

The Canadian Military Police Commemorates 75 Years In Peace And In War



The Canadian Military Police Branch can trace its roots to the formation of the Canadian Military Police Corps on September 15, 1917 when mounted personnel were charged with the responsibility of traffic control while enforcing discipline for the massive Canadian military machine on the Western Front. By war's end, formal establishment was set at 850 within 13 detachments and with 34 horses.

The uniform code of conduct and discipline has deep historic roots. Following in the grand traditions of the British fleet, since its inception in 1910, the Royal Canadian Navy had used the ship's Master of Arms and Shore Patrol to ensure proper conduct of ranks ashore and on board ships at sea. The RCAF had done likewise in 1940 creating a Provost Marshal with a formal establishment to ensure discipline within the ranks.

It was the Second World War which truly saw the birth of contemporary Canadian military policing. The Canadian Provost Corps (C Pro C) was created on June 15, 1940; No. 1 Company, formed at Rockcliffe, Ottawa as part of 1st Canadian Division, was made up entirely of RCMP members. No. 2 Company, formed in Halifax and joining 2nd Canadian division, was comprised largely of municipal police officers.

The Corps involvement in the fight against tyranny was global. Members of the Corps were captured in the defense of Hong Kong. Other MPs were bloodied on the Dieppe beaches.

It was in Italy, among the D Day Dodgers, the Corps came into its own. A Special Traffic Control Company was formed and placed as many as 200 directional signs per mile of advance, manning well known routes like "Maple Leaf," "London," "Diamond" and "Ruby." They also controlled the "Gold Flake" route from Marseilles to Cambrai as Canadian troops moved to their comrades in France, Belgium and Holland.

It was on 10 December 1943 in Italy that Lance Corporal Fred Butler won the Military Medal, the first of 67 Canadian awards, 13 foreign awards and 117 Mention In Dispatches that would be awarded to military police in that war.

By war's end, Corps strength had risen to 6,120 men. MPs were clearly present when the Nazis finally surrendered on 6 May 1945 in the Dutch town of Wageningen. The red cap, MP brassard and olive green motorcycle had become the Corps trademark; reflecting the bravery and discipline of the men and women who served as Provosts.

Their naval and air force counterparts also performed admirably in the great global conflict. Royal Canadian Navy Master of Arms and shore patrols ensured good order and discipline serving on 369 surface ships and countless stone frigates in what, at war's end, was the world's fourth largest navy. The RCAF Service Police ensured base security and good conduct for a quarter million Canadians in 48 squadrons, air bases, and support and training formations in Canada and overseas, in what had become the fourth largest force in the world.

The Korean War saw a continuation of this martial spirit as Canadian military police joined their British and Australian counterparts to form the policing component of the famed Commonwealth Division.

Since then, MPs have served on military missions and theatres of conflict from Cyprus, to Haiti, Cambodia to Afghanistan, and most recently in the Ukraine. Their roles are as complex and diverse as intelligence gathering to base security, combat support, to the training of their counterparts in emergent nation states.

Today, the Military Police Branch has members on every base and station of the Canadian Armed Forces in Canada and abroad. Military Police serve at the Royal Military College of Canada, JTF 2 and Joint Task Force (North) and at NATO, CFSU Europe and Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, in addition to Canadian embassies and high commissions around the world.

As we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Canadian Military Police Branch, the Canadian Military Police Association is extremely pleased to partner with one of Canada's leading watch designers, Time is Ticking Inc., which has a long and honourable history of creating watches which reflect our nation's great military heritage.

To show your pride in the Branch and its proud history, we offer a Limited Edition 75th anniversary Canadian Military Police Branch watch. The cost to you is only \$79.00 plus applicable taxes and postage. The watch is being sold far below its retail value of approximately \$200.00. Generous proceeds from each watch are being returned to the Association for them to use as a special initiative.

The slim-line watch has a Seiko Japanese movement, 24K, raised gold plating on its face, a curved crystal, engraved case back and a designer leather strap which is being offered in black, red and blue. The watch will be delivered in an embossed velveteen collector's box. This limited edition commemorative timepiece will make an excellent gift. All sales are final.

Wherever Canadian Military Police are stationed, they will hold true to their mission. For it has never changed.

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