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# THE NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT 1981 ANNUAL REPORT

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NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT

1981 ANNUAL REPORT



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## HISTORY OF THE NEW ORLEANS POLICE DEPARTMENT

New Orleans, like all cities that have grown from villages and towns into great urban areas, has had its ups and downs, its reverses and successes, its failures and triumphs. The police force has always played a conspicuous part in its history. When the City of New Orleans was founded by Bienville in 1718, its policing was in the hands of the military. In 1796, the Spanish took possession but some of the French constabulary were retained.

The military police passed out of existence in 1802 when New Orleans was formally turned over to Commissioners Wilkinson and Claiborne. Then came the municipal force, the history of which dates back to November, 1803, when Mayor Etienne DeBore appointed a committee from the City Council to inspect prisons and formulate rules and police regulations. Having adopted regulations, a police force was appointed to carry them out. Pierre Achille Rivery was placed in command. The force under the Commissioner General numbered about twenty-five men.

In 1804 came the patrol militia under James Pitot, then mayor of New Orleans. The Guard Deville (City Watch) followed in 1806. However, the Grand Jury as early as April 23, 1806, arraigned the force as inefficient and it was disbanded in 1808.

When New Orleans was captured in 1861, during the Civil War, General B.F. Butler suspended civil government and established martial law with military police and a provost marshal.

Civil Government was reestablished in 1866 and a municipal police force was appointed by Mayor John Monroe. This force was succeeded in 1868 by the Metropolitan Police Force created by legislative act.

It was not until 1877 that the Metropolitan Police law was repealed and the Metropolitans ceased to exist. After the abolition of the Metropolitan Police Force, a few interested citizens volunteered to do police duty until a municipal force could be organized. This force of citizens is known in history as the "Ribbon Force".

A Municipal Force created by ordinance of the City Council replaced the Ribbon Force, after a few weeks, and lasted until there was a change in administration. In 1888 a bill known as Act 63 was introduced in the Legislature by the Honorable Felix J. Dreyfous and passed. This bill called for election of six (6) commissioners to reorganize and act as administrators of the Police Department. The Honorable Joseph Shakespeare, the newly elected Mayor opposed the bill in the courts and it was not until February 11, 1889 that the Supreme Court ordered the bill to be put into effect. The new Police Bill gave satisfaction to the citizens of New Orleans and they were proud of their force.

After the Police Board was elected, the Board unanimously elected David C. Hennessey Superintendent of Police on March 13, 1889. Superintendent Hennessey was a brave and zealous officer and under his command, the improvement was rapid and marked. Due to his devotion to duty and his fight against crime in the city, he brought down upon himself the enmity of the lawless. On October 15, 1889 he was assassinated. Captain John Journee was placed in temporary command of the Department by the Board of Commissioners.

On January 5, 1891, Detective Dexter S. Gaster was elected to the position of Superintendent of Police. After the death of Superintendent Gaster on August 13, 1901 Senior Captain John Journee was selected as Gaster's successor. Captain Journee was commissioned Superintendent on September 12, 1901.

On July 27, 1904 a new Act which had passed became law. The Mayor was placed in authority of the force with the power to appoint two commissioners and an Inspector of Police, a title which was given in lieu of superintendent. Since the title of superintendent was abolished, Superintendent Journee was elected by the new board as Inspector of Police in January, 1905 and served until June 2, 1905. The board then elected E.S. Whitaker as Inspector of Police and he held this position until January 2, 1908.

Following Whitaker, William J. O'Connor was elected Inspector of Police and he served until death on November 29, 1910. He was succeeded by Senior Captain John P. Boyle who served until February 10, 1911. The board met on this same date and elected James W. Reynolds as Inspector of Police. Under the administration of Inspector Reynolds, the Department took a long stride to realign itself with modern progress by initiating a mechanization program. It was in 1911 that the first motorized units were added to the Department. This consisted of one motor patrol wagon and four motorcycles. The other equipment consisted of seven horse drawn patrol wagons, one run about, two buggies and fifty-five horses.

On January 1, 1912, there were 399 paid members of the police department. By the end of 1915, there were 520 policemen of which 394 were regular members and 126 were listed as supernumeraries.

In 1922, the Department was operating 33 automobiles and 21 motorcycles. The department was now beginning to concern itself with a new problem of vehicular traffic in the commercial district. It was also in 1922 that the nucleus of the Juvenile Bureau was formed. During this year the department received national recognition as the only force in the country thoroughly equipped for first-aid in all of its departments.

Colonel Guy Molony was named Superintendent after the death of Inspector Reynolds. A renewed and revitalized drive against gambling

and violations of the Prohibition Amendment of 1923 was instituted. A retiring Grand Jury of 1925 described Colonel Molony's administration as one of the best in the history of the New Orleans Police Department.

In 1925, Thomas Healy replaced Colonel Molony as Superintendent. His "100 miles per hour police service" came into being with the acquisition on August 16, 1926 of five armored motorcycles, capable of developing speeds of 100 miles per hour.

On January 1, 1929, Captain Theodore Ray, succeeded Superintendent Healy. Into Superintendent Ray's lap fell the series of bombings that were the result of a street car strike. In between the bombings, the force was pressed for time to continue its crusade against vice, slot machines and other forms of gambling.

Superintendent Ray's resignation which came on May 5, 1930 was followed by Coloney H.B. Myers who became the head of the department. Captain George Reyer was assigned to the new post of Chief of Police. In 1931, Police Headquarters moved from Tulane and Saratoga Streets to the new Criminal Courts Building located at Tulane and South Broad Streets. Shortly afterwards police began physical training with new equipment at this location. The new police show-up room was first used on October 7, 1931.

Superintendent Myers resigned in 1931 and George Reyer became acting Superintendent. The post of Chief of Police was abolished. Superintendent Reyer had an eye towards moderization and plans were made for a radio station and an up-to-date communications center. The radio station began broadcasting information to cruising vehicles on May 14, 1932. During this same year the first fleet of White motorcycles arrived. By 1936 the department had 850 members.

On May 6, 1946 Colonal Adair Waters replaced Reyer as Superintendent. Colonel Waters took office as deLesseps S. Morrison became Mayor.

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During 1946 the Police Board was abolished and its functions transferred to the Mayor. An Advisory Board of three members came into existence. Motor patrols were increased from 17 to 23. In 1947 the Police Emergency Unit was organized.

On February 15, 1949, Joseph L. Scheuering, former Chief of Detectives, took office after the resignation of Colonel Waters. In 1950 the Police Department numbered 934 members. On May 5, 1955, Colonel Provosty A. Dayries was appointed Superintendent of Police, after Scheuering retired. Colonel Dayries served until 1960 and retired.

Upon the retirement of Superintendent Dayries, Mayor Morrison appointed a man who had risen through the ranks to Deputy Superintendent, Joseph I. Giarrusso, as the new Superintendent of Police. Mayor Morrison later resigned as Mayor of the City of New Orleans to accept the appointment as the Ambassador of the Organization of American States. The Honorable Victor H. Schiro was elected by the City Council to serve the unexpired term of Mayor Morrison and was later elected by the citizens for two full terms as Mayor.

The Department of Police saw some of its greatest advancements during the administration of Superintendent Giarrusso. He stressed professionalism, instituted a cadet program and opened ways for officers to further their education at Loyola University in the Evening Division for a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Criminology.

He waged a relentless fight to reduce crime in the city and increase patrol service by implementation of the one-man patrol unit. A National Crime Information Center was established which at present connects the City of New Orleans with 46 other state agencies participating throughout the United States.

Through his farsightedness, Superintendent Giarrusso recognized the need for better communication between the police and the public. On September 15, 1966, he brought into existence the Community Relations Division.

In June of 1968, the Police Administration Building was completed and Headquarters moved from the Criminal Courts Building which it occupied jointly with the Criminal Courts since 1931. The new Administration Building was modern and contained the necessary space and equipment to operate a large metropolitan force.

In August of 1970 Captain Clarence B. Giarrusso was appointed Superintendent of Police by the newly elected Mayor Moon Landrieu. Giarrusso was a 29 year veteran of the Department. Innovations highlighted the administration of Superintendent Clarence B. Giarrusso. In 1971 the Urban Squad was formed giving more personal and knowledgeable service to those areas of the city most in need. The Alcohol Safety Action Division was formed in an effort to reduce alcohol related automobile accidents.

In 1972 the Felony Action Squad was formed to concentrate in high crime areas. The Department enjoyed a reduction in crime that year. In 1973 the Communications Section was renovated and another reduction in crime for that year was noted.

In 1974 Crime Analysis was created to provide rapid dissemination of current crime data and the identification of career criminals. Additionally the Rape Squad, an arm of the Homicide Section, was formed to deal more compassionately with victims.

In 1975 Family Crisis Intervention training was introduced as well as the Crime Prevention Unit which was designed to inform the public in better security of its homes and personal property and how the public might assist the police for the betterment of the community.



From March through September of 1976, Deputy Superintendent Anthony D. Duke supervised the affairs of the Department while Chief Giarrusso recuperated from an illness.

In 1977 construction was begun on a much needed addition to the Headquarters building for the expansion of several divisions and the integration of a computerized communications system presently being installed.

James C. Parsons' was sworn in as Superintendent of the New Orleans Police Department on June 12, 1978. Parsons was selected from over 110 applicants interviewed for the position by an appointed citizens committee. Parsons served as Birmingham, Alabama's Chief of Police from 1972, resigning from that position to become NOPD's new chief.

Upon Parsons resignation, Henry M. Morris, a 34 year veteran of the New Orleans Police Department, was appointed Acting Superintendent of Police on November 24, 1980 by Mayor Ernest N. Morial. Morris, at the time, was Deputy Chief in charge of the Technical Services Bureau, having been promoted to Deputy Chief on August 31, 1979.

On April 16, 1981 Morris was appointed Superintendent of Police.

