



The Great Village Fire Hall was used as a staging area by RCMP during the tragic events of the weekend. (Source: Taken from Internet)

Portapique Events Tidbits

Media coverage concerned the tragic mass murder which started in Portapique on Saturday, April 18th and continued until late morning of Sunday, April 19th has been extensive. The Shoreline Journal has tried to capture a few highlights and have presented them below.

Queen Elizabeth II was among those sending Messages of Condolence. In her message she said, "Prince Philip and I have been deeply saddened by the appalling events in Nova Scotia, and we send our condolences to the families, friends and colleagues of those who have lost their lives. I also pay tribute to the bravery and sacrifice of the officers from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other police services who selflessly responded to these devastating attacks, and to the emergency services who are supporting those who have been injured and affected. My thoughts and prayers are with the people of Nova Scotia and all Canadians at this tragic time."

Joy McCabe, Onslow witnessed RCMP officers discharging their weapons early Sunday morning April 19th at the Onslow-Belmont Fire Hall. At least three shots damaged one of the fire vehicles and several bullet holes are visible on the wall of the hall. Additional details are not available because the RCMP referred the matter to the Serious Incident Team (SIRT) which prohibits release of any additional information.

RCMP Superintendent Darren Campbell, officer in charge of Support Services, stated in a press conference on Friday, April 24th, said, "In total, there were seven locations where people were found deceased." There were 13 people found dead and two others injured within a two-square-mile area around Portapique, particularly along Portapique Beach Road and Orchard Beach Drive.

RCMP received the first call at 10:26 pm on Saturday, and located a man leaving the area with an apparent gunshot wound. The gunshot victim, who has not been identified said he had met another vehicle on the road to the beach in Portapique and was shot as the vehicle was passing by. He described the vehicle as a car that looked like a police vehicle. That victim was taken to hospital and survived. Several structures, including the assailant's home, were on fire.

Prior to the 911 call, the assailant assaulted a woman he was in a relationship with. The victim managed to escape from the gunman and hid overnight in the woods. She is cooperating with police and is believed to have provided names of family members and other people she believed to be in danger. When asked during about a "hit list" Supt Campbell said a list was not found.

Nathan Staples, Glenholme, when interviewed by the Globe & Mail is quoted as saying he was informed by police he had been a potential target of the assailant and believed he was 7th or 8th person to be informed. The Shoreline Journal has received information several other people in the West Colchester area were potential targets of the assailant, but we have not been able to confirm who and how many.

Hill Top Campground was reported as a site the assailant had visited. The Shoreline Journal spoke to Bert Gaudet, owner, who was in Dieppe, NB, who said the video surveillance did not record his presence, but they advised two staff and two of their friends, who were at the campground to take shelter. He said, "We are grieving like all Nova Scotians and the rest of Canada".

Media reports indicate the assailant had a checkered past involving police, tenants, family members and business associates. The first report he plead guilty in January 2002 to assaulting a 15 year old boy outside his business in Dartmouth, receiving nine months probation and an order prohibiting his from owning any guns. Supt Campbell said during the press conference the assailant was reported to have several hand guns and long rifles. One gun has been traced to a Canadian purchase, while the remainder are believed to have been sourced from the United States.

Laurie Jennings, owner Masstown Market, who was interviewed by CBC said the RCMP came knocking on his door early Sunday morning, while he was still in bed. He said they were requesting he open the market as several members wanted sandwiches and water. There is a report he accommodated their request and in total almost 40 officers were provided refreshments.

Surviving family members and concerned citizens are complaining the RCMP used Twitter to send out an alert instead of broadcasting a message through the EMO phone and cell phone system. One grieving family member stated that if the EMO system had been deployed, it may have saved six or seven lives in areas outside Portapique. Thirteen of the twenty-two victims were located in Portapique.

Zoey, a miniature Pinscher, who belonged to shooting victims Jamie and Greg Blair, was treated for a gunshot wound by Dr. Jennifer McKay, Central Nova Animal Hospital in Truro, N.S. The wounded dog was taken to Dr. MacKay by RCMP Const. Rodney MacDonald. MacKay lives in Lower Onslow found out during the procedure the dog was owned by Jamie Blair was a personal friend. She said she knew "something big" was going on early Sunday morning since her husband and father are volunteer firefighters, and their station had been taken over by RCMP as a safe staging area.

During Friday's press conference, Supt Campbell said the killer had owned three plated Ford Taurus vehicles that were probably former police cruisers. Police found one of the vehicles at the killer's primary residence in Halifax Regional Municipality and two others burning at the gunman's residence, Portapique, along with the home and garages. Police learned later he had a fourth unplated RCMP replica vehicle, which is the car that he used during his rampage. Knowledge of the fourth unplated vehicle didn't emerge until the early morning hours (Sunday) when the woman he had was having a relationship with emerged from the woods.

It has not been determined where the killer may have had the RCMP decals that were on the fourth replica vehicle printed. Supt Campbell said the killer did not have access to RCMP radio communications. Police have not determined if the events were a result of pre-planning. When asked during the conference if a "hit list" of names was found, Supt Campbell said no list has been found. Information detailing names of family members and other people sought by the assailant are believed to have been provided by the assailant's lover after she emerged from an overnight of hiding in the woods. She is reported to be fully cooperating with police.

At the conclusion of the press conference, Supt Campbell said, "A related shooting Sunday morning involving two RCMP officers at the Onslow Belmont Fire Hall is under investigation by the Serious Incident Response Team, (SIRT). Campbell asked anyone with further information, no matter how insignificant it may seem, to call the RCMP tip line 1-902-720-5959.

It all Started in Portapique

By Maurice Rees

The West Colchester sleepy community of Portapique, unfortunately, became the center of attention around the globe on Saturday / Sunday, April 18 & 19 when an enraged resident when on a rampage killing a total of 22 innocent people including RCMP officer, Cst. Heidi Stevenson. In the area of Portapique Beach Road the RCMP confirmed there were 13 victims at seven sites.

The 22 victims of the weekend shooting spree on April 18 & 19, which started in Portapique included: Lisa McCully, a teacher in Debert; RCMP Cst. Heidi Stevenson, who was killed in an exchange of gunfire in Shubenacadie; Heather O'Brien, Masstown; Kristen Beaton, a VON employee from Debert; Greg and Jamie Blair, Portapique; Alanna Jenkins and Sean McLeod, Wentworth; Tom Bagley, Wentworth; Jolene Oliver, Aaron (Friar) Tuck and Emily Tuck, Portapique; Gina Goulet, Shubenacadie; Margaret Lillian (Hyslop) Campbell, who was killed roadside while walking in Wentworth; Joanne Thomas and John Zahl, Portapique; Joey Webber, who returned to work on Friday, and was gunned down while running an errand in Shubenacadie to get some furnace fuel; Dawn and Frank Gulenchyn, Portapique; Corrie Ellison who with his brother were spending the weekend visiting their father in Portapique, and when to take pictures of a nearby home which was set ablaze and Peter and Joy Bond - Portapique

Readers will note, any of the coverage about the tragic weekend events, which has set a record as Canada's largest mass murder, we will not be mentioning the assailant's name. Our policy is to have respect for the families, community and those who have been touched by similar incidents and do not give the assailant's name.

At last count RCMP said there are at least 16 crime sites including Portapique, Wentworth, Debert, Shubenacadie, Milford and Enfield where the RCMP ended the twelve hour tragedy by killing the assailant at the Irving Big Stop site, on Highway 102, Enfield. Although they believe they have found all victim sites, they have not ruled out the potential of other victims.

The assailant, at one point, was driving a "fake" RCMP cruiser complete with lights and all decals. As a result of his travels through several rural communities covering a distance of upwards of 200 Km they are not totally sure, there may be other random sites and poten-

tially victims.

During the ordeal several homes were razed, vehicles burned and because RCMP had cordoned off several roads leading to several sites, it has been impossible to determine how many homes or vehicles the assailant had torched. During one of many media interviews, Nova Scotia Chief Superintendent, Chris Leather, indicated it will take months to complete all the investigations.

Residents in the Portapique area reported seeing reflections in the sky from at least three fires in the area. Fire departments had responded to the calls, but were stopped by RCMP roadblocks and could not answer the calls. On Monday afternoon RCMP had cordoned off road access to the main site, allowing only local residents to pass through.

The geographical footprint and number of incident sites were so extensive the RCMP earlier in the day on Monday, April 20th had not been able to conduct investigations on many of the sites, nor had they been able to bring in excavators to evaluate the rubble.

On Sunday morning there was media report there had been a sighting in the area of Hilltop Campground, Glenholme Highway #4. The campground is closed for the season, opening on May 13th. As of press time they had not replied to an email message request for a return call.

Additional information was suggested, the assailant had attempted to visit the property of Adam and Carol Fisher, who own The Ditch Doctor. When contacted by phone, Carol Fisher said she and Adam preferred not to make and comment as they had lost family members and friends in the ordeal.

It is believed the assailant then made his way to Hunter Road, Wentworth claiming at least four victims, then used the East Mountain Road back road to get to Debert to continue his carnage. His next victims were in Shubenacadie, which included, RCMP officer, Cst Heidi Stevenson and Joey Webber, who stopped to help was shot and killed by the assailant. He stole Webber's silver SUV and proceeded to Milford killing Gina Goulet, removed his police clothing and transferred his weapons from Webber's to Goulet's vehicle, a red Mazda 3.

The final stop was at the Irving Big Stop, Enfield, when he stopped to refuel and was noticed by RCMP officers in and unmarked vehicle. He was confronted by and was taken down and killed by an RCMP Officer around 11:00 am on Sunday, April 19th.

West Colchester Privacy Request

By Maurice Rees

Colchester council has approved a 14 day period of hiring commissionaires to prevent access to Portapique Beach Road by persons other than sub-vision residents once the RCMP blockade comes down on Monday, April 27th. The matter was part of the agenda at council's special meeting on Thursday, April 23rd. The roadway will be manned by commissionaires for 14 hours a day during the 14 day period.

Resident Councillor Taggart was contacted by the Chair of the Community Association for Orchard Beach Subdivision requesting assistance with security for the private road and issue a press release on behalf of the Community Association requesting the privacy of the residents be respected. Another media release will be done when the residents are permitted back into their homes and Public Works staff will be erecting private property signage for the residents.

In other matters to assist the residents the Manager of Waste Reduction is arranging special

collection of materials and arranging a dumpster, donated by ReGroup, to be brought in to the area for residents use. Councillor Taggart said, Bairds Septic is providing a portable restroom, free of charge, at the entrance for use by the Commissionaires.

Looking toward the future discussion was held on establishing a system to allow permitted persons access; having coded gates at the entrance instead of security as it is feared the area will attract gawkers for many months to come.

The Municipal Solicitor, Dennis James, advised Council this is a private road, and if Council agrees, it should be understood this is being done on behalf of the property owners and any prosecution of charges under the Protection of Property Act, the Municipality would have no authority on. This would be the responsibility of the property owners.

The Municipality's role would be limited as it is not a municipal road. The Commissionaires would also have to be clear on their role.



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