

## **Alma LOCKE**

**NOMINEE:** Alma LOCKE

**MEMBER SPOUSE:** Charles “Charlie” A. LOCKE, #3615 (D)

**DETACHMENT(S):** Foleyet Detachment June 15, 1955 – July 1, 1959

**NOMINATOR:** Rhonda LOCKE (daughter)

### **SILENT PARTNER STORY**

The following chronicle was provided by Rhonda Locke, daughter of Alma Locke, on why her mother should be recognized as an OPP Silent Partner.

Charlie Locke joined the OPP in December 1953, and in February 1954 was initially stationed in Garson, Ontario. Garson is now incorporated in the City of Greater Sudbury. From there he was stationed in Espanola for a brief period before being transferred to Foleyet Detachment in June 1955. These are Rhonda Locke’s recollections of these years when her dad, Charlie Locke, was the sole officer posted to Foleyet Detachment.

Foleyet was an unincorporated community in the unorganized north part of Sudbury District in northeastern Ontario, on Highway 101. It’s midway between Chapleau and Timmins, Ontario. The town was created during the construction of the Canadian National Railway (CNR) through the area in the early years of the 20th century. Traditionally a francophone community, it is located about midway between Capreol and Hornepayne. Foleyet was established as a divisional point for changing train crews and servicing rolling stock, with a large railway roundhouse, too. Today, Foleyet is also the name of the geographic township that contains the community. In 2016, it had a population of 177 people.

Back in those days there was no road in or out of Foleyet , so people had to take the train. The house that Charlie and Alma Locke lived in with their young daughter (Rhonda) was also the OPP detachment

office and the jail cell (which shared a wall with their living room).

On a side note, when Charlie was later transferred to Dundas in 1961, and assigned to traffic patrol, he was not happy with this detail and he left the OPP to become the Chief of Police in Forest. When the Forest Police Service amalgamated with the OPP seven years later, Charlie returned to the OPP. At that time, Supt. Sam Whitehouse, Sudbury, requested that Charlie be sent back to Sudbury. Charlie remained in Sudbury until his retirement in 1985.

During his entire policing career, Alma Locke was always an active partner for her husband, Charlie. This was especially true in Foleyet, where she used to feed any prisoners who were locked up. Even when Charlie was the Chief of Police in Forest, Alma used to feed prisoners on occasion, although the jail was not part of the residence then, as was the case in Foleyet.

There likely aren't arrest records from Foleyet during those years, but if there were Rhonda Locke is sure her mom's name should be included on at least one of them. Most famously, in Locke family lore, there was the arrest that Alma made in Foleyet that both Charlie and Alma would recount many times through the years.

On this occasion Charlie was out of town transporting a prisoner when a call came in that a break and enter was in progress. As was often the case when Charlie was not at detachment, Alma answered the phone and took the information. In this case she could not pass it along to Charlie, as he was not available. So, Alma hopped in the police car along with their family German shepherd, drove to the store, caught the culprit in action and directed him to get into the police cruiser.

The dog must have intimidated the suspect because he did climb into the cruiser. Alma took him home and locked him up! Charlie took a lot of ribbing about that incident and every time he transported a prisoner he would be asked if it was his arrest or Alma's.

Thereafter, Alma was required to go to Sudbury to testify at the trial and she was reluctant to go. Charlie convinced her to attend by telling her she would be paid for her court appearance and she could use the money to buy herself a new dress in Sudbury. Whatever works, it would seem!

Besides feeding prisoners, Alma took special care of them when needed; including cutting the fingernails and toenails of some, and in a few cases cutting their hair.

Rhonda Locke turned five when Charlie was transferred to Sudbury from Foleyet. She recalled that her dad used to have a lot of informants.

“We would get calls at home from some of them.” Often her mom would talk to them and record the information to pass along to Charlie.

“When he retired, Charlie still received calls about police work. Often, he had fellow officers, who were still on the job, phone and ask if he could get some information from his contacts. One of his good informants even attended his funeral in 1999!

After Charlie retired, he was instrumental in starting the Sudbury Chapter of the OPP Veterans’ Association. He was chair of the chapter until his death. During this time, he managed to convince the OPPVA to hold their annual meetings at different chapter cities. Up until then the annual meeting was held in Niagara Falls every year.

The first OPPVA meeting outside of Niagara was in Sudbury. As was the case during his police career, Alma and Charlie both put in many hours getting everything organized for this conference. It was a total success!

Alma and Charlie also put in many hours helping to organize the annual curling bonspiel for the OPP in Sudbury. It raised money to donate to children’s charities through raffles and other means on behalf of the OPPVA.

Charlie always enjoyed keeping his connections with his fellow officers after retirement. Alma joined in and helped him with everything. It was a life-long partnership, exemplified by their time in Foleyet Detachment.

Rhonda knows that her mother dedicated her life in support of her father's policing career, and though her recollections of their time in Foleyet are distant childhood memories, her parents often fondly shared their stories about the unique experiences of that time in Foleyet.

Rhonda believes her mother is truly worthy of recognition for her selfless contributions during their years posted to Foleyet, and throughout her adulthood.

In addition to the above narrative, Rhonda wrote:

*"I was very proud of my parents. They were both well liked throughout the community and had a lot of friends."*

*"As one example, and there were other instances, when we lived in Forest, I remember Dad had to arrest a young juvenile for stealing a lawnmower. He felt bad for the young man as he said he stole it so he could earn some money to buy food for his siblings. Mom and dad both felt this young man needed a chance and mom would buy toiletries and treats and other small gifts for dad to take to him when he was in juvenile detention.*

*"When the time came for him to be released, my parents did not want him to go back to his family, as they felt that would put him on the wrong path, so they convinced my aunt (dad's sister) and uncle to take him in and raise him. They lived outside of Strathroy, Ontario. He called them mom and dad and he was considered part of the family. The young man went on to get a good job, got married and had a family of his own. He maintained a relationship with them until they both passed away."*

Most of Alma and Charlie Locke's family and peers that would know the stories of their time in Foleyet are deceased. However, Alma's sister, Betty Dee Black (who is living), recalled the story of Alma's arrest of the suspect in Foleyet.

"For this act alone Alma is deserving of distinction," Betty wrote:

*In the early 1950s when Foleyet was an outpost of the O.P.P., an interesting event took place involving one of your young officers, Charles A. Locke and his wife, Alma.*

*“While Charlie was in another part of the territory – Alma arrested one of the locals. The jail was a room in their home. She locked him down, made and served him a good meal and waited for Charlie to come home. The event was a legendary happening that I call ‘compassionate lawfulness’.”*

*“She is my sister. She needs a star and recognition for this unusual act of bravery!*

*Sincerely,*

*Betty Dee Black*

Alma Locke received no compensation for her services... she was another Silent Partner.

### **About Foleyet**

**Foleyet** is an unincorporated community in the unorganized north part of Sudbury District in northeastern Ontario, on Highway 101 midway between Chapleau and Timmins, Ontario. The town was created during the construction of the Canadian National Railway (CNR) through the area in the early years of the 20th century. Traditionally a francophone community, it is located about midway between Capreol and Hornepayne, Foleyet was established as a divisional point for changing train crews and servicing rolling stock, with a large railway roundhouse too. Today, Foleyet is also the name for the geographic township that contains the community. In 2016, it had a population of 177 people.

Unique OPP Jeep image:

From left, Alma, Charlie and Rhonda LOCKE in Foleyet, 1957-1958.

