



May/June 2022 Newsletter

Hello and happy summer to you all!

We are so excited to share that The OPP Museum will be opening its doors to visitors again in July. New exhibits will be added frequently during the next few months leading up to our fantastic Grand Opening in the fall.

We are also excited to announce that the OPP Shop will be open to the public starting in July. When you stop by to visit the gallery, pop in to see the new store merchandise and say hi to the staff.

We have missed you all and are excited to say hi again in person.

Celebrating our Veterans

By Karin Taylor and Chris Johnstone



We have been enjoying some wonderful, and long-awaited, in-person events celebrating our Veterans. This year we are marking the 10th anniversary of Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) Veterans' Day, inaugurated on June 6, 2012, by Commissioner Chris Lewis. While OPP Veterans' Day recognizes all OPP veterans and their spouses, June 6th was selected as a nod to the OPP Veterans' Association (OPPVA) as that was the date they signed their charter in 1969. As we acknowledge this milestone, we would like to also take this opportunity to reflect on some of the history of this amazing volunteer-run organization that supports and engages our veterans. The OPPVA is marking its 53rd anniversary in 2022 as a group committed to the well-being of uniform, Auxiliary and civilian members and their families.

Conceived in early 1968 by members of the Ontario Securities Commission, the Ontario Fire Marshal's Office and the OPP, the OPPVA was created to ensure retired officers would find support in a group of their peers who shared similar, and often exceptional experiences. Commissioner Eric Silk supported the development of the association, as well as its use of the OPP's name and the term Veterans' Association.

Officially approved by the *Corporations Act* on June 6, 1969, as the non-profit OPPVA, the next several months saw the development of draft bylaws including the

requirements of membership, executive roles, service requirements, and a cost of \$5 per year for the membership fee.

The following year, the first OPPVA Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on April 24, 1970. A dinner was hosted at the Sergeants' Mess of the Moss Park Armouries in Toronto. The draft bylaws were submitted and approved by the membership, including the election of the 1970-1971 executive lead by President Elmer Hoath, Vice President Alan C. Williams, Secretary James M. Stanton, Treasurer W. George Halliday and supported by directors David Mitchell, Charles Wood, Alexander MacLeod, John W. Clark and Clarence Parmenter. The role of Honorary President was given to Commissioner Eric Silk in tribute to his important support of the association.

Meetings and a tradition of festive events would become quite popular among the growing membership. The first such event was hosted at the Tam O'Shanter Golf and Country Club in Scarborough. One hundred and thirty-two members and friends attended a lively dinner and dance, with music provided by the OPP Band. Regional events would quickly follow including BBQs, dinners and meetings.

In 1971, motivated by significant interest in membership outside of the central Toronto area, the North Western Ontario Region Chapter in Dryden was formed. Through the 1970s and early 1980s, four regional areas were formed: North Western, North Central, Niagara Falls and Woodstock. With ongoing events and encouragement from the executive and membership, #2 London, #3 Burlington/Simcoe, #4 Niagara Falls, #5 Toronto, #6 Guelph/Mount Forest, #8 Peterborough, #9 Belleville and #13 Sudbury would be formed in the first 15 years of the association.

To ensure communication between the executive and the growing membership, the Vetletter was established to share stories, memories and upcoming events. By 1987, the OPP Association (OPPA) offered space in their newsletter to the OPPVA for

upcoming and newsworthy events that would pertain to their membership. By 1994, a permanent space in the OPPA Newsletter was offered, which reached the 7,000 OPPA members quarterly. Later renamed Beyond the Badge and issued five times a year, this allowed a significant circulation to the OPPVA, and made members aware of their activities and events.

For the association's 20th anniversary, the AGM was being hosted around Ontario instead of solely in Toronto, thus providing many opportunities for the members to visit various areas of the province. Financial support was generously provided by the OPPA and the OPP Commissioned Officers' Association.

An OPPVA flag was presented to then-President Norm Clark by Jim McCutchen, OPPA Operations Director and a strong supporter of the OPPVA. At the AGM held in Niagara Falls in May of 1989, this flag was dedicated by OPP Chaplain Kirk Dupre.

It was also in 1989 that the first female former OPP member joined the association and held an executive position. Liz Arbour, then Secretary/Treasurer for Chapter #3 Burlington, continues to serve as a member of the Provincial Board of Directors of the association to this day.

By 1990, with 14 chapters and almost 730 members, and with the increasing need for accessibility to the executive, it was necessary for the association to maintain a physical office space. As luck would have it, the standing Secretary (Jim McCutchen) and Treasurer (Bob McAfee) were associated to the OPPA and OPPA Credit Union. With their assistance, an office was set at the OPPA Credit Union at 119 Ferris Lane in Barrie and would later move down the street to 123 Ferris Lane. This enabled members to engage with the OPPVA, and also assisted with the formation of chapters #11- Long Sault and #12- North Bay by the end of the year.

The early 1990s also saw several important OPPVA milestones. A “Life Membership” was created for members when they turn 80 years old in recognition of their years of service with the Province of Ontario and with the association; and ardent support was shown for the Canadian Police Memorial being built at Parliament Hill in Ottawa, with \$3,700 donated to the pavilion that stands today in honour of those members who have given their lives in service to the people of Canada. Chapters would also later be granted the ability to issue honorary membership to a widow or widower, and thus maintain an important link to the families of their colleagues.

By the 25th anniversary of the OPPVA, Commissioner Thomas B. O’Grady presented the first “Veteran of the Year” award, a prestigious honour that would be granted annually henceforth. He also gifted a large metal replica of its crest. Standing three feet high, this was displayed proudly at association events. After several years of use at dinners and functions, and with concern for its long-term well-being, it was donated to The OPP Museum collection in 2011 (2011.81.1).

The association was also honoured with a special invitation to the grand opening of the OPP General Headquarters in Orillia on September 9, 1995. Members proudly displayed their uniform of a navy blue blazer, grey pants, the Force gold bullion wire pocket crest bearing the words “Veterans’ Association,” with maroon tie and white shirt.

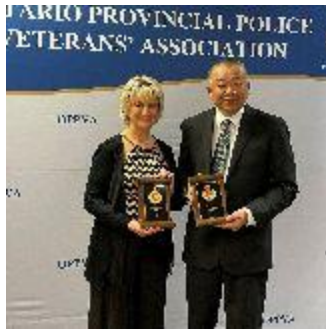
By the later 1990s, with the continuation of annual meetings and events, there were almost 1,100 members, and new chapters were formed in #10 N Pembroke and #16 Chapter Thunder Bay, and Chapter #11 Long Sault was separated into #11 N Ottawa and #11 S Cornwall to better serve their local communities.

The OPPVA has since grown to 23 chapters across Ontario with approximately 2,165 dedicated members. This active group continues to participate in meetings and luncheons, enjoys the support and friendship of staying in touch with former

colleagues, and is organizing numerous special outings and events. Each winter, several members who fly south to Florida, Arizona, California and Texas even plan fun Vets' events and share camaraderie away from home!

Each year, detachments across the province are encouraged to recognize and support the OPP veterans in their communities. Commissioner Carrique carried on the tradition of recognizing all our veterans with an event held at OPP General Headquarters this year – in the spirit of regular communication, to the benefit of all.

The Commissioner's Veteran of the Year Awards were presented at the 53rd OPPVA AGM held in Sudbury. Due to the cancellation of in-person get togethers for the last two years, there are three Veterans of the Year who received their awards in 2022.



Congratulations to Provincial Secretary and Chapter 18 Vice-Chair Carmen Marrier who was the 2019 recipient, and Chapter 18 member Bill Lee who is the 2021 recipient. Carmen is a regular supporter of Friends events, including our annual Run event. Bill has been a long-time Friends member, gracious donor and museum volunteer. Photo Courtesy of OPPVA Branch 18



Ron Allen was recognized at the OPP Veterans' Day BBQ at GHQ on June 6 by Commissioner Carrique as Veteran of the Year for 2022. Ron has also been a long-time Friends and Museum supporter and donor.

Many congratulations to all three recipients!

Interested in learning more about the OPPVA? New members are always welcome!

Visit oppva.ca for more information.

Honoring Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

By Angie Stirk



On May 5, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), along with individuals and organizations across the country, show our support for Red Dress Day by wearing red or publicly hanging red dresses in remembrance of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG). These displays act as a powerful visual representation of the pain and loss felt by the families and friends of victims as well as survivors. On Red Dress Day the OPP Indigenous Policing Bureau asks you to reflect and learn more about the ongoing national tragedy. Individuals are also encouraged to honour MMIWG by

working together to embrace and support community healing. [View the video of the OPP General Headquarters display in honour of the many Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people whose lives were stolen on YouTube.](#)

How Red Dress Day began...

In 2010, Jaime Black, a Métis artist from Winnipeg, started [The REDress Project](#) in response to the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. Inspired by a demonstration in Colombia involving local women gathered in the capitol's public square, she knew she needed to bring that energy home.

Jamie recounts: *"They were all women who had experienced having people in their families go missing, without any kind of recourse, there were about 40 women wearing red dresses. One woman in a red dress climbed to the top of the statue in the middle of the square, and she called out, 'Where are they?'"*

The REDress Project, highlighted the epidemic of violence against Indigenous women and girls with hundreds of red dresses displayed in public spaces across Canada. Each dress symbolized a missing or murdered Indigenous woman or girl. It has since evolved into a national movement to educate and bring awareness, as well as acts as a conduit for individuals experiencing violence to share their own stories. The color red has become a symbol for MMIWG across North America, extending well beyond Black's work.

Cultural significance of the colour red:

The colour red holds sacred symbolism in Indigenous cultures. As one of the four sacred colours on the Medicine Wheel, red represents fire, energy, and blood. Red also represents love; the love for all things on Mother Earth, and a gentle reminder for us to care for one another. It is often said that red is the only colour that spirits can see and is used to call the spirits of missing and murdered women and girls back to

their loved ones.

The OPP MMIWG Team:

With an ongoing commitment to address violence against Indigenous women and girls, the OPP established the MMIWG Team. Developed in response to the Government of Canada's National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), the role of the MMIWG Team is to ensure an organization-wide implementation of any applicable Calls for Justice identified in [*"Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls"*](#).

The team is tasked with enhancing the OPP's response to the Calls for Justice by further evaluating what is already in place, expanding upon best practices, and identifying initiatives, activities, actions, and policies that can improve police service delivery. Prioritizing community engagement by building meaningful relationships with Indigenous communities will help guide the organization in making the necessary, Indigenous-led changes. Working closely with OPP program area subject matter experts, the MMIWG Team will support the development of action plans to facilitate extensive internal and external communication. This collaborative approach will focus on the importance of engaging with Indigenous communities throughout our continued work towards reconciliation, equity and inclusion.

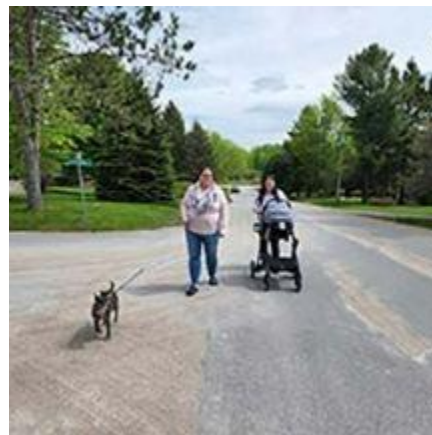
As we work to address the ongoing tragedy, a priority for the MMIWG Team is enhanced engagement with survivors and impacted families and community members of MMIWG. Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQIA+ people all have the right to feel and be safe in their communities, wherever they live.

For more information on the role of the MMIWG Team visit opp.ca/MMIWG.

RUN WITH **FRIENDS** **2022**

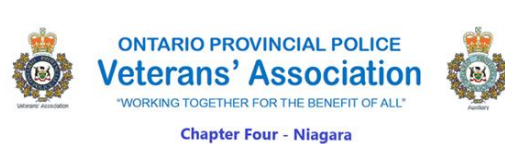
2022 Run with Friends Fundraiser Update

Thank you to all those who supported the run! This year, we had our youngest ever participant with little Eleanor Hogeveen. At 23 days old, she slept through most of the “run” but she was supported by her enthusiastic “Gigi” Faye Robertson and her loving new mom Ainsley Hogeveen along the route.



We are so happy with the success of our 2nd Annual Run with Friends fundraiser. We raised over \$4000 in support of the Friends’ future outreach programming and special events.

We would like to share a grateful thanks to our generous sponsors:



Planning will begin shortly for the 2023 race! Registration will begin in March, and we encourage everyone to challenge their families, friends and co-workers to get active and enjoy some time together.

Don't forget to share your glory- send us your photos and videos- we would love to share them for future Run with Friends events. Please email them to support@oppmuseumfriends.ca

CONGRATULATIONS! Virtual high-fives from the Run with Friends Organizing Committee!

See you in 2023!

Professional Development

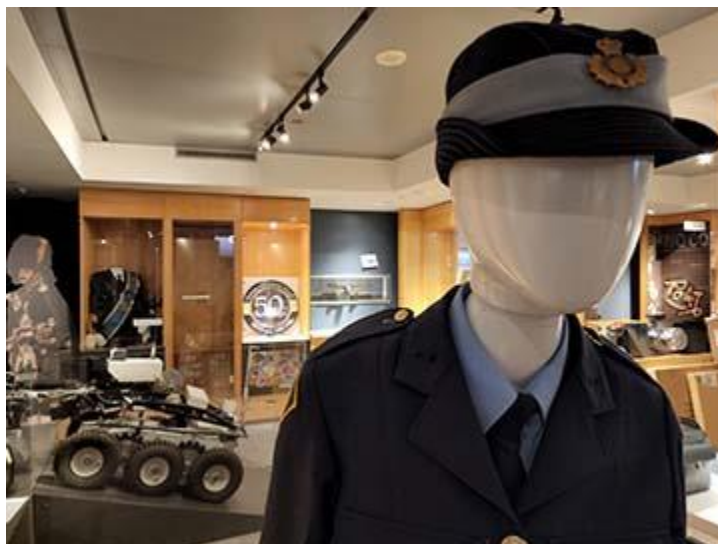
While attending the OPPVA AGM in May, Chris and Karin were able to visit Science North in Sudbury. While enjoying the wonderful exhibits, they met some new friends and brainstormed some ideas for upcoming exhibits.



Calling all Volunteers!

The Friends are looking for volunteers to assist with upcoming events and outreach programming. For more information, please email volunteers@oppmuseumfriends.ca

We look forward to welcoming guests back to the Museum in July.



Please visit www.opp.ca/museum for all updates!

Wishing you a wonderful summer,

The Newsletter Committee