



35th Anniversary of Female Regular Members in the RCMP

Making “her-story”

On September 16, 2009, the RCMP commemorates 35 years of female regular members in the Force.

On May 23, 1974, RCMP Commissioner M.J. Nadon announced the RCMP would begin accepting applications from women for regular police duties in areas and positions previously reserved for males.

The first troop of 32 female regular members (Troop 17) arrived at the RCMP Academy (“Depot” Division) on September 16, 1974, to commence training. Ranging in age from 19 to 29 and representing all provinces with the exception of Prince Edward Island, this first all-female troop graduated from “Depot” on March 3, 1975.

Roles and role models

Throughout the RCMP’s 136-year history, women have made significant contributions to the RCMP, serving as public servants, civilian members and as regular members.

Women employees have always been integral to the mandate and functioning of the RCMP. As early as the 1890s, the Force employed women as matrons and gaolers to deal with female offenders and as part of the escort when female prisoners were moved from one place to another.

In the early 1900s, women filled positions such as fingerprint technicians and lab technicians. Dr. Francis McGill, often referred to as the “First Woman Mountie”, was the Force’s first Honourary Surgeon appointed in 1946 but she had been the director of the Saskatchewan lab from 1922 to 1942 and associated with the Force for many years in the fields of medical science, forensic medicine and pathology.

Leading the way

Since 1975, women have made considerable progress in the RCMP. For example, in 1981 the first female was promoted to Corporal and the first females served on the Musical Ride; in 1987, the first female served in a foreign post; in 1990, the first female was appointed Detachment Commander; in 1992, the first female officers were commissioned; and in 1998, the first female Assistant Commissioner was appointed. On December 16, 2006, Beverley Ann Busson (an original member of Troop 17 [1974]) was appointed the 21st Commissioner of the RCMP.

Quick Facts

- March 3, 1975: The first all-female troop of regular members graduates from “Depot”.
- Today, 3,755 of the RCMP’s 11,726 women employees are regular members.
- From Constable to Commissioner, anything is possible for women who join as regular members of the RCMP today.