

He smiled and shook his head — meaning “no.” I was disappointed that we could not swing a deal. I knew my chances for a trade were not very good if I approached police officers on the street, but I did it three more times with the same result.

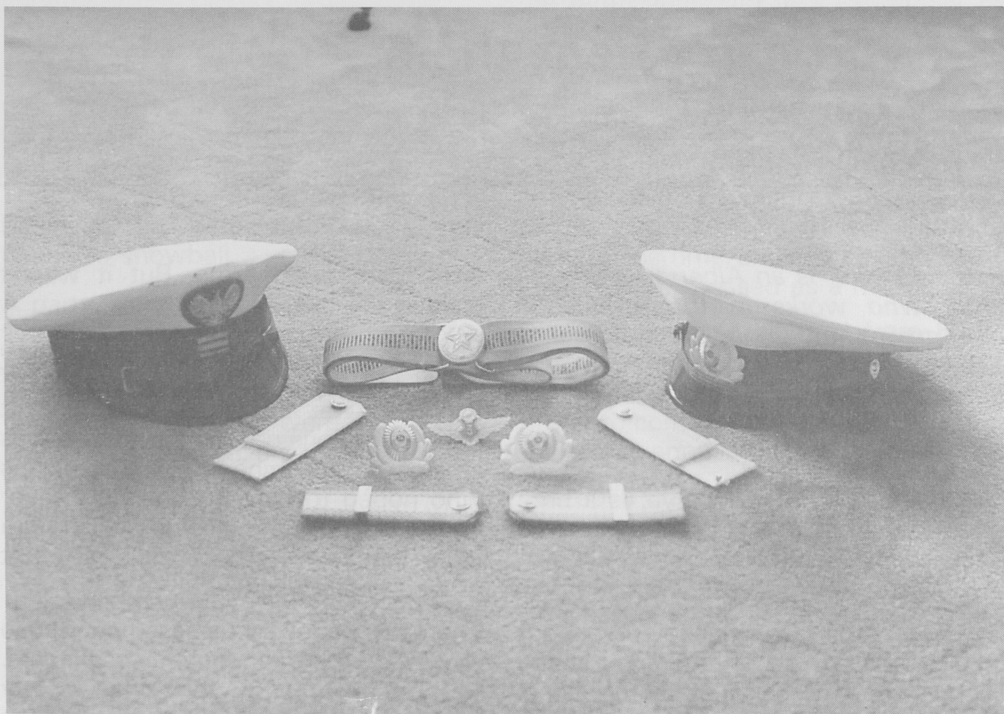
A few days later in another city, I spotted two police officers in the hotel restaurant. I asked our tour guide to approach them and let them know of my intentions. After a brief discussion, the officers declined and as a friendly gesture, I gave them a couple of tie bars and Musical Ride decals.

After a short tour of the city, I saw the same two officers sitting in the hotel lobby. Seizing the opportunity, and armed with my trading material, I approached them again. This time they were able to see what I had to offer. I also had some posters depicting RCMP uniforms and badges and the famous

“Charge” of the Musical Ride. At this point I was ready to lighten the load of my suitcase by at least giving some of the items away.

Looking over my collection, they made it well known that the American badges were their favourites. I was given a dress forage cap, epaulettes, collar insignia, a breast badge, and two dress belts. They just about cleaned me out; my trading stock was depleted. If I had been trading anywhere else in Europe, I would have ensured a one to one ratio. But what the heck!

There is another twist to the story however. A deaf mute on our tour ran across six young men who were also deaf. As I struggled through a conversation in crude sign language and broken English, I spotted them with their hands just a blurr! It was a sight to behold. Here we were, able to speak and hear perfectly, and yet because of the language



New acquisitions: forage cap, epaulettes, collar insignia, breast badge and dress belt.