

Ontario Homicide Investigator's Association

The History





OHIA History

“Murder is unique in that it abolishes the party it injures, so that society has to take the place of the victim and on his behalf demand atonement or grant forgiveness; it is the one crime in which society has a direct interest”

W.H. Auden *“The Guilty Vicarage”*



OHIA History

B. Charter Membership Role

1. Barrie City Police Service
2. Belleville Police Service
3. Brantford Police Service
4. Brockville Police Service
5. Chatham-Kent Police Service
6. Cornwall Police Service
7. Durham Regional Police Service
8. Guelph Police Service
9. Greater Sudbury Regional Police Service
10. Halton Regional Police Service
11. Hamilton Police Service
12. Kingston Police
13. London Police Service
14. Major Case Management Ontario
15. Midland Police Service
16. Niagara Regional Police Service
17. Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario
18. Office of the Fire Marshal
19. Ontario Forensic Pathology Services
20. Office of the Fire Marshal
21. Ontario Police College
22. Ontario Provincial Police



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23. Orangeville Police Service
24. Ottawa Police Service
25. Peel Regional Police Service
26. Peterborough-Lakefield Police Service
27. St. Thomas Police Service
28. Sarnia Police Service
29. Sault Ste. Marie Police Service
30. Six Nations Police Service
31. Stratford Police Service
32. Strathroy Police Service
33. Toronto Police Service
34. Waterloo Regional Police Service
35. Windsor Police Service
36. Woodstock Police Service
37. York Regional Police



OHIA History

HISTORY OF THE OHIA

The OHIA formed as a result of meetings held in 1997 between investigators within the Golden Horseshoe. In 1998 these agencies formed the Golden Horseshoe Homicide Investigators Association, at that time the membership consisted of the following ten agencies:

- Durham Regional Police
- Halton Regional Police
- Niagara Regional Police
- Ontario Provincial Police
- Hamilton Police Service
- Peel Regional Police
- Major Case Management
- Toronto Police Service
- Waterloo Regional Police
- York Regional Police

By 2004 membership had grown to fourteen agencies with the addition of Barrie, Brantford, Guelph and the Office of the Chief Coroner and the first Charter was adopted.



OHIA History

Membership

In 2004 a formal Charter was adopted by the existing member agencies. The requirements for membership in the Association were as follows:

- 1. The Golden Horseshoe Homicide Investigator's Association (herein referred to as the Association) is comprised of members of police services and related government agencies that are involved in the investigation of unlawful death.*
- 2. The member agencies are drawn from the Province of Ontario.*
- 3. Membership in the Association may only be granted to a bona fide police agency or government agency directly involved in unlawful death investigation and whose members are subject to an oath of secrecy.*

As more agencies from outside the Golden Horseshoe became interested in membership the decision was made to change the association name. In 2007 the membership voted to change the name to the Ontario Homicide Investigators Association in order to better reflect the organization.

As of May 2012 the membership has grown to thirty-seven agencies throughout the Province of Ontario with the addition of:

- Belleville Police Service
- Brockville Police Service
- Chatham-Kent Police Service
- Cornwall Police Service
- Greater Sudbury Regional Police
- Kingston Police



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- London Police Service
- Midland Police Service
- Office of the Fire Marshal
- Ontario Forensic Pathology Services
- Ontario Police College
- Orangeville Police Service
- Ottawa Police Service
- Peterborough-Lakefield Police Service
- St. Thomas Police Service
- Sarnia Police Service
- Sault Ste. Marie Police Service
- Six Nations Police
- Stratford Police Service
- Strathroy Police Service
- Windsor Police Service
- Woodstock Police Service



OHIA History

Objectives of the Association

The original Mission Statement and the Goals and Objectives of the GHIA, which remain unchanged, stressed the need for meetings and the sharing of successes, failures and experiences for the benefit of educating those charged with homicide investigation.

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the function of the Ontario Homicide Investigator's Association to bring together the men and women charged with this responsibility and to provide a forum through which they can share their skill, knowledge and expertise for their professional development and support.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- ***To share skills, knowledge and experience:*** Through regular meetings, association members will share and discuss their successes, failures and unique experiences for the benefit and education of their colleagues.
- ***To develop and maintain an environment of teamwork and cooperation between police services and related agencies:*** the development of professional relationships between homicide investigators from various jurisdictions will serve as a conduit for assistance and cooperation.
- ***To identify and react to universal investigative problems:*** the sharing of information will allow members of all services to be alerted to any type of problem arising out of violent death investigations. The Association will serve as a forum to discuss, evaluate and recommend effective solutions to these problems.
- ***To provide a case conferencing forum:*** in drawing on the sum experience of its membership, the Association will provide a vehicle for problem solving and/or case review as requested.
- ***To enhance the expertise of officers engaged in death investigations:*** The Association will strive to enhance the expertise of investigator's by offering assistance, training and guidance in the field of death investigation.



OHIA History

The Homicide Workshop

The only homicide conference or seminar had been those conducted by the Toronto Police and subsequently the OPP, both of which had ceased by 2005. In order to fill this void the GHHIA met with the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police and proposed a partnership. The goals and objectives were agreed upon and the partnership was formed. The primary objective would be to provide homicide training to those engaged in death investigation within the Province of Ontario. In addition the following parameters were agreed upon:

- *This workshop should be focused on the investigation of homicides within Ontario, dealing with issues that impacted local police under Canadian law but with consideration to international trends.*
- *This workshop should be held annually and be open to all law enforcement officers involved in homicide investigations, however OACP member agencies would be given priority.*
- *The workshop would be held in May of each year in order not to conflict with the Vancouver Homicide Conference.*
- *An organizing committee would be selected from participating GHHIA members for the first year.*

As a result of this partnership the first Homicide Workshop was held in May of 2006 and a Homicide Training Committee was formed within OACP. This partnership continues and the Workshop is recognized as an accredited OACP conference.



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Awards

In conjunction with the Homicide Workshop the GHHIA saw the need to recognize the good work of homicide and death investigators in the Province of Ontario. The Association sought out sponsors for awards and struck an award in memory of Niagara Regional Police Detective Mike Matthews. This award was presented to:

The Homicide investigator who has displayed the courage, tenacity and compassion that were the hallmarks of Mike Matthews legacy.

The OPP Criminal Investigation Branch was approached and agreed to sponsor the Lynda Shaw award presented for:

Vigilance and dedication demonstrated in Historic (Cold Case) Homicide investigations.

Ontario Major Case Management agreed to sponsor the MCM Award, presented to:

The individual, team or service that has exhibited outstanding innovation and achievement in case management in a homicide investigation.



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In 2007 the OHIA initiated an Award of Merit that is presented to:

Persons that throughout the Province of Ontario have made a significant contribution to homicide investigations or to homicide training and education.

The Association added and award in 2010, the OHIA Award, presented to:

Persons that throughout the Province of Ontario have made a significant contribution to homicide investigations and to OHIA homicide training and education.



OHIA History

Role of the OHIA

Over the years the role of the OHIA has been expanded and it has now become a recognized entity throughout Ontario. It is routinely utilized by its member agencies for case conferencing, consulting and resource identification. In addition it is often consulted by government agencies, the Ontario Police College and the OACP.

Some of the contributions made by the OHIA are:

- Consulted by the Ontario Police College on training, formed the working group to redevelop the Major Case Management Course and more recently was consulted on the reworking of the Homicide Course.
- Consulted by OACP on issues affecting police agencies within the province such as Note Book Retention and proposed changes to the Coroners Act.
- Supported the OPP Missing Persons Unidentified Bodies Unit (MPUB) efforts to develop a national missing person's data base.
- Worked with the Centre of Forensic Science on the issue of disclosure of CFS Technicians notes.
- Was requested by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services to work with the Policing Services Advisory Committee (PSAC) which developed into the Goudge Working Group. This group reviewed the police related recommendations of the Goudge Inquiry and was instrumental in the adoption of the recommendations.
- In partnership with OACP pushed the ministry to move the new MCM Manual forward after it had stalled in bureaucracy.
- Death Under 5 Committee.
- Pediatric Death Review Committee.
- MCM User Group Committee.
- The One Day Training Symposiums – offering training to members agencies.