

# Joe Grozelle – Timeline Synopsis – Coroner's Inquest

Officer Cadet Joseph Grozelle was a third year student at the Royal Military College (RMC) in Kingston, Ontario. He was enrolled in the Business Administration Program at RMC and resided on the college grounds in the LaSalle dormitory in room 2029. During his three years at RMC, Joseph Grozelle was dating Officer Cadet Melissa Haggart. Officer Cadet Grozelle was a member of the Varsity basketball team and he maintained a good grade average throughout his schooling.

Officer Cadet Grozelle returned to RMC in September 2003 and resumed his normal course activities. He entered his third year of Business Administration, rejoined the Varsity basketball team and acted as the Sports Officer for his squadron, his relationship with OCadet Haggart continued as well.

On the weekend of October 18 and 19, 2003, Joseph Grozelle was with the basketball team at a tournament in Halifax, Nova Scotia. They returned on Sunday October 19, 2003 in the mid afternoon. During the next two days Joseph Grozelle was seen at various locations throughout the RMC campus. He attended classes on Monday, but skipped classes on Tuesday. He attended all of his basketball training or practices on both dates. On Tuesday evening October 21, 2003 Grozelle met with several other cadets and had interaction with them. Melissa Haggart was with Joseph Grozelle in the later evening and fell asleep on his bed while he was working on his computer. When she awoke at approximately 0530 hours on Wednesday October 22, 2003, Joseph Grozelle was not in the room. At 0600 hours she returned to her room, as is her normal practice. When she attended breakfast and classes she did not see Joseph Grozelle. She attended his room several times during the day and did not find him.

Wednesday October 22, 2003, Officer Cadet Melissa Haggart reported Officer Cadet Joseph Grozelle missing. At approximately 1630 hours, Haggart posted a note on the door of CSTO OCadet Fortin-Grondin. A missing persons investigation was commenced by the Military Police at this time. The Military Police started a search of the campus and made attempts to locate Joseph Grozelle. They contacted Kingston City Police Service (KPS) and enlisted their assistance in trying to locate Joseph Grozelle.

On Thursday October 23, 2006 the Department of National Defence National Investigative Service (NIS) was called in and took over the missing persons investigation. During the next three weeks the NIS employed numerous methods to investigate the disappearance of, and to locate Joseph Grozelle. This included, searching the RMC grounds, searching Joseph Grozelle's room, canvassing hospitals and shelters in the Kingston area, interviewing numerous persons, flagging credit cards, checking the computer in Joseph Grozelle's room and enlisting the public's help. During this time the NIS liaised with the

KPS and the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) and utilized their specialty services to conduct the investigation. Air and water searches were conducted and canine teams were utilized.

On November 13, 2003 a body was spotted from the LaSalle Causeway, floating in the Cataraqui River, near the RMC grounds. The weather conditions and surface current pushed the body into the bay near the HMCS Cataraqui Naval building. The body was recovered by NIS and KPS at that time. The body was identified as Joseph Grozelle. The identification was made by the father of the deceased, Ron Grozelle. Pathologist Dr. Hurlbut conducted a post mortem at Kingston General Hospital. The initial post mortem was inconclusive and further testing was required to determine the cause of death. NIS continued with their investigation into the disappearance and subsequent death of Joseph Grozelle.

In February 2004, the Office of the Chief Coroner requested that the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) Criminal Investigation Branch take over the investigation. Under the authority of the Coroner's Office the OPP obtained the files from NIS and liaised with them to continue the investigation.

In November 2004 after discussions with the Coroner's Office the decision was made to exhume the body of Joseph Grozelle and to conduct a second Post Mortem. Dr. Michael Polanen, Chief Pathologist for the Office of the Coroner, conducted the second post mortem in Toronto, Ontario.

As a result of this examination in conjunction with the first postmortem, the cause of death was listed as undetermined. However it was noted that the forensic evidence was consistent with both drowning and hypothermia, but it was not conclusive.

The subsequent investigation conducted by the OPP was unable to definitively establish the manner of death, the time of death, the location of the death nor establish why this occurred. Numerous investigative techniques were employed; specialty services utilized and avenues of investigation were tracked down.

An inquest has been called by the Office of the Chief Coroner to examine the evidence on the disappearance and death of Joseph Grozelle.

### **Synopsis of Joseph Grozelle's Activities from October 18, 2003 to October 22, 2003.**

On the weekend of October 18 and 19, 2003 OCadet Grozelle was in Halifax, Nova Scotia with the basketball team at a tournament. He returned to Kingston in the afternoon of October 19, 2003. Melissa Haggart and Joseph Grozelle attended a late movie in Kingston. Haggart spent the night in Grozelle's room and left at 0600 hours to return to

her own room.

On Monday October 20, 2003 Joseph Grozelle attends his classes, he meets Melissa Haggart on several occasions and he attends his basketball practice sessions and weight training. In the evening Haggart and Grozelle again spent time together and she slept in his room until 0600 hours on October 21, 2003.

On Tuesday 21 October 2003, Joseph Grozelle skips all of his morning classes. He attends the lunchroom and interacts with several different people at this time. Grozelle plays video games in the room of Officer Cadet Kevin Delude after lunch. He meets Melissa Haggart in his room after and they talk about him missing classes that day. Later in the afternoon Joseph Grozelle attends at the office of instructor Margaret Shepherd, he makes an excuse for missing her morning class and picks up an assignment stating he will be in class 'tomorrow'. He attends basketball practice at 1630 hours until 1845 hours. Grozelle eats with the basketball team at the mess hall after practice. During the evening Grozelle speaks to Kent Miller, Dawn MacDonald, Heath Robson and Melissa Haggart. He is seen by other cadets throughout the evening. During this time he also starts working on his computer. Melissa Haggart returns to Grozelle's room at approximately 2300 hours and remains reading while he works on the computer. She believes he is doing a law assignment that is due the next day. The computer analysis shows that the activity on the computer is consistent with someone working on it until 0123 hours on Wednesday October 22, 2003. Melissa Haggart states she fell asleep in the room and awoke at 0530 hours, Joseph Grozelle was not in the room when she awoke. She left the room at 0600 hours and returned to her own. She did not see him again.

On November 13, 2003 the body of Joseph Grozelle was found in the Cataraqui River near both the LaSalle Causeway and the RMC grounds on the east bank. His body was recovered by NIS and KPS.