

Phyllis GAUDRY

NOMINEE: Phyllis GAUDRY

MEMBER SPOUSE: Robert GAUDRY, # 3124

DETACHMENT(s): Minaki 1955 – 1957

NOMINATOR: Maureen WITHERSPOON (daughter)

SILENT PARTNER STORY

Minaki is a tiny community on the Winnipeg River and CNR mainline, 30 miles north of Kenora.

I was 12 years old when my father was transferred to Minaki Detachment. The office/residence was just like a small house with everything in the one building. The office was located on Jackfish Bay, Winnipeg River. I believe my dad was the only police officer at the detachment. There were no other police officers who lived with us that I can recall.

When he was out working, my mother would have to answer the telephone, which was shared with the police office and the residence. She would have to record all the information from the individual then try and contact my dad through the local telephone operator in Kenora.

I do not recall any cells in the house but do remember my dad locking up prisoners, usually for intoxication, in an old railroad car that was on the CNR siding not too far from the house/office. Mom would have to take meals to the prisoners in the rail car. She was always accompanied on the trip to the rail car by a big police dog, who was kind of the family pet and guardian. This dog would also help my dad put prisoners in the rail car by barking and chasing them up the step and inside.

I can also recall Native people coming to the door who were injured and mom would have to treat them with first aid, usually from fights or stab wounds. She would then have to try to find my dad who was out on patrol.

There was major construction of an Ontario Hydro power generation dam at Whitedog Falls. This kept dad very busy and away from home a lot. Again, when he was away, mom would have to answer the door and the telephone recording all the necessary information and attempt to get a hold of my dad.

One day, I recall there was a very bad accident at the construction site or close to it on Pistol Lake. A piece of equipment went through the ice and five to eight people drowned. My dad had to investigate the matter. As my father was at the scene and investigating the incident, the phone which was ringing off the wall from people phoning from all over Canada wanting to know the name and information about the accident. I recall that my mom was very busy for about a week answering all of the calls and providing whatever information dad had provided to her in the morning before he went back to the scene of the accident.

Quite frequently, other police officers would come to visit us in Minaki. I know some were from Kenora and were my dad's bosses. My mom and dad would always take them fishing and it was always my mother's job to prepare a shore lunch for the visitors and help with cooking of the fish.

I believe that my late mother, Phyllis Gaudry supported her husband, the OPP and the citizens of the province of Ontario by assisting my dad as much as possible at this one- man location and is deserving of the OPP Silent Partner Award.

About Minaki

Minaki is a small, unincorporated community in northern Ontario, about a 55 kilometer drive north of Kenora. Minaki is gateway to lakes and rivers of the Ontario portion of the Winnipeg River system, including Gun, Sand, Pistol and Roughrock lakes. Fly-in service is available to the English River and lakes farther north.