

**Pearl Agnes BENDER**

**NOMINEE:** Pearl BENDER (Posthumously)

**MEMBER SPOUSE:** Richard Ludwig BENDER, # 1003 (D)

**DETACHMENT(S):** Dryden Detachment 1952 – 1954 – two-man detachment  
Atikokan Detachment 1954 – 1956 – one-man detachment  
Red Lake Detachment 1957 – 1963 – Detachment Commander

**NOMINATOR:** Terry BENDER (son)  
OPP Detective Senior Constable, #5207

**SILENT PARTNER STORY**

Richard Ludwig Bender joined the OPP in 1947 and was posted to Fort Frances Detachment. While stationed in Fort Frances, Richard married Pearl in 1950.

In 1952, Richard was transferred to Dryden Detachment, where he served for two years. In 1954, another transfer took him to Atikokan Detachment in 1954 where the family spent the next two years. Three years later, Richard was transferred to Red Lake where the family remained for six years.

The Bender family was very young when they were stationed at the one-man and two-man locations in Dryden and Atikokan. It would be assumed that Pearl would perform any extra duties to support her husband, the OPP and the citizens of Ontario.

Since he and his siblings were so young, it is difficult for their son, Terry, who grew up and became a Detective Senior Constable with the OPP, to recall all that their mother had done to help their father who was often the lone OPP officer stationed at these detachments.

At Red Lake Detachment, it was expected that the Detachment Commander's wife would take on the role of feeding the prisoners. Terry does remember his mother Pearl telling the children to save some food from their meals so she could feed the prisoners.

On court days, Pearl had to babysit for prisoner's children until the Children's Aid Society or other agencies were summonsed to pick up the children when parents were sentenced to do jail time or an order of apprehension for neglected children was executed.

As in all small remote one-man or two-man detachments in the old OPP District No. 17 during this period, the wives were encumbered with a variety of duties which they considered just part of the job. This included such duties as answering the telephone and recording the information, taking complaints at all hours at both the office or residence doors, to name just a few. Pearl Bender was no different, she silently provided service to the OPP in these remote locales.

#### About Red Lake

Located 535 kilometers northwest of Thunder Bay and less than 100 kilometers from the Manitoba border, Redlake consists of 6 small communities, with a total population of 4,107 in 2016. The site of a Hudson's Bay Company fur-trading post 1790-1822, it's modern existence can be traced back to gold mining in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.