

**Allis CRAIG**

**NOMINEE:** Allis CRAIG

**MEMBER SPOUSE:** John CRAIG, # 1529

**DETACHMENT(S):** Chapleau 1955 – 1964 & Gogama 1964 – 1967

**NOMINATOR:** Spouse

**SILENT PARTNER STORY**

I worked at Chapleau Detachment from 1955 to 1964. In the early months of 1964, when I was transferred to Gogama Detachment, it was a one-man operation. At some point during the remainder of 1964, it changed to a two-man operation. The following is about our time posted to Gogama Detachment.

My wife, Allis, delivered our second child in April 1964, so at the time of my transfer, we had a six year old and a newborn infant.

The detachment in Gogama was housed in a large two storey home that was previously owned by The Poupore Lumber Company. The building consisted of a residence, courtroom, office, two holding cells, a recreational compound and a garage.

While I was serving at the detachment, my wife faced many challenges from managing the office in the absence of police personnel, answering the telephone, taking complaints at all hours and contacting Timmins and Sudbury Headquarters. In some cases, she was also responsible for dealing with the complaints she received. She knew who the troublemakers were from supplying them with meals and looking after the cells. In the vent of a disturbance at the Hotel Beveridge Room, she would simply demand that the troublemaker be placed on the phone, ordering them to report to the police office. She would then place them in the cellblock with the promise of a bowl of hot soup.

First aid was an ongoing requirement. There was no medical assistance in Gogama so persons from motor vehicle accidents, industrial accidents, etc., were treated in the courtroom. During the summer months, the removal of several fishhooks from scalps was a common procedure.

Back in those days, the Department of Indian Affairs placed a cabinet in the office of remote detachments containing a supply of non-prescription drugs – aspirin, liniments, eye, ear, nose and throat remedies. Native people would arrive at the detachment office with medical complaints and were provided with in-stock remedies as needed. Those who required a doctor or hospital care were issued travel permits on the Canadian National Railway to and from Capreol or Sudbury and permits to stay in hotels overnight. The permits were signed by the officer or his wife.

Many difficult decisions were made over an obviously sick infant.

To add to the workload, the Gogama Detachment had a direct telephone line installed from the residence to the Mattagami Reserve. While it was originally intended for emergencies, it was the source of many aggravations.

The Gogama Detachment had a fairly high number of First Nations people during the winter. Cree trapping communities from Northern Quebec and of course the Mattagami First Nations, 10 miles to the east were within this community. My wife was called Mrs. Chief.

On occasion, Allis acted as secretary, interviewer and matron. On an ongoing basis, she cooked and supplied meals for prisoners, assisted in transporting prisoners and conducted the female searches when required.

I am reminded of instances where children were abused or neglected and they would have to be sent to the Department of Children's Aid in Sudbury.

I am also reminded of instances of childbirth where the mother required medical attention but would not leave Gogama to receive it. In all such instances, Allis would be involved.

An additional duty was supplying meals and accommodation for visiting senior officers, court officials, clergy and funeral directors.

And finally, caretaking – where there was no caretaker, Allis or the lady of the house was allowed \$21.00 monthly for the care of the office, courtroom, cell blocks, recreation area and bathrooms. She would often remind us when putting things back in order, “I get .75 cents a day to keep this place clean.”

This was a different time. Police officers and their wives were dedicated to their jobs, they enjoyed giving to the people and to their community and in return, they garnered the respect of the people.

These times served up golden memories and silver tears. I am sure my wife, Allis would tell you the same.

### **About Gogama**

Situated on the shores of Lake Minisinakwa on Highway 144 between Sudbury and Timmins, Gogama is currently home to approximately 450 people. The name Gogama is an Ojibway word meaning “jumping fish”, which is believed to be in reference to the many fish that can be found in Lake Minisinakwa.