

dividuals to navigate their automobiles back to their homes afterwards.

I should add parenthetically that in those days liquor could only be legally purchased in an Alberta liquor store, and could only be legally consumed in the home of the purchaser. It was rumoured that liquor was sometimes carried by members into golf clubs (and other clubs) and sometimes carried into hotel dining rooms to be consumed illegally. But the enforcement of this unpopular statute was the responsibility of the small corps of provincial liquor inspectors, and the policy of the Mounted Police then seemed to be to ignore any rumours of this nature.

Calgary Detachment sought to encourage good driving on the ten-mile stretch of provincial road between the city limits and the Bowness Golf Club gates, and with this mission in mind Constable Bob Kay and I were detailed to patrol the Bowness Road this New Year's Eve, until the party ended.

The early part of the evening passed without incident. Bob Kay and I regularly patrolled the route and we made ourselves as conspicuous as possible. We were sure that most of the guests had seen our uniforms and it would be common knowledge in the club that the police were on the road that night.

Sometime after midnight some of the guests started to leave the club and by 3 o'clock the festivities were over. Bob Kay and I had a cup of coffee in the kitchen with the staff while they were beginning to clear up, and then started back to Calgary in the police-owned Terraplane.

En route to the city we overtook a small sedan travelling very slowly and sedately ahead of us. Our attention was particularly attracted to this vehicle because of an extraordinary phenomenon which really had to be seen to be believed. The highway surface immediately under the automobile sparkled and glittered as the vehicle passed over the road. We fell in behind and followed this car for perhaps a

mile as we tried to understand this preposterous thing that our eyes were seeing. After some profitless speculation we decided to stop this object of our curiosity.

When we walked up to the driver, Bob Kay and I had a little difficulty in keeping our faces straight, because we recognized immediately the answer to our question. Long strands of barbed wire were looped gracefully over the radiator, with the ends extending underneath and on both sides of the car body. The number of strands suggested that the vehicle had been driven through a farmer's fence more than once, possibly when entering a field and again when leaving it. The twinkling and sparking that we had seen had been caused by the numerous barbs scratching the flinty gravel of the road surface.

The driver was unable to give any explanation for the presence of the barbed wire and seemed not to know that it was there. He hotly denied that he had driven through any fence during the evening. However, it was pretty obvious that this gentleman was in an advanced state of intoxication; to use the vernacular — he was sloshed!

It was New Year's morning and the story has a happy ending. I drove the man home and, after removing the barbed wire, Bob Kay drove the automobile to the police garage. It was to be held until later in the day when the driver had an opportunity to sober up.

I telephoned the operator of the "barbed wire" car about noon on New Year's Day and had some difficulty in explaining the situation to him. He did not know who I was, he did not know where his car was, and said that he had no clear recollection of anything after arriving at the Bowness Golf Club the evening before.

He may have been the life of the New Year's Eve party, but he was also unwittingly the source of one of the most briefly perplexing experiences during my service in the Force.