

The AWLE 23rd Annual Training Conference Report – Truro, Nova Scotia



The Atlantic Women in Law Enforcement (AWLE) 23rd annual training conference was held in Truro, NS October 20th to the 23rd, 2015. This year's conference saw numerous first time attendees. The theme of the conference was *"Staying Strong and Carrying On"* and was hosted by Truro Police Service, Colchester County District RCMP and Nova Institution Correctional Service of Canada. The theme *"Staying Strong and Carrying On"* brought on new meaning with the death of Constable Catherine Campbell who was on the conference organizing committee. It was her dedication to this conference which gave us all the courage to continue with the planning. Cst Karen Degroot, Sherry Mackinnon and Cst Jane MacDonald were chairs of the conference and because of their committee's tireless efforts the conference was a huge success.

Lieutenant-General The Honourable Romeo A. Dallaire, retired Lieutenant-General, Senator and celebrated humanitarian, was the keynote speaker. Lieutenant-General Dallaire spoke of his experiences as Force Commander for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda where he witnessed the country descend into chaos and genocide, leading to the deaths of more than 800,000 Rwandans. Since his retirement he has become an outspoken advocate for human rights, genocide prevention, mental health and war affected children. He founded the Romeo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, an organization committed to ending the use of child soldiers worldwide and is an author of two best selling books.

Over the three day conference other speakers included Dr Margo Watts. Dr. Watts had a very informative presentation where she spoke of how clinical forensic psychologists try to figure out why people do the things they do. Dr Watts has a recent book which includes a collection of criminal cases that highlight the interface of psychology and law. Catherine Cogswell, a Criminal Law Policy Advisor with Department of Justice (NS) presented and focused on the background and context for the new prostitution provisions in the Criminal Code. Stuart Bradshaw who is the owner and President of Atlantic Security Group Inc. provided a background on terrorism and recruitment and highlighted cultural perceptions which can impede effective operations. The recruitment and radicalization for terrorists is growing in nature. Today's recruiters are influencing Canadian citizens in their homes using nothing more than social media. Paul Greene, Director of Strategic Communications for the RCMP in New Brunswick spoke how his unit turned to social media to not only share information but assist investigators in catching the killer of three RCMP members in Moncton last year. Corey Walsh an officer with the Durham Regional Police presented the issue of stigma and attitudes with the workplace when it comes to Mental Health issues. The case study "Mayerthorpe" was presented by Inspector Terry Kohlhauser, a 27 year veteran of the RCMP and currently posted in Kelowna, BC. Mayerthorpe at that time was the worst one day loss of life for the RCMP and the worst multiple-officer killing in modern Canadian history. Kohlhauser provided an overview of the investigation into James Roszko and the covert operation of the arrest of Shawn Hennessy and Dennis Cheeseman.

These presentations were both interesting and informative. Delegates were presented with a great deal of information that will assist them in their professional careers and personal lives.

The highlight of the week was the Awards Banquet held the evening of October 22, 2015. There were delegates and dignitaries from all four Atlantic Provinces. The following awards were presented:

Officer of the Year

Staff Sergeant Penny Hart started training with the Atlantic Police Academy in the spring of 1988, and has conscientiously served the people of Halifax Regional Municipality for the past 27 years. As with most police officers, her initial assignment was with uniformed patrol services, before transferring to several investigative units. In January 2001, she was promoted to Sergeant where she worked for two years as a Patrol supervisor before accepting a United Nations Peacekeeping Mission to East Timor in 2002. There she was assigned as an investigator to the Serious Crimes Unit where she was responsible for investigating homicides, crimes against humanity and serious sexual offences. She was then promoted to Deputy Chief of the Serious Crimes Unit where she supervised a staff of 30 international police investigators. In January 2003, S/Sgt. Hart returned to Halifax where she became the Sergeant-in-charge of the Financial Crime Unit. In December 2003, she was seconded to the RCMP peacekeeping branch in Ottawa where she worked as a project manager for the mission

in Iraq. She was responsible for conducting research in order to prepare Canadian police officers, prior to deployment, for missions in Iraq.

In October 2004, S/Sgt. Hart accepted yet another United Nations Peacekeeping Mission in Sierra Leone, West Africa, where she was deployed to investigate criminal offences committed by Charles Taylor, the former president of Liberia. The assignment involved the investigation of war crime offences committed on an international level. Some of these offences involved the procurement of child soldiers.

In January 2006, she was assigned to the Integrated Sexual Assault Investigative Team (SAIT) where she supervised an integrated team of investigators comprised of Halifax Regional Police and RCMP members. She was responsible for ensuring quality investigations were conducted, providing guidance and assistance in relation to complex investigations and acting as a liaison between her team members, senior management and the public. In her role as the SAIT Sergeant, she participated in numerous committees and worked closely with community partners to ensure that Halifax Regional Police was actively participating in a best practice coordinated approach to crime solving and victim support.

In 2011, she took on the responsibility of managing the Integrated High Risk Enforcement Action Team (HEAT) and Cold Case Unit. HEAT is responsible for managing the most dangerous and high-risk offenders while the Cold Case Unit investigates historic and unsolved homicides.

In September 2011, S/Sgt. Hart became the first female Sergeant within Halifax Regional Police to be assigned to the Homicide Unit. She excelled as the team leader in complex and high profiles investigations ranging from serious assaults in which death may occur to attempted homicides to multiple homicides. Her duties included performance management, financial management, guidance and completion of complex operational plans. She has been the team commander for several complex S/Sgt. Hart played a key role in the design and development of a training manual for the Romeo Dallaire Child Soldiers initiative and she has continually been involved, on a yearly basis, with training. In February 2015 she participated in the Train the Trainers course, and in November 2015 she will travel to Uganda, Africa, to train police, the security sector and military personnel. She has gone on a variety of 11 different training initiatives through the Pearson Peace Keeping Centre, as well as the Child Soldiers Initiative.

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S/Sgt. Hart has been an integral part of many teams, including the Investigative Triangle for the Catie Miller Homicide which was awarded the Halifax Regional Police Investigator of the Year Award in 2014. The triangle, composed of S/Sgt. Hart, HRP Detective Constable Jon Beer and RCMP Constable Trent Milton, demonstrated incredible determination, ingenuity and perseverance throughout the Catie Miller homicide investigation. Under S/Sgt. Hart's leadership and guidance, they actively worked this file every day for several months, and when faced with a very daunting task, did not give up despite very limited information and avenues of investigation. As one of the most technical investigations ever completed in Eastern Canada, they had to think outside the box. Despite all their hard work and planning, use of technology and resources, just about every obstacle that could have cropped up, did. That said, they remained positive and committed to solving this crime and bringing closure to the family. In May 2015, she was promoted to Staff Sergeant and transferred to the Halifax Regional Police Training Section where she supervises a team of trainers and is responsible for coordinating the training of approximately 700 sworn and civilian members.

While pursuing a larger-than-life career, S/Sgt. Hart still found time to complete her Bachelor of Arts in Police Studies from Memorial University in 2015.

S/Sgt. Penny Hart is the type of mentor any officer would be lucky to have. She is hard working, caring and a fine example of a police officer. She has been an effective mentor to both men and women, and her high expectations of herself and others seems to naturally raise the quality of work in any team endeavours in which she is involved.

S/Sgt. Hart has been an excellent example to others regarding the importance of work/life balance. Outside of her work as a police officer, she is a fierce competitor in both local and international triathlons and Ironman competitions. It is not unheard for S/Sgt. Hart to snowshoe into work during a major blizzard if the roads are un-passable. She often spends hours training both before and after her work day. She is an avid traveler and enjoys exploring new countries and cultures, often on her road bike. On a personal level, S/Sgt. Hart is socially conscious and passionate about the rights and welfare of women and children globally, as can clearly be seen in her volunteer work with the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative.

Team Endeavors

Inspector LeBlanc, Constables Gellatly, DeMello and Redfurn worked on a high profile, sensitive and complex file that was a joint task-force effort, which played an integral role in the investigation of Saint John Councilor Donald Snook.

Inspector Tanya LeBlanc was the manager of the Criminal Investigation Division. Prior to her promotion to Sergeant in 2015 she spent a number of years as an investigator in the Family Protection Unit and the Major Crime Unit. Tanya was promoted to Staff Sergeant in 2010 and recently to Inspector. She has been a member of the force since 1990.

Constable Mary Gellatly currently works in the Family Protection Unit and has been a member of the Saint John Police Force since 1998. In her current position she investigates all crimes involving children, sexual offences, elder abuse and domestic violence.

Constable Gordon Redfurn currently works in the Integrated Child Exploitation Unit with the RCMP and has been a member of the Saint John Police Force since 1990. In his current role, he investigates child exploitation and luring offences, as well as child pornography offences.

Constable Andrew DeMello currently works in the Court Services Unit and has been a member of the Saint John Police Force since 1988. In his current role, he performs the role of court informant and file review for court readiness.

The investigation was a very sensitive, and the complexity of this investigation was intensified after the target of this investigation was identified as being Councilor Snook, a well-respected elected official of the Saint John Common Council and a well-known child advocate involved in many child volunteer programs in the city.

On January 9, 2013, Donald Snook was arrested for child exploitation offences. This investigation involved one of the province's most prolific child sex offenders. Snook confessed to sexually abusing the 17 young males who ranged in age from 6 to 15 years, over a 12 year period. After his confession, the team was tasked with locating and identifying the young victims and corroborating Mr. Snook's confession.

The investigation was particularly complex due to the public trust held by Snook and the negative feedback by the community at his unexpected and sudden arrest. This was initially due to the community not believing the offences were committed but changed to outrage when the community began to acknowledge that Snook had committed these offences. The public blamed the police for not taking action sooner. This resulted in numerous meetings with victims and families, keeping them informed and to ensure that counselling needs were met, but also to diffuse the anger spawned from rumors, as well as from incorrect information shared on social media and by the news media, who were actively keeping this investigation in the daily news.

The investigation was all consuming with a seven month time-line from the date of Mr. Snook's arrest, to his conviction and sentencing. Snook was sentenced to a total of 17 years federal time for 46 child sex offences.

This was a high profile investigation which rescued children and youth from continued child sexual abuse by Snook, who at the time of his arrest was a beloved and trusted community leader. Many of the victims struggled to disclose their abuse. The impact on the victims and their families was severe and will have a lasting impact. The impact on the community was significant, as Mr. Snook had endeared himself in the Saint John community.

The team of Saint John investigators understood the enormity of their assigned tasks and truly exhibited the utmost dedication and commitment to this high profile investigation.

Mentorship

Constable Bonnie Hodder is in her seventh year of policing with the RCMP and is currently posted as a general duty member at the Stratford Detachment. Prior to this posting, she served her first six years at the Montague Detachment.

Cst. Hodder's dedication to the RCMP and the job can be seen in her extra duties including being a school liaison at a couple of different schools. She takes her role as a school liaison seriously and takes the time to regularly visit the schools, interact with the students and get to know the staff members.

While on duty with another officer, Cst. Hodder observed a female youth defacing a street sign. The youth was writing profanity about another student from her school. Cst. Hodder was able to identify the youth, having recognized her from a previous call for service and from visits to the local school. After cleaning the profanity from the sign, Cst. Hodder took the time to speak to the youth and listen to why she was upset and what had led her to deface a public sign. This youth was very reserved and nervous. She was afraid to speak to the police as the only dealings she previously had with police were from incidents at her home when police came as a result of her mother's drug dependency or arguments between her and her mother. Cst. Hodder knew from previous research that this youth came from a troubled, abusive home and was heading down that proverbial path.

Cst. Hodder took it upon herself to speak with members of the community including Child Protection workers and the staff members at the school. The principal shared Cst. Hodder's belief in this youth's potential and believed she needed someone to give her proper guidance. Cst. Hodder took an interest in this youth, hoping that she could help her change her path in life. Over the next couple years, she spent endless hours mentoring this youth. She consulted regularly with Child and Family Services and the high school staff members. After seeing that Cst. Hodder genuinely wanted to help, eventually this youth started opening up and talking. It was obvious that Cst. Hodder's mentoring was making a difference. The youth's work and school attendance, although not perfect, was much better, and she started to talk about graduating from high school as opposed to quitting. Cst. Hodder spoke to her about post-secondary education and what it takes to be successful in today's society. Cst. Hodder helped her apply to a college, something she had not considered before. Cst. Hodder continued to mentor and guide this youth as she graduated from high school and was accepted at a post-secondary school where she is now starting her second year in a Police Foundation Program. On many occasions she has thanked Cst. Hodder for being there for her when no one else was.

It is obvious that Cst. Hodder takes a great deal of pride in her job, and simply says, "I want to help people and make a difference." She certainly does each and every day.

Community Service

Constable Jeanette Hudson began her career with Fredericton Police Force in August 1999. During the course of her 16 years, she has worked ten years as a member of the Primary Response Team, transferring to the Neighbourhood Action Team/Crime Prevention in 2009.

Over the course of the last six years Cst. Hudson has heavily invested in program delivery for Fredericton's twelve elementary and four middle schools and most recently,

one of the three high schools. Cst. Hudson's focus is to have as much presence in the schools as possible, offering educational support to the elementary schools in the areas.

Cst. Hudson routinely conducts unscheduled "pop-in" visits at the various schools. These visits are designed to raise her presence as a school liaison officer and assist with youth-at-risk or any criminal/enforcement issues that may arise. Cst. Hudson also represents Fredericton Police Force when a Violent Threat Risk Assessment is required by a school.

Along with the schools, Cst. Hudson has been active in the community with various groups and community events such as being a member of both the Moncton Youth Residence and Youth Advisory Committee, and involved with the Saunders Street Group Home's youth committee meetings.

In April 2014, Cst. Hudson was assigned as the School Resource Officer for Fredericton High School and jumped right into her new job by participating in class presentations such as the P.A.R.T.Y. Program. This program involves the prevention of unnecessary risk behaviour in youth and is presented to Grade 10 classes.

Cst. Hudson believes in being accessible to the students and endeavours to provide a safe learning environment. One way she accomplishes this is with her presence on school grounds both outside and inside during lunchtime and break times. This also includes stores and restaurants in the area.

In June 2015 Cst Hudson's supervisor received an e-mail from a Fredericton High School teacher:

"I teach a class called General Health Science, but it is known affectionately as 'Sex Drugs and Alcohol.' Each year I ask the students to write position papers on drugs and alcohol. They have approximately 25 questions to pick from, and they write a narrative essay. This year, several students chose the question that asks "has the Resource Officer attached to the school made a difference - please explain." The comments are not always kind or appropriate....but of the 23 students, who wrote the position paper, 17 chose to write about the resource officer and 100% of the comments were positive. I have gone through the papers and would like to share with you some of the comments from the students:

"She is friendly but not friends with the students....you know what I mean?"

"She is everywhere...that stops stuff from happening"

"Her visibility acts as a deterrent to potential bad behaviour"

"I feel safer with her at the school"

"She is doing her job....I appreciate that!"

"Things that would have...could have happened, didn't because she was on it!"

The kids know it."

These sentiments were repeated by all students who chose to discuss this topic. She is highly respected by staff and students recognize her dedication to making the school a safe place."

During the summer months, Cst. Hudson is assigned to the downtown core, walking the beat or riding a bicycle. As in many cities, panhandling and homelessness in Fredericton has become more prevalent. Last summer she assisted a downtown merchant who was dealing with homeless individuals taking up residence in two old food trucks parked alongside their property. Cst. Hudson liaised with by-law

enforcement, and the two food trucks that had been sitting abandoned for 10 years have now been removed.

Cst. Hudson was one of the organizers and participants in a graffiti eradication project held in the downtown core. She has participated in Operation Outreach, a crime prevention initiative that strengthens the communication between downtown merchants and police. It is also an intelligence gathering initiative to identify potential problem areas and those individuals who pose a threat to the well-being of the downtown community.

Cst. Hudson has made a very positive impact on the downtown core. Merchants repeatedly tell her supervisors how happy they are with her presence and acknowledge the compassionate and fair manner in which she deals with the local panhandlers. She has earned the respect of both the panhandlers and downtown merchants. This was evident last April when Cst. Hudson was asked to speak to a panhandler even though she wasn't working and was there on her personal time. The panhandler acknowledged who she was and quietly left the area.

Many people may think it is a police officer's job to merely serve and protect. Cst. Jeanette Hudson demonstrates every day, through her passion for the job and her compassion for the community, that good policing is much more than serving and protecting. Not many people, let alone a police officer, can generate the positive influence on a group of high school students that Jeanette has.

Excellence in Performance

Sgt. Lisa Stuart joined the RCMP in July 1990 and attended Depot training, graduating in January 1991. Sgt. Stuart was then posted to Coquitlam Detachment in British Columbia where she performed uniformed duties, and was also assigned to the General Investigation Section where she was the lead investigator, file coordinator and affiant on homicides, sexual assaults and other more complex investigations. She was transferred to "E" Division's Major Crimes Unit in September 2001 and was responsible for investigating homicides in more remote locations in British Columbia. In her role, Sgt. Stuart was a lead investigator, file coordinator and affiant for numerous types of judicial authorizations. In the spring of 2002, Sgt. Stuart was seconded to the Missing Women's Task Force in British Columbia and was assigned to lead a search team at the property of Robert Pickton, who killed numerous female sex trade workers from the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. In her role, she was responsible for locating hundreds of exhibits which lead to identify victims through DNA.

While investigating a double homicide in May 2002, Sgt. Stuart identified the main suspect, and through her efforts, gathered evidence which implicated him in the crime. In recognition of her efforts, she was selected by the RCMP to be featured in a crime show called "Murder She Solved" which aired on the Oprah Winfrey Network in February 2012.

In July 2003, Sgt. Stuart received her first promotion to the rank of Corporal.

In November 2004, she was transferred back to the Missing Women's Task Force and was the NCO in charge of one of three investigative teams. Due to her strong leadership skills, her team was able to complete all tasks gathering evidence against Robert Pickton, who was tried in 2007 and found guilty of six counts of second degree murder. As a result of her efforts, Sgt. Stuart was awarded a RCMP Commanding Officer's commendation.

In January 2009, Sgt. Stuart was transferred to "H" Division and worked in several units before being promoted to her current rank of Sergeant in May 2011 and assigned to the Integrated General Investigation Section (IGIS) of RCMP and Halifax Regional Police. IGIS's mandate is to investigate attempted homicides, robberies, arson, break and enters and other more complex investigations. During investigations, Sgt. Stuart is the team commander providing oversight, direction and guidance to the investigators who report to her.

On Thursday, February 12, 2015, the IGIS received information that two individuals were planning a mass shooting at a Halifax mall on Valentine's Day. This was a dynamic unfolding event and quickly turned into Nova Scotia's and one of the country's highest profile criminal investigations. Sgt. Stuart's strong leadership skills, attention to detail, and calm demeanor enabled her to multi task many important tasks. Sgt. Stuart's leadership and management of critical tasks ensured that HRP & RCMP members thwarted a mass shooting. The result was an overwhelming support of police actions by municipal, provincial and federal politicians as well as the public who have continued to support and show their appreciation for the actions of police during those first two days. Halifax is a small city and this incident shocked people to the core that a possible terrorist event could have happened, but through the tireless efforts of Sgt. Stuart and all the police officers involved, numerous lives were saved on a day that symbolizes what is most cherished in life, sharing time with loved ones.

Leadership

Staff Sergeant Kimberly Quartermain has been a member of Fredericton Police Force since February 1996. Currently, Kim is the Acting Inspector of the Neighbourhood Action Team. Her primary role is to supervise the day-to-day operations of this dynamic team. At present, there are 12 very separate and diverse work groups within this team, whose goals are preventing crime and reducing harm in the community. They include uniformed Community Officers, contracted Saint Mary's First Nation Police Officers, plain-clothes investigators, drug crime investigators, Traffic Unit, Crime Prevention Officers, School Resource Officers, Youth-at-Risk Officer, Domestic/Intimate Partner Violence Officer, Victim/Witness Unit, Intelligence Officer and a Crime Analyst.

Although not directly related to her current role, S/Sgt. Quartermain has been a strong advocate for both the physical and mental health of all members of Fredericton Police Force. Not one to discriminate between a sworn police officer and a civilian member of the Force, she has always identified with the need to find healthy solutions and has worked tirelessly, leading by example, to do so.

Thirteen years ago, S/Sgt. Quartermain played a key role in the implementation of Critical Incident Stress Management within Fredericton Police Force. She played a significant role in developing a process that identified:

The need to organize a critical incident stress debriefing

All people who should be invited to participate: police officers, civilian staff, other first responders and civilians

Appropriate facilitators

Proper follow-up care

Today she is the team leader of a very successful Critical Incident Stress Management program.

In 2007, Fredericton Police Force developed a five-year strategic plan that saw the creation of a Wellness Committee that works in conjunction with the City of Fredericton's wellness program. The mandate of the Wellness Committee is to support the well-being of the organization by assisting in creating and maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Objectives of the Wellness Committee include: Employee Engagement, Mental Health, Physical Health and Work-Life Balance.

The main focus of the Wellness Committee is to champion employee health and wellness with a focus on physical activity, nutrition and mental health. S/Sgt.

Quartermain has been a key member of this very active committee by facilitating flu shot and health fair clinics, travelling lunch and learns speaker series as well as activity challenges. She was also very actively involved with "Honey I'm Home", an initiative intended to enlighten police spouses and partners on job-related issues that impact on personal relationships and work/life balance.

From the inception of the Critical Incident Stress Management plan 13 years ago, S/Sgt. Quartermain has recognized the correlation of physical and mental health. In 2014, she received training for Open Mind and Road to Mental Readiness, and was instrumental in the successful rollout of the Force's own version to police members and civilians. This is a program designed the Department of National Defence and modified for a police audience. It involves bi-annually training for all members and training for new hires during their orientation by S/Sgt. Quartermain and Sgt. Simmons-Beauchamp. This training has brought an understanding of mental illness, and how the stresses of our work can generate a great deal of stress, which can lead to declining health.

Throughout her 19-year career with the Force, she has worked in Patrol Response Community Policing and Major Crime. S/Sgt. Quartermain is the team leader and a member of both the Crisis Negotiator Team and the Critical Incident Stress Management Team. She has continuously demonstrated her commitment and passion to help ensure the physical and mental wellness of the sworn members and civilian employees. She has been the driving force behind the Forces' adoption of the Road to Mental Readiness program.

S/Sgt. Quartermain is also an Aide-de-Camp with the Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick, and enjoys time when not at work with her husband and two children.

Medal of Valor

Constable Darlene Goguen has been a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police since August 16, 2004 and currently posted at the Riverview Detachment as a General Duty Constable. Constable Donnie Robertson has been a member of the Royal

Canadian Mounted Police since April 2000 and is also posted at the Riverview Detachment as a General Duty Constable.

On June 4, 2014, Csts. Goguen and Robertson were working the southeast district when they responded to the area of Moncton, where shots had been fired. At 7:58 p.m., Cst. Darlene Goguen was travelling east on Hildegard Drive and heard gunshots. As she was in the process of turning her vehicle, she heard more gunshots and the front passenger window of her vehicle was shot out. Cst. Goguen felt she had been shot and tried to get her vehicle from reverse to drive and upon turning her vehicle around, another shot came through her driver's window. She advised over the police radio that she had been shot. Cst. Goguen met Cst. Donnie Robertson at the intersection of Hildegard Drive and Ryan Road. He reached in her vehicle and placed her vehicle in drive. He told her they were still too close, and advised her to keep driving, if she could, to get out of the immediate danger. Cst. Goguen proceeded to drive herself to Penrose Street where she waited for an ambulance.

Cst. Robertson's quick actions assisted Cst. Goguen in getting out of harm's way and he then transported her to the hospital for medical aid as the ambulance did not arrive. A total of six shots hit Cst. Goguen's vehicle. She suffered multiple wounds to the base of her neck and back as well as her left forearm and right side.

Cst. Goguen showed bravery in performing her duties and attending the scene of the shootings to provide assistance while facing immediate danger. After being shot at several times and severely wounded by gunshots, she persevered and was able to remove herself from harm's way.

Congratulations to all of the award winners who were selected by an independent committee based on nominations submitted.

In addition to the professional training and awards presentations, delegates of the conference participated in a fun night which is a great way for delegates to create friendships and networking opportunities with partners in the law enforcement community. At each conference a donation is made to the charity of choice of the conference committee; the recipient this year is The Truro Homeless Outreach Society. They have fifteen emergency shelter beds for men and women sixteen years of age and older and space for families who find themselves homeless.

Louanne McQuaid
Media Relations