

RCMP PIPES AND DRUMS (NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION)

2000



Background

Early in 1997, as part of its 125th anniversary celebrations, the RCMP formed a "Tartan Committee" to design a unique tartan for the RCMP, to consider orders of dress for RCMP pipers and drummers, and to make recommendations on its findings to the Commissioner. In April 1998, the Commissioner and Senior Executive Committee (SEC) approved recommendations to:

- * adopt a unique tartan for the RCMP, and
- * adopt a kilted uniform for pipers & drummers.

That decision by the SEC authorized a kilted uniform for RCMP community bands of pipes & drums comprised of serving and retired members of the Force, employees, and citizen volunteers. The new RCMP tartan was officially worn for the first time by an RCMP band at the Halifax International Military Tattoo in 1998. In 1999, a composite band was formed to perform in Hong Kong in support of an "E" Division Ceremonial Troop. A similar group was also gathered to perform at the RCMP Depot Division Annual Police Memorial Service.

At the same time in Ottawa, the wheels were put in motion in 1998 to establish a local pipe band and two years later in the spring of 2000 the RCMP Pipes & Drums of the National Capital Region (NCR) were subsequently formed with the full support of the Deputy Commissioner, Central Region, and under authority of the Commanding Officer "A" Division.

Capitalizing on collaboration: the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police

In its initial stages, the Band envisaged a working partnership with the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Pipes & Drums. This was practical and desirable for the following reasons:

- ***Shared resources*** - The RCMP Band would coalesce around a core group of serving members and employees. The Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Band had sufficient strength in numbers and talent to make an interim contribution of 'guest players', both pipers and drummers.

- **Expertise** - There was a clear need for leadership in establishing both 'quality of sound' and 'quality of performance'. The Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Band had an enviable track record in both cases and had expressed a willingness to contribute its expertise to the formative development of the RCMP Band. Musical direction, in the person of an interim Pipe Major, was critical during this initial period.
- **Mentorship** - The RCMP Band initially practiced with the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police Band and the bands shared a common musical repertoire. In this fashion, the RCMP Band had the opportunity to be mentored through its critical start-up period.

Vision

The vision for a combined complement of RCMP pipers and drummers based in Ottawa was as follows:

- * comprised of RCMP members, employees and citizen volunteers,
- * positioned to support charitable and not-for-profit community initiatives,
- available to complement the Force's regimental traditions and ceremonial duties,
- * reflecting best practices in community policing, partnership and quality service,
- * aligned with RCMP local and (Central) regional service priorities and initiatives,
- * encouraging an increased profile for the RCMP's federal enforcement program,
- advancing the RCMP's commitment to integrated policing, and
- continuing the legacy of cooperation and partnership with the Ottawa Police Service Pipe Band and other community-based service organizations.

Mandate

The mandate of the Band was established to benefit the community through its music and performance repertoire. The Band would perform for the public and in support of regional and local community endeavours including:

- * charity fund raisers,
- * special interest group performances (hospitals, schools, retirement homes),
- * sport and cultural awards ceremonies,
- * fairs, festivals and parades,
- * memorial services,
- * state and official occasions, and
- * RCMP ceremonial functions.

Welcome to the Band

The RCMP Pipes and Drums (National Capital Region) went from a loose-knit collection of individuals to a “band” with the following welcome letter sent to each of the original band members in May 2000.



05 May, 2000

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham".

Please accept this as a note of thanks from me to you, for offering yourself up to this 'adventure'. I like to think of our group as the “founding members” of the RCMP Pipes & Drums (National Capital Region). You may be absolutely certain that we're proceeding from this point with the full support and enthusiasm of our Commanding Officer and the Commissioner.

Being a part of something new brings both opportunity and challenge. This is a very big 'first' for us and the Force will be watching us closely. We'll have the opportunity to chart our own course and to set our own standards in terms of performance quality and deportment. We'll also have to rise to the challenge of meeting the expectations of our public and our membership.

I am looking forward to this. And, once again, I thank you for contributing your talent and your time to getting us underway!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham".
Graham Muir

Canada



Royal Canadian Mounted Police Gendarmerie royale du Canada

KIT

The first kilt fitting took place 29 March 2000 and the order went out to Burnett's and Struth Scottish Regalia Company in Barrie, Ontario, on the 1st of April 2000 for a priority order of the completion of kilts to the initial cadre of pipers and drummers as follows:

Pipers: P/M Pat Hayes, P/Sgt Gilbert Young, Steve Douglas, Andrew Hayes, Graeme Ogilvie, Jamie Ritchie, Errol Schell, Bill Stewart Jr, Keith Theobald, Barry Wereley, Matthew Yuen.

Drummers: D/Sgt Bob Downey, Pat Gribbon, Jack Mellon, Keith Penney Sr, Keith Penney Jr, John Sullivan.

2000 Band and Solo Events (band events highlighted)

As the band slowly eased into a fully functioning unit, the year 2000 saw primarily performances at solo events, with the first formal event by the band being the Change of Command parade for RCMP Commissioner Zaccardelli on 01 September at the Canadian Police College.

- 19 Feb 2000 – Eastern Ontario Girls Basketball Tournament, Orleans
- 10 Mar 2000 – Commanding Officer's Change of Command Parade, Lansdowne Park (1 piper with Air Command small group)
- 24 Mar 2000 – Regimental Funeral, Cassleman
- 26 Mar 2000 – Retirement A/Commr Cooper, Crown Plaza
- 20 Apr 2000 – Medals Parade, "C" Division HQ, Montreal
- 05 May 2000 – Ottawa Area Officers Annual Mess Dinner
- 07 May 2000 – Dedication, Ontario Police Memorial, Toronto
- 10 May 2000 – Rotary Luncheon, Congress Centre "Adventures in Citizenship"
- 10 May 2000 – RCMP HQ/A Division Medals Parade, Lansdowne Park
- 01 Jul 2000 – Canada Day, Museum of Civilization
- 01 Sep 2000 – Commissioner's Change of Command Parade, CPC**
- 24 Sep 2000 – National Police Memorial Service, Parliament Hill**
- 30 Sep 2000 – Regimental Wedding
- 05 Oct 2000 – Regimental Funeral
- 16 Oct 2000 – Opening for the Chieftans and Natalie MacMaster, NAC
- 21 Oct 2000 – Sergeant's Mess Dinner
- 25 Oct 2000 – United Nations, Medals Parade, Lansdowne Park
- 28 Oct 2000 – Ottawa Hospital Association
- 03 Nov 2000 – RCMP Millennium Ball, West Block, Parliament Hill

**First Formal Event – 01 September 2000
Change of Command Parade for RCMP Commissioner Zaccardelli**



**01 September 2000
Photo Post Change of Command Parade**



(left to right) P/Sgt Gilbert Young, Bill Stewart Jr, D/Sgt Bob Downey, Steve Douglas, Graeme Ogilvie, Jamie Ritchie, Pat Gribbon, Barry Wereley, Keith Penny Sr, Keith Theobald, Kyle McIntyre, John Sullivan, Chris Munroe, Jack Yourt, Errol Schell, Matthew Yuen, Bill Gilmour, D/M Graham Muir.

**24 September 2000
National Police Memorial, Parliament Hill**



Pipe Bands Outfitted by Burnett's & Struth

(left to right) Ottawa-Carleton Regional Police, Niagara Regional Police, Metro Toronto Police, Sudbury Regional Police, Durham Regional Police, Air Command (Ottawa), RCMP (NCR and "J" Division), OPP, York Regional Police, Hamilton-Wentworth Police.

**First Formal RCMP Pipe Band (NCR) Photo
29 November 2000
Foyer, West Block, Parliament**



FRONT ROW: P/M Pat Hayes, D/Sgt Bob Downey, RCMP CSM Yvon Mercier, OPS Chief Vince Bevan, RCMP A/Commr Dawson Hovey, P/Sgt Gilbert Young, D/M Graham Muir.

2nd ROW: Cpl Debbie Reitenbach, Wendy O'Connor, Keith Penney Jr, Sandra McGrath (Turner), Pat Gribbon, Cst Serge Lalonde.

3rd ROW: Errol Schell, Beau Schell, Jack Yourt, Bill Stewart Jr, Jack Mellon, John Sullivan, Steve Douglas.

BACK ROW: Andrew Hayes, Keith Penney Sr, Jamie Ritchie, Keith Theobald, Graeme Ogilvie.