry can be used internationally. My biggest fear is that people are going to say 'Bruce got his match, so our work is done.' It is important to know that other people in Powell River and around the world are going to draw from the bank as it enlarges."

Tremblay also said he was concerned people would think Denniston had benefitted personally from the bone marrow society's fund raising campaigns. Tremblay said this was definitely not the case. "Bruce did not get five cents of the money that has come in," Tremblay said. "What the society has tried to do for Bruce is help him maintain morale and to provide incentive for the Red Cross to search further for a transplant donor." Tremblay said there are people who have been raising money for Denniston personally to help him with expenses as he goes through his ordeal, but they are not officially connected with the bone marrow society. "We have received phone calls from people saying they want to help out Bruce directly, but our main concern is the unrelated bone marrow registry."

Tremblay said he did not think Denniston knew how many lives he affected by coming forward and telling people about his disease. "I have heard a number of comments from people who don't know Bruce who have been praying for him," Tremblay said.

A Community Grieves

Bone marrow transplants were far from sure cures. Their success rate ranged from 25 to 75 percent depending on which disease was being treated and whether or not it was in a stable phase. All the certainty lay with not having a transplant – the disease was fatal within three or four years.

Bruce entered the Vancouver General Hospital on January 19, 1989 to begin four days of intense chemotherapy and four days of radiation prior to the transplant. Donors of bone marrow have the right to withdraw from the program at any time, but they're informed that if they do so after the patient has received the conditioning regimen for the transplant, the patient will undoubtedly die without infusion of the donor's bone marrow. The radiation and chemotherapy completely destroys the patient's immune system so his or her chances of rejecting the donor bone marrow are minimized. This naturally leaves them open to any infection.

Although the Canadian Red Cross insisted on secrecy to protect the emotions of the donor in case a transplant failed, their British counterpart did not. The donor, a married woman, was extensively interviewed, as was the Powell River doctor, Robert Crossland, who served as courier and visited her in her hospital room prior to the operation. Crossland presented the donor with several small gifts from the community of Powell River. (Pauline Humphreys was most appreciative, and went on to develop a lasting relationship with the Denniston family, visiting Powell River on numerous occasions.)

The operation took longer than expected because of complications in another operating theatre. Crossland waited outside the operating room, and with a Radio Canada van serving as taxi, he was rushed to Heathrow Airport where he was allowed to circumvent the X-ray security procedures and take an Air Canada jet home to Vancouver. The bone marrow was given to Denniston within 14 hours, well within the 48 hour limit.

Then came the waiting, the hoping and the praying over the two week critical period. People were optimistic and the comments on the streets of Powell River were always upbeat as residents sought to reassure one another. But in less than two weeks it was announced that Denniston's condition had been downgraded from fair to serious. It briefly returned to fair and hope soared in this town of roller coaster emotions.

The news came via Telex from OIC Admin Services "E" Division of the RCMP:

CST. DAVID BRUCE DENNISTON PASSED AWAY AT 9:14 A.M. SUNDAY 89 FEB 12 AT THE VANCOUVER GENERAL HOSPITAL. ALL FLAGS IN "E" DIVISION ARE TO BE LOWERED TO HALF MAST UNTIL SUNSET THE DAY OF THE FUNERAL.

FUNERAL SERVICE TO BE HELD AT 1:00 P.M. FRIDAY 89 FEB 17 AT DWIGHT HALL. 6274 WALNUT STREET. POWELL RIVER. B.C. INTERMENT WILL BE AT THE CEMETARY IN POWELL RIVER FOLLOWING THE SERVICE AND A RECEPTION WILL BE HELD AT 2:30 P.M. AT DWIGHT HALL.

IN LIEU OF FLOWERS. DONATIONS MAY BE MADE TO THE BRUCE DENNISTON BONE MARROW SOCIETY. 7095A DUNCAN STREET. POWELL RIVER. B.C. V8A 1W1

Ironically, Bruce's body never rejected the bone marrow. Vancouver General Hospital spokesman Peter Walton said Const. Denniston slipped into a coma Thursday night, following liver and kidney failure believed to be due to intensive chemotherapy and radiation that was necessary prior to his bone marrow transplant. He was so weak and ill that he just couldn't fight anymore. Help had come too late.

Powell River RCMP S. Sgt. Ron Mangan said members of the detachment responded to news of their colleague's death with emotion. "There's been a great variety of responses. They range from shock – some of us just assumed he would bounce back again – to certainly a great amount of sorrow to losing a great officer and a friend." But Mangan said the shock and sorrow were tempered with a degree of hope and pride – hope that others being diagnosed with leukemia will now have access to an enlarged bone marrow bank, and pride in the courage Denniston and others in the community displayed in the past year. "I think Powell River is a proud town, proud of Bruce and proud of their participation in the endeavor," Mangan said.

In the May 25th, 1989 issue of Western people **C. Heather Allen** reported, "The community flocked to the funeral and tears blurred the sight of more than 70 red-coated Mounties who had come to honor their former colleague. The sadness was palpable but there was no despair. Even those who worked the hardest did not feel their efforts were in vain. There were approximately 500 people, including RCMP colleagues of Const. Denniston from the Yukon, North West Territories, Alberta and British Columbia, gathered to pay tribute to the man whose widely-publicized battle with Leukemia and subsequent search for a bone marrow donor gained national notoriety.

Outside the packed hall in the wet snow a handful of people gathered to hear the funeral service over a loud-speaker. His coffin was draped with the Canadian flag and carried into the hall by six RCMP members, including former Powell River Mounties Cpl. Peter Jacques, Cpl. John DeJong and local Const. Luc Quenneville. The detachments of Powell River, Inuvik, Coronation, Alta., Victoria and Vancouver were represented. Behind them

an RCMP insignia bearer carried a Queen's Jubilee Medal awarded to Denniston for two years' service in the Musical Ride beginning in December 1976. Inside the hall, RCMP officers in red serge, local uniformed personnel representing the fire department, sheriff's office, emergency health services' staff, RCMP auxiliary, federal fisheries office and the Canadian Guard stood around the hall where about 400 seated guests and family were present. In all, 76 RCMP officers in review order attended the funeral, accompanied in the funeral procession by more than 40 other uniformed personnel."

Constable Denniston was eulogized by former Powell River RCMP Cpl. Frank Shedden as a dedicated officer and great friend. Cpl. Jacques said it was "difficult to put into words" what Const. Denniston meant to him and others in the Force who knew him. "Bruce was like the character in the J.D. Salinger's novel Catcher in the Rye. In a dream sequence in the book, children are running in a field of rye and the character catches the kids to keep them from falling over a cliff. That's what Bruce was like."

Bruce's Legacy

Bruce Denniston lives on in the Society that bears his name. **John Tremblay**, chairman of Bruce Denniston Bone Marrow Society at the time of Bruce's death, noted, "I think even though he is gone he will always be with us because he has left us with a legacy. As long as there is a need for bone marrow transplants and as long as there is a need for matches, his name will be synonymous with those programs."

In a letter to the editor published in the Powell River Town Crier, **Brian Small** wrote, "... Bruce Denniston through his illness united a whole community that rallied together for a common goal; it started at a local level, ending up on an international scale. Bruce has given hope to hundreds of other people inflicted with cancer as did Terry Fox, Steve Fonyo and Rick Hansen, to name a few. ...If Bruce's life or death hasn't touched you the way it touched the hundreds of us that knew him, then that is your loss."

Commissioner's Change of Command Parade

RCMP Corps Sergeant Major Alan McCambridge has asked the RCMP Veterans' Association to form a ceremonial troop to participate in the Change of Command parade that will be held in Ottawa at an undetermined future date, after the new Commissioner is named.

Arrangements for the parade remain under development. Ideally, it is hoped that our ceremonial troop will be as representative of the Association as circumstances permit with Veterans from any and all Divisions welcome. For clarity, attendance will be at the full expense of individual participants and the Association will not be subsidizing any costs associated.

The Dress Code will be enforced without exception and all Veterans wishing to participate must adhere strictly to the dress code.

Marc Dureau, S/S/M (Rtd.), Sergeant-at-Arms of Ottawa Division, is coordinating RCMP VA participation in the troop. Please contact Marc Dureau via email at marcdur@videotron.ca to inform him if you intend to participate, and to confirm that you have all of the elements of kit to appear on parade.

Large medals

When further details are received they will be passed on along with the dress code for both men and women.



President

Donna Morse 604-541-7354

Vice President

Bob Underhill 604-988-4844

Past President

Keith Leishman 604-531-0702

Secretary

Mert Rowden 604-434-0424

or Toll Free 1-888-726-7838

Fax 604-436-3393

Email: vandiv.vets@telus.net or meredith_rowden@telus.net

Treasurer

Rupert Bullock 604-533-5354

Directors

Ceremonies, Memorabilia

Gord Cave 778-688-6181

Social Activities, & Events

Dorothy Martinson 604-261-4630

Membership

Ric Hall(Interim) 604-853-5500

Liaison to RCMP & Governments

Ric Hall(Interim) 604-853-5500

Health & Welfare

Ron Budd 604-535-5960

RCMP Veterans' Women's Council

Vacant

Communications & Outreach

Eric Ross(interim) 778-545-0110

Division Revitalization

Eric Ross 778-545-0110

Presidential Appointees

Provincial Advocate for BC.

Bob McKee 604-885-6372

Division Chaplain

Jim Turner 604-833-6251

Honor Guard Coordinator

Bob Underhill 604-988-4844

Newsletter Editor

Peter Bond 604-740-9962

Golf Tournament Coordinator

Bill Duckworth 604-948-9928

RCMP Officers' Mess Coordinator

Doug Wheler 604-246-5329

Sick Parade Visitations Coordinator

Ray Kielan 604-936-6062

Transportation Coordinator

"Andy" Anderson 604-943-3456



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R.C.M.P. Veterans' Ladies' Auxiliary

March 1, 2018 Ladies Auxiliary Luncheon/Meeting: St. Patrick's Day was the theme for this luncheon/meeting so "green" was the colour of the day! We were booked into the Fireside Room at "Hazelmere Golf & Tennis Club" in Surrey, B.C. which we decorated with a wee bit of Irish flavour. Auxiliary Treasurer, Lillian Keen, said Grace, followed by the Lord's Prayer, then two Irish Blessings were read out by Dorothy Martinson. A brief discussion followed when we had some members acknowledging their Irish heritage, and a few mentioned that they have been following their DNA line to discover their family backgrounds. After the buffet luncheon, the ladies completed an Irish Trivial Game which was won by Susan Rivard, following which a video was presented for viewing, featuring the well-known Irish music group, "Celtic Thunder." There were no afghans/blankets handed in this date but 12 baby hats/toques were hand-made



and donated by a friend of the Auxiliary and brought in by Auxiliary member, Dorothy Robinson.

April 5, 2018 Ladies Auxiliary Luncheon/Meeting: This is our next **Ladies Auxiliary Membership Dues:** A reminder that the annual fees of \$25.00 per person are now due for the Year 2018. Payment may be made at the next Ladies Auxiliary Luncheon/Meeting on April 5th, or mailed by cheque or money order to Membership Convener, Barbara Scobie, #23, 2081 Winfield Drive, Abbotsford, B.C., V3G 1C7. All cheques or money orders are to be made payable to: R.C.M.P. Veterans' Ladies Auxiliary, Vancouver. Dorothy Martinson, President RCMP Veterans' Ladies Auxiliary

(604) 261-4630

NEW ANNOUNCEMENT

RCMP VETERANS' GENERAL MEETING & BUFFET LUNCH, MARCH 15, 2018, 12:00 NOON
"HAZELMERE GOLF & TENNIS CLUB"
\$30.00 PER PERSON, CASH/CHEQUE, & 50/50.
GUEST SPEAKER, BOB YOUNG, CSIS.
NEW CONTACT: DOROTHY MARTINSON
demartinson@shaw.ca or (604) 261-4630
NO LATER THAN TUES., MARCH 13TH
TO RESERVE YOUR SEAT AND MEAL!



R.C.M.P. VETS' LADIES AUXILIARY COFFEE KLATCHES

CHILLIWACK/ABBOTSFORD: Last Wed. every month, 10 am Chilliwack at "I-HOP" Cottonwood Corners/Freeway, and alternating monthly in Abbotsford at "Ricky's Restaurant" (Best Western) off Clearbrook Road & Freeway. Myrna Meyer (604) 847-8977.

WHITE ROCK/SURREY/RICHMOND: Third Wed. every month, 10 AM at White Spot restaurant, 1681 152nd Avenue (Semiahmoo Mall) White Rock Kathy Turnbull, 778-292-1864.

VANCOUVER: First Thurs. Summer months & January only, 9:30 AM, Bean Bros., W. 41st. Ave. in Kerrisdale. Dorothy Martinson (604) 261-4630.

NORTH & WEST VANCOUVER: Summer months only. TBA

COQUITLAM/PT. MOODY/NORTH FRASER: Third Thurs. every month, 10:30 a.m., "Coquitlam Grill," 2635 Barnet Hwy. Helen Kielan (604) 936-6062

DELTA/TSAWWASSEN: Locations vary each month., Last Thurs. each month, 10:30 a.m. Sheila Zerr, 604-943-3012
Email: Sheila Zerr (srzerr@telus.net)



White Rock Koffee Klatch

Ricky's Restaurant on King George Hwy.
10:00 AM, Second Tuesday of Every Month

Abbotsford Koffee Klatch

Roseland Family Restaurant, 5 Corners
33550 South Fraser Way, Abbotsford
10:00 AM, last Wednesday

Richmond Koffee Klatch

Richmond Koffee Klatch disbanded and meeting
with Vancouver Koffee Klatch. See below.

Friday Lunch Crew

Every Friday at 11:00 AM at the Legion in Ladner.

Chilliwack Vets & Ladies Coffee Klatch

Homer's Restaurant
46090 Yale Road, Chilliwack
2nd Monday each month, 10 AM

North Shore Koffee Klatch

The 2 Lions Pub, Westview Mall, 11:00 AM,
1st Tuesday of every month

Vancouver Koffee Klatch

White Spot Restaurant in Oakridge Mall
Second Thursday each Month, 10 AM
Call Herb Martinson, 604-261-4630

Coquitlam Koffee Klatch

Coquitlam Grill on the Barnet Hwy.
3rd Tuesday of each month at 10:30 AM

Maple Ridge Coffee Crew

Town Hall Public House, 206-20690 Lougheed Hwy.
Every Sunday morning at 10:00 AM

Langley Koffee Klatch

Langley Golf Centre, 21550—44th Avenue, Corner
of 216th Street and 44th Avenue, Langley 9 AM, first
Tuesday of the month.

The RCMP Vets Vancouver Division
newsletter is produced monthly, July, August
and December excepted.

Vancouver Division Governors

J.S. (Jim) Warren	(780)464-1138
W.F. (Bill) McCheyne	(604)535-9670
D.C. (David) Turnbull	(778)292-1864
G.J. (Jim) Druchet	(604)536-1925
W.L. (Les) Holmes	(604)298-7517
W.H. (Bill) Schindeler	(604)604-542-8449
A.J. (Alf) Erickson	(604)594-5463
R.C. (Bob) McKee	1(866)970-7267
E.R. (Ed) Wilson	(604)864-0443
R.A.P. (Dick) Hawkshaw	(604)824-8464



NCOs' Mess Meetings

Dave Miyashita, 778-290-3293

Mess: ENCOMESS@rcmp-grc.gc.ca

Dinners and Lunches Call Secretary Mert Rowden
at 604-434-0424 prior to meeting to ensure a meal will be
available for you. Bars open 11:30AM/5:00PM, meals
served 12 NN/5:30PM

Are you shut in? Would you like a visit from a fellow
vet? Call Jim Druchet at (604)-536-1925.

Dues The dues for the Veterans Association at \$65.00
per year and are due on January 1 of each year. Funds
should be forwarded to the Veterans Association office
using **our mailing address**.

RCMP Vets' Association

Vancouver Division

Mailstop 1004

14200 Green Timbers Way
Surrey, B.C. V3T 6P3

Our Website:

www.rcmpveteransvancouver.com

Newsletter Editor

Peter Bond,
6394 Gale Avenue North, Sechelt V0N 3A5
Tel: (604) 740-9962
Email: peter@attheshore.ca

Rides to Vet's Meetings Don't drive at night?
Don't drive in the rain. Don't drive at all but want to go to
a meeting? **Ray Kielan** will arrange transportation for
you. If you're willing to provide a ride for a fellow vet to a
meeting please call Ray at 604-936-6062.

Sick Parade By Ray Kielan

None reported



If you know of someone who is ailing please
advise **Ray Kielan** at 604936-6062 or
rayandhelen@telus.net by email.

Last Post By Dan Lemieux

16727 - Joseph M. PHIPPS
28603 - Arthur KLEINSMITH
18880 - David Alexander McLEAN
19047 - John William LEE
17795 - Maurice (Moe) G. KELLY
17808 - Kenneth POLLOCK
38941 - Sandro COLASACO



Important Phone Numbers and Website Links

- Morneau Shepell - for RCMP Insurance only - 1-800-661-7595
- Public Works & Government Services Canada - PWGSC - For all aspects of Pension Administration - 1-855-502-7090
- Veteran Affairs (DVA) for Hearing Pensions 1-866-522-2122
- B.C. Health Care Plan (MSPBC) Vancouver 604-736-2033
- Old Age Security (OAS) & Canada Pension Plan (CPP) 1-800-277-9914
- RCMP Veterans' National Association: www.rcmpvetsnational.ca.

