

Reflecting today on the 2021 Remembrance Day ceremonies, and remembering our veterans who fought for our country, we also honour members of the service who serve and served their communities. The Toronto Police Widows and Orphans Fund (the “**TPWOF**”) is a fraternal benefit society that operates as a not-for-profit organization for the benefit of its members and their beneficiaries.

The Fund was established in 1952 to formalize the practice of members who would go around the parade room with a forage hat to collect from the parading members to assist a family when an officer passed away. Members want to ensure their loved ones are protected and believe in looking after one another, like a family, throughout their lifetimes. The TPWOF “is about members looking after members”, says Madelaine O’Driscoll, TPWOF Board of Director and active member.

The Fund’s death benefits exist to provide immediate support and financial assistance to loved ones when an active or retired member passes away. The TPWOF’s motto is “First to Respond” in your time of need. Madelaine’s father was a retired member of TPWOF and on his death she recalled “the stress at that time, mom was flustered”. Yet, on the same day the family received a call from the TPWOF, and the next day when the family received the Fund’s death benefit, some of the pressure was alleviated. The personal touch and connection are what Madelaine and her sister, Michele O’Driscoll, remember.

Elsie Lacey made a considerable donation to the TPWOF in 2020 as a lasting memory for her son, former member Kenneth Lacey. Mrs. Lacey recollected to her executor, Lester Wright, her positive interaction at that difficult time noting the Fund helped her tremendously by providing personal support and guidance. Her message was she wanted to give back to the police family.

Member dues, unchanged since 1952, are allocated primarily to fund member benefits, with the Fund maintaining lean operations. Donations made to the Fund in lieu of other charitable donations help with the increasing costs of operations.

With modern times, come more complex operational needs. To provide valued Fund benefits long into the future, “operations need to be sustained in a professional and thoughtful manner which will help with capital projects”, states Jon Schmidt, Board Director and retired member. New regulatory reporting standards are increasingly complex and require additional one-time resources in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. The acquisition of a new record-keeping system to modernize infrastructure will also require a large commitment of resources to ensure the Fund continues to deliver on its vision of providing easily accessible benefits.

Guided by strong governance, the Fund is well-capitalized, and the Board has a strong commitment to serving members and their families. Jon states, “the Fund is an organization to be proud of.”

Your donations to the TPWOF are greatly appreciated. Madelaine echoes, “It’s how we look after one another.”

To learn more about the TPWOF, visit www.TPWOF.ca.

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