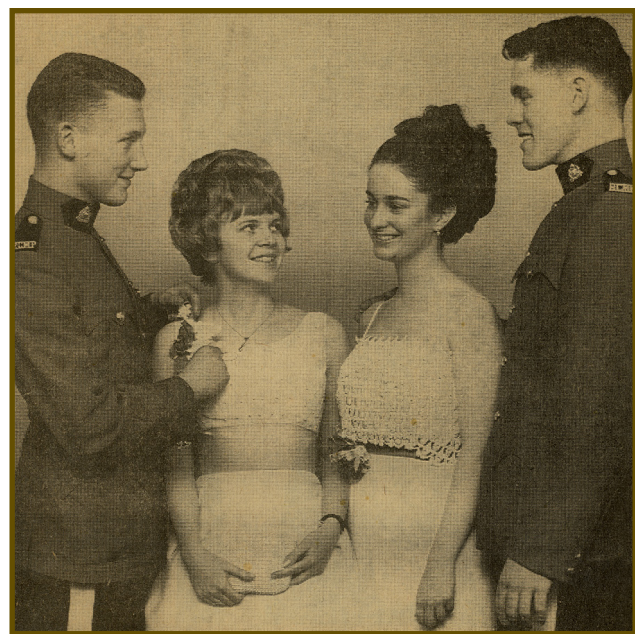


## CITY POLICING

My Mom accompanied me to British Columbia to my city posting in Burnaby. It was a memorable seven day car trip with the highlight being our drive west out of Calgary and seeing the Rockies for the very first time. Mom visited a few days with relatives in Chilliwack before going back home by train. My first task was to find room and board close to the detachment. I found a place and shared it with Ron Kostick, a member of the detachment's elite General Investigation (Detective) Section. We lived with Betty and Bill Peterson and their son Bill Jr. Betty was Burnaby's number one realtor. Their home was on Rosewood Street at Canada Way only a few blocks from the Burnaby Detachment located at the corner of Edmonds Street and Kingsway. By co-incidence, Magistrate Murray Hyde lived next door. Although much older than me, we became friends. He had several cherry trees in his backyard and often we chatted as I helped myself to the fruits of his labour.

My initiation into real police work began a couple of nights after my arrival. I reported for inspection at 8:30 p.m. and learned my supervisor was Sergeant Ken Jensen. Immediately after inspection Ken drove Constable Joe Healy and me up to a fire hall located at the intersection of Willingdon Avenue and Hastings Street in North Burnaby. Joe and I were told to do a foot patrol up and down Hastings Street from Willingdon Avenue to Boundary Road until 5:00 a.m. It didn't take Joe and me very long to work out a system. Our first walk of the night was east to west for an approximately one mile walk. Joe took one side of the street and I took the other, checking the front doors of the establishments. On the return walk we did the back alleys. It took us roughly five minutes to walk a block. Usually we both arrived out of a back alley and at a side street about the same time. We would turn our flashlights on and off twice to indicate to each other everything was all right. If one of us was delayed checking someone out, the other member crossed the street and stood by in the shadows as backup in the event of a scuffle. Joe was a great partner and earned himself the nickname "Gentleman Joe." We were in training at the same time but he had gone through "Depot" Division in Regina. Although never giving any thought at the time, I learned Joe was a devout Roman Catholic.

A few nights later, I stopped a suspicious looking character in the back alley near the Admiral Hotel on Hastings Street. When asked to produce some identification, he asked me to attempt the physically impossible. Unsure of my authority, I didn't do anything. The next morning over breakfast, I discussed my problem with Ron. The following night he drove his ghost car down the back alley until he found me checking doorknobs. We talked briefly about the chap who the night before had refused to produce any identification. Ron told me to jump into the car with him and we sped off to the hotel. We saw the the guy in the parking lot. Pointing him out, Ron drove up to him and in very explicit language told him to produce his wallet. He did so and we ran his driver's license. The fellow had a lengthy record for break and entry, theft, and assault.



Me and "Gentleman Joe" Healy, with dates at the Burnaby Detachment's Christmas Sub/Division Ball, 1965.

A career policeman, Joe terminated his career as a Superintendent being Contingent Commander with the United Nations Peacekeeping core. Upon retirement, he founded the website [RCMPgraves.com](http://RCMPgraves.com). This database has 77,000 entries. Photo by Basil King, The Vancouver Sun

Joe was a career policeman and created the web site [RCMPgraves.com](http://RCMPgraves.com) with a database of over 77,000 names. The last name, initials and regimental number of every person who was ever a member of the NWMP, RNWMP or RCMP is provided as this information is a matter of public record. Personal details about the individual member are only filled in after the member is deceased. The website also contains a substantial collection of stories and information about the RCMP.

During my very first week, I spooked three youths in the back alley on the south side of Hastings Street not far from Boundary Road. The three took off in three directions with me in hot pursuit. Without any hesitation, I kept chasing after the one in the rear. He began running southbound down Boundary Road and we were taking four foot strides on pea gravel on a steep hill and a fall would result in an extremely painful tumble. The suspect came to the same conclusion and began yelling, "I give up, don't

trip me". He began to slow down. I caught up to him and yelled at him to lie on the ground with his hands behind his back. He co-operated and allowed me to place him in handcuffs. We sat beside each other for several minutes trying to catch our breaths. It was then I began to smell gasoline. As we walked back up the hill to Hastings Street, he told me his name and that he and his two friends had been siphoning gas from an old car. I turned him over to some general duty members and watched a senior member take a statement at a booth in the hotel coffee shop. My prisoner gave them the names of his accomplices and all three were charged with attempted theft. It was my first introduction to an informant, a rat in criminal jargon! One time, I visited Ken at his home and he had a Crested Myda bird whose only vocabulary was 'Stool pigeon'.

It was while on our way to do foot beat patrol with Ken and Joe that we witnessed my first sudden death. We were about halfway between the detachment and the fire hall when a call came in on the car radio. A small boy had possibly drowned in a backyard swimming pool. Ken responded and we were at the scene within a few minutes. A man was running around the backyard ranting and raving like a madman, kicking over lawn chairs, and pounding his fists into the siding of the house. Ken knelt beside a small child's play pool. It was round and bright yellow and couldn't have been more than six feet in diameter and the water in it couldn't have been more than two inches deep. It took a moment for me to realize Ken was attempting to give the small boy mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. He yelled at me to get on the car radio and request a doctor. During this time, the distraught father tried to pry his child away from the senior policeman. Joe began wrestling with the father and managed to pin him to the ground without causing him any physical injury. After placing the call for medical assistance, I went to the aid of Joe. I then went to help Ken but the little boy was blue in color. A doctor arrived at the scene and worked on the baby for several minutes and then shook his head to indicate the child was dead. The father went absolutely berserk and it took Ken, Joe and me to keep him from further injuring himself. The doctor gave the father a sedative in the hip, taking all the fight out of him. By this time a couple of general duty members arrived on the scene and took over the investigation. Ken told them he'd drop Joe and me off at the fire hall and then file a report.

Late one night, I was checking doorknobs and discovered a back door ajar and heard people talking. Instead of opening the door and walking into a potentially dangerous situation, I retreated back down the alley and found Joe. We let ourselves in quietly through the unlocked door expecting to catch someone committing a burglary. It turned out to be Doug Hepburn, the store's owner, and his girlfriend. Doug took the bust in good humor and explained as well as operating a health store specializing in body building foods, he worked at the Cave Supper Club in Vancouver as a singer and bouncer. Doug explained he had won the title for weightlifting at the 1953 World Championships. Before we left, Doug insisted Joe and I take complimentary tickets to the club. A few nights later, I decided to go to the club and listen to Doug perform. He greeted me and then directed me to a table of beautiful young dance performers called "The Cavettes". It was odd one of the girls lived directly across the street where Joe and I room and boarded. She had often seen me coming and going to work. It just so happened the star performer was Jane Mansfield, one of the most beautiful women in the world. I was totally mesmerized as Jane sang and danced not more than 10 feet from our table. Doug later invited the Playboy sex symbol to sit at our table.

Early one morning after beat walking, Ken was taking Joe and I back to the detachment when he received a call a man had committed suicide by jumping off a 300 foot cliff near the top of Burnaby Mountain. We drove to the park and met Paddy Sherman, the Vancouver newspaperman, whose passion was heading up the North Vancouver Search and Rescue team. His men had driven a jeep to the edge of the cliff and run out a cable and stretcher and had already lowered two men down the mountain. With walkie-talkies the two radioed back to Paddy there were two bodies side by side at the bottom of the ravine. Paddy asked for a police volunteer to go down and view the scene. I volunteered. The rescuer and I were able to stand in the stretcher and use a free hand to push away as the cable lowered us down the near vertical cliff. Stupidly, I wasn't clipped into the stretcher or wearing a helmet and it never occurred to me a dislodged rock from above could have knocked me off the stretcher to make me a third dead body at the bottom of the cliff. At the bottom, I saw the second body was several weeks old and badly decomposed. We radioed this information to Ken who requested a member from the Identification (Forensics) Section attend and take pictures of the two side by side bodies. The forensics member and two general duty members walked to the scene from the Barnet Highway. The identification member took several photographs before the bodies were placed into two body bags. It was decided to haul the bodies out to the highway. Consequently, the forensics member, a regular member, and three men with search and rescue and I made two trips out to the highway.

After walking the beat for a couple of months, I was assigned to General Duties on 3 Watch under Ken while Joe was assigned to Traffic Detail. My first senior general duty partners included the excellent and brightest right down

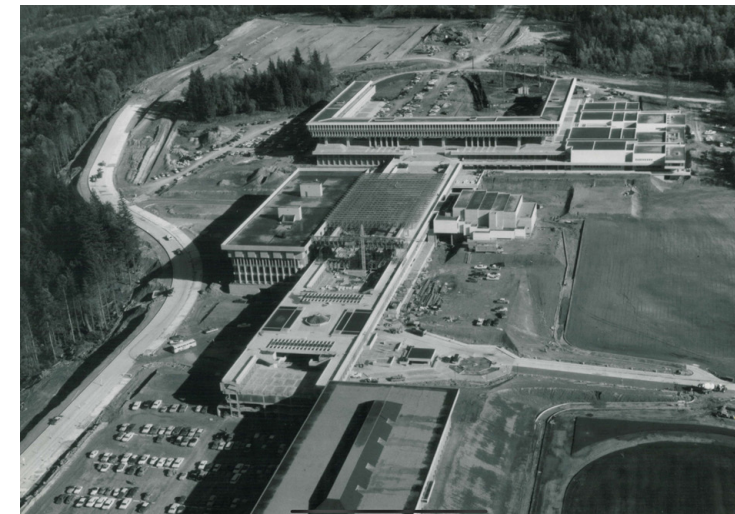


The recovery of two suicide victims who jumped off the near-vertical cliffs on the northeast face of Burnaby Mountain.

to some of the laziest men on the planet. My first general duty partner and I attended a family fight that left me unimpressed with his way of handling the situation. A wife had taken a bad beating from her husband and he refused to become involved unless she promised to swear an information charging her husband with assault. Out of sheer frustration, the woman punched me right in the face only to have my trainer grab and arrest her for assaulting a peace officer. In my mind, the wrong person went before the judge. Police policy in 1965 allowed a wife-beater husband to pound the living daylight out of his spouse with no repercussions to him unless the wife swore out an information for assault. A wife was always too scared to charge her husband for fear of getting an even worse pounding.

During a dayshift, an outlaw Hells Angels Motorcycle Club member appeared in court charged with a criminal offense. He appeared before Magistrate Hyde. The biker let out an outburst in court and Murray told him to sit down. He refused so my neighbour told me to subdue my prisoner. We got into a scuffle and I decked him. Regaining his feet, he complained. Murray looked at him, "If you want to horse around in my courtroom be prepared to deal with the outcome."

One graveyard shift, I was typing up a report when a call came in of a garage break-in a few blocks from the detachment. Instead of responding in the police cruiser with red lights and siren, I went in on foot and looked through one of the garage's bay windows and saw a man in a crouched position near a workbench at the back of the shop. Working my way along the side of the building to the front door, the suspect bolted out the back door. I took off after him and was soon running flat out between houses and across a few side streets. The chase lasted less than a few minutes before the suspect gave himself up. Upon seeing his face, I was dumbfounded—the person being chased was Ron, my roommate. He told me he had been authorized to install a voice-activated tape recorder under the workbench in the garage. Ron explained he had a warrant from Magistrate Hyde permitting him to clandestinely install the recording device. I let him



September 1966 opening ceremonies of 2500 charter students.  
Simon Fraser University  
George Allen Aerial Photography Ltd.

escape and he greeted me with a very sheepish grin at the breakfast table the following morning. The garage was being used to chop up stolen cars for parts.

I stayed a few months with the Peterson family and then moved again and shared room and board with foot beat partner Joe Healy. He was staying with Angela and Thomas F. Dempsey and their teenage daughters Deidre and Shelia. Tom was an intellectual who taught at the local high school. We often went on long walks and he told me he'd graduated with two degrees at age 17 in Ireland. He explained a good writer could turn a negative into a positive. He was instrumental in persuading me to enroll as a charter student at Simon Fraser University on top of Burnaby Mountain and then later to attend the University of British Columbia. I wrote home for my grade 13 results from the Renfrew Collegiate Institute and had no trouble getting accepted into first year courses at the new university. My request to further my education

only triggered a reply from the force stating I should prove myself as a policeman before taking on extracurricular activities such as improving my education. Instead of taking advice, I took courses in English and Psychology and on the successful completion of these subjects, I sent a letter to my superiors advising of my passing grades and requesting a reimbursement for successfully completing the two courses.

I was working during an illegal strike by employees of a big company in the Lake City industrial area of North Burnaby. I quickly realized senior members dressed as civilians had infiltrated the hall where the strikers had gathered and were instigating arguments with the strike speakers. This resulted in confrontations, and every time a member was shoved, the offender was promptly arrested for assault. Members, impersonating strikers, passed real strikers onto members waiting in cars to escort them back to the detachment. I was one of the junior members taking those arrested back to the lockup to put down the strike.

During a cold spell, I had an opportunity to practice what Corporal Roy had taught me about fights. I was patrolling with mentor Dale Lang when we saw two well-known thugs walking through the Old Orchard Shopping Centre parking lot at Willingdon Avenue and Kingsway. The two men were brothers and known for their boxing skills. Dale pulled up to them and on emerging from the vehicle, placed his hat on the hood of the car and began taking notes. I saw one of the men knock his hat on the ground, and as Dale stooped over to pick it up, the ruffian positioned himself to boot him right in the head. My sixth sense kicked in and I knocked him off balance. We both exchanged kicks to the other's groin areas and we both connected and we both went down on the pavement. While I was on the ground, the other brother got into a punch-out with my partner. I recovered from the groin kick first and was able to help Dale in subduing the other brother. Backup arrived, and both brothers were charged with assault.

Another time, I was working with Dale when we spotted a young break-and-enter artist who was wanted on an outstanding warrant for burglarizing a high-end clothing store on my foot-patrol route. I chased after the youth on foot and was catching up to him when he jumped over a two-foot hedge of shrubs and disappeared. I cleared the hedge right after him only to discover there was a six-foot drop on the other side of the row of trees. Landing, we both took bad falls resulting in both of us receiving sprained ankles and skinned elbows. Dale was able to drive right to the scene of our accidents and make the arrest.

I was working with Dale on a graveyard shift when we received a call to attend a house fire not far from the Astor Hotel located on the southwest corner of Willingdon Avenue and the Trans Canada Freeway. The fire had engulfed the entire home. We talked to the homeowners and learned their son had a friend living with them who has a criminal record. It was winter and we found footprints leading to the hotel. Talking to the night clerk, she told us a young man had checked in an hour earlier. She gave us the keys to his room and we let ourselves in and after asking a few questions, we noticed his clothing smelt heavily of smoke. We seized all his clothing and arrested him for arson and escorted him back to the lockup wrapped in bed sheets. Although we had only circumstantial evidence, we charged him with arson. He pleaded not guilty. The case went to County Assiz Courts in New Westminster and Murray Hyde, now a judge,

## SIR JAMES BOND II: CRAZY GENIUS

found the evidence overwhelming and sentenced him to seven years in the penitentiary. It never occurred to me the homeowner's son might have been involved in the arson to collect an inheritance had his parents died in the fire. Arson is always a difficult investigation because the evidence is destroyed.

Constable Don Brown was an exceptional role model for a recruit, and we had several successful investigations. One afternoon shift, Don took a call from the parents of a 10 year-old boy who had been grabbed off the street and brutalized by a couple of men. We questioned the youth about the gruesome details for several hours and asked the boy if he could remember anything unusual about the interior or exterior of the car. The youth recalled part of the license plate and an unusual logo or decal. We spent four hours going through the Motor Vehicle Branch's records until Don finally found a car fitting the description and whose owner had a criminal record for sex crimes. We drove past the house and noted the decal matched the car's description. Armed with this evidence, Don obtained a search warrant, and later that morning we arrested two suspects and impounded the vehicle. By noon, we had managed to get confessions from the two men. For a farm boy who had never really been exposed to the dark side of life, it's no wonder I was amazed at the number of men we checked who had lengthy criminal records for everything from police assaults, to bank robbery, to murder.

I worked with Irv Just who was 6'4" to my 5'8" making us a Mutt and Jeff team. His girlfriend was Miss Burnaby, and her parents owned the Casa Loma Motel on Kingsway and when working the afternoon shift, we would always take our lunch or coffee breaks in the home portion of the motel. One summer afternoon, I was driving along Kingsway with my partner en route to the motel for our nightly coffee break when a call came over the air that a suspect vehicle was driving east on Kingsway. The dispatcher gave a description and the plate number on the vehicle. The dispatcher then issued a call telling all vehicles to attempt to intercept the driver, as he was a police informant, and his intended rendezvous was with two hired hit men from Chicago staying at the motel. We were the same distance west of the motel as the other vehicle was east. While this short exchange was coming over police radio, I saw the suspect vehicle making a turn directly in front of us and into the motel enclosure. I hit the emergency lights and siren. In the few moments that followed, the informant parked directly in front of a door to the motel room where he was to have his meeting. He jumped from the car and ran to the door, but I intercepted him and arrested him on the spot for hit and run. I told him he had just struck a pedestrian. He looked utterly confused. I ignored his protestations and placed him in the back seat of the police car explaining if he was innocent, I'd get everything straightened out back at the detachment. I left him in the care of big Irv while I went into the motel and took the names and particulars of the two men. Once we left the area, I explained to the informant just moments before the interception we had learned he had been ratted out and the supposed coin collection buyers were instead contract killers. Several hours later plain-clothed detectives with co-operation from my partner's girlfriends' parents, entered the room and caught the two men as they were sleeping. When they did a search of the room, they recovered a loaded revolver with a silencer from under a pillow on which one of the two men was sleeping.

I worked with Don Henderson and we had a pretty exciting incident when a soldier from the army base in Camp Chilliwack went absent without leave (AWOL) and had been spotted in a back alley in South Burnaby. I volunteered to walk the alley in search of the soldier while he and members in other police cruisers cordoned off the area. Since the wanted man was a soldier, I naively assumed he'd be in a military uniform. Encountering a clean-shaven individual in civilian dress walking toward me in the back alley, I asked if he'd seen an army deserter. He walked on past me, but for some unknown reason, I looked back at him just in time to see him coming straight at me with a four foot club. He had picked up the stick in the instant I looked away from him. There was a pile of sand in the middle of the alley and I tripped over it in the dark. I rolled onto my back on the pile of sand and instinctively shone my flashlight up into the face of the soldier. By now, he was standing directly over me with both hands held high over his head holding onto the club. His intentions were clear; he was going to bash my brains. I threw a handful of sand into his face and somehow rolled in such a way to regain my feet. We squared off with each other to do battle. He had the stick and I had my flashlight for weapons. Suddenly, a car came out of nowhere and its driver drove straight into the soldier and sent him flying through the air. I jumped on top of him and in the struggle to get my handcuffs out of the pouch ended up unfastening the button on my holster strap containing my .38 Smith and Wesson service revolver. During the fight my Sam Browne belt had become twisted and my gun holster ended up where my handcuff pouch should have been. My antagonist had my loaded service revolver out and we were fighting over the gun. I managed to wrest it out of the soldier's grasp and throw it away. Don handcuffed the AWOL soldier and placed him in the back seat of the cruiser while I went to retrieve my revolver.

I worked with Bill Dawson for several months. One night a call came in around 5:00 a.m. a garage had been

## SIR JAMES BOND II: CRAZY GENIUS



The former locations of Oakalla Prison Farm and the Willingdon School for Girls in what is now urban Burnaby.

broken into overnight and the cigarette machine pried open for the silver coins. Shortly after leaving the scene of the burglary, we spotted a man hitchhiking along the Lougheed Highway near the Willingdon Avenue intersection. In shaking this man down, I made a near fatal mistake. Instead of making the suspect stand spread-eagled with his hands up against the police car, I began to shake him down on the side of the highway. Frisking his legs down near his ankles, I noticed a big bulge in both his pant cuffs. The thief had cut holes in both his pockets and allowed the stolen silver to drop down into the lining of the trousers. Looking up, the man was poised with a hunting knife. By this time, Bill had drawn his revolver and pointed it at the crook's nose. Bill uttered, "Move, and I'll blow you to Hades." The next instant the knife dropped at my feet.

At this time, a young Afro-American youth's weekend escapades caused the police a great deal of extra work in North Burnaby. One night, Bill and I responded to a noisy party complaint. We walked up to a house just as the black kid began yelling obscenities while fleeing on foot between some neighboring houses. In the dark, he failed to see some cellar steps and took a bad tumble head over heels down cement steps. I ran to the bottom of the steps and found him in a semi-conscious state and half-scalped. We took him to the Burnaby General Hospital for some stitches before placing him in the lockup. We charged him with causing a disturbance. Upon his release, we never saw him again as like so many troublemakers he merely moved into another jurisdiction.

The Willingdon School for Girls, a correctional institution for incorrigible young women, was located on the southwest corner of Willingdon Avenue and Canada Way. Once Bill and I received a call five girls from the school had gone over the fence and were hiding in a nearby swamp. Bill dropped me off near the intersection and I went into the swamp alone to look for the escapees. I found them at the root-tangled end of a large downed Western Red Cedar in the process of changing from prison garb into street clothes. Friends had stashed clothes and shoes under a large stump to aid them in their escape. I walked down the length of the fallen tree and announced, "Hello girls, isn't it time to come with me?" Their giggling changed to verbal abuse, and one girl suggested since they outnumbered me five to one, they beat me up. I treated their threats lightly and responded by shouting, "Help, rape." At first, I chased the girls through the swamp but after about 20 minutes the girls turned on me, and I was the one being chased. One girl made the mistake of

## SIR JAMES BOND II: CRAZY GENIUS

getting away from her associates and coming too close to me, I made a lunge, grabbed her, threw her down and removed her shoes. Throwing them out into the swamp, I made a retreat calling out, “You can’t catch me, you can’t catch me.” This infuriated the girls, and they became bound and determined to catch me and give me a sound beating. I took them through the wettest part of the swamp, and everyone was mud up past the knees. I emerged from the bush not far from the intersection of Willingdon Avenue and Canada Way. I sprinted past a lady waiting at the bus stop and shouted, “Call the police, I need help.” The lady was unaware these young women were capable of assault causing injury. She placed the call and told the telephone orderly a policeman had just ran past her being chased by five girls saying he needed help. Within moments, police cruisers converged on the scene and took the five escapees into custody. After allowing them to have a smoke, we returned them to the prison. Ironically, members never asked these young girls if they ran away from home due to physical or sexual abuse nor did members ever listen to them about abuse from guards within the prison.

Around this same time, I was working with Bill when we received a call two inmates from the 160-acre Oakalla Prison Farm had beaten a guard with a chair, scaled the prison fence, ran across Royal Oak Avenue, and escaped into Forest Glen Park. We were told the two men were dangerous and to use extreme caution. My partner dumped me off and I was the first one into the heavily timbered park. I climbed up onto a big log and surveyed the dense bush for possible clues as to where the two had disappeared. The dog man was brought in but the escapees managed to steal a car and escape temporarily. They were apprehended a few days later. John Emmett McCann and David Ian Clark were two of the most dangerous criminals in Canada.

One day shift, Bill and I were having a relaxing patrol up to Simon Fraser University on Burnaby Mountain when we received a call about a bank holdup in progress at a bank located in northwest Burnaby. We were miles away. He was driving and came down off the mountain by Curtis Street without breaking any speed limits. He was proceeding west on Hastings with the red lights and siren going, when he screeched the patrol car to a stop to permit a woman pushing a baby carriage to cross the street. He obviously didn’t want us to be a first responder. Despite his attempt not to be heroic, we were still first at the bank and arrived in time to see a man running southbound away from the bank. The robber had escaped on foot. Instead of turning the car southbound toward the action, Bill turned northbound. I bailed out of the police cruiser and hit the pavement on knees and elbows and my revolver flew out of my hand and skittered across the street. I picked it up and limping and running took after the man I had seen a moment earlier fleeing southbound. He was running back toward me waving a revolver. I dropped into a crouch position, in readiness to fire, and he threw his weapon 25 feet in the air, at the same time putting up his arms. He was completely out of breath and began yelling he was the bank manager and the bank robber had pointed a handgun at him threatening to shoot. Until that moment, I thought the bank manager was the bank robber. I kept running in the direction of where the robber had just gone but he had managed to duck out of sight behind some houses. By the time I caught up to the banker, he had lost sight of the bandit. Within minutes the area was cordoned off and swarming with policemen who began a house-to-house search. It was then I realized my hands, knees and elbows were bloodied as a result of jumping out of the moving police car. The plain-clothes General Investigation Section apprehended the robber a few days later.

Another summer evening, Bill and I responded to a break and entering in progress at a home in North Burnaby. We reached the residence within a few minutes and found a woman hysterically screaming at us from the porch. She told us one of the thieves had tripped while trying to escape and was on the lawn next to the house, while the second one was fighting with her husband and his brother in the living room. I ran over to the man on the lawn and booted him in the ribs while he was still on the ground. I then wrenched his hands behind his back and put him in handcuffs before running into the house to see the house owner, his brother, a burglar and Bill struggling for possession of a shotgun. My partner and I managed to wrestle the weapon away from the other two men. After several minutes, we discovered we had busted a drug raid. Two Vancouver City detectives and two members of the Vancouver RCMP Drug Section had been tailing a known drug addict and pusher. The addict got on a bus going eastbound into Burnaby. The two Vancouver detectives managed to board the bus but the two Mounties opted to return to their car. This left the two Vancouver detectives out of their jurisdiction but rather than abandon the chase they concluded they were in hot pursuit and so stayed on the bus with the suspect. When the bus stopped, the addict got off and walked to a house that was being rented by his brother and sister-in-law. The Vancouver plain clothes detectives got off at the next stop and then doubled back just in time to see the druggie go into the house. Since the residence was known to the two members, they decided to use their writ of assistance allowing them to do search and seizure without a warrant. They waited a few minutes and then crashed the home hoping to catch the addict shooting up in the bathroom. They kicked in the front door and ran into the bathroom just as the addict was preparing to inject himself in the arm with heroin. Rather than be caught red-handed with the stuff, the drug user threw his paraphernalia out the window. One officer struggled with the addict while the second ran back outside to retrieve the needle and syringe for evidence. Unaware the two men who had forced

## SEVEN YEARS A HORSEMAN

## SIR JAMES BOND II: CRAZY GENIUS

their way into the home were policemen, the homeowner grabbed his shotgun from a closet, while his wife called in a break and enter in progress to the Burnaby Detachment. By the time Bill and I had responded to the call, the fight for possession of the weapon had made its way to the living room. Eventually the complaint got sorted out and the two Vancouver policemen arrested their suspect, charging him with possession of a narcotic. The senior detective who had taken my boot kicking told me in very strong language that he was not impressed with our handling of their drug bust.

My curiosity came close to getting me into some serious trouble during a couple of visits to the skid road area of Main and Hastings Streets In Vancouver. My first trip was with a clean cut chap who’d been a regular visitor with the hookers plying their bodies on the street corners. In order to blend in, I bought a flashy jacket, pointed shoes and gaudy cuff links. He introduced me to an attractive prostitute and she offered a freebie. The next time my cousin came along and we visited the Smilin’ Buddha Cabaret, a favorite hangout for criminals. I was downright stupid.

We ended up sitting with Guitar Shorty, Jimi Hendrix’s uncle, and Little Venus, a stripper. She did a performance and threw a little slip of a dress at me. After about an hour, the Vancouver City Police did a raid and took the names of any unfamiliar faces. They took mine. By this time it was about 2:00 a.m. and the Buddha was shutting down for the night. Our new companions Shorty and Venus invited us back to their place to party with friends. I chatted with Shorty and he mentioned a few days earlier he’d been checked at the Blaine/Douglas border coming up from the States and customs had seized his treasured revolver. He asked about my place of work. I was a teller at a bank. Which bank? Where? How long? When he began asking about investments, it was time to leave. At work the following day, I read a bulletin about suspicious persons and my name came to the attention of my superiors. I explained it was my curiosity that took me into Vancouver’s skid road.

Some graveyard shifts a partner and I would stop and search every car moving up or down Hastings Street between 2:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m. and often ended up with an arrest before morning. It was not unusual for members to drive up and down the freeway to put miles on the cars. During a period of government restraint, a memo came out instructing members to do our part by parking to reduce fuel consumption on the graveyard shift and to only respond to emergency calls. Our superiors told us the gist of the memo meant to find a secluded place and hide out between 3:00 and 5:00 a.m. A while later either the economy or crime picked up, because another memo came out saying graveyard members were expected to put several miles on their vehicles per shift.

One evening while working alone, I interrogated a young suspect in the presence of his parents on a break-and-enterhome invasion. Although guilty as sin, he refused to rat on his friends until his father gave him a couple of good cuffs on the ear. In those days a parent could hand out physical discipline without repercussion from the police. He spilled the beans on his accomplices and the investigation mushroomed, and 50 people, including several adults, were charged with car thefts and home invasions and over the next month many unsuccessfully concluded files were amended to charges pending and for a couple of weeks I was putting in 10-12 hour days.

Robert Owen Lewis was an Auxiliary policeman who often rode shotgun with regular members on weekend afternoon shifts as a backup in the event of a skermish. As a result, he knew every nook and cranny where members took their coffee and lunch breaks. He knew the dedicated members from the slackers. It took a few months before the General Investigation (Detective) Section to put two and two together and concluded Bobby was a bank robber.

I was working in North Burnaby when Staff Sergeant Bruce Northrop and Corporal Les Holmes requested a uniformed member assist in the execution of a search warrant on Bobby’s basement suite in a North Burnaby home. We went downstairs and climbing up on a chair, I looked on top of some air vents and found the smoking gun. A member from the Identification Section photographed the scene. For a bank robber, Bobby wasn’t the sharpest knife in the drawer. He’d hidden a blue ski mask, complete with eye holes, in which was hidden a loaded revolver. A member from the Identification Section photographed the scene and dusted the gun for fingerprints. They arrested Bobby with possession of an unregistered firearm.

My sleuthing evidently impressed my superiors and I was transferred to the General Investigation Section’s newly formed Burglary Detail. My boss was Bruce. Les was in charge of Burglary Detail. I was one of the younger members in Burnaby to make the elite plain clothes squad and was given perks including a ghost car, food vouchers, and at times even my own hours. I was the youngest member of Burglary Detail. I worked with Sergeant Roy Pickell and Barry Daniels. Because I was taking classes at SFU, a few members began to call me ‘The Professor’ and even the ‘Absent-minded Professor’.

My first annual leave began at 8:00 a.m. on 4 August, 1966 and immediately after the completion of a graveyard

## SEVEN YEARS A HORSEMAN

## SIR JAMES BOND II: CRAZY GENIUS

shift on a Thursday morning, partner Bob Babcock and I left en route back to Ontario. I was hoping to attend my first cousin's wedding reception at Foresters Falls on Saturday night. We drove my car and managed to cross from Burnaby to Renfrew in just three days. I made the reception in the Orange Hall at Foresters Falls. Around midnight my two policemen uncles, Dad, one of his school chums from his youth, and I went out to my car for a few drinks. I sat in the front seat with one uncle while Dad sat in the back seat sandwiched between an uncle and his friend. The car was parked under a streetlight, and Dad's friend kept looking out the window convinced the police would appear and search the vehicle. Dad finally told his buddy not to worry, as the police never patrolled the Falls. He savored the moment when he told his drinking companion I was in the RCMP, my uncle was the Chief of Police for Renfrew while another uncle was a sergeant with the Peterborough City Police. A few evenings later, I was hanging out with a group of friends at a favorite gathering place on the Ottawa River drinking beer and eating corn on the cob. We had a big bonfire going and were having a great time. When it was time to leave, the Ontario crowd told me they either had to finish off the booze or pour it on the ground, as it was in violation of the Ontario Liquor Act to have an open bottle of alcohol in a vehicle while driving. I explained to the group that in BC it was quite all right to transport open bottles provided the car occupants were of legal age and the liquor was in the trunk. There were many senseless laws between provinces across Canada.

The wedding celebrations were cut all too short by a tragic accident on August 21. My Dad's youngest brother John and my Dad's oldest brother's only son Reid and two of their friends had decided to take a 14-foot aluminum boat up the Ottawa River and through the Fourth Chute to hunt a cougar or bobcat that had been spotted on one of the islands in the Ottawa River. A sudden rush of water, the result of the opening of the Sullivan Dam upriver on the Quebec side, caused the boat to capsize, and the four men and their two dogs were dumped into the swirling waters. Boaters were so close to the spot of the accident some saw one of the four men being sucked under water and into an eddy. The men had life preservers but were not wearing them and the first responders found the dogs clinging to the preservers and thus were able to haul them to safety. I heard about the accident on coming home late from a date in Ottawa. Everyone was crying and trying to explain my uncle and my cousin had drowned in the Ottawa River. I was in complete denial and refused to believe the story having seen them a day or two earlier. Dad and I drove up to my grandparents but rather than visit with relatives, I let myself into the only church in the Falls and began to pray the four men would be found alive. Just before daybreak, Dad and I drove to where the men had placed the boat in the river and began searching the shoreline. That evening, I phoned the hydro-power station requesting they lower the level of the water to facilitate the search.

Dad and I spent the entire week walking along the shoreline of the Ottawa River looking for the men. The river gave up a body on four successive days after the accident—day four, day five, day six and day seven. My relatives were the last two men to be taken from the river. On the 1st or 2nd day, as Dad and I returned from an all-day search, we saw a body bag on the riverbank containing one of the four victims. It was not uncle John or cousin Reid. An Ontario Provincial Police sergeant on the scene learned I was a policeman, and he showed me the bloated body. This resulted in bad nightmares with me merging the memory of the cadaver I had seen floating in formaldehyde at the University of Toronto and my relatives. I had the same recurring dream for several months with the result being I hated to go to bed at night. I would wake nightly dreaming in which a very dead favorite uncle was floating in a big vat.

Working plain clothes had one very dangerous task iwhich nvolved sitting in a ghost car with a loaded shotgun on a Friday night in the event of a bank robbery. We were never given explicit instructions on what we were to do in the event of a robbery and none of the members wore the cumbersome 20 pound bullet proof vests. The banks would have cash on hand to exchange money for pay day cheques. The Lower Mainland experienced a series of bank robberies during this period the head of Burnaby's General Investigation Section implemented a bank strategy on government paydays by having RCMP members park within a block of a bank and wait for a robbery. Another job was to hide in darkness and to do surveillance on the homes of known bank robbers and safe blowers. I used a tape recorder to monitor the comings and goings of their patterns. One home had two career criminals and the GIS members wanted to know their associates so I sat parked in an alley half a block away with a pair of binoculars watching the house.

My time in GIS lasted only three weeks before a past mistake took me from the top of the pile to the bottom. Just before joining the special squad, I investigated a house burglary and had written the report on a graveyard shift and the last paragraph stated the homeowner had been notified of the negative results. I had thrown the file in the completed reports basket with the full intention of calling the complainant before booking off shift but neglected to make the call.

This was an honest mistake but it was false. Everything would have been fine had not the complainant chanced to call and make enquiries during my days off shift. Staff Sergeant Florian Schmidt called me into his office to talk about

## SEVEN YEARS A HORSEMAN

## SIR JAMES BOND II: CRAZY GENIUS

my inaccurate report. We talked and I foolishly told him other members sometimes embellished their reports with little white lies. He asked for the names of any members but I didn't want to be a rat as to do so would have resulted in ostracism from my comrades. He ordered me to give a statement with threats of charging me with conduct unbecoming by refusing to give a statement to a non-commissioned officer. I told him to write down, "I am refusing to give a statement. This is my statement." He wasn't a happy camper and a few days later he informed me I was being charged with a false statement in a police report. I asked a couple of senior members if they would act as my defense but no one seemed interested in helping me for fear of jeopardizing their own career. I was taken off Burglary Detail with a demotion to Telephone Orderly with my duties being reduced to answering the telephone and typing up complaint sheets. Even as a Telephone Orderly there were some stressful moments. A couple of times emergency calls came in requiring me to direct responding police vehicles to the scene with a map book. My job was to use the book and to set up a perimeter around a home invasion and sometimes even a bank robbery.

Most members go through a 35 year career and never experience a court marshal and I had managed two in less than three years of service. Tarrd with a black brush, any appeal for help fell on deaf ears. I explained my predicament to my landlord Tom and he offered to help me prepare a written statement to read to Inspector Bob Simmonds, second in command for Burnaby Detachment. He later became the Commissioner of the Force and Canada's top cop. He was impressed with my conducted my own defense and let me off with a reprimand and not the recommended dismissal from the force. He insisted on being told who had helped me with such a well prepared statement. I told him that my landlord was a professor and that he had offered to help me.

After my trial in Burnaby, I was further demoted from Telephone Orderly and transferred to Orderly Room at the New Westminster Subdivision on 6th Street near 6th Avenue in the Royal City. The powers to be though the demotion would teach me a lesson but I enjoyed my time on the second floor of the subdivision's offices where I was allowed to coffee daily with Larry Proke, Les Holmes and Bob Stinson, the force's top guns who investigated serious crimes such as safe blowing, commercial burglaries, bank robbers, rape and murder. When not working, they were called upon to get the daily paper, coffee and donuts and sometimes even a bottle of whiskey for Officer Commanding Superintendent Herb Bloxham. the man in charge of all the Lower Fraser Valley Detachments as far east to Chilliwack. They were all career policemen. Les went to New York to train to be the first lie-detector cop in all of Canada while Larry Proke became the top policeman in charge of British Columbia.

Bank robber Bobby Lewis had his day in court at the 1966 County Assizes in New Westminster. Although only charged with the possession of an unregistered revolver, Judge Hyde sentenced him to a stiff sentence in jail. In taking Bobby from the New Westminster Detachment to the British Columbia Penitentiary, he shouted in my ear for my testimony against him, "When I get out of here Waite, you're a dead man." In return, I arrogantly retorted, "When you get out, you'll be an old man."

A year or two later Government of Canada's Department of Justice lawyers introduced the Habitual Criminals Act and repeat offenders of indictable offenses were sentenced to life in prison. It was the "Three sticks and you're out." It made career criminals such as safeblowers and bank robbers rethink their chosen career paths.

Although my position was clerk, and my duties were reduced to report reading, I still managed to get into trouble after only a few weeks. I began opening Herb's letters stamped "Confidential". After reading, I'd type up brand new envelopes, place the letters in the new envelopes, and lick their flaps. One morning, Herb asked me to visit him in his office in an hour. It was a most stressful hour leaving me sweating bullets. Knocking on his door, he was very polite and asked me to close the door before casually asking why I was reading his confidential mail. I confessed to sometimes intercepting his private mail and read their contents out of curiosity. He gave me a wry smile and said, "If you're going to try things like this, you have to be smart enough not to get caught." I was puzzled and asked how he knew I had read his mail. He answered, "This morning, the envelopes were still wet." He told me there were three rules when doing clandestine operations within the force. Number one was don't get caught and numbers two and three were the same as number one. His reprimand never went beyond his office.

There was an opportunity by being stationed at the subdivision as the Identification (Forensics) Branch members worked directly below on the main floor. I often watched Sergeant Skip Wheatley, the non-commissioned officer in charge, process and make prints in the darkroom. We became good friends. I often went out on graveyard shift patrols with Skip to photograph crime scenes. He later encouraged me to apply for a transfer into forensics.

It took me several months before being transferred from a clerk at subdivision back to uniform at the New Westminster Detachment occupying a small office in the Court House in New Westminster where members' duties

## SEVEN YEARS A HORSEMAN

mostly involved prisoner escorts between Oakalla Prison Farm in Burnaby and the British Columbia Penitentiary in New Westminster. These criminals appeared in County Court for heinous crimes. These escorts were extremely dangerous since these prisoners were serving lengthy sentences and had nothing to lose if they attempted an escape. Al Ellard and I escorted McCann and Clark, the two men that had attempted to kill the guard at Oakalla Prison Farm from the British Columbia Penitentiary to County Court for several consecutive days. They were the men I had tried to locate when stationed in Burnaby. On our drives back and forth between the prison and the court room we talked about their escape. McCann told me they had been hiding under the log I was standing on and they would have tried to kill me if confronted. I told them I had my revolver out and would have shot them. Their trial had gone on for several days and we had done the escorts with the prisoners with their hands cuffed to their front but through a wide belt with the buckle in the middle of their backs. We always did a skin frisk before taking the men from the cells. McCann told me when he was only eight, a man attempted to rape his older sister and he stabbed him in the neck. He died and he ended up in the penal system and was never released. Although he liked me, he told me not to ever turn my back on him or he'd try any means possible to escape. On the day of sentencing the pair were extremely giddy so I handcuffed them with their hands behind their backs. That decision may well have saved our lives. On our return to the detachment our superior took us into his office and explained the penitentiary warden had told him the two cons on passing through the metal detector had set off the alarm. The guards did a search and discovered knives hidden in their notebooks. These table knives that had been honed on cement to a sharp point and were called shivs. If the two convicts had been returned to the pen with their hands cuffed in front instead of behind their backs they could easily have had enough reach from the back seat to run the shivs into the backs of our necks at the first stop light. The pair were considered two of the most dangerous criminals in all of Canada.

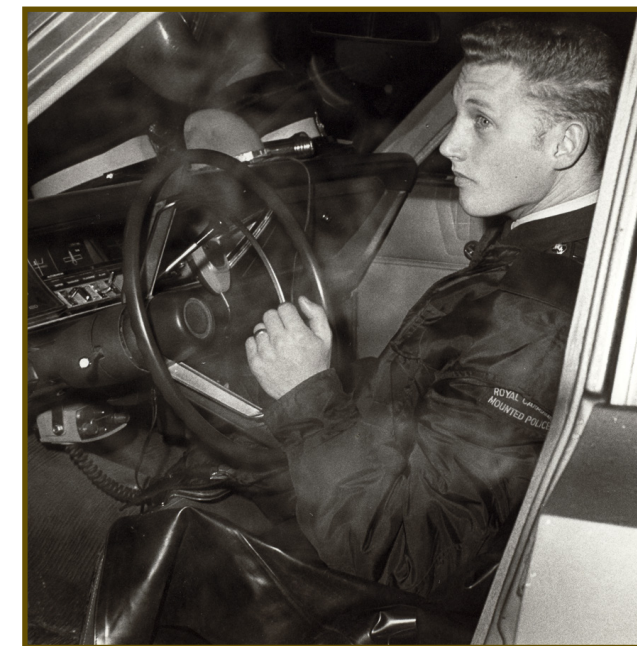
One day Frank called me into his office and asked me to help tidy up a room containing criminal files going all the way back to the late 1880's. He unlocked a door behind his desk which lead up spiral stairwell to a large room. Going back down the steps, Frank casually remarked, "They hung Old Slumach from a rafter at the top of the stairs for murder. He shot a fellow for following him to his gold mine." It piqued my curiosity and a few days later I visited the New Westminster Library and perused a 50 page file on the villainous killer. Before leaving, I asked the librarian to photocopy the entire file. Katzie First Nations' Old Slumach and his Lost Mine of Pitt Lake, almost like an Albatross, kept appearing in my life for the next 50 years.

Having served my time doing city policing it was time for a transfer to rural policing. It was akin to going from Purgatory to Heaven.

## **RURAL POLICING**

On July 1st, 1967, Canada's 100th birthday, I was posted to Haney Detachment some 40 miles east of Vancouver. The detachment included the communities of Haney, Pitt Meadows, Hammond, Websters Corners, Ruskin, Whonnock and Pitt Polder. These communities later comprised the Municipality of Maple Ridge. City policing compared to rural policing was akin to a transfer from purgatory to heaven. The detachment had 17 members to police 17,000 souls in Rainy Haney and neighboring Pitt Meadows. Staff Sergeant Rowland Harding, an ex-British Columbia Provincial policeman, was in charge of the detachment.

One of the first members to introduce himself was Charles Anthony 'Tony' Kelly Beecroft and our paths would cross several times over the years both in and out of the force. He told me he had transferred in a month earlier from Dawson Creek Detachment, a Doukhobor (Russian) posting. He was my mentor for my first several months in Haney. He was an excellent role model and was very much involved in community policing, a politically correct term used today but back then was unknown. When Tony stopped to check out some local troublemakers he was never confrontational. Instead, he had a way of bringing these potential lawbreakers around to his way of thinking and many became our friends.



Constable on patrol in Haney-Maple Ridge, 1968

When working with Tony, I never had to worry about having to call for back up because we always had it from the public. Most of the youths in Haney simply knew him as just plain Tony. I quickly learned he had a photographic memory and could read a National Geographic magazine and have me quiz him on its contents. He always had the correct answers. He loved writing and taught me how to submit reports seldom bounced by a proof reader. He and I often did shifts together and drove around in the same patrol car. I realized immediately Tony was a big man with big ears. He was a sponge constantly absorbing knowledge about anything and everything. Simply put, he was a walking talking encyclopedia. Other members knew when I had been working with Tony because new words were in my vocabulary that were either mispronounced or used in the wrong context. Tony did not suffer fools likely. If he liked someone, you could do no wrong, but if he didn't like someone they knew it and were written off as being a 'DAAR' meaning 'dumb as a rock'. Tony was an Alpha male. One time an antagonist jumped in front of him, threw up his hands and shouted, "Kung Fu" to which Tony responded, "flashlight" and knocked him cold.

While on patrols, we often talked about growing up and our first years in the force. Tony's first posting was into the Security and Protection Section (later the Security and Intelligence Section) where many of his shifts were spent on Parliament Hill or at the Royal Canadian Mint. He often patrolled the residences of Prime Minister John Diefenbaker and Governor General Vincent Massey and on more than one occasion was threatened by 'Dief the Chief' with a posting to the PM's hometown of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.

After his stint in Ottawa, Tony was transferred to the other side of Canada and posted to Security and Intelligence in Vancouver. Although a policeman first, Tony was a student second for he never stopped furthering his education. His time in Burnaby was no exception for he enrolled in a blend of courses including business administration, criminology, and organized crisis management – all much needed to survive as a standard beat cop. The RCMP in those years was: prove yourself first as a policeman and then we will decide if you go back to school and if so the courses you will take. Tony didn't follow policy. He was a square peg never quite fitting the round hole. The force didn't like him furthering his education without their approval and posted him to a small detachment within the Nelson Subdivision located halfway between Vancouver and the Alberta border and away from any institutions for advanced education but he began attending a school a long drive from his place of work. He passed his courses and asked his superiors for reimbursement but the force was reluctant to pay. Tony had two major occurrences happen to him in Nelson: one was good and the other one was bad. The good one was his marriage to Judy Birch and his bad one was confrontations with