

# BRANDON POLICE SERVICE HISTORY

On July 12, 1882, the Brandon City Police Force came into being. The Force's first members were Chief Constable Archibald L. McMILLAN and two Constables, Donald CAMPBELL and John M. KEAYS.

In the early years, the Force was primarily concerned with breaking up fistfights, raiding houses of ill-repute of which there were many, and fining people for reckless driving. Fistfights usually broke out as young men battled over girlfriends, liquor, or horses.

Such conduct usually brought an officer of the law to the spot, and the brawlers were taken before a Police Magistrate who in those days was usually regarded as "The Beak." Raids and houses of ill fame were often, and at one point in Brandon's history, these establishments out-numbered churches.



Brandon Police Constables in 1912

One of the infamous Madame's was Miss Bandy FRENCH. After one raid on her place of business, the following fines were reported to have been levied: \$44.60 against Miss FRENCH; \$36 each against two other ladies; \$10 each against four male guests.

Miss FRENCH'S career came to an end when she shot a local businessman in the ear with a revolver after summoning him to her establishment. Her apparent reason for shooting him was that she had held a suspicion against him. This was never explained fully but probably meant that he had reported her to the Police. Brandon City Council at one point in time considered licensing these houses of ill-repute to keep them away from the settled portions of the City for the protection of the respectable women.

Reckless driving of the day seemed more of a problem with horses than today with the automobile. Residents of the City complained that life and limb were in constant danger from drivers trying to see whose horse could pace or gallop the fastest. The drivers of those steeds complained that it was impossible to get up any speed on Pacific or Rosser Avenue as the Police were interfering with them. They suggested that Victoria Avenue be set aside where respectable horsemen could race their horses as fast as they wished. In the 1970s, the Force experienced similar complaints from people and their muscle cars; however, instead of Victoria Avenue, they wished assistance in establishing a drag strip outside the City.



In the early years, the salaries of the members of the Force were raised through fines. In 1886, the City was paying the Chief Constable \$800 per annum, and the Constables received \$600 per annum.

In the first century of service, the Force grew from 3 members to 56 with a complement of 19 civilians. During the first 100 years, the Force had 13 Chief Constables - the first being Archibald L. McMILLAN who accidentally shot himself in 1885 while placing a rifle in a case in Smart's Hardware Store. Shaking the rifle down, the butt hit the floor, the rifle discharged sending a bullet through the body below the stomach, and he died three hours later.

In the early years, each Chief left his mark on the Force, and in most instances, their tenure was tenuous, to say the least. It was a very political position, and he tried to mould the Force to the expectations of the citizens and politicians of the day, in some cases, such as our 6th Chief, Chief Constable E. G. "Edward" BERRY, an ex-Winnipeg City Police Sergeant. Council was looking for a strict disciplinarian after a lack of reign of Watson H. BOYD. BERRY's letter of the law campaign proved too much for the Council and the citizens as he was discharged in 1913 after approximately twelve months of service.

Not until H. B. "Harry" EVERETT, another ex-Winnipeg City Police Sergeant who was appointed in 1923 to the office of Chief Constable was the position de-politicized. Before coming to Brandon, Chief EVERETT had served as Chief Constable in Dauphin, Manitoba, and to date, he had the longest tenure from 1923 to 1947. Chief EVERETT died in office as a result of health reasons.



Chief Hardy

The Force had several volunteers for active service overseas in World War I and World War II and the Korean Campaign. In World War I, two Chief Constables distinguished themselves in battle. Our fourth Chief Constable, James KIRKALDY, rose to the rank of Brigadier General and was awarded the following medals: Distinguished Service Order and Two Bars, and the Croix de Guerr, and Commander of the Orders of St. Michael and St. George, Joseph Robert HARDY was the 8th Chief Constable and while serving with the Canadian Expeditionary Force, he rose to the rank of Captain. He was awarded the Military Cross and Two Bars.

A. C. "Charlie" GOUCHER was the Force's 11th Chief Constable, and he was the first member to rise to his office from within the Force. There have been others; however, their appointments were of a political nature in the early years of the Force's history. K. R. "Ken" ELLIOTT was appointed to the rank of Deputy Chief Constable in September of 1979 and appointed to the rank of Chief Constable in January 1980. Chief Constable ELLIOTT remained with the Brandon City Police until the fall of 1987.



A citizen explaining to Cst. C. Fitzpatrick how his accident occurred.

To mark the Force's Centennial, a medal was struck to be issued in full and miniature sizes to the serving members. The medal is a reproduction of the City's Coat of Arms with the following inscription on the reverse side: "1882 to 1982, A Century of Service." The ribbon is comprised of the following colours: Red, blue, and gold, which are representative of the Constables, N.C.O.s, and Officers of the Force.

On Sunday, November 21, 1982, a church parade was held at First Baptist Church to present the medal to all serving members of the department.

## After The First Hundred Years

In January 1989, Brian SCOTT became the Chief of Police. Chief SCOTT had worked for the Edmonton Police Service for many years. Chief Brian Scott's job was to rebuild the department and develop written policies for the officers to follow. Chief SCOTT did this by moving the Department into the Accreditation process. In July 1994 the Police Service became accredited.

On June 1, 1993, the organization changed its name and became the Brandon Police Service. This name change better reflected the goals and objectives of the Service.

In the summer of 1995, Chief Brian SCOTT retired from the police profession. In November 1995, Dick SCOTT, who had served under Brian SCOTT as a Deputy Chief was promoted to Chief of Police. Although we had been doing some community based policing, Chief Scott's goal was to turn the Brandon Police Service into a complete Community Policing Service. In April 2001 Chief Scott retired from the Brandon Police Service completing 37 years as a Police Officer in Manitoba.

F. Richard Bruce was appointed to Chief on May 14, 2001. He began his career with the Brandon Police Service in November 1970 and worked in many areas within the Police Service.

#### Chief Keith Atkinson

January 1, 2007 – January 25, 2013

Chief Atkinson came from Saskatoon Police Service where he served for 27 years, his last post as Deputy Police Chief. Keith studied at the Ontario Provincial Police College and the Canadian Police College and served as a police officer for the United Nations in Kosovo.

During his time in Brandon, Chief Atkinson introduced COMSTAT, which allowed the Police Service to track crime trends and adjust resource distribution. He also oversaw the construction of the new Brandon Police Station in the former Safeway property, located at 10th Street and Victoria Avenue.

#### Chief Ian Grant

January 25, 2013 – October 6, 2017

Chief Grant was the third individual in the history of Brandon Police Service to be promoted from within from Constable through the ranks to Chief of Police. Originally from Corner Brook, Newfoundland, Chief Grant joined the RCMP in 1980 and moved to the Brandon Police Service in 1985 where he worked in various sections including Traffic Services, Community Services and Crime Stoppers before moving into senior administrative roles in the Service.

#### Chief Wayne Balcaen

October 30, 2017 – Present

Chief Balcaen is a lifelong resident of Brandon, joining the Brandon Police Service on October 2nd, 1990. Balcaen is the 19th Chief of the Brandon Police Service and one of only four Police Chiefs who rose through the ranks. Chief Balcaen is particularly proud of the human resource and financial management, as well as the technological growth of the Police Service under his command.