

Joe Grozelle – Timeline Synopsis - RCMP

Officer Cadet Joseph GROZELLE (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 (Melissa HAGGART) Joseph GROZELLE was a member of the Varsity basketball team and he maintained a good grade average throughout his schooling.

Joseph 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 Melissa 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 Joseph GROZELLE meet 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.

On Wednesday October 22, 2003 at approximately 1630 hours Melissa HAGGART reported Joseph GROZELLE missing by posting a note on the door of Officer Cadet FORTIN-GRONDIN. A missing person's 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 KPS and enlisted their assistance in trying to locate Joseph GROZELLE. On Thursday October 23, 2006 the CFNIS was notified and took conduct of the missing person's investigation. During the next three weeks the CFNIS employed numerous methods to investigate the disappearance of, and trying 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 CFNIS liaised with the KPS and the 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 CFNIS 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.

CFNIS 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 OPP Criminal Investigation Branch take over the investigation. Under the authority of the Coroner's Office the OPP obtained the files from CFNIS 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 establish the location of the death, the time of death, the manner of death, or the cause of death. Numerous investigative techniques were employed; specialty services utilized and investigative leads were pursued.

An inquest had been called by the Office of the Chief Coroner to examine the evidence on the disappearance and death of Joseph GROZELLE. The first Inquest was halted due to "issues of fairness". The second Inquest was conducted by Dr. EDEN from March 19, 2007 to 26 of April 2007. The Verdict specified the cause of the death to be "Unascertained", "Non-Natural Causes and by means undetermined". The Jury made 10 recommendations.

The DND convened a BOI on January 8, 2008 to October 9, 2009. The three members of the Board were Lt. Col. Jeffrey STOUFFER (President), Major Daniel JOBIN, and Major MATIOWSKY. In addition the Board utilized specialist's that included Dr. BANKS and Dr. NATARAJAN of Biodynamic Research Corporation. The BOI concluded the cause of death of Joseph GROZELLE as "unascertained." The BOI reported that they found evidence not previously reported through investigative action or the Coroner's Inquest. The BOI concluded that there was insufficient evidence to support a specific cause of death (i.e. accident, suicide, natural and / or other causes). The BOI reported that no conclusive evidence of drowning was found and in their opinion opened the possibility that Joseph GROZELLE was inserted in the water after death.

The BOI witnesses (Dr. BANKS and Dr. NATARAJAN) expert opinions included:

The injuries to Joseph GROZELLE consisting of discolouration to the lip and chip / damaged tooth likely occurred prior to or at the time of death;
Hypothermia was not a contributing factor in Joseph GROZELLE's death;

Joseph GROZELLE probably ate 1 - 2 hours prior to death (RMC Mess closed at 1930 hours on the evening of Joseph GROZELLE's disappearance);

Joseph GROZELLE's decomposition was consistent with the date he went missing;

Joseph GROZELLE may have died prior to entry or insertion in the water as there was no direct evidence of drowning;

The most probable point of entry in the Cataraqui River was north of the LaSalle Causeway based on the requirement for stagnant or still water to form a demarcation water line to the head of Joseph GROZELLE.