

Doreen Mildred THACKER

NOMINEE: Doreen Mildred THACKER

MEMBER SPOUSE: Cliff THACKER, # 3229

DETACHMENT(S): Nestor Falls 1965 – 1967

NOMINATOR: Spouse

SILENT PARTNER STORY

In 1965, Doreen Thacker moved with her two young children from Atikokan to Nestor Falls when her husband, Cliff was assigned as the sole OPP officer at the detachment. Nestor Falls was a remote posting for an officer, his wife and family during those years.

The Thacker family quickly settled into the detachment residence that would be their home for the next two years. It was a multi-storey old house with office space on the main floor, jail cells in the basement and accommodations for their family.

There was no janitor, so Doreen cleaned the office, cut the lawns and helped to shovel the snow from the driveway for the office. She also provided meals to any prisoners that were lodged in the basement cells. She was regularly called upon to search female prisoners since there were no female guards or police officers.

On one occasion, there was a murder in Nestor Falls, the result of a domestic assault. Doreen guarded the female suspect for several hours by herself in the back bedroom of their residence, as the officers could not lock the suspect in the cells. They had to wait for several hours for the detectives and Inspector to arrive.

The detachment and residence had the same phone number, so when there was no one in the office, Doreen answered the phone, recorded the information, then called the police office in Emo, 60

kilometres south of Nestor Falls, to radio the information to Constable Thacker. He may have been out on patrol, or possibly attending court in Fort Frances, 94 kilometres southeast of Nestor Falls.

Several times intoxicated people would come to the residence or detachment door seeking police assistance. Doreen would have to deal with each situation by herself until Cliff returned to the office. If urgent, she would call the Emo office to relay the details about the incident to him, asking him to return and assist.

On different occasions, Doreen provided first aid when people showed up at the door bleeding or injured. She never knew what awaited her when she opened that door, though generally these were the result of assaults. Nonetheless, she never refused to open that door, or to offer the needed assistance until Cliff returned to the office.

The choice of restaurants was very limited in Nestor Falls. So, when senior officers from Kenora District Headquarters visited the detachment for visits or inspections, Doreen always provided a meal for the visitors.

Cliff Thacker summed up Doreen's contributions, stating that while he was out on patrol she raised their two children, ran the household and took care of the detachment building and grounds, making Nestor Falls a little less remote and a little more welcoming for all who came into her sphere of influence.

About Nestor Falls

Situated on the eastern shore of Lake of the Woods on Sabaskong Bay, the resort community of Nestor Falls has about 300 permanent residents, but sees this number increase substantially during the summer months.