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## Rose from the ranks to police chief

# Mississauga's first

# detective Bruce Kivell dies

By JOHN STEWART *July 21/99*  
Staff *Peel Biog. MN*

The first detective the Toronto Township Police Force ever had was also one of its finest.

Bruce Kivell, who rose through the ranks to become chief of the Mississauga Police Department, died this week of cancer at age 81.

"He was the first detective ever on the force," former Peel Region Police Chief Bill Teggart recalled yesterday. "His work inspired me and a lot of other people," he added.

For many years, Kivell was the only detective working for the organization that preceded today's Peel Region unit. "I often used to speak to the men he'd arrested and they'd say it wasn't long

after they'd committed a break and enter that they knew Bruce would be knocking on their door," says Teggart.

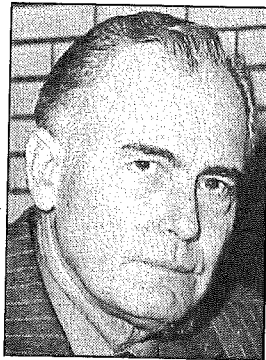
Kivell, who was raised in Port Credit, joined the force in April 1946. He had driven a tractor trailer at St. Lawrence Starch before the war broke out. He served as a paratrooper in the army.

After returning from overseas, Kivell followed another local boy who'd driven a truck at St. Lawrence, Garnett McGill, onto the force. For years they, along with Gord Stanfield, would be the leaders of the executive group.

Kivell rose through the ranks to become chief of the Mississauga Police Force in 1972 and 1973. He was forced to resign when failing eyesight, which eventually led to blindness, set in.

The veteran officer took his loss of sight, as he did so many other things, with stoicism and put the best light on things. "Bruce was a very practical man," says Teggart. "He understood that you have to take life's blows as they come."

Former Mayor Ron Searle, who served on the police commission when Kivell was chief, is amazed that, even after he



**KIVELL**

lost his sight, he would still play golf with a little help from friends. He had been the best golfer on the force for many years. A quiet man who never bragged about his accomplishments, Kivell actually had his first brush with violence even before he joined the force. He and a girlfriend were in a parked car on an Erindale sideroad in 1939 when they were attacked and bound and taken to a field at Winston Churchill Blvd. and Thomas St. where a man with a gun threatened to kill them. Kivell managed to get his hands free and get his legs around the man, holding off his gun hand while his girlfriend hit him over

the head. The gunman, Earl Baker, was killed as Kivell defended his life and that of his girlfriend.

In many ways, Kivell was ahead of his time as police chief, recalls Teggart. He was the first chief ever to call an executive meeting of the force and he sent three men, including Teggart and ex-chief Douglas Burrows, to a university training program at Northwestern University, something unheard of in those days. "It was a very progressive little force," says Teggart.

"Bruce was also a very astute judge of character," says Teggart. "His contributions are still being felt today because of his selection and hiring of men, including the current chief, Noel Catney."

Teggart wanted to go into traffic enforcement until Kivell saw that his skills leant themselves most to detective work. "I could have thanked him every day I was on the job," says Teggart, chief from 1988-90.

Kivell, who still lived in the Port Credit area, is survived by Dorothy, his wife of 59 years, daughter Jacqueline Blake and three grandchildren.