



VPD OFFICER HONOURS A FALLEN MEMBER

BY CONSTABLE BILL TAYLOR

IN SEPTEMBER 2009, while travelling to the Police and Peace Officers' Memorial in Ottawa, I took some time to visit relatives who live about an hour from the city. My route took me by a small cemetery, where four policemen in dress uniform were laying a wreath at a grave.

Curious, I stopped to speak to them. They explained that each year around the time of the Memorial, they lay a wreath at the grave of every member from their police force killed in the line of duty.

When I met up with the rest of the Vancouver Police Department's Ceremonial Unit in Ottawa, I asked if anyone knew where the final resting places were for all 16 of the VPD's fallen members. No one had an answer.

I continued asking this same question when we returned to Vancouver, and it became apparent that some of our fallen members had been buried in long forgotten locations. It's the proper thing for a police agency to know where its fallen members are buried, and so began my two-year investigation into where those unknown final resting places were.

The internet and clues from "The Book of Remembrance," a large book dedicated to the memories of those lost in the line of duty and displayed at the VPD's Graveley Street location, revealed that Constable John McMenemy was buried in Knight's Cemetery in Inkerman, County of Dundas, Ontario. The Dundas County Clerk helped in my search, and we learned that the cemetery dates back to July 1854 and is situated at a crossroads in a rural farmer's field.

In 2012, my wife and I returned to Ontario on another family visit, and she accompanied me when I drove to Inkerman to find Knight's Cemetery. We walked through the cemetery and finally located Constable John McMenemy's headstone. He was laid to rest with his mother and father.

I have now located and visited all but one of the fallen members' final resting places; Constable Byers is buried in the small town of Carievale, Saskatchewan. One day soon I hope to complete this journey and visit his graveside and honour the ultimate sacrifice he made.