

Misplaced RCMP plaque baffles cemetery staff

Desmond Devoy

desmond.devoy@metroland.com

Just who was Special Cons. Robert Earl Lewis, and why was his RCMP plaque never affixed to his headstone?

The mysteries keep piling up at the Elmwood Cemetery with this newest one being about mysterious circumstances about Cons. Lewis (born May 4, 1926, died Jan. 2, 1995. His wife Reta H. White according to the main headstone, was born on Valentine's Day 1926, and she died April 24, 1991, and is buried with him.)

Eric Halpin, president of the non-profit Perth Cemetery Company, recently found an RCMP plaque that was never installed on the deceased officer's grave. In an email to this newspaper on Monday, Dec. 21, Halpin wrote that "while looking for old documents, I located the plaque hidden in our office safe. I tried to contact every Lewis in the phone book, looking for a relative, to no avail."

He then contacted RCMP headquarters in Ottawa, who put him in touch with one Joseph Healy, who handles RCMP graves across the country. Healy came out to see the graveyard on Saturday, Dec. 19, and "I loaned him the plaque so he could undertake an investigation with the Lewis family (if any exist) as to why the marker was not installed."

It is the intent of both men to place the plaque in front of the Lewis grave next spring, which could involve a small, formal "dress reds" contingent of RCMP officers who will be on hand for the installation.

Do you remember Special Con. Lewis? Do you know why his special police plaque was not added to his gravesite? As Robert Stack used to say on *Unsolved Mysteries* (1987-2002): "Perhaps you may be able to help solve a mystery."



Submitted photo

Eric Halpin, president of the non-profit Perth Cemetery Company, right, and RCMP grave investigator Joseph Healy hold up the police plaque for RCMP Special Cons. Robert Earl Lewis at his gravesite on Saturday, Dec. 19.