

RCMP say that a car driven by Ruth Steeves of the city and a taxi driven by Divender Mann, also of Grande Prairie, collided at the intersection of 98 Ave. and 98 St. Damage is estimated at \$500.

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Police are investigating a shooting death at this farmhouse 15 km northeast of Grande Prairie.

Staff photo by Christine Vanzella

Husband charged in wife's death

Herald-Tribune staff

A man calmly called police after allegedly gunning down his wife with a rifle at their farm 15 kilometres northeast of Grande Prairie.

Ruth Steeves, 59, was found dead at the scene with at least two bullet wounds, but possibly a third which has yet to be confirmed by police.

Her husband William Irving Steeves, born in 1937, was charged with first degree murder and possession of a weapon.

Steeves appeared briefly in Grande Prairie provincial court this morning. Dressed in blue plaid shirt and jeans, he appeared sombre.

He will remain in custody until next Monday when a date for a preliminary hearing will be set.

Police say Steeves called them about 10:45 p.m. to report he killed his wife.

Police raced to the scene and found the man waiting for them outside the home.

"He was just waiting on the porch," Moore said.

"He had been drinking. I don't know to what extent but he had been drinking."

The man was arrested and taken into custody.

Police investigators were on the scene last night and

are continuing their investigation today. A forensic team from Edmonton is expected to begin investigating the site today.

Neighbors of the Steeves, longtime residents of the area, were shaken and in a state of disbelief this morning after learning about the killing.

Melina Morken, who has known the family for about 25 years, said their marriage showed no signs of anything like this happening.

"They were both very good people, very good neighbors, and very good people."

William Steeves worked at the Northern Lite Canola plant in Sexsmith, neighbors say.

This is the second fatal shooting in the Bezanson area in the last three and a half years.

Gerald Goff, 53, was killed by a single gunshot wound to the chest early in the morning of Feb. 1, 1991.

His body was found in his burned out farm trailer.

Goff's son, Rocky, was acquitted in March, 1992 of second-degree murder after the judge ruled the shooting accidental. Goff, 21, was sentenced to 90 days in prison for arson.

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Murder case delayed by funeral

Herald-Tribune staff

A court appearance for a man facing charges of murdering his wife was rescheduled due to her funeral Monday, RCMP said.

Ruth Steeves, 59, died from gunshot wounds June 21 at the Steeves rural home near Clairmont Lake.

A date for a preliminary inquiry was to be set Monday in Grande Prairie provincial court for William

(Bill) Steeves, 57. His appearance is now set for Wednesday.

RCMP said three bullets were fired from a .308 rifle. Two, and possibly a third, entered the woman's body.

The results from an autopsy are not expected for a number of weeks.

Steeves was a mother of three.

Police said the man telephoned the Grande Prairie detachment that night about 10:45 p.m.

The Daily Herald-Tribune

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Hearing date set for Steeves

A four-day preliminary hearing is set for William Steeves, charged with shooting his wife last week.

Steeves, 57, appeared in Grande Prairie provincial court this morning. He has been in custody since the murder June 21 at the couple's home 15 km northeast of Grande Prairie.

Ruth Steeves, 59, died from shots from a 30.08 rifle.

Steeves is charged with first degree murder and use of a firearm while committing an indictable offence.

The Daily Herald-Tribune

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Thank You

The children of the late **Ruth Steeves** would like to thank all who gave their love and support when we needed it the most.

In times like this we came to realize how truly valuable our family & friends are. The compassion shown from our closest family and friends, to those we personally didn't even know, was truly comforting.

To John, Scott and Berry from Parklane Funeral Chapel, somehow "thank you" alone cannot express what your support has meant to us. Thank you to the paramedics who assisted with our grandmother, to Rev. Canon Isaac Graham from the Anglican Church, and to Carla from Victims Assistance.

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Man gets 8 years for shooting wife

Laura Tester
Herald-Tribune staff

A 57-year-old local man was given an eight-year jail term in Grande Prairie provincial court for shooting his wife twice while on a drinking binge June 21.

William Irving Steeves was sentenced to seven years in a penitentiary for manslaughter and one year for the charge of unlawful use of a firearm. Originally, Steeves was charged with first-degree murder in the death of his wife Ruth on their farm 15 kilometres northeast of Grande Prairie.

He was also prohibited from possessing firearms for 10 years after his release from jail. The experienced hunter's current firearms were ordered given to his son.

Judge D.E. Patterson said this was the story of a happy marriage "which went awash in a sea of alcohol, ending in tragedy."

Family and friends knew the couple as neighborly but it became customary for them to drink after work, Patterson said.

Apparently, Ruth's alcohol addiction was worse and she used it to combat her back pain, he said.

"As the level of intoxication increased, she became verbally abusive to her husband."

Crown prosecutor Roy Smith said a neighbor heard three shots at about 10:30 p.m. on June 21. Steeves called the police less than 10 minutes later to say he shot his wife and she was dead, Smith said.

When police arrived, Steeves was in a housecoat with a drink in his hand. His wife, had been shot twice — once in the upper chest area and another in the abdomen on the left side.

Both had very high alcohol levels in their blood, Smith said. Apparently, William had also tried to shoot himself but failed, he added.

Defence counsel David Mochan said "Mr. Steeves was a very unusual person to be in that situation."

"It was completely out of character," he said, adding Steeves has shown a lot of remorse about killing his wife of 35 years. "He picked up the phone immediately to call police."

Steeves, who appeared in a purple sweater and pants, wiped tears from his eyes as sentence was passed and his family looked on.

"There are three children (of William and Ruth's) present," Mochan said. "This is a normal family, not a dysfunctional family."

• A man calmly called police after killing his wife with a rifle at their farm 15 kilometres northeast of Grande Prairie. William Steeves, born in 1937, pleaded guilty to the offence in Grande Prairie court and was sentenced to eight years in jail.

The Daily Herald-Tribune

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In Loving Memory Of

**RUTH
STEEVES**

September 15, 1934 -
June 21, 1994



We miss your presence, your laughter,
those years.

We wish the times lost could replace
our tears.

We think of you often, years missed,
children born.

You are forever in our hearts.

Love, Will and Debbie

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