

Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador Folklore and Language Archive (MUNFLA)

Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Historical Society Collection Description

Fonds description written by Anita Best under the co-sponsorship of the Canadian Council of Archives and the Association of Newfoundland & Labrador Archives. Reformatted by Renee Lawrence.

TITLE:

Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Historical Society Collection

COLLECTION NUMBER:

Special Collection Number I.9
Accession Number 89-275

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

30 audio cassettes

DATES:

1988

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY/BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:

The Newfoundland Constabulary came into being as a recognized entity in 1871 when the colonial government budgeted \$20,000 to unify the existing scattered individual constables, many of whom

were tavern owners, into one police force under the direction of Thomas Foley. Foley had served 22 years with the Royal Irish Constabulary and administered the Newfoundland Constabulary accordingly, as did his successor, Paul Carty, a veteran of the same force. In 1909, John Sullivan became the first native-born Newfoundlander to head the force and in 1923, the Newfoundland Constabulary made its first foray into Labrador, under contract with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. In 1949, with Confederation, the RCMP replaced the Constabulary in all areas of Newfoundland and Labrador except St. John's. Over the years, working conditions improved gradually until 1969, when Constable Tom Fraize led an elected group, which was to become the Newfoundland Constabulary Association. After an initial set-back and two-day strike the Association was recognized as a bargaining unit and negotiated its first collective agreement. Women were admitted to the Constabulary in 1980, following the 1974 example of the RCMP. New dress uniforms were adopted in 1977 and a new headquarters opened in 1979 at Fort Townshend, just a short distance from where the force was founded. In 1979 also, Queen Elizabeth II conferred the prefix "Royal" upon the force and it began once again to take up duties outside St. John's.

In 1987 the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary Historical Society was formed and a museum collection was begun; the museum officially opened in 1989. In 1988 Paul Kenny was hired to undertake an oral history project that would gather information from senior and retired members of the force. Although the RNC have an extensive archival and artifact collection at Fort Townshend, it was decided, for conservation reasons, to deposit the audio cassettes in MUNFLA.

Source: Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador.

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

Collection consists of 30 audiocassettes of interviews with members and former members of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary on the history and evolution of that police force. Interviews have not been transcribed.

RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS:

No access without written permission of the chief of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary until 2008

FINDING AID AVAILABLE:

Audio indexes available

TERMS GOVERNING USE AND REPRODUCTION:

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LANGUAGE:

English

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Title based on contents of collection