

have no full-time police force, and assist in search and rescue operations (SAR). These are just a few of the police functions Marine members carry out. They are, of course, required to perform all the usual tasks demanded of a regular member in addition to performing marine duties on their P/V.

An excellent example of a patrol vessel, and one of the largest in the RCMP on the West Coast, is the P/V *Pearkes*. She is a fifty-three foot fiberglass vessel made by Canoe Cove of British Columbia and was commissioned in 1973. The vessel is completely self-contained. Below, forward, are bunks for five, storage space, and a "head" complete with shower. The wheelhouse is amidships; located here is the helm, the radar equipment, various radios and charts. The galley is aft of the wheelhouse and is equipped with a refrigerator, a stove, and hot and cold running water.

The *Pearkes* was first stationed at Port Alberni, and after seeing extensive service there was moved to her present home port of Alert Bay. Alert Bay is situated on Cormorant Island in the Johnstone Strait at the northeast tip of Vancouver Island. Although vessels in the past used to be the residence of the Marine members, today a crew's permanent quarters are maintained on shore.

The *Pearkes* is maintained and operated by four regular members: a sergeant in charge of the vessel, plus a crew of three constables. One constable position is designated "Engine Equipment Operator" (EEO), and this person runs and maintains the two, huge 300 Cummins diesel engines, along with the other mechanical equipment on board. The remaining two constables look after the myriad other duties on board and are classified as "investigators." The boat cannot be operated by less than three members; the skipper and the EEO must always be aboard.

On board the *MP90* there is no question who is the master of the vessel; the constables are always under the direct supervision of the skipper, as the confined quarters of the fifty-three footer dictate. With an enthusiastic skipper and a zealous crew, life and times on board are unequalled!

The crew of the *MP90* supplement the four detachment members and the one sub-detachment member operating out of Alert Bay. The NCO in command of Alert Bay Detachment oversees the operation of the *MP90* along with keeping an eye on the sub-detachment of Sointula on Malcolm Island.

In the summer of 1981 the crew of the *Pearkes* consisted of Sergeant Wayne Garton, a fifteen-year veteran of the Force's Marine Services and a highly-qualified skipper; Cst. Bob Mollet, the senior constable and EEO — a Marine man at heart, and Cst. Len Sullivan, a Newfoundlander and a natural for Marine Services. I completed the crew as a rookie to Marine Services, but a one-year "veteran" of Alert Bay Detachment.

It seemed a routine day on August 2, 1981... the *MP90* was cruising the straits, enforcing primarily the Customs Act and the Canada Shipping Act. Three warnings had been given out under the Canada Shipping Act, one person had been charged, and twenty small vessel checks had been performed. After tying up in port at the end of the day and returning to the office, Sergeant Garton was greeted with a phone call from Major Moran of the Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) in Victoria. The *MP90* was requested to join the SAR efforts of the Canadian Armed Forces in the area of Ocean Falls, a small B.C. coastal village.

On July 30, 1981, a single engine Beaver aircraft had gone missing with