

The advent of snowmobile use by wardens also presented humorous scenes of wardens dashing across the snowy countryside in pursuit of runaway snow-machines. Those stories are too fresh in the minds of certain contemporary wardens to be expounded upon however.

### The Mackenzie Era

Prior to his appointment as chief warden in 1925, H.W. Mackenzie had been the field warden for Langlade County at Antigo. He served as chief warden until 1934 when he became Director of the Wisconsin Conservation Department serving in that capacity until 1942. Although he traded his role of law enforcement officer for that of administrator in 1934 "Mac" never left the warden force in spirit. Changes that took place under his supervision as chief warden and as director imbue the daily activities of wardens today.

Events in America during Mackenzie's era also had a lasting effect. Lindbergh's Atlantic solo flight in 1927 was bringing the gay and roaring 20's to a close, the Black Friday stock market crash of 1929 brought the nation to its knees. Oddly enough, the warden force expanded and flourished through the Great Depression years under Mackenzie's guidance.

From his office at the State Capital "Mac" provided direct line supervision to the field wardens assuring uniform, fair law enforcement statewide. Adding an extra touch of professionalism to the force, he won authorization from the Conservation Commission for the issuance of the first warden uniforms in 1928.

J. W. Taylor retells the maneuvering required to supply the original tailoring:

"They (Conservation Commission) decided to use the Royal Canadian Mounted Police outfit as a prototype and chief warden, H. W. Mackenzie was dispatched to Ottawa to negotiate permission and obtain tailoring specifications.

The Mounties' chief tailor, Staff Agt. David Hay was assigned to Mackenzie for two days. Outdoor fabrics and design details were inspected and a selection made.

When Mackenzie reported back, the commission was enthusiastic but learned to its dismay, that the law did not authorize issuing uniforms to wardens without cost. They proceeded nevertheless, and here's how it was done:

Commissioner Haskell Noyes arranged for the Personal Loan Department of the First Wisconsin National Bank of Milwaukee to accept a promissory note from each warden for \$90.04, the cost of the uniform.

Coat and breeches	\$40.98
Overcoat	27.31
Hat	9.75
Shirt	8.45
Tie	.85
Buttons and Badges	2.45
Star	.25
	<u>\$90.04</u>

The commission then raised the pay of each warden by \$10 per month so that he could pay off the loan.

Browning, King and Company of Milwaukee made the uniforms. There were 68 wardens and a tailor from the firm took individual measurements for each man. Special days were set aside for fittings at Ladysmith, Antigo and Madison. Mounties had unique rights to their hat design and the John B. Stetson Company required special written authorization before it would consent to duplicate the hats for Wisconsin. Wardens started wearing these forest green uniforms in 1930. The original is on display at the Mackenzie Environmental Education Center at Poynette."

In addition to his assistance in providing wardens uniforms, Haskell Noyes, then Chairman of the Wisconsin Conservation Commission, initiated and sponsored a annual conservation warden efficiency award in 1930. This award was presented to the warden selected by a committee of wardens who recognized him for outstanding total state service. Since the award conception, the Noyes family has continued this recognition and annually for the past 49 years the "outstanding warden of the year" has been honored.

From 1928 to 1933 the conservation warden program was considerably expanded. Although a 95% conviction rate ( 1,438 arrests) was obtained in 1928, public opinion was still very strong against conservation law enforcement and was the main obstacle in establishing a stronger program. The Chief Warden therefore revived the in-service warden school in an effort to inform all wardens on state-wide problems and develop

greater efficiency. (Recently, in 1977, this state-wide training was again revived and annually all state wardens return to Fort McCoy for the Warden Conference Training

In a further effort to win over public opinion, the Conservation Commission in 1933 initiated public hearings to secure information relative to regulation changes. Having in that year been granted authority by the Legislature to regulate seasons, bag limits and other regulations, the Commission initiated the traditions of public participation in rule making. The participants, later appointed to committees, were the forerunners of the citizen advisory group that evolved into the Wisconsin Conservation Congress in 1938.

In 1934, Chief Warden Mackenzie ascended to directorship of the Conservation Department, his one-time fellow field warden, Harold C. "Barney" Devine, was selected to fill his position as chief.

From 1935 to 1939, the warden force expanded from 68 to 77 regular wardens. Duties also expanded from traditional fish and game enforcement to cooperation with other WCD functions such as; planting fish and game, fire suppression, winter feeding, bounty law administration, deer and bear damage claims, beaver control, supervision of CCC and WPA crews and the issuance of many miscellaneous permits. As areas of patrol expanded with the state road system group or team enforcement started and an increased effort in license checking increased fees received by the Department. Arrests rose from 1,967 in 1935 to 2,920 in 1939 with a 93% conviction rate.

Organizational changes took place also. The law enforcement division was organized into three state areas with a warden supervisor in charge of each area. The position of Assistant Chief Warden was also created during this period.

In 1940, Chief Warden Barney Devine died and Warden Al Robinson was appointed as Chief Warden. In the same year the Conservation Commission purchased a large patrol boat to be used for commercial fish law enforcement on the waters of Green

Bay and Lake Michigan. In memory of the deceased chief warden and beginning a tradition of naming patrol boats after former wardens, the new boat was christened The Barney Devine. The boat, now performing fisheries research functions, still carries the same name, and as-spotless and ship-shape as the day it was launched, still cruises the same waters.

From 1941 through the end of World War II, the mobilization of manpower into the United States armed services drained the number of the conservation warden force. Because of decreased staff, emphasis was directed from Chief Warden Robinson's office to the public requesting the cooperation:

"We find efficient law enforcement possible only when there prevails a friendly cooperative spirit between the public and the law enforcement agency. The fine cooperation received by the enforcement division...is extremely valuable to the wardens in apprehending violators at all times, but is even more valuable because the assistance rendered in many other aspects of the department's management programs is dependent upon public effort to realize success."

Events in the Pacific and European theatres of war overshadowed events at the home front. During the war years, the wardens remaining on enforcement duty quietly fought their own battles and suffered their casualties as they always had regardless of worldwide conflict.

"During the War .30-.30 ammunition cost you a dollar a round, if you could find them at all."

Anonymous Warden