

The Shooting of Cst. Mike Buday Teslin Lake, Yukon 1985

The first event occurred in 1985. The setting was the exquisite and uncomplicated beauty of the rugged northwest corner of British Columbia that borders the Yukon. On that March 19th morning, along the shores of Teslin Lake, the air was crisp and cold. A deranged individual was moving with amazing speed through the bushes, yet he was barely making a sound.

The objective of the special RCMP Emergency Response Team camouflaged in position on the ground was to capture and arrest Micheal Oros - an American draft-dodger-turned-bushman who had earned a reputation for alarming and bizarre behavior. For 13 years, the suspicions surrounding him were plentiful and included murder.

The RCMP members did not expect Oros to be arrested quietly. And no one was kidding themselves by expecting it to be easy! Oros's survival skills were astonishing and legendary. Skilled with a gun, he was known to never miss a shot. And he had openly expressed an intent to kill policemen!

Oros had spent the previous night on Big Island. This was disquieting to the Tlingit people in the area because by doing so, Oros had trespassed on sacred ground. The island was in fact the gravesite of a Tlingit shaman. They knew this was sure to disturb the spirit of the Shaman buried on the island and there would be consequences for Oros. Serious consequences.

Sadly, Oros was able to completely circle around the Mounties and attack from the rear - a feat believed to be physically impossible for any human, given the bush and snow conditions. Oros instantly killed Constable Mike Buday with his first shot. In the same motion, he turned and aimed at Constable Garry Rodgers and pulled the trigger. Simultaneously, Constable Rodgers caught movement in the bushes and saw what he described as "a face strangely glowing." He raised his rifle and fired at the almost imperceptible glimpse of Oros's face through the tangled tree branches. The bullet struck its mark precisely. Oros was dead.

Constable Rodgers should have been, too.

Oros had fired first! What happened to prevent the second RCMP Officer's death? Subsequent investigation proved the gun was fired and worked perfectly. Miraculously, the bullet didn't. The percussion cap had an indentation where it had been struck, yet something had prevented it from firing.

And how was the bullet that Constable Rodgers fired able to find its mark? The odds are astronomically against it! The .223 caliber bullet that Constable Rodgers fired could

have easily been deflected by a twig or even a raindrop. Expert marksmen shook their heads in amazement when they viewed the path the bullet traveled. "It is impossible" they said.

Perhaps the Tlingit people were right all along. They believe that Divine Spiritual Intervention was at work that day on Teslin Lake...

The Beginning of VisionQuest 1995

The story picks up ten years later to the day back on the shores of Teslin Lake. A group of men gathered there with a vision and a quest. In a unique blend of circumstances, a plan to turn tragedy into triumph was unfolding to the group - most were RCMP members, all were strong friends.

Accomplished West Coast artist and RCMP S/Sgt. Ed Hill, had dreamed of completing a painting to commemorate Constable Mike Buday. His friend and noted international artist - Roy Henry Vickers also had a dream. His was to see the opening of a facility for the treatment and healing of addictive personalities, so he suggested that they collaborate on the painting. With the support of the RCMP behind them, the sale of limited edition prints would begin the funding.

They looked for an image to paint, and found it on march 19, 1995 standing on the shore of Teslin Lake looking towards Shaman Island. it was framed by a group of mountains called "Sheep Standing By Himself," locally referred to as the Aces. Uncannily, the scene they chose... (they found out later from Mounties who were there that fateful day 10 years ago) was precisely the one that Constable Mike Buday was looking at the moment he died.

The sale of the limited edition prints of the painting they created, aptly named "Sheep Standing By Himself," was instantly successful and raised the first \$100,000.

In June 1996, Commissioner Phillip Murray, on behalf of the RCMP committed to turning the concept of a recovery facility into a reality with the official launching of the project now called VisionQuest. The Officer in Charge of this history-making Initiative is Insp. John Grant, who was stationed in Teslin during the Oros incident and was instrumental in the evolution of the VisionQuest concept. The circle begins again...