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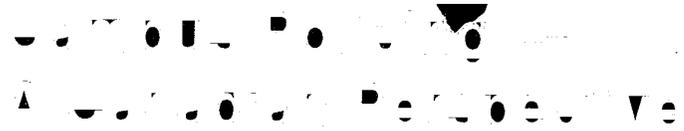
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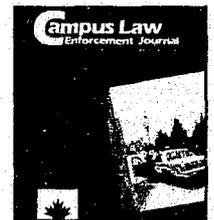
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**ON THE COVER: The University of Western Ontario, whose Special Constable Bob Earle gives us a Canadian perspective on campus law enforcement in the article beginning on page 6.**



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# University of Ottawa Protection Service Creates Haven of Safety in Busy Downtown

by Daniel Morin  
Public Relations and Information Services  
University of Ottawa



*Tabaret Hall is the University of Ottawa's main administration building.*

Visitors strolling on the beautiful and stately University of Ottawa campus, sprawled over 87 acres in the historic center of Canada's National Capital, may well think they have found a haven away from the rumble and tumble of the busy downtown.

But the University itself, one of Canada's largest and oldest, is a veritable beehive of activity, with thousands of people living, working, and studying on campus. From his second-floor office in the physical plant building, Director of Protection Yvon McNicoll looks over the well-being and security of these men and women. It's a job he takes very seriously and in which he obviously has great pride.

"I consider the campus relatively safe," McNicoll says. "We have very few sexual assaults or other types of assaults causing

serious injury." All the same, the University has not escaped the nation-wide increase in acts of vandalism and theft.

## A diverse environment

The campus is located in Sandy Hill, one of Ottawa's oldest neighborhoods. The area forms an eclectic mix of turn-of-the-century mansions, modern high-rise apartments, luxury condos, embassies and rooming houses. Its population is made up of large numbers of young, upwardly-mobile families, senior citizens and, of course, students, with a highly heterogeneous cultural and racial mix. This diversity is reflected on the campus.

The University of Ottawa is fully bilin-

gual offering a complete range of programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels in French and English. Its student clientele is made up of 13,900 students at the undergraduate level and 9,000 at the graduate level, of whom 38 percent are of Franco-phone extraction. Its teaching staff numbers over 1,100, complemented by 1,400 support staff.

The institution has deep roots dating back to 1842 when it was founded by the Catholic Oblate Fathers. Over the next 120 years, the modest college blossomed into a full-service university under the guidance of the religious order. In 1965, control of the University was passed to a lay Board of Governors, which made the institution eligible for public funding from the Ontario Provincial Government.



*University of Ottawa Director of Protection Yvon McNicoll is also Canadian Director for IACLEA.*

## Contracting out

Until 1969, the University was content with contracting out its security services. But with the continuing expansion of the institution and the growing number of students and employees, the University decided to create its own in-house security.

McNicoll's sole predecessor was former Canadian Armed Forces Captain Yvon Cousineau who was responsible for setting up the service in 1969 and who recruited the first 36 full-time employees.

During his tenure, Cousineau was president of the Canadian Association of College and University Security Directors. He strongly supported the fusion between this Association and the International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators, which finally came about in 1978. McNicoll has continued the sound tradition of active involvement in professional associations and is currently Canadian Director for IACLEA.

He took over the service in 1976 and brought a wealth of experience as an 18-year veteran of police work. Before moving to the halls of academe, he was Director of Criminal Investigations for five years with the City Police in Vanier, a municipality of about 40,000 bordering Ottawa. McNicoll readily gives credit to his predecessor for placing the service on a sound footing. "I took over a solid ship," he says.

## Five women on staff

The Director of Protection supervises the work of 44 employees, including five women patrol officers, while administering an annual budget of \$4.5 million<sup>1</sup>. Ten officers are responsible for parking control.

The service's responsibilities extend to four areas dealing with security, parking and traffic, investigations, and fire prevention.

From 1981 to 1987, work place health and safety, as well as radiation and bio-hazard safety were also under the tutelage



*From his position in the main control room, officer Pierre Guèvremont can survey all strategic areas of the campus. He maintains constant communication via telephone and radio with patrol officers.*

of the protection service. This involved lab and work place inspections to ensure safe conditions. The service also handled chemi-

cal waste disposal and spills cleanup, in addition to ensuring the University conformed to regulations of Atomic Energy



*Patrol officer, Claude Lozier discusses investigation procedures and prevention measures with story writer.*

<sup>1</sup> Canadian dollars



*Physical Plant Services Director General Normand Berthiaume (left) looks over model of the University of Ottawa Master Plan with Director of Protection Yvon McNicoll.*

Canada Ltd. for the handling of radioactive material. These responsibilities were subsequently transferred to Human Resources and Research Services.

The protection service is also responsible for security at the Medicine and Health Science faculties, located in the posh Alta Vista district approximately seven kilometers away at the Ottawa Health Science Centre, a major medical complex comprising the Ottawa General Hospital, the Eastern Ontario Children's Hospital, and the Royal Ottawa Rehabilitation Centre. U of O's service works with an outside security agency to ensure round-the-clock protection of the premises.

### Officers keep "low profile"

Officers are unarmed and keep "a low profile" on campus, McNicoll points out. Before being hired, an officer must complete a two-year Law and Security program of study at a recognized community college. The University ensures that all officers continue to receive on-the-job training through seminars and conferences with

lawyers, doctors, psychologists, and other professionals in fields related to law enforcement. Due to the bilingual nature of the University, fluency in both official languages is an essential requirement of the job. Officers earn \$34,000<sup>2</sup> a year on average.

As a downtown campus in Canada's capital, the University of Ottawa is often on the itinerary of heads of state and other dignitaries, which means extensive security preparations. For example, over the course of a three-month period last spring, the University hosted events for Soviet dissidents Andrei Sakharov and Yelena Bonner, Costa Rican President Oscar Arias and Princess Chulabhorn of Thailand. Officers maintain regular contact with municipal police forces and with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to coordinate security in such cases.

As well, the protection service must handle special security arrangements for children of ambassadors who attend the University of Ottawa. They may number from 10 to 12 at any time.

<sup>2</sup> Canadian dollars

### TV surveillance

An officer posted in the main control room in the physical plant building can survey the whole campus through a system of television cameras posted at strategic points. The duty officer can be alerted to the presence of any intruder through a computerized alarm system. A detailed plan of the building appears on a video screen, allowing the officer to pinpoint the exact location of the occurrence. The officer dispatched to the scene can thus intervene quickly without having to search the whole building first.

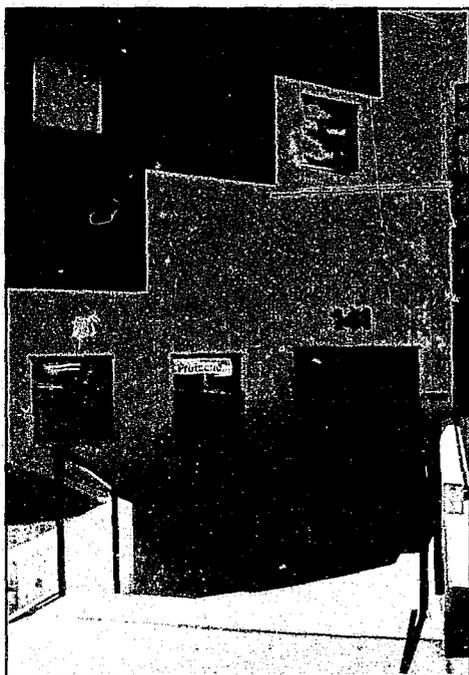
Every occurrence is recorded in a computer data bank which contains lists of locations where crimes have occurred and of people who have previously been involved in criminal activity on campus.

One highlight of the year for the service, explains McNicoll, is the Panda game. This football contest, held every October for the past 35 years, pits the University of Ottawa Gees Gees against the arch-rival Carleton University Ravens — the team representing Ottawa's other university. The winning team gets to take home a plush panda bear known as Pedro.

While the game is held off-campus at the city's Civic Centre, protection officers are often called upon to intervene when pre-Panda or post-Panda parties on campus get a little too rowdy. Excessive drinking by some students during the Panda festivities has been the source of criticism, especially since an accident two years ago in which a number of spectators at the game were injured after falling from the stands when a railing snapped from the pressure of the crowd. Student federations at both campuses have since been collaborating with local police forces to tighten up security and reduce the incidence of alcohol abuse at the game site.

### Crime Stoppers

The University was the first in Canada to join the highly successful Crime Stoppers



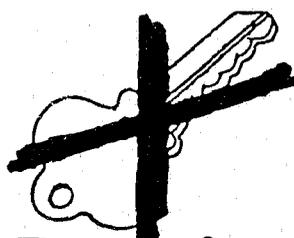
*The anonymous physical plant building serves as the center of operations for the protection service.*

program. When a major crime occurs on campus, the community is informed through the use of posters and a reward is offered for any information leading to the arrest of the persons responsible.

The service works closely with students to increase awareness of potential risks on campus. "We have an excellent prevention program," McNicoll says, part of which involves regular meetings with students living in residences on campus. Victims of crime on campus are advised as to means of preventing another occurrence as part of the initial investigation. The service also organizes presentations and meets with various groups on campus on request. It staffs information booths during Welcome Week in September and National Crime Prevention Week in November.

In future years the service will put even more emphasis on community awareness and education programs for both students and employees, McNicoll says. He sees this as the best way to involve the whole community in maintaining a safe and secure campus environment.

"The goal of the service is to help people rather than fight crime," McNicoll concludes.



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