

L.A. SHERIFFS' MUSEUM

By Chris Miller

Los Angeles Sheriffs' Museum

LADY DEPUTY PATROL PROJECT, PART 1

In 1906, during Sheriff White's last year in office, he appointed Harriet Shehi as the first matron of the Los Angeles County Jail. The matron's duty was to search and supervise female prisoners after they were arrested. According to a letter submitted to Sheriff Traeger in 1923 seeking his support for an early retirement, Harriet claimed that she lived in the jail 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and during the first seven years of her employment, was only relieved by her daughter.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department began requiring women applicants to take a written exam for deputy sheriff in 1916. This exam was different than that taken by males. Once hired, women did not attend an academy, but instead went directly to the jail, where they were trained. For promotions, female and male deputies were also administered different exams.

Once women started attending an academy, they were all in one platoon with a female staff instructor. Their physical training had different requirements than that of the male cadets, so it was held separately. Certain exercises were modified to compensate for the difference in upper-body strength between men and women. Pull-ups were done with the feet on the ground while leaning back and grasping a bar with arms extended. The body was then pulled forward to touch the bar. Pushups were the same as those done by male cadets with the exception that the knees remained on the ground.

JOB ASSIGNMENTS

The first female deputy was hired in 1912, but it wasn't until 1972 that female deputies were allowed to work many of the assignments performed by male deputies. Out of all the jobs around the Sheriff's Department, only a few were available to women. These included working the women's jails at Terminal Island and Sybil Brand Institute for Women (SBI), as well as the women's module in the Hall of Justice jail. Female deputies worked the complaint desk at patrol stations answering phones, handling counter traffic and searching female prisoners. Vice and Narcotics Bureaus needed women to work undercover, and since Sheriff's executives felt that women worked well with kids, they were also assigned to Juvenile Bureau. Since they weren't allowed to work

in a patrol car, they didn't need patrol training, so they graduated weeks earlier than their male counterparts. Over the years, women deputies were subjected to comments from male deputies such as, "Why do you get the same pay I do? Your life isn't in danger like mine is."

CIVIL RIGHTS ACT

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act prohibiting employers from discriminating against employees on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin and religion was signed into law in 1964. It applied to employers with 15 or more employees, including federal, state and local governments. However, since there were no repercussions if the law wasn't adhered to, discrimination against women in the workplace continued for years.

DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED

On June 23, 1972, President Richard Nixon signed into law Title IX of the Education Amendments. This law prohibited discrimination on the basis of sex in any program or activity that was federally funded. It prohibited discrimination of women in hiring, recruiting and promotions, as well as in workplace conditions. This meant that any federal, state or local government agency, including the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, could lose federal funding if they discriminated against female employees.

Sheriff Pitchess wanted the Sheriff's Department to continue to receive federal money, but in order to do so, jobs and promotional opportunities would have to be equal for both male and female deputies.

FIRST FEMALE FBI FIELD AGENTS

FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover was set in his ways and did not want female FBI agents to work in the field. After he passed away on May 2, 1972, L. Patrick Gray was named acting director and promptly opened up the field special agent position to women. The first two female agents transferred to field duty on July 17, 1972. As a former FBI agent himself, Sheriff Pitchess did not want to be outdone by his former employer.

FIRST FEMALE PATROL DEPUTIES IN THE NATION

When, in 1968, Indianapolis became the first city police department to assign women to work patrol, Sheriff Pitchess decided that Los Angeles

County would be the first sheriff's department in the nation to do the same. A one-year pilot program would place 12 female deputies in patrol cars so that their performance could be evaluated.

NATIONWIDE STUDY OF WOMEN IN PATROL

On March 30, 1972, Sheriff's Bulletin 072 was distributed throughout the Sheriff's Department. The bulletin stated: "Consistent with this Department's progressive utilization of women in varied law enforcement assignments, we have been selected by the Police Foundation, a sub-unit of the Ford Foundation, to participate in a nationwide pilot program relative to the assignment of women peace officers to field policing duties... The objective of the study is to maximize personnel resources by concentrating on the expansion of the role of women in law enforcement. The project seeks to answer the question, 'Can women be utilized in all facets of police work based on ability and not on gender?'"

Sheriff's Bulletin 076-1 stated: "Lady Deputies in Patrol Car" is a one-year pilot program and "evaluation of the results will be done by independent research consultants."

PILOT PROJECT COMMITTEE

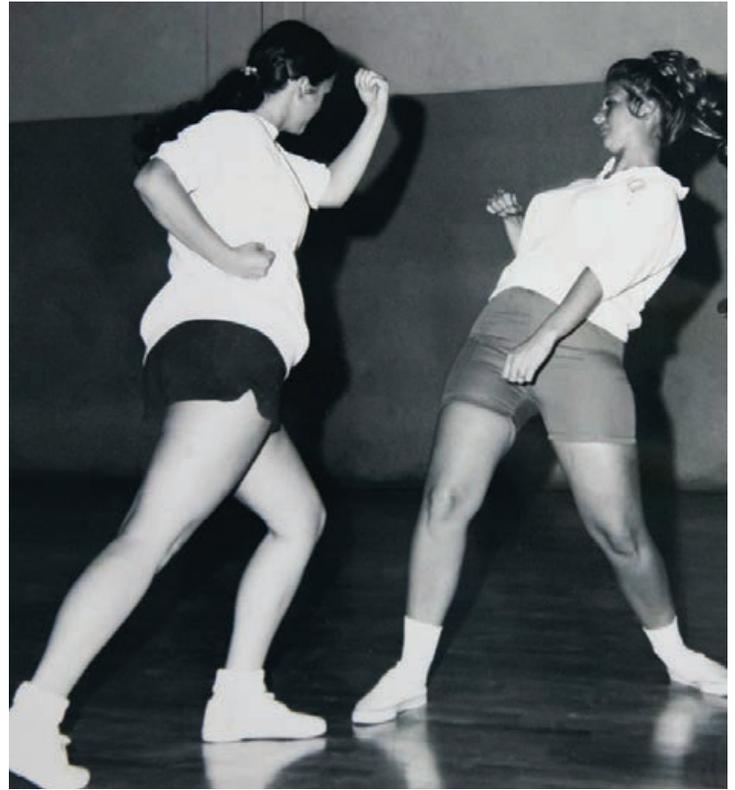
After graduating from the Sheriff's Academy in 1969, Deputy Judith Lewis was working at Sybil Brand Institute when Sheriff Pitchess' executive secretary took a leave of absence. Finding a replacement secretary was no small task since the Sheriff had a temper and was known to yell at employees. Having previous experience as an executive secretary, Deputy Lewis had a strong personality and was not easily upset. After being transferred to the Sheriff's office as the executive secretary, she was asked to become a member of a committee that was formed to research the feasibility of having female deputies work in patrol.

The committee was composed of the chiefs or their representatives from every division on the Department. In the meeting, many voiced their concerns about female deputies working patrol because they didn't have the upper-body strength of a man. They were anxious not only for the safety of the female deputies, but for their male partners as well.

Most of the committee members wanted the initial group of women to be chosen at random and sent out to patrol without any say in the



Defensive tactics training

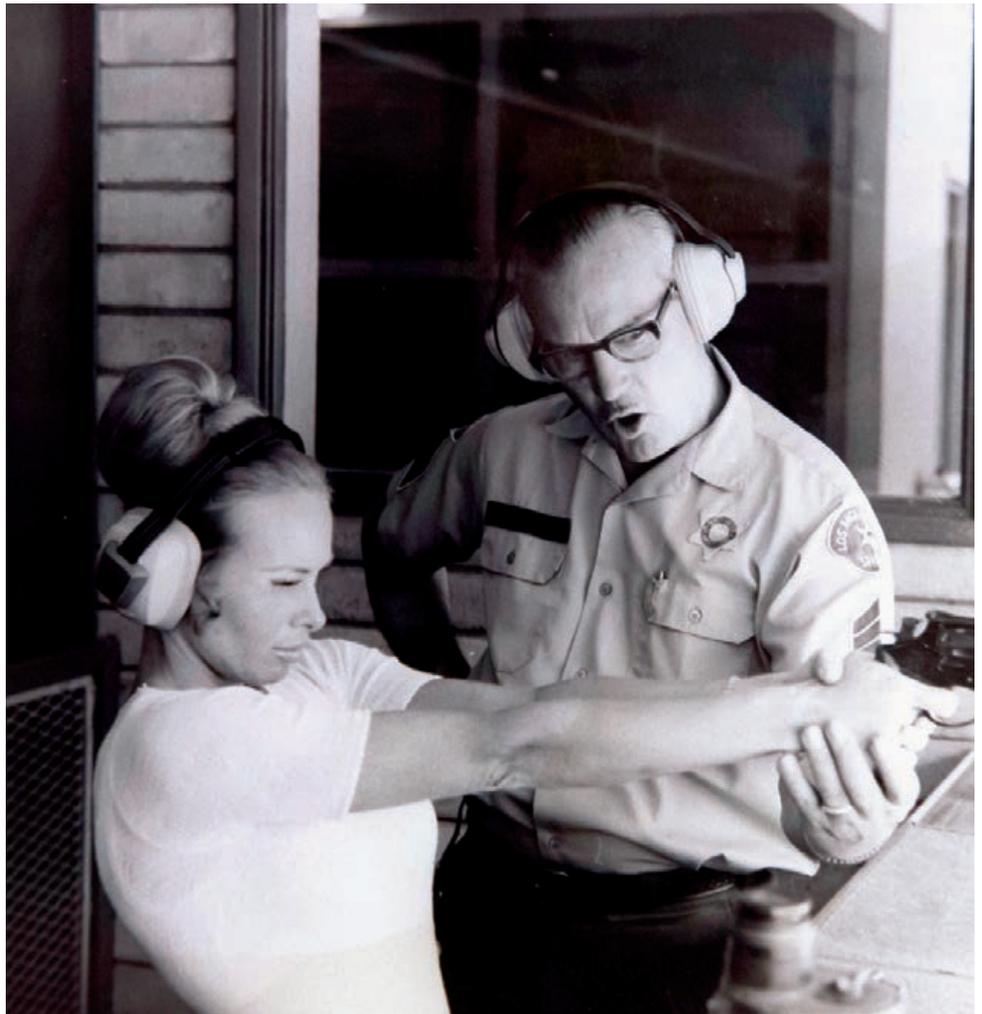


Deputies Kathleen Wade and Sandra Crawford practicing defensive tactics

matter. Deputy Lewis disagreed, pointing out that it wouldn't work if participants were picked arbitrarily. It was then she realized most of them wanted the pilot project to fail. Female deputies had never been assigned to patrol and had joined the Department not expecting to do so. They attended a basic 10-week Academy compared to the men who received 20 weeks of instruction, which included patrol training, driver training and more advanced defensive tactics and weapons training. The committee agreed that, prior to being assigned to patrol, the female deputies would have to receive additional instruction. There was no doubt that Sheriff Pitchess wanted the program to succeed, so instead of forcing people, they asked for volunteers. Having women in the pilot project who wanted to be there made the possibility of success far more likely. A memo was sent out to all division chiefs asking them what jobs under their command women could work. Lewis recalled that one chief responded that women couldn't work auto theft since they would have to crawl under cars to read hidden VIN numbers.

SEARCH FOR VOLUNTEERS

Although Sheriff Pitchess was optimistic about having female deputies in patrol, convincing the division chiefs this was a good idea was an uphill battle. Once the decision was made, a county-wide teletype was sent out seeking participants



continued on page 16 Deputy Lovette Caples during revolver training



Instructor Stan White teaches defensive tactics to Deputies Jeanne Miles and Carol Perry



First patrol school graduates (1972)

willing to volunteer in a feasibility study of women working patrol. Not only was it difficult to garner support among the division chiefs, but volunteers for the pilot program were hard to come by. Many female deputies were concerned about joining, because, if the program proved successful, they didn't want to be responsible for other women being forced to transfer to patrol. The women who were assigned to coveted positions and receiving extra pay had no interest in being in a radio car. Others, who had manned complaint desks for years, were afraid that the program's success would force all women to work in the field.

REQUIREMENTS

At least one year on the Sheriff's Department was the only requirement necessary to apply. Participants were selected based on an interview.

FEMALE DEPUTY UNIFORM COMMITTEE

Before the patrol pilot program began, a committee was formed, with Training Bureau Captain Dick Foreman as chairman, to decide what these women should wear as uniforms. Almost all of the women on the committee felt that pants would be far more appropriate than the standard uniform of a white blouse, green skirt and heels, with their gun and handcuffs in a purse. One female deputy who worked custody felt that the women in patrol should maintain their femininity by wearing skirts, and since Sheriff Pitchess wanted the female deputies to look like ladies, he would not change his mind about having them wear the uniform skirt in the field.

PATROL PLANNING

A planning and selection team consisting of seven deputies and supervised by Captain Bud Hansen and Lieutenant John Baird was assembled and worked under the title Patrol Planning. The applicants were interviewed by one of two panels, each consisting of three deputies. The seventh deputy collected the results from the panels. In order to ensure that scoring was being done equally, each panel interviewed Deputy Carol Walker (Painter), who was not one of the applicants. Their scores of Deputy Walker were only one point apart, thus showing consistency in the scoring. In addition to passing their oral interview, applicants were required to talk to a psychologist who asked pertinent questions such as, "Are you afraid of the dark?" After the results from their oral interviews and personnel records were reviewed, the top 20 female deputies were chosen to attend the very first patrol school.

PATROL SCHOOL COURSE OF INSTRUCTION

Before the first patrol school could begin, a training curriculum had to be developed. Sergeant T. J. Smith was the supervisor of Advanced Officer Training (AOT) and was in charge of creating the course of instruction, which included weapons training, physical training, lectures and tests.

WOMEN ATTENDED A SHORTER ACADEMY

Since women were not allowed to work patrol, they only attended the first half of the Academy, which consisted of basic law enforcement training. The second half of the Academy taught patrol training and was for males only. The first 20 female deputies chosen for the patrol pilot program attended two weeks of patrol training, which provided the additional instruction they had not received in the Academy.

PATROL SCHOOL BEGINS

A Department-wide teletype on August 11, 1972, listed the names of 20 deputies who would be the first women to attend patrol training. Patrol school began on Monday, August 14, 1972, in a classroom located under the Biscailuz Center Range. The attendees had already passed a POST-approved training academy, so instruction focused on the more advanced skills needed to work patrol, such as weaponless defense, emergency vehicle operations, communications, firearms training, investigation and practical field problems. One day, a staff instructor entered the classroom carrying a rifle and immediately fired blanks toward the ceiling. He wanted to see how the women would react. Since none of them were armed, they all did the right thing by taking cover under their desks.

Patrol school included revolver and shotgun training, as well as defensive tactics and judo. During handcuff training, the women had to control a suspect while opening their purse, which hung by a strap on their shoulder, and remove the handcuffs. Role-playing was conducted to test their overall skills and knowledge. Training culminated with an all-night practical application exercise at Universal Studios. This allowed the trainees to handle role-playing situations in realistic locations while being evaluated by the Academy staff.

Department executives were concerned that sending too many female deputies out all at once would overwhelm the patrol stations and cause problems. Because of this, only 12 of the 20 women who completed and passed patrol school were assigned to stations. They were chosen by the overall combined scores of their written tests, weapons training and role playing.



Deputy being interviewed by a news reporter



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Deputies Carole Freeman and Lovette Caples during the first patrol school graduation



Sybil Brand speaking during the first patrol school graduation



Instructor Ray Grant training Deputies Norma Zimm, Charlene Rottler, Kathleen Wade and Judy Shepard

PATROL SCHOOL GRADUATION

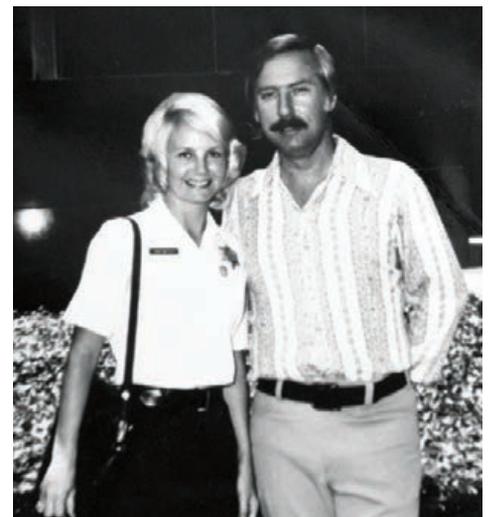
A ceremony honoring the very first female deputies to be patrol trained was held on the mall of the Los Angeles County Hall of Administration on August 31, 1972. The event was well attended by the news media, which captured Supervisor Warren Dorn and Undersheriff James Downey presenting the women with their certificates for completing the Lady Deputy Patrol Orientation Course.

News reporters interviewed not only the female deputies, but their training officer partners as well, asking a variety of questions, including ridiculous ones such as, "What are you going to

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Undersheriff Downey and Supervisor Dorn shake hands with graduates



Deputy at patrol school graduation



Deputy Judy Allen (Preimsberger)



Deputy Charlene Rottler



Deputy Mary Francis Baker



Deputy Norma Zinn (Violette)



Deputy Barbara Birkland



Deputy Judy McGrath (Fox)



Deputy Jeanne Miles (Sysak)



Deputy Elaine Minnis



Deputy Carol Perry (Brown)



Deputy Kathleen Wade



Deputy Lovette Caples



Deputy Carole A. Freeman



Deputy Judy Shepard Evans

be doing during the lonely early morning shifts out in the field?"

This first patrol school was considered such a success that patrol school became a requirement for every deputy to attend and pass prior to transferring to patrol.

FIRST 12 FEMALE DEPUTIES

Twelve of the 20 women who completed the training began working at patrol stations on September 1, 1972. The other eight returned to their prior assignments and were held in reserve to replace any of the original 12 if necessary. Of the women chosen to begin the patrol training, seven came from the Sybil Brand Institute for Women and the others from working complaint desks at various stations. The first 12 are listed below along with the stations where they trained, followed by

the eight alternates.

Altadena Station Patrol

- Judy Allen (Preimsberger) transferred from East Los Angeles Station Desk
- Charlene Rottler transferred from San Dimas Station Desk (Deputy Rottler was critically injured two months into her patrol training when a drunk driver broadsided her radio car. She was replaced by Deputy Judy Shepard Evans.)

East Los Angeles Station Patrol

- Mary Francis Baker transferred from Sybil Brand Institute for Women
- Norma Zinn (Violette) transferred from Sybil Brand Institute for Women

Lakewood Station Patrol

- Barbara Birkland transferred from Lennox Station Desk



Deputies Carol Perry and Ronald Dietrich



Deputies Kathleen Wade and Ronald Dietrich and Sgt. Robert Carpenter

- Judy McGrath (Fox) transferred from Sybil Brand Institute for Women
- Jeanne Miles (Sysak) transferred from Firestone Station Desk
- Elaine Minnis transferred from Norwalk Station Desk
- Carol Perry (Brown) transferred from Sybil Brand Institute for Women
- Kathleen Wade transferred from Sybil Brand Institute for Women

West Hollywood Station Patrol

- Lovette Caples transferred from Sybil Brand Institute for Women
- Carole A. Freeman transferred from Sybil Brand Institute for Women

Alternates

- Virginia Brown Harper
- Sandra Crawford
- Janna Fallon

- Barbara Kashino White
- Claudia Landenberger Smalley
- Jacquie Morgan Cavallero
- Irene Perry Belanger
- Judy Shepard Evans

FIRST WOMEN PATROL TRAINEES

Information, both formal and informal, was provided to the entire Department on how the first women in patrol should be treated. Moving into what was considered a man's job, they were still viewed by many Department members, including Sheriff Pitchess, as community relations officers, not actual patrol deputies. It was incumbent upon these trailblazers to prove themselves able to competently handle the dangers and challenges that confront patrol deputies. The hard reality, though, was they had to do more than a male deputy to be accepted as an equal.

When women first began working in patrol cars, there were no restrictions from stations or Department executives, including the Sheriff, on the types of calls they would handle. Station desk personnel, however, felt differently. Not wanting to be responsible for sending a female deputy to a call where she may be injured, station dispatchers decided on their own what calls the women trainees were "allowed" to handle. "Hot calls," such as shots fired or armed robberies, were considered too dangerous. In addition, they would often assign an assisting unit on calls that didn't normally require one. This was done out of caution until they knew the female deputy and her training officer could handle calls on their own.

This story will be continued in the next issue of *Star News*.

Edited by Jan Jenkins (ret. LASD).

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Deputy Mary Baker checks a shotgun as Deputy Kenneth Duffy watches on



Deputy Jeanne Miles at briefing



Deputies Lovette Caples and Robert Sherrer



Deputy Elaine Minnis