

MOUNTIE – Michele (Michael) PEPE - TURNS '100'



The 2016 Canada Census reported 8,230 Centenarians with over 8,000 living in Ontario (Statistics Canada, 2016).

December 2, 2017, RCMP Veteran, **Michele (Michael) A. Pepe (Rtd. S/Sgt #13134)** joined the prestigious Centenarians' club.

**CONGRATULATIONS Michele (Michael)
on your 100th !!**

RCMP Veterans' Association members, **Jack O-Reilly, Toronto Division and Regina Marini, Georgian Bay Division**, dressed in their Red Blazers made their way to Port Elgin, ON to present Mike with a tribute from Edmonton Division and **National President, Al Rivard, and Board of Directors, RCMP Veterans' Associations.**

"Really, made my day!" states Mike.



Mike joined the Force on December 28, 1938 and served in "K" (Edmonton) and "B" Divisions (Newfoundland). He retired on January 4, 1966. A 50+y Life member of the Edmonton Division, he attended AGM 2014 in Ottawa. Currently, Mike is the second oldest surviving RCMP Vet with the lowest regimental number (RCMP Veterans' Association Vancouver, Nov 2017).

On behalf of Jerry Plastow, President, Edmonton Division RCMP Veterans' Association and members, Jack and Regina presented Mike with a beautifully crafted 100th congratulatory plaque decorated with the RCMP crest and an insert with his 1966 application for membership to the Edmonton Division.



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On behalf of **Al Rivard, President, RCMP Veterans' Association and its' membership**, Jack and Regina presented Mike with a 100th congratulatory letter acknowledging his years of service as a RCMP officer (1939-1966) and RCMP Veteran (50+y).



Celebrations, for **Mike's milestone day** were embraced and *graciously hosted* by the **Royal Canadian Legion (RCL) Branch 340 Port Elgin, Ontario** where Comrade Mike, a 50+y Life Member, has served as president and service officer.



Comrade Mike Atkinson, Past President, on behalf of President Dan Kelly, Ladies Auxiliary, and RCL membership, congratulated Mike on his milestone day, reminisced of Mike's legacy of long service and projects within the RCL Branch 340.

An estimated 200+ guests/family celebrated with Mike, some of whom travelled from distances afar – Vancouver Island and New York City.



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An entertaining slide show provided a 'snap-shot' of Mike's 100 year journey and showcased some of his greatest achievements.

Picture
Displays
&
Best
Wishes
Table



After graciously thanking **Jack O'Reilly and Regina Marini** for their presentations on behalf of **RCMPVA Edmonton Division and the "RCMPVA National Division President, Al Rivard"**, Mike took to the stage to entertain his audience with a few of his many memorable, detailed and humorous stories of his RCMP days.



"I will not forget this day. As a 50y+ RCMP Veteran, it was appropriate to have the 'Red Serge Members' in the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 340, Port Elgin, ON, where I also hold a 50+y Life Membership. 'Thank-you', everyone, for making my day!"

Mike A. Pepe (Rtd. S/Sgt)

Mike's 'tales of long ago' (see more in September 2017 Edmonton RCMP Veterans' Association Newsletter)

In 1938, when I joined the RCMP it was acceptable to use one's baptismal certificate, if you did not have a birth certificate. My baptismal certificate showed 'Michael'. Some 50-odd years later, I needed a birth certificate. To my surprise it came back as 'Michele'!

I discovered in my early days that I had to be careful about planning a weekend, as there could be little notice of getting transferred. At this time I was single and stationed in Calgary. In planning with some of the friends that I had met, we were going to have a party weekend which was to start on the Saturday afternoon after normal quitting time came. What a

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change! I came back from the Mess Hall and about 1:15pm the Sergeant approached me and said *'You are going to Drumheller, today.'* I asked *"Can this be changed to Monday?"* The Sergeant replied, *"No, and you can pack your trunk and you will be on the 4pm bus to Drumheller - there are no changes."* So, off to Drumheller I went. This is an example of one of reasons why they liked single men in the force. It was easier to move one person rather than a family.

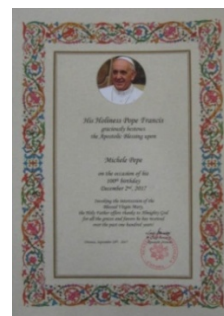
In the 40's, some detachments varied in their facilities. Interestingly, in one transfer to a small community, I was dropped off at an abandoned two-room school house. The front portion was very small and the school room had been cleared of all furniture except for a single bed, a couple of chairs and a coal-fired stove. A thing of interest was to find a bathroom, but to my surprise, there was no bathroom! On looking out a window facing the back of the building, I finally saw my bathroom on the edge of a back laneway. I was not long making good friends with the local hotel management.

Centenarian, Mike, also received congratulations from many dignitaries, including:

- *Her Majesty the Queen*
- *Governor General of Canada (Julie Paget)*
- *Prime Minister of Canada (Justin Trudeau)*

Interestingly, in 1970, Mike received a letter from then Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau (Justin's father) commending him on his 'excellent job' of security arrangements during his visit to Douglas Point (ON) where Mike was Chief Security.

St. Joseph's Parish, Port Elgin, ON, held a special 100th celebration Nov 26th with 80+ parishioners witnessing the presentation of Mike's 'Apostolic Blessing', Bestowed by *His Holiness Pope Francis*.



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Thank-you From Mike's family:

*Dear RCMPVA Edmonton Division and RCMP Veterans' Association **National Executive** and Members,*

As Mike's family we believe him to be a truly amazing man --our treasure; our gift of a loving husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather; a great role model and a man of character. We have been so blessed to share so many of his accomplishments throughout his life to date and look forward to sharing more.

It was his honour to serve with the RCMP so many years ago; and it was our honour and a true privilege as his family, to be able to share and witness him being recognized for his contributions and service.

Thank you, so very much, for being part of a once-in-a-lifetime moment that will be cherished forever.

Very Sincerely,



Michael, Janice, Stephen and families