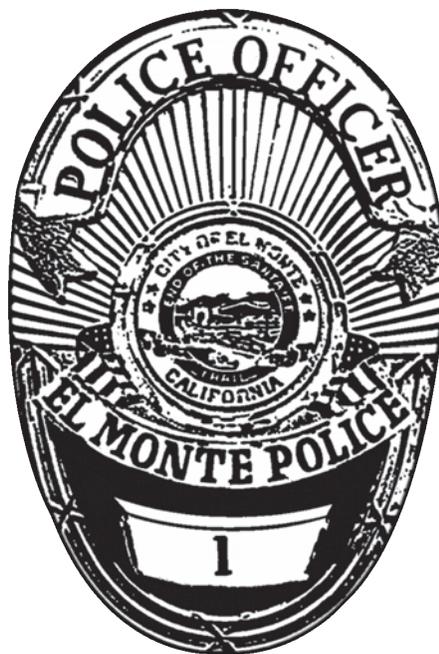
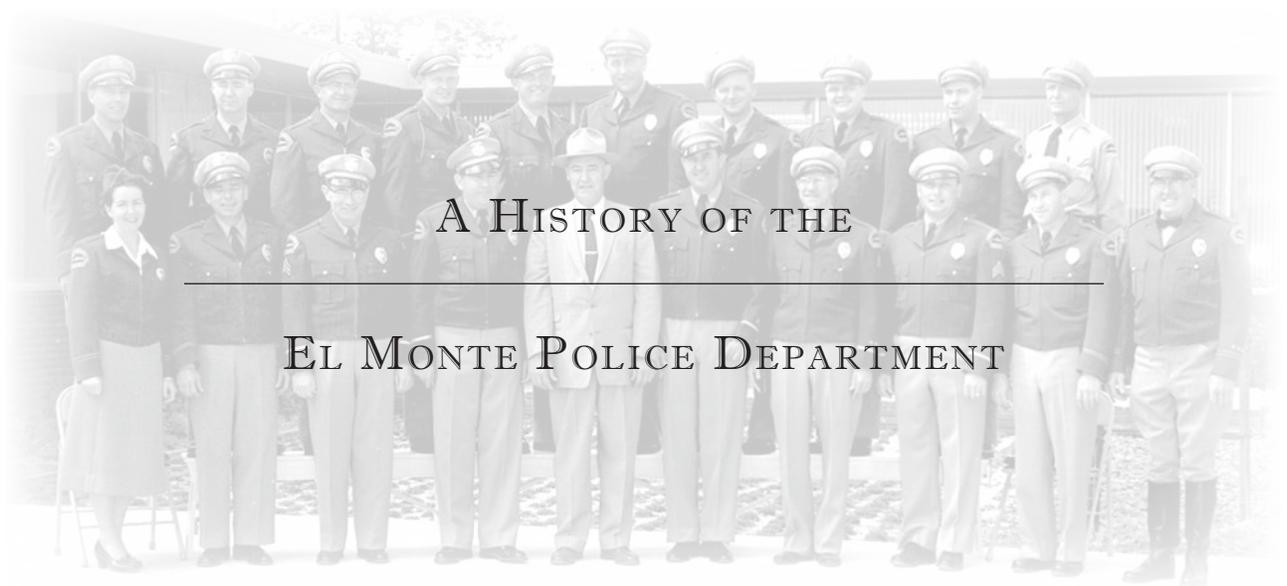




A HISTORY
OF THE
EL MONTE
POLICE DEPARTMENT
2008





A HISTORY OF THE

EL MONTE POLICE DEPARTMENT

David Edward Schulberg
El Monte Police Department Historian



A HISTORY OF THE
EL MONTE POLICE DEPARTMENT



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Lester C. Burdick
11-18-12 to 9-1-37



Alexander MacKay
9-1-37 to 5-1-38



Edwin Wiggins
5-1-38 to 1-26-39



Glen E. Bodell
1-26-39 to 7-9-39



Gene B. Woods
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Carl Vonn
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El Monte Chiefs of Police 1912-Present



Jay J. Sherman
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Orval Davis
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Maurice Matthews
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Wayne C. Clayton
8-1-78 to 12-30-00



James W. Ankeny
12-31-00 to 1-4-02



Kenneth P. Weldon
1-4-02 to Present



CITY OF EL MONTE



POLICE DEPARTMENT



November 6, 2008

Chief
KEN WELDON

Assistant Chief
THOMAS ARMSTRONG

Captain
STEVE SCHUSTER

Captain
MARCIA VAIL

To All the Men and Women of the El Monte Police Department
And To All Who Read This Script:

The manuscript prepared by the author, David Schulberg, represents decades of service and history of the El Monte Police Department. The story is not personally singular in nature, but made up of the collective experiences and efforts of various men and women both sworn and civilian.

After serving this department for the past 35 years, I am well aware of the role the Chief of Police has within the organization. However, I am acutely aware that the accomplishments the police department enjoyed were due to the accomplishments of the personnel who did the actual work to make these programs successful. In addition, the Chiefs I worked for would not have been successful were it not for the ideas and thoughtful innovations expressed by individual members of this department.

Sadly, our profession does not come without tragedy. As I reflect on the lives of officers who lost their lives, to whom this account is dedicated, I know others will follow.

All members, past and present, should be proud of their calling to law enforcement. Whether in a support role or in the field, this career has allowed all of us to truly make a difference in people's lives. I am proud to have had the opportunity to be a small part in that endeavor.

Daily, as we make our own history, let us remember the trust our public has conferred upon us and not forget our fundamental duty as defined by the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics...which applies to all of us:

"My fundamental duty is to serve the community; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the constitutional rights of all to liberty, equality and justice."

To accomplish and maintain the public trust, let us never lose sight, that we must be the example of honorable and ethical law abiding citizens, bringing credit to our profession and us as individuals. It is my hope, that in doing so, those who follow us in the future will reflect on the past and remark, "What a fine example they were, let us follow in their footsteps."

Respectfully submitted,

Handwritten signature of Thomas B. Armstrong in cursive script.
THOMAS B. ARMSTRONG
Assistant Chief of Police



CITY OF EL MONTE



POLICE DEPARTMENT



Chief
KEN WELDON

Assistant Chief
THOMAS ARMSTRONG

Captain
STEVE SCHUSTER

Captain
MARCIA VAIL

November 19, 2008

To All the Men and Women of the El Monte Police Department
And To All Who Read This Script:

As a lifelong resident of El Monte and a thirty-seven year veteran of its police department, I have been privileged beyond words to be both a provider as well as consumer of what I believe to be the singular most responsive – and community-friendly – law enforcement agency in the world.

Having moved through the department's ranks from Reserve Officer to Chief of Police, I have seen much, including the ultimate sacrifices of three brave officers – Tony Arceo, Terry Long and Don Johnston – who had their tours of duty tragically ended during this period.

I have also seen the sacrifices of equally dedicated men and women, boys and girls too, some who have served – and some who still serve – explorers, cadets, secretaries, clerks, technicians, jailers, dispatchers, reserve officers and regular officers: each and all serving the people in and of El Monte with an energy and dedication that makes me proud of our shared department-heritage and sure of our department's future.

As you reminisce in this story of our past, please rejoice, too, in the fact that you can do so comfortably in a safe place in a peaceful land. By your hard work, dedication to service and professional ethics, you have helped to make this fact a reality.

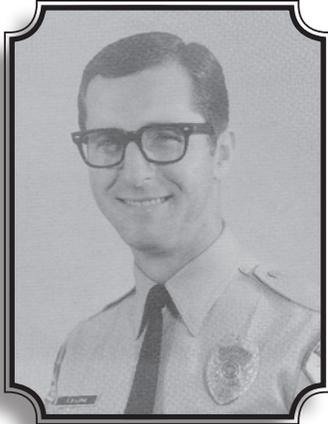
Please enjoy this excellent book on the history of our Police Department. Thank you for your personal contributions to make El Monte a safer and better place and the important role you played in making this book possible.

Respectfully,

KEN WELDON
Chief of Police



*Dedicated to the memory of those El Monte Police Officers
Who had their lives taken far too soon,
To protect ideals each cherished enough
To die defending.*



TERRY DEWITT LONG



MANUEL ANTHONY "TONY" ARCEO



DONALD RALPH JOHNSTON

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Here I am, privileged beyond words to have been asked to write this account of outstanding men and women—amazing, brave, modern day dragon-slayers—and then doubly rewarded to be able to thank those wonderful people instrumental in my doing so. But, then, who to thank? Where does the line start, and where to stop? There have been so many people that contributed to this project, directly and indirectly, recently and long ago.

I owe tremendous thanks to Chief Ken Weldon, who asked me to write the department's history, and Chief *Emeritus* Wayne Clayton, who suggested me for the job. I would not have been considered for this tremendous honor had Chief Clayton not appointed me as a reserve in the first place, which led to Chief James Ankeny permitting me to do background investigations, which then led to Assistant Chief Tom Armstrong allowing me to do various research projects—where my research and writing skills first became known to the department.

See what I mean?

Outside of the department's executive offices, literally, there is Alva Huertas. She has been invaluable in providing me with contacts and information, and exhibited unshakable patience in dealing with my endless inquiries.

The original research done for this project by Gary Walker provided a strong starting point for my own research, and his encouragement helped me more than he may know.

Dan Buehler not only "liaised" with me as the project evolved, he also lent an interested ear to listen to rough drafts, ideas, and questions—endless questions—often on his ride home, and often as he juggled several other things much more important.

Then there is Marty Penney, who spent several hours of his time relating information to me with a passion, interest and patience that amazed me. Not to mention his unbelievable memory for details, names and events, and his openness and candor.

I also must thank Marcia Vail for her information, input and support. Her encouragement and assistance was unparalleled.

Steve Krigbaum, Joe Fritsch, Edwin "Randy" Wiggins, Jim Tedrow and John Eckler each provided unbelievable amounts of information, confirmation and documentation simply unknowable outside of their personal archives, and individual memories.

Everyone named in the bibliography also helped me, much more than they may ever know, and much more than my brief words here could ever properly acknowledge or thank. Phil Moore, Tom Millett, Bob Wiles, Emilie Matthews, George Hopkins, Gary Walker, Jeff Girgle, Ken Alva, Harold Bettelman, Clarence Johnson, Albert Reneer, and Brenda Rodriguez, to name just a few.

Thanks, too, to Jack Rodriguez, without whose assistance the original text would be pretty much that—*text*—with sparingly few photographs.

Thanks also to Paul Paulson, for the only known picture of Officer Terry Long, to Nicole Salim for several outstanding pictures, as well as to Ethel Boyce, Cheryl Bertram and Marianna De La Torre for photographs of the September 20, 2008 department open house. Sadly, the origin of many of the beautiful and meaningful pictures used throughout this book is simply unknowable—coming from many sources lost to history.

Also much thanks to those who, by reason of their position, or the nature of their information, asked me to not mention them specifically—or told me stories that I could not use directly—but which led to information I could use, or a better understanding of such information. You know who you are, and thanks for the terrific stories!

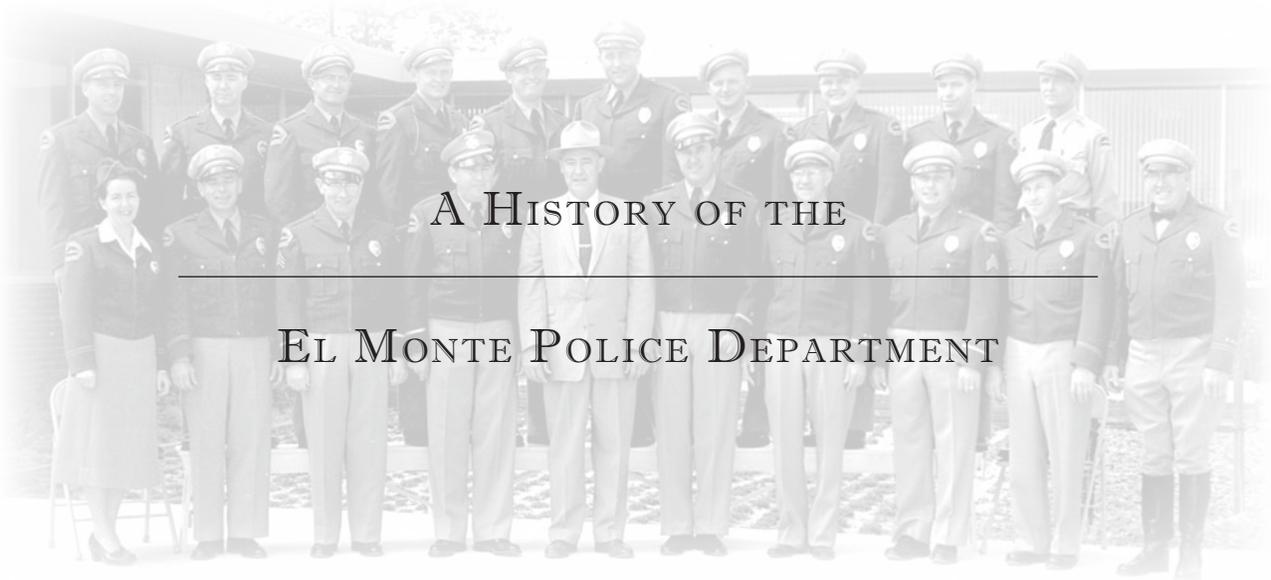
Thanks, too, to the members of the department's professional staff, without the assistance of whom I could never do my jobs within the department—much less have completed this book.

Additionally, I must thank my father, Harvey Schulberg. Without his loving, caring and exemplary upbringing—as well as the amazing examples his life has set for me—I would not have the tenacity to have seen this project through, or the ethics to see it through with as much scrupulous attention to detail and accuracy.

Finally, I must thank several wonderful ladies without whom I would not have been able to write this coherently, if at all.

Sylvia Davis, my junior high school English teacher, apparently taught me more about writing than even I had realized, and helped instill in me a love of writing and an appreciation for the power of the written word. My mother, Virginia “Ginny” Shoup, who read, edited, re-read and re-edited my endless drafts without a single complaint. My mother, Elaine Schulberg, who made my writing possible by giving me life. My sister, Randie Crump, who made my writing possible by saving my life with a kidney. And, finally, my lovely wife Sheryl who has made my life something to write about.

Thank you, one and all.

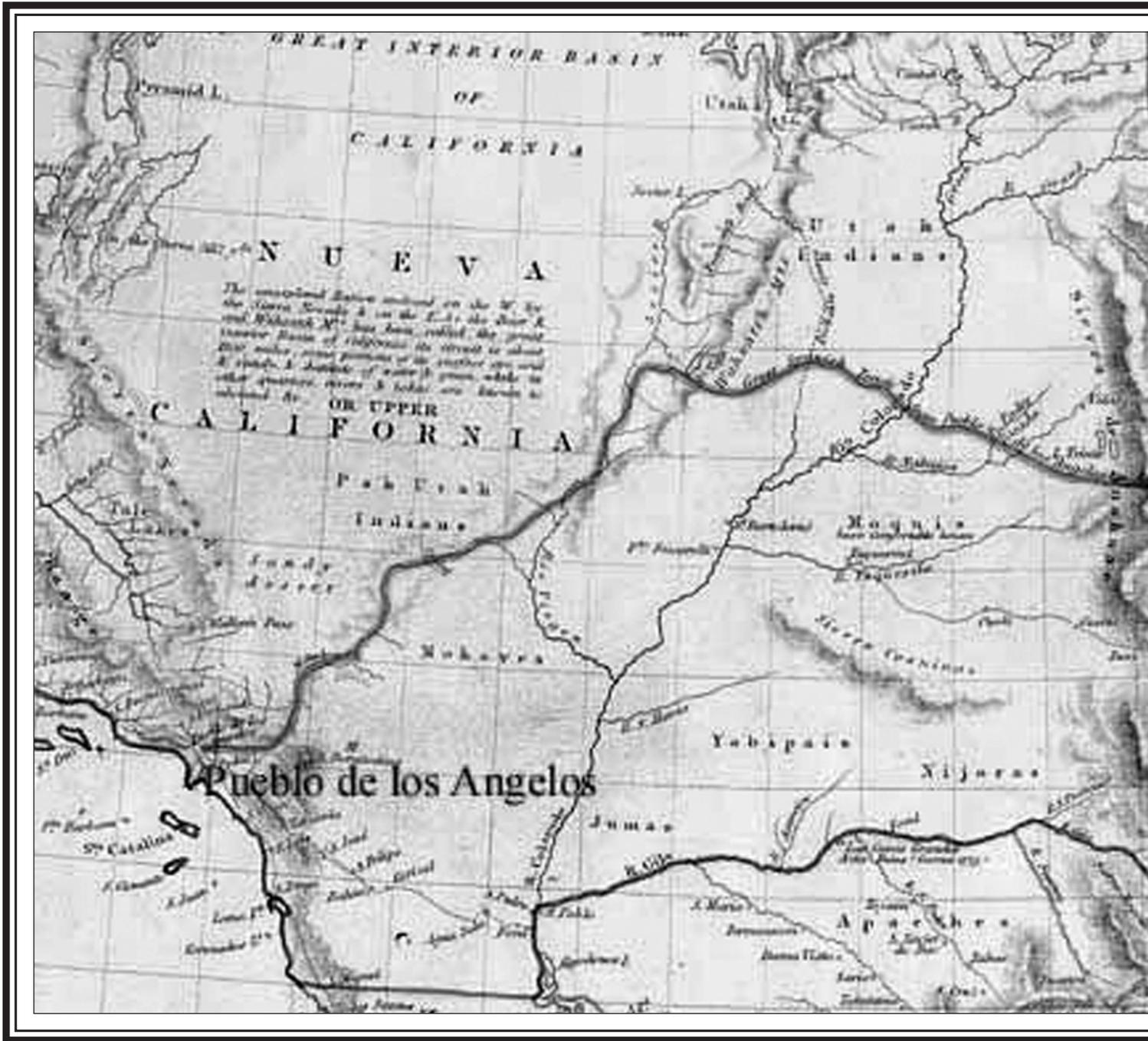


A HISTORY OF THE

EL MONTE POLICE DEPARTMENT



OFFICIAL SEAL OF THE
CITY OF EL MONTE
CALIFORNIA



This nineteenth century map shows the old Santa Fe Trail route between Santa Fe and El Pueblo de los Angeles.

wide; flat, and with soil naturally rich in nutrients.

Situated over an underground lake, El Monte required “neither irrigation nor rain from heaven” to be agriculturally productive. At some points less than six feet below the surface, this water was found to be

unusually cold, virtually chemical and bacteria free, and thought to be practically unlimited in quantity.

The first house in El Monte was built by Michael Johnston in 1852. It, and the majority following, were made of willow poles shoved into the earth,

ESTABLISHING THE PEACE:

El Monte Law Enforcement Through 1919

“There was very little law, but a large amount of good order... crime was rare, for punishment was certain.”

During the 1850s there were more criminals in Los Angeles and its environs than in any other place along the Pacific coast. It was not possible to draw over 100,000 strangers from all over the world to an area with a new government, and in some parts little or no law enforcement, without there being much turmoil. This area was a natural meeting place for desperados encouraged to move south from the gold fields or north from Mexico—not to mention “outsiders” with bad intentions, such as cattle rustlers from Texas preying upon the local herds.

In April of 1850, following California’s inauguration as the 31st state, the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department was formed, becoming the first civilian authority legally responsible for law enforcement coverage of the area that would become the city of El Monte.

The sheer size of his jurisdiction made keeping the peace virtually impossible for the sheriff and his two deputies, even when later augmented with fifty volunteer posse members. Los Angeles County at that time encompassed 34, 529 square miles, this including all the geography later to become Kern, Orange, San Bernardino, and Ventura counties, as well as the areas of Santa Barbara and San Diego.

By 1853, the Los Angeles “City of Angels” metropolitan area was the murder capital of the country, suffering more deaths from criminal violence than the remainder of the U.S. Its nickname, “Los Diablos,” or “City of Devils,” reflected this reputation.

Quoting from the diary of one El Monte settler: “There was very little law, but a large amount of good order; no churches, but a large amount of religion; no

politics, but a large number of politicians; no offices, and no office seekers; crime was rare, for punishment was certain.” Safety-wise, El Monte was off to an auspicious start in an inhospitable era.

In 1854, by act of the state legislature, the all-volunteer Los Angeles Rangers became the first law enforcement entity mentioned in connection with El Monte proper, having earned praise from one Los Angeles newspaper for the prompt capture of suspects in the murder of James Ellington “of the Monte,” followed by a later thank-you letter to the editor from “the Citizens of the Monte.”

Ellington’s murder, on October 26, 1854, is the first homicide on record within the city. The hanging of his confessed killer, Felipe Alvitre, on January 12, 1855—the first known intra-El Monte execution and the first legal execution in Los Angeles County—was attended to by the county sheriff. Interestingly, not only was Alvitre hanged twice, the rope having broken on the first attempt, but two days after his execution the sheriff received a letter informing him that the execution had been stayed.

In November of that same year, several El Monte residents “executed four Mexican desperados” in and for San Gabriel, for “outrages” committed in that city. *Justice* though these acts may have provided local area residents, they were the precursors to the citizens of El Monte forming their own protective body a few years later.

The El Monte Boys—by all accounts a fearless group of frontier-hardened men self-tasked with the quick dispatch of rough-justice—became so effective an enforcement body that their reputation became

legend even during their own time, and they were personally summoned to exact justice well outside of El Monte itself.

Although mentioned in association with several “lynchings,” the El Monte Boys seemed to have crafted a form of peacekeeping befitting a wild frontier area lacking in much formal law enforcement. How many crimes their reputation prevented, and the number of prisoners delivered for trial, being on the former less-knowable, and the latter less-notable.

vigilantes unknown), the El Monte Boys considered but chose not to lynch an already convicted murderer, John P. Lee. Lee, an El Monte resident, was found not guilty upon retrial.

The history of the El Monte Boys fades after their part in the 1874 lynching of a resident of former governor (under Mexican rule) Pio Pico’s mansion, who had robbed and severely slashed a store owner’s son, and shot the young man’s wife. Caught with the proceeds from the robbery, identified by

El Monte’s original jail, circa 1880. Today it is on display in the city’s Pioneer Park.



On January 22, 1857, following the murder of four storekeepers by a band of Mexican outlaws led by an escaped convict, the El Monte Boys joined with a Los Angeles group and captured the bandits—returning them to trial and subsequent judicially-authorized hanging in Los Angeles.

In 1863, following the lynching of four suspected murderers, as well as a suspected chicken thief (by

the victim, and having confessed to the crimes, the criminal’s subsequent hanging drew the word of Pico that he would come and “kill the whole damned lot” of them.

The El Monte contingent replied with a cordial invitation for Pico to visit the city and promised to receive him “with due hospitality and warmth.” There is no record of Pico’s reply, if indeed there was any.

Continued from its Mexican origin after California became a state, the first judicial position in El Monte was the 1856 appointment of Dr. M. Whistler as Judge of the Plains for El Monte Township. This official administered disputes concerning cattle.

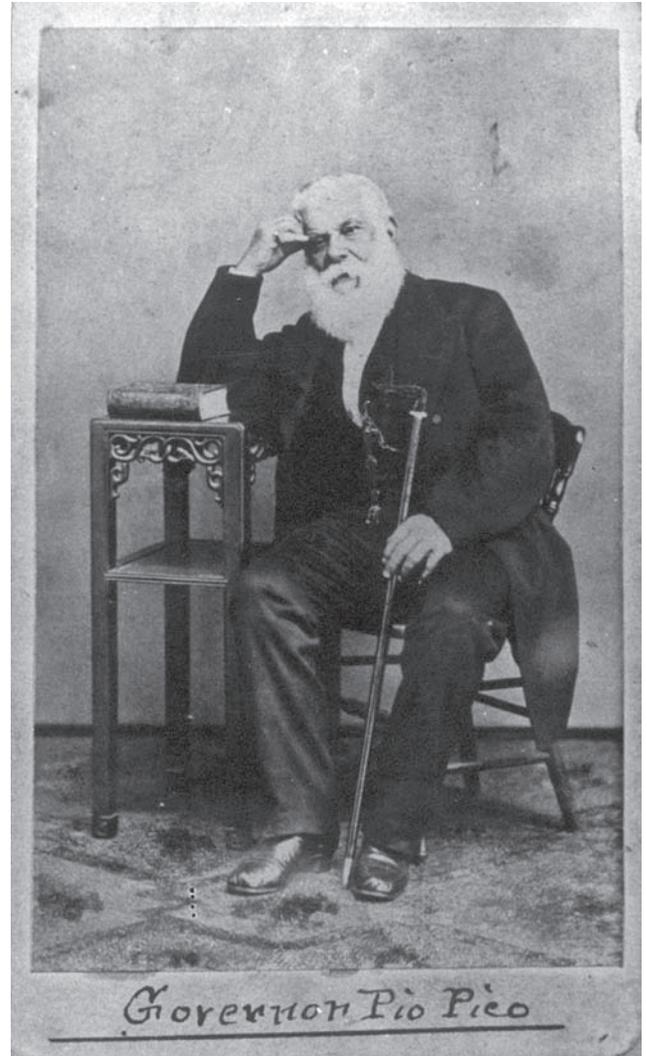
The first jail in El Monte, a one-room structure measuring twelve by sixteen feet, was built in 1880 and continued in use until it was replaced by a new one in 1922. As seen in the photo on the opposite page, the building still exists.

Barney S. "Bud" Bryant became El Monte's first township constable, making him the city's earliest law enforcement official. Bryant was followed in the constable's position by Archie N. Wiggins and Robert Hicks, although their dates of service—as concerns much of El Monte's history during this period—are unknowable due to a 1913 fire that destroyed Cave's Hall and with it all city offices and records. It is known, however, that Constable Wiggins built quite a reputation during this era in the enforcement of city codes prohibiting saloons from being open on Sundays.

There is some dispute between official records, contemporary writing and published and other sources, concerning the identities, dates of employment, duties, and other facts related to some early city law enforcers. Put another way—not all of the available official records mesh exactly with less-official sources—even as to who was employed by the city in a law enforcement capacity. The police department did not begin a formal logbook of sworn members until the administration of Chief Orval Davis in the late 1950s.

Lester C. Burdick, a Los Angeles County deputy sheriff, served as resident deputy in El Monte when it was still a township. He was appointed deputy constable in 1906, constable in 1907, and city marshal after El Monte's incorporation in 1912. This was the same year all local constables were absorbed into the sheriff's department as sheriff's deputies.

Burdick, who resigned as constable in 1935 in favor of R.E. Foell, had been El Monte's ex-officio tax collector, street superintendent, building super-



intendent, water and maintenance supervisor, and license collector.

Following authorization of the city council to hire two additional members on June 1, 1913, El-dridge Freer and Charles Gordon were hired to perform motorcycle patrol. Freer was paid \$3.50 per day, and Gordon \$5.00, the extra pay because Gordon had to provide his own motorcycle, gas, and oil.

G.H. Blalock served El Monte as a law enforcer from at least February 5, 1915—although other information shows him with the department in 1914. There are no records of him with the city after February 1915. Payroll information indicates he was paid for less than six days' service.

A local farmer poses next to a tall corn crop in one of El Monte's rich fields, circa 1914.



Below: These early, mule-drawn freight wagons are pictured here hauling El Monte's crops to be sold at market.





Above: The aftermath of a raid on a bootlegging operation in El Monte: law enforcement officers break up a still after the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1919.



Richard McCoy is mentioned in contemporary writing to have served the department from 1913 to 1918, and Charles Wade is likewise shown to have been appointed to the department in 1915. Both names are absent from department records, however. Other documents show McCoy was a “Night Watchman” who shot and captured Manuel Ramirez and participated in the arrest of Ramirez’s two associates following a botched burglary at a local store. He was “one of Burdick’s right hand men” who “served the department without any salary.”

Although the facts of the actual incident are not in question, there is conflict concerning McCoy’s title. Documents show that, following a May 16, 1918 petition signed by seventy-five residents, the city appointed Mr. C.D. Littlefield as El Monte’s “sole” night watchman.

El Monte’s night watch program was discontinued—officially at least—on July 25, 1918.

Between 1917 and 1919, Marshal Burdick hired Gale Ledbetter, T. Nelson, and John J. Alder. He would need each and every one of these men, and even more as time passed. If he did not already have enough on his hands enforcing already-existing laws, Burdick would soon have another to concern himself with. It would not at all be one destined for widespread popularity.

On October 28, 1919 Congress overruled Woodrow Wilson’s veto and enacted the Volstead Act, which authorized federal enforcement of the 18th Amendment.

Prohibition had begun.



THE ROARING TWENTIES

El Monte Gets a Police Department: 1920-1929

On Tuesday, October 26, 1920, three burglary suspects used a sledgehammer to break out of the Fillmore Jail. Fleeing through El Monte they came under the eye of department member John J. Alder. In the ensuing gunfight, Alder and a civilian who came to his assistance killed two of the escapees, having to shoot the third escapee twice before he would surrender.

Marshal Burdick moved his office from his home into the rear of new city offices in 1922. This building also contained the new city jail. The jail consisted of two four bunk cells for males, two additional bunks for males in the locked hallway, and a separate cell with two bunks for females. Prisoners considered trustworthy were taken to a local eatery twice daily for meals. Those classed as “desperados” were booked at the county jail in Los Angeles. Prisoners between desperado and trustworthy were fed in their cells.

That same year, department members Jack Alder and George Hamblin shot two thieves to death after a violent attack during a traffic stop in front of the old adobe house. While mentioned in a contemporary news account, there is no mention of Hamblin in existing department records.

L.J. Berry joined the department on August 2, 1923, staying with the agency for slightly over one year, with Elmer Redd joining on September 15, 1924 and leaving on August 8, 1928.

In 1927, Burdick’s title was changed from city marshal to chief of police. No small change, El Monte now had its own police department. Two officers each worked twelve-hour shifts, seven days a week, with no vacations, overtime, or sick pay. The pay was \$140.00 per month.

Because of the growth, better communication was needed to dispatch officers when and where needed. Burdick designed a switch that attached to his telephone and activated a light on top of the city’s water tank when a call for service rang through. Officers would see the light, call the telephone operator, and receive their dispatches from her.

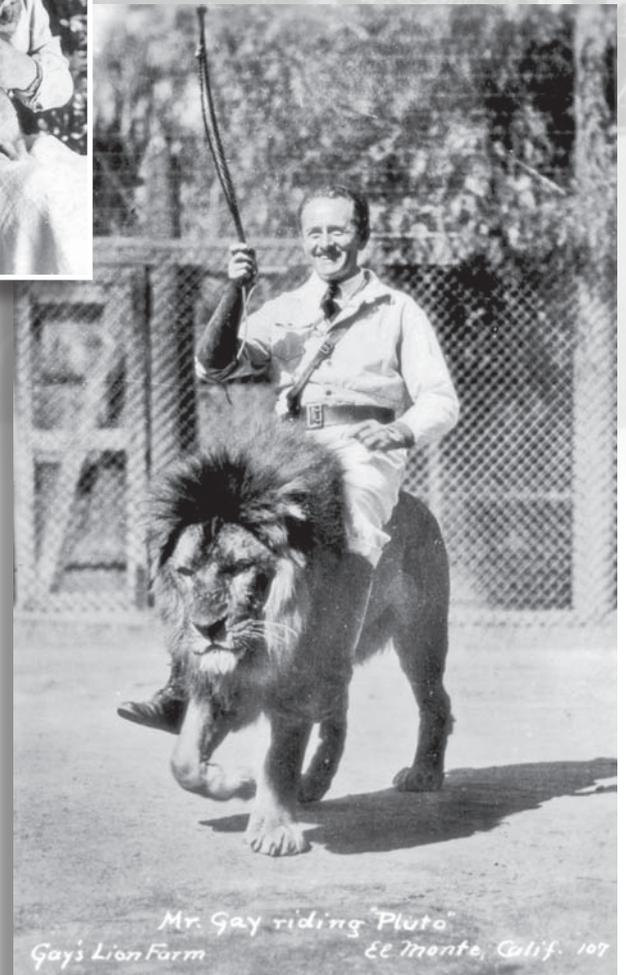
1927 also marked another first for El Monte. Following a \$7,000 burglary, Chief Burdick con-



The El Monte water tower, circa 1920s. Note the lone light atop the tower, used to signal policemen to emergencies. The tower still stands today.



El Monte's famed Gay's Lion Farm.



firmed the involvement of a particular truck in the crime through tire impressions. It was the first recorded use of forensic evidence to solve a crime within the city.

On September 26, 1927 the El Monte Police Department was to respond to the wildest call for service it had ever received, and probably ever would. The failure to close a gate had freed three of the lions at Gay's Lion Farm to roam unchecked. While the li-



Officer Walter Freer, May 1930.



Above: Traffic Officer Walt Mason, circa 1928. Right: Officer Joe Fritsch. At right above, he poses with son Joe, Jr. and daughter Patricia in September of 1932. These photos display the varied styles of uniforms worn before standardization by the El Monte Police Department in the 1950s.



While not an official uniform, E.M.P.D. officers were authorized to wear Western-style attire during the Pioneer Days celebrations of the 1920s and '30s.



ons could not escape the park, there were several employees in the facility and one was seriously mauled. Chief Burdick and Officers Frank Lair and Robert Foell responded to the scene, killing one of the lions with repeated rifle shots. One lion was killed by a park employee before the police arrived. The remaining lion was penned and captured.

Gay's Lion Farm—the Disneyland of its time—closed in 1942 due to World War II's imposed rationing of the horsemeat used to feed the lions.

On December 17, 1927, Officer Wiggins, who had joined the department on April 1, 1926, stopped a truck that he found suspicious. In fact, the truck contained \$3,000 worth of merchandise just burglarized from the local Walter's store. Unknown to Wiggins at the time, the truck was being followed by a car containing the truck driver's four accomplices. Of the five men involved, four were convicted felons.

As Wiggins approached the driver the truck sped away. Pursuing in a roadster, Wiggins was immediately fired upon by a gunman in the chase-car. The rounds narrowly missed him. One of the thieves later told authorities he had earlier saved Wiggins' life by initially telling the gunman not to fire—insisting that Wiggins “be not killed in cold blood.” The suspects were subsequently arrested and prosecuted.

In 1928, while on his motorcycle, officer Wiggins went in pursuit of two men in a stolen automobile. The chase ended when his motorcycle careened out of control, hit a curb, and flew twenty feet into a walnut orchard after the thieves fired five shots at him. The sheriff's department arrested the pair shortly thereafter, charging them with multiple burglaries. The suspects then confessed to their part in the murder of an El Monte police officer.

Deputies rushed to El Monte only to find that Wiggins was very much alive—he had just missed the curve. Locals later reminisced that Wiggins appeared at the top of the hill covered in dust, and “chomping out curses for the car thieves to beat the storm.”

There is no available evidence of department members wearing official uniforms prior to the



El Monte Police Department Motor Officer Edwin Wiggins served from the 1920s until the 1950s, rising from patrolman to the office of the Chief of Police.

1920s. Photographs, however, reflect that a wide variety of uniforms and equipment was used during the decade, and later, before formal regulations were implemented.

Interim department uniforms included all-khaki, all-black, black pants with a light-colored shirt, and what appear to be green breeches worn with a long, green, button-front tunic and just-short-of-the-knee lace-up boots. The tunic is evident in two styles: one with a neck like a suit jacket and having a light colored shirt with bowtie underneath, and one stiff-necked like the Marine Corps dress tunic.

Duty belts appear to have been black leather,

with photographs of flap and non-flap holsters, and later even a spring loaded “clamshell” holster. Ammunition is pictured carried in both leather loops and drop pouches. Unfortunately, no color photographs exist to confirm exact coloring.

Uniforms eventually became standardized in the same dark-blue color worn today—prior to the department changeover to tan uniforms in the 1950s.

With the single exception of Edwin Wiggins, who carried a .44 caliber Smith & Wesson Triple-Lock revolver, the department’s sidearm remained the .38 caliber revolver—Colt or Smith & Wesson manufacture and self-purchased by each officer—from inception until the switch to .45 caliber semi-automatics in the 1960s.

Just as El Monte’s uniforms and equipment became more standardized over time, so too would disappear the vagaries of early police work within the city. As the 1920s faded into history, so too did the time the officers had been required to clock-in to

document their patrols; as well the requirement that officers supply their own cars and gasoline.

Perhaps surprisingly, 1920s-era law officers faced many of the same challenges seen today. There was the smoking of marijuana—then called “crazy weed”—and juveniles with too much time on their hands and too little supervision committed a wide variety of crimes, including attempting to derail trains. Alcohol caused the same trouble then as it does now, contributing to fights, traffic accidents, and both public and private disturbances. Burglaries and other felonies were common. Shootings were virtually a weekly occurrence.

As the 1920s drew to a close, El Monte increasingly reverberated with the sound of windows being smashed, doors being kicked in, bottles being broken, barrels being chopped, and the sudsy-tinged gurgle of

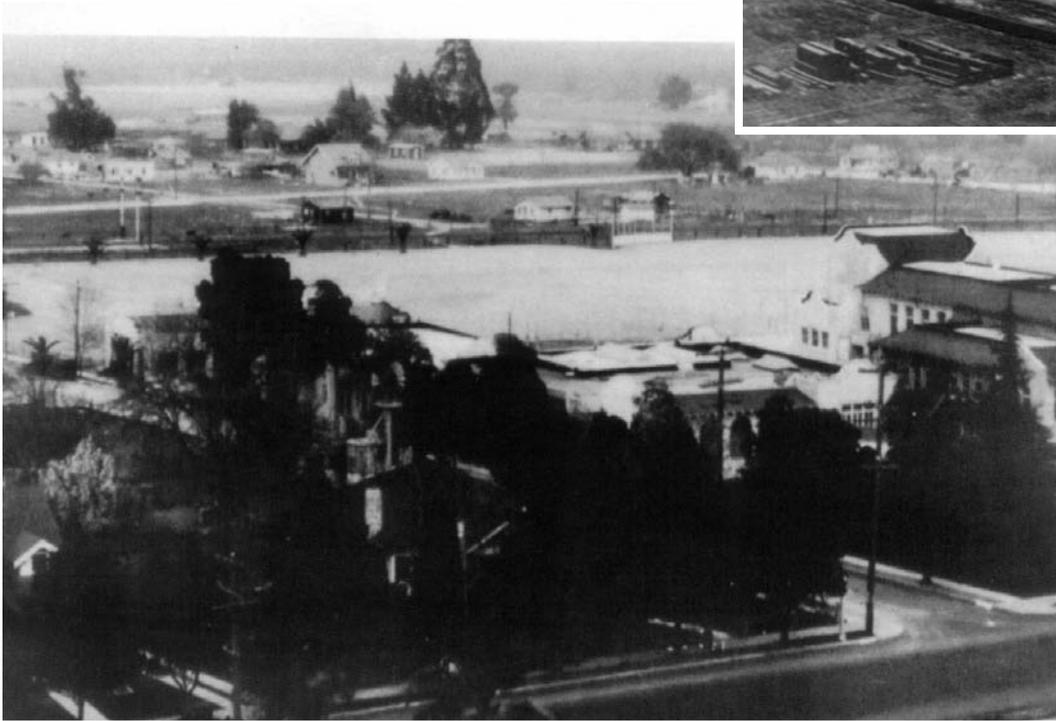
During the 1920s, the El Monte Transfer Company used Ford “Model T” trucks like this one for deliveries.



illicit elixirs bubbling down drains. Though certainly not alone in his efforts, officer Wiggins, one newspaper would later report, had “cracked more illegal stills than the Yanks have won pennants.” Prohibition would last from January 16, 1920 until December 5, 1933.

If someone ever needed a drink, perhaps it was anyone alive on October 29, 1929, the day that came to be known as “Black Tuesday.”

The day the Great Depression began.



Views of El Monte, circa the 1920s. Below: El Monte High School, located on the north side of Main Street (now Valley Boulevard), east of Tyler. These photos were taken from atop the city's water tower.



BROTHER, CAN YOU SPARE A DIME?

The Changing Landscape: El Monte in the 1930s

Primarily agrarian through the 1920s, El Monte's cityscape and economy both changed in the 1930s due to plummeting produce prices brought about by the Great Depression—some crops falling up to 60% from their pre-Depression values. This forced a general change from larger to smaller farms and, increasingly, the conversion of farm land into space for residential and other construction. In 1932, elephants borrowed from a visiting circus were used to uproot many of the city's once-prodigious walnut trees in order to clear the land for development.

It was a time when *Brother can you spare a dime?*, the 1931 E.Y. "Yip" Harburg and Jay Gorney song, became a sort of anthem, rising in popularity to become the number-one song on the music charts of the era.

In spite of the dire economic conditions already existing, and predictions of worse to come, not all was bleak within El Monte, or boring. In addition to at least one game of donkey baseball played by members of the city's police department—essentially regular baseball, except the players all rode specially trained donkeys that travelled from town to town for such purpose—the decade also included the Summer Games of the X Olympiad, which opened in Los Angeles on July 30, 1932.

Despite predictions to the contrary, over 1,300 of the athletic best from thirty-seven countries participated in the games, which ended on August 14, 1932 without a single non-sport related noteworthy event. This was almost not the case, however, and El Monte figured squarely in the middle of circumstances that threatened to turn the Olympics from a sports-page fixture into a front-page Extra.

Off-duty and coming from a movie, Officer Edwin Wiggins saw a man sitting behind the steering wheel of a "sharp-appearing car" outside the then-closed Mason Hardware Company store. Wiggins sent his wife to the police station to alert on-duty Officer Joe Fritsch, while he stayed in the shadows and staked out what was unfolding as a burglary-in-progress.

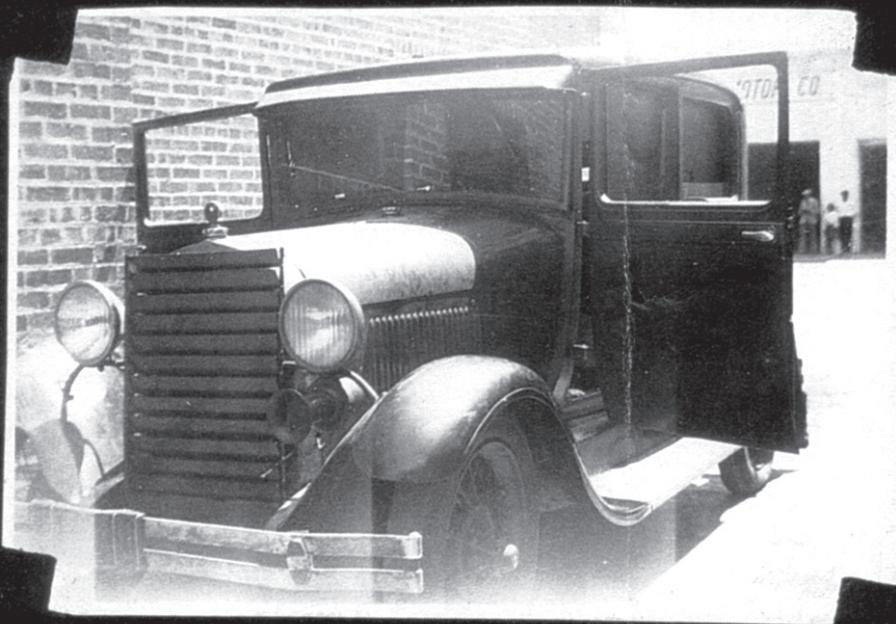
When Fritsch arrived, both officers moved in to investigate. With a second suspect now inside the car, the burglars raced toward the officers, almost running both down. The officers pursued the suspects—Fritsch on his motorcycle and Wiggins on foot. Their



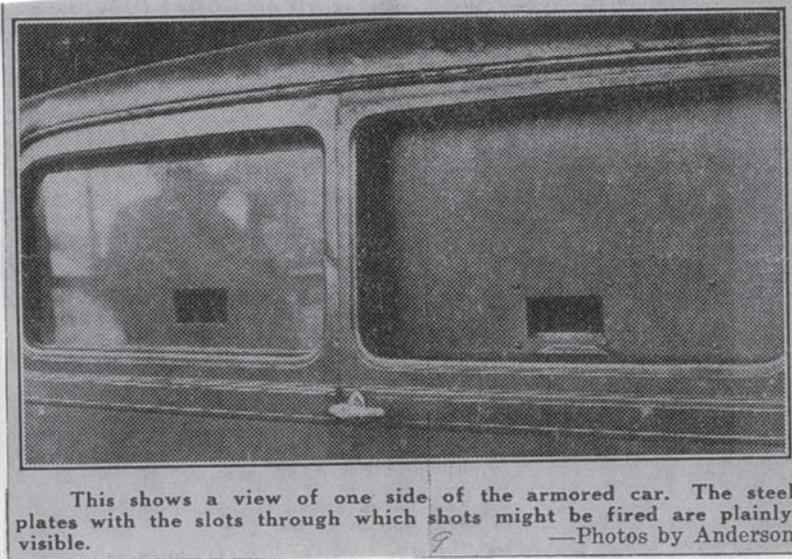
Officer Joe Fritsch, ready for a game of "Donkey baseball" in the 1930s.



"Dot + Eddie"



Above, and at top of next page: El Monte's infamous "armored car," 1931. In the top photo, Officer Ed Wiggins stands next to the Ford with his sister-in-law, Dorothy "Dot" Heaton.



This shows a view of one side of the armored car. The steel plates with the slots through which shots might be fired are plainly visible. —Photos by Anderson

escape route blocked, the felons lost control, their car careening wildly before hitting another car and stopping. Both suspects then fled on foot, Fritsch capturing one moments later and the second escaping.

Facts surrounding the incident may well be more interesting than the event itself. John Schultz, the 41-year-old arrested after the chase, was a convicted burglar who had served time at Folsom and San Quentin prisons. A seasoned felon, he had equipped the car involved with over 800 pounds of ¾-inch thick armor plate covering the windows, body, fenders, tires, hood and radiator. The only part of the car not solidly armored was the center of the roof.

Investigation found the burglary was not the suspect's ultimate goal; rather the means toward their intended end—robbery of the box office at the Olympic Games then in progress. Toward that end they had intended an armored arsenal—already having the armor, and intent on gathering the arsenal. Their car was the first armored vehicle “to be captured in California.” Chief Burdick estimated that over 2,000 spectators viewed it at the police station after the incident.

As amazing as what had happened—and what was planned—there remained this: Edwin Wiggins, who had seen the matter through from start to finish, had been *unarmed* the entire time!

Immediately following the massive March 10, 1933 Long Beach earthquake, the El Monte Police assisted local authorities in a variety of ways. The department's motor police not only provided emergency escort but proved particularly useful in quickly reaching otherwise isolated areas by jumping over buckles in the roadways.

In 1935 Burdick, still employed by the county as El Monte's constable, resigned this position in favor of the appointment of El Monte Police Officer Robert E. Foell. Burdick had been the city's constable for twenty-seven years. Foell resigned from the police department on January 7, 1935 to assume his new position.

Growing out of the city's Pioneer Pageant celebrating the March 20, 1922 opening of the Rio Hondo bridge, and running from May 1935 through the early 1950s (with the exception of during World War II), El Monte's residents commemorated the city's founding with an annual *Pioneer Days* gala featuring three days full of festivities, feasting and the wearing of period clothing. During the celebration any local man caught in town without facial hair was unceremoniously carted off by the city's police, fined and dunked in a water trough.

Pioneer Days resumed after World War II, although—there being no water troughs in the city—the dunking did not. The police still carted off those local men who were clean-shaven, but now to a cell, where they were locked up just long enough to be photographed before being sent on their way with a souvenir picture. This being the expected custom, there were never any complaints.

On February 11, 1935, El Monte suffered a jail-break by three men originally arrested on alcohol-related charges. They overpowered Officer John Bancroft when he entered their cell to question them, fleeing the area in a car owned by one of the men.

Officer Bancroft telephoned the Temple City sheriff's station and reported the escape, and deputies captured the men within fifteen minutes. This

POLICE REPORT.

ROBBERY.

JANUARY 31, 1936, 3.P.M. RECEIVED A CALL FROM TILIE IRWIN OF THE EL MONTE HERALD, 307.W.VALLEY BLVD STATING THAT THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES BANK WAS BEING HELD UP, 237.W.VALLEY BLVD.

CALL WAS ANSWERED BY JOESPH FRITSCH, MOTORPOLICE MARTIN SORENSEN FIREMAN EDWIN WIGGINS, MOTORPOLICE OF THE EL MONTE POLICE DEPT, THEY WERE JOINED BY ROBERT FOELL OF THE EL MONTE CONSTABLE OFFICE EL MONTE. MARION THOMPSON OF ALHAMBRA POLICE DEPT, ROBERT COX, ALHAMBRA POLICE DEPT, E.S. STRONG, ONTARIO POLICE DEPT.

ON ARRIVAL AT THE BANK THE ABOVE OFFICERS SURROUNDED THE BANK, OFFICER WIGGINS WENT TO THE FRONT DOOR AND TRIED THE DOOR AND FOUND IT TO BE LOCKED. R.E. FOELL LOOKED IN THE FRONT WINDOW, BUT SAW NO ONE. WIGGINS AGAIN TRIED THE DOOR. R.E. FOELL THEN SAW TWO MEN COMING TO THE FRONT DOOR. THE TWO MEN OPENED THE DOOR AND WERE COVERED BY FOELL AND WIGGINS. THE HEAVY SET MAN SAID WE GIVE UP BOYS. WIGGINS FOELL AND FRITSCH FORCED THE TWO BACK INTO THE BANK AT THE POINT OF THEIR GUNS. THE HEAVY SET MAN WAS RELIEVED OF THE SACK OF MONEY HE CARRIED, SEARCHED AND HANDCUFFED.

THE OFFICER WHO WERE STATIONED OUT SIDE THE BANK CAME INTO THE BANK AND STOOD BY. FRITSCH AND FOELL HAD STARTED TO SEARCH THE SLENDER BANDIT, HAVING THEM BACK TO THE FRONT DOOR, WHEN A THIRD BANDIT ENTERED BRINGING A SAWED OFF SHOT GUN HE SHOUTED "STICKEM UP OR ILL SHOOT" FOELL AND FRITSCH WHIRLED TO THE SIDE AS THE BANDIT FIRED. OFFICERS WIGGINS, THOMPSON, COX, STRONG AND FOELL FIRED AT THE BANDIT WHO SHOT AND HE FELL DEAD.

THE SHOT FROM THE BANDITS STRUCK OFFICER FRITSCH IN THE LEFT HAND ALSO FOELL IN THE SHOULDER, AND THE FULL CHARGE STRUCK THE SLENDER BANDIT IN THE CHEST, WHO TURNED THEN AND WALKED TOWARDS THE REAR OF THE COORIDOR OF THE BANK AND FELL.

OFFICER FRITSCH WAS RUSHED TO THE OFFICE OF DR FARRINGTON, THEN TO THE GARFIELD HOSPITAL WHERE HIS MIDDLE FINGER ON HIS LEFT HAND WAS AMPUTATED.

THE SLENDER BANDIT WHO WAS SHOT BY HIS PARDNER WAS TAKEN TO STANLEYS HOSPITAL 177.E.VALLEY BLVD WHERE HE LATER DIED.

THE MONEY WHICH WAS RECOVERED WAS TURNED OVER TO MR MOUNTAIN PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES BANK. THE TOTAL AMMOUNT WAS \$ 1577.00 DOLLARS.

DECEASED BANDITS. CLARENCE SMITH, 155.N.NEW HAMPSHIRE ST. LOS ANGELES.

EMERY C. YATES, 265.N. MAPLE DRIVE. BEVERLEY HILLS.

THESE BODIES WERE MOVED TO THE CORONERS OFFICE HALL JUSTICE LOS ANGELES.

FRANK FORREST SMITH SOLE SURVIVOR OF THE BANDITS WAS BOOKED AND JAILED IN THE CITY JAIL FROM 4.P.M. TO 5.P.M. THEN RELEASED TO P.M. KUNEU AND GUSTI OF THE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION SHERIFF OFFICE LOS ANGELES.

THE WEAPONS USED BY THE BANDITS ALSO TURNED OVER TO THE BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION.

*Edwin Wiggins
Acting Chief of Police
El Monte.*

spurred much contemporary discussion of how modern law enforcement, using the latest methods, had greatly reduced the opportunities for law breakers to get away with crime.

In 1936, the police station was expanded to house the city's fire department headquarters. This allowed firemen to answer telephone calls for the police department, as well as to keep tabs on the city jail. This was important as prisoners often lit their bedding afire, and several had nearly been killed by smoke inhalation.

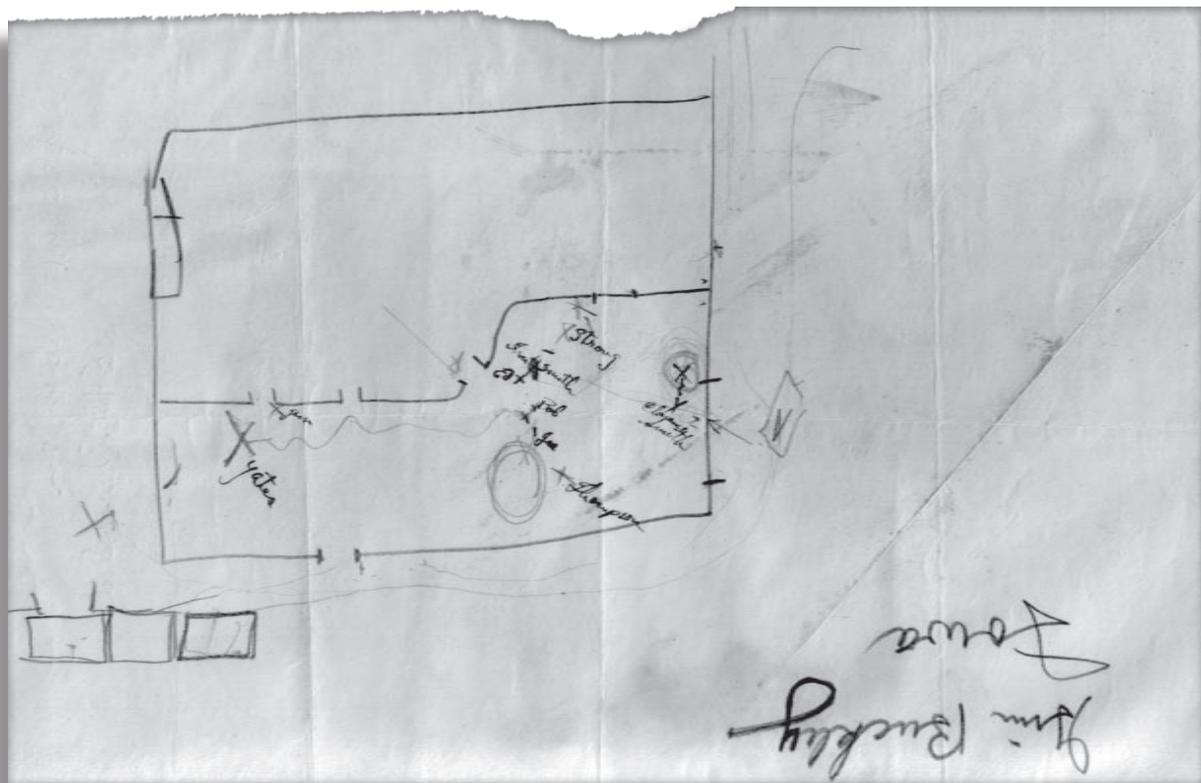
At approximately 3:00 P.M. on January 31, 1936, the most violent robbery in El Monte's history took place. The incident was discovered when Tillie Irwine, office manager for the El Monte *Herald*, telephoned the Southern Counties Bank to speak to a girlfriend. The phone had been answered by Ruth Bruton (later to serve as El Monte City Clerk, sister of James Bruton, who later retired from the El Monte Police Department with the rank of captain).

Through the telephone Irwine heard a crash "that sounded like a shot." Bruton exclaimed "My God!" and either slammed down or dropped the receiver.

Alarmed that there might be a robbery, Irwine had a coworker run to the bank—only a few doors away—to see what was wrong. The young man confirmed her suspicion, and Irwine immediately telephoned authorities.

Witnesses described the robbery as starting when Frank Smith and his accomplice, C.E. Yates, pulled weapons as the bank closed for the afternoon, one suspect going to the manager's desk, and one to the desk of Bruton. What Irwine had not heard, but which prefaced what she had, was the robber saying "Hang up girlie, this is a stick-up."

Opposite page: The crime report taken for the Southern Counties Bank robbery in El Monte, January 31, 1936. Below: The first-known El Monte crime scene diagram, showing the positions of the various persons involved in this robbery.



City Council
THOMAS J. CAFFERY, MAYOR
W. L. EWING
FRED KING
A. MACKAY
R. G. WOLSTONCROFT

CITY of EL MONTE
The End of the Salina Fe Trail



EL MONTE, CALIFORNIA

August 15, 1932

MRS. BEATRICE DAVIS
CLERK
WM. P. HAUGHTON
CITY ATTORNEY
R. L. ARNOLD
TREASURER

WHEREAS, Officers Joe Fritsch and Edwin Wiggins of the Police Department of the City of El Monte have recently effected the arrest of an alleged burglar, captured his armored car, and recovered stolen property; and

WHEREAS, these acts were fraught with grave danger of serious injury and loss of life and resulted in great credit and honor to themselves and to the department which they so efficiently serve;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of El Monte extend to Officers Joe Fritsch and Edwin Wiggins the commendation of the City of El Monte for their effective and valiant discharge of duty;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be spread upon the minutes as a permanent record of their valorous actions and as evidence of the Council's recognition thereof;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution bearing the signature of the Mayor and the official seal of the City of El Monte be presented to each of said officers.


Thos. J. Caffery
Mayor

If the circumstances surrounding the robbery's discovery had not been chance enough, those surrounding the law enforcement response surely were.

At the time of the robbery, the San Gabriel Valley Peace Officer's Pistol League had been holding a shooting match in El Monte. In addition to El Monte Police Officers Joseph Fritsch and Edwin Wiggins, also responding to the robbery would be El Monte Constable Robert Foell, Alhambra Police Officers Marion Thompson and Robert Cox and Ontario Police Officer E.S. Strong.

Martin Sorensen—an El Monte fireman—came at the request of Officer Fritsch, who, responding from the police station, originally believed he would be alone. As events unfolded, however, he was able to notify the other law officers on his way to the bank.

The two robbers ordered all employees to the rear of the bank. While one robber emptied the teller drawers, the second ordered the manager to open the safe. With money in hand, the robbers ordered the employees into the vault.

By this time, those responding had the bank surrounded. Wiggins repeatedly tried opening the bank's front door, finding it locked. Foell looked in the bank's nearby window and saw two men walking toward them. When the men opened the bank's door, Wiggins and Foell pointed their weapons at them, at which time one of the robbers, Frank Smith, said "we give up, boys."

Wiggins, Foell and Fritsch forced the two men back into the bank at gunpoint, relieved Smith of the bag of money he was carrying, and searched and handcuffed him. At that time Fritsch and Foell then began to search the second robber.

Unseen, Clarence Smith, Frank Smith's brother, outside the building and acting as lookout, entered the bank behind the officers and pointed a sawed-off shotgun at them, shouting "stick-em up or I'll shoot." Foell and Fritsch whirled to the side as the bandit fired.

The blast from Smith's shotgun "struck officer Fritsch in the left hand, also Foell in the shoulder, and the full charge struck the slender bandit in the chest, who turned then and walked toward the rear of the corridor of the bank and fell." Yates, "the slender bandit," died of his wounds at Stanley's hospital where he was taken following the robbery. Fritsch "was rushed to the office of Dr Farrington, then to the Garfield hospital where his middle finger on his left hand was amputated."



Sheriff Biscailuz (center) presents diamond-and-gold presentation badges to El Monte officers Edwin Wiggins (at far left) and Joe Fritsch, Sr., for bravery during the 1936 Southern Counties Bank robbery. El Monte P.D. Chief Lester C. Burdick and Deputy Sheriff R.E. Foell look on.



Reproduced above and on the opposite page are pages from a 1944 color comic book written about the daring January, 1936 robbery of the Southern Counties Bank in El Monte.

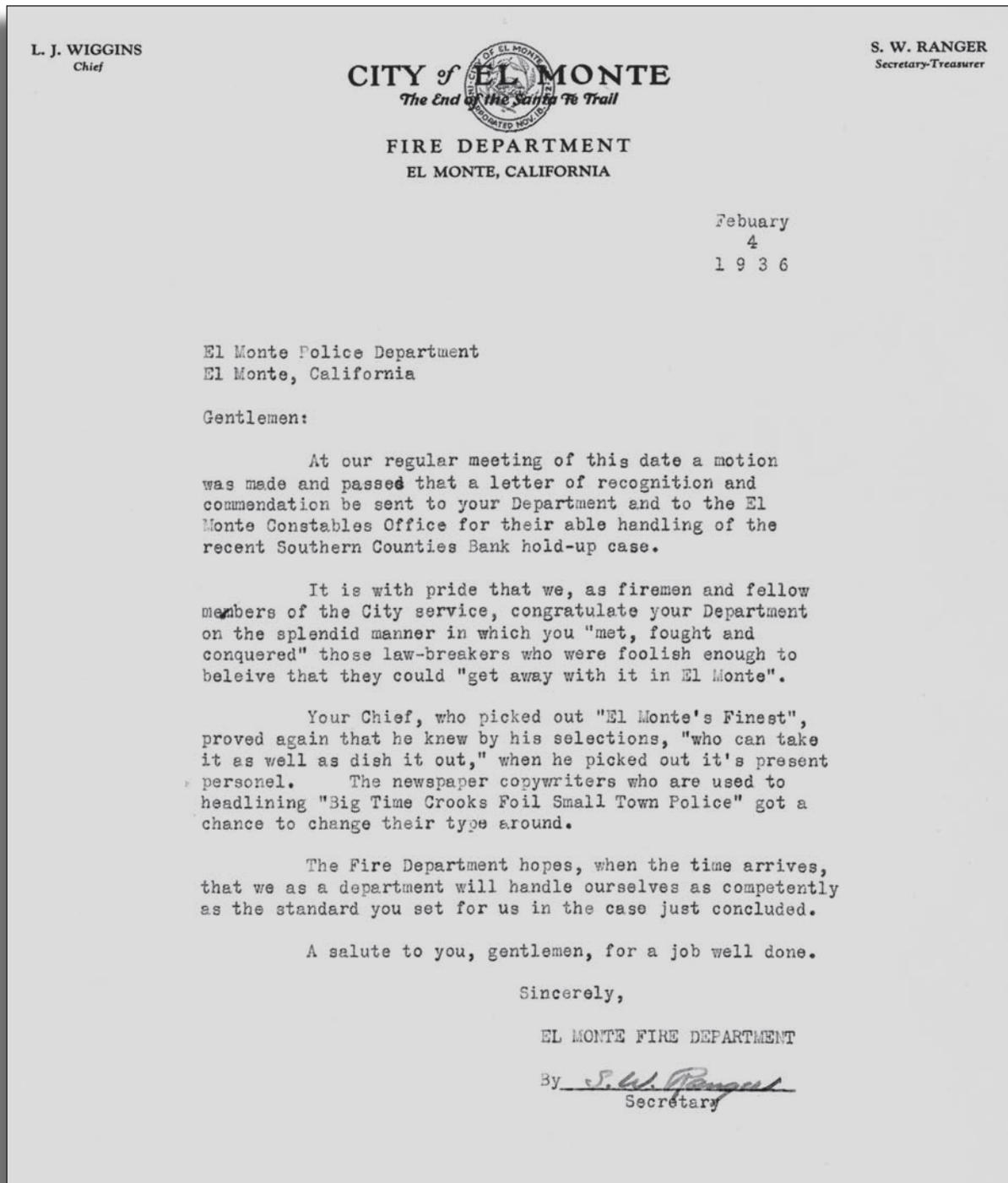




As Fritsch was being taken from the bank, his son Joe Jr. and Joe Jr.'s friend Jimmy Husky, both second graders at nearby Columbia Grammar School, came running up. Jimmy had heard about the robbery and fetched Joe, knowing Joe's dad was a police officer and might be involved. Officer Fritsch, in pain and upset that his young son had seen him wounded, yelled to

Wiggins "Ed, what are the Goddamn kids doing here? Get them out of here!" Wiggins took both boys home and told Fritsch's wife Ella what had happened.

Officer Fritsch later said his initial thought, in the instant following the gunfire, was "I got him!"—not realizing that he had been wounded until a fellow



officer told him. Fritsch had been searching Yates when he saw Yates suddenly drop—a victim of Clarence Smith's shotgun blast—feeling the concussion against his own stomach “like a blow from a fist.” Fritsch is quoted in contemporary news accounts as saying he turned and fired, striking Clarence Smith and seeing him drop before the other officers fired.

Interestingly, the crime report says “Officers Wiggins, Thompson, Cox, Strong and Foell fired at the bandit who shot and he fell dead,” while another officer directly involved in the incident reported later that several members of the pistol league—not wanting to be left out of the excitement—shot into the prone Smith not long after the robbery itself had ended, but certainly after his life had.

After his conviction, and hoping for a reduced sentence, Frank Smith led deputies to a jar buried in Little Tujunga Canyon. The jar contained \$7,450 in traveler's checks and two deputy sheriff badges. This corroborated the gang's responsibility for a string of bank robberies dating from at least 1916, which had netted an estimated \$35,000.

Sentenced to life in prison, Smith swore he would one day kill Officer Fritsch. Fritsch took the threat seriously enough to carry a .45 caliber derringer with him for the rest of his life.

Chief Burdick, having been critically ill for several months and unable to respond to the robbery, heard the gun battle unfolding from his nearby home.

The El Monte Fire Department sent a letter to the police department, praising “the splendid manner in which you met, fought and conquered those law-breakers who were foolish enough to believe that



they could get away with it in El Monte.” The letter continued that “The newspaper copywriters who are used to headlining ‘Big Time Crooks Foil Small Town Police’ got a chance to change their type around.”

El Monte's business community took up a collection and bought Edwin Wiggins and Joe Fritsch gold and diamond-studded police badges befitting the new ranks to which each had been promoted following the robbery. Wiggins became the department's first captain and Fritsch its first sergeant. Both badges were inscribed on the back “Presented by El Monte Merchants for Preventing Bank Robbery Jan 31, 1936.”



Here is El Monte's beloved chief of police for many years—Lester C. Burdick—viewing a display of guns which he has collected over a period of nearly 30 years. Many of the weapons have been used in gun fights by desperadoes in the early days. Each weapon has some story attached to it. Many of the guns are several hundred years old, Mr. Burdick said.

News of the crime, El Monte's second bank robbery in twenty years, spread like wildfire. It was covered by newspapers across the country, including a special issue of the *New York Telegram*. It also inspired a 1944 comic book, *True Stories From the Archives of Crime—Gangsters Can't Win*.

After the robbery, merchants rallied the city to raise the salaries of Edwin Wiggins and Joe Fritsch. The city council unanimously agreed. Later the same year, however, the council denied Sergeant Fritsch compensation for the loss of his finger.

Joe Fritsch left the El Monte Police Department in 1939 to become the first chief of the West Covina Police Department, where he served out the remainder of his law enforcement career.

Although considered closed, the very nature of the Southern Counties Bank robbery prompted Chief Orval Davis to retain the original El Monte police report among his personal papers after its retention period had passed. This would prove unforeseeably fortuitous.

In September 2008 the El Monte Police Department was contacted by Detective Rick Graves of

Chief Burdick Recalls Other El Monte Police Gun Fights

DAD OTHER SHOOTINGS

Chief of Police L. C. Burdick, who has been ill for several months, heard the fusillade of shots at the Southern County bank as he sat in his home four doors north of the bank. He thought it was firecrackers. Then a neighbor shouted that the bank was being held up.

Like a fire horse, Chief Burdick, barely able to walk, hobbled down to the bank, arriving after the shooting was over.

"The boys did great work," he said proudly as he was interviewed in his home yesterday. "They've got the nerve, too. They're real police officers, and they've got everything it takes." He was speaking of Constable R. E. Foell, who was his assistant for many years; Acting Chief Ed Wiggins and Officer Joe Fritsch.

Then Lester began to reminisce concerning previous shooting affairs and the part police had played in them:

"Officers Jack Alder and George Hamblin shot two bandits to death in 1922, after the highwaymen had opened fire on them when the officers stopped their car to investigate in front of the old adobe house on East Valley boulevard," he recalled.

"Then, back in the days when Baker and McDonald owned the department store which later became Asher and Naumann's, Night Watchman Dick McCoy saw three burglars trying to break into the store. He hollered, and the men scattered. He shot one in the chest, but the bandit got away.

"The shooting occurred at 3 a. m., and at 5 a. m. I arrested him at the hotel. Three days later, I went to the Plaza in Los Angeles and arrested the other two.

"In 1932, Constable Foell got a call that two bandits had robbed a service station in Brea canyon. Taking Charles Horn with him, he parked on East Valley boulevard, and when the car passed, overtook it. One of the bandits leaned out, aimed his automatic pistol

at Foell, and pulled the trigger. The safety catch was on, though, and that fact saved Bob's life. The latter arrested both bandits.

"On December 17, 1927, Walter's store was robbed of \$3,000 worth of merchandise by four ex-convicts and a fifth man, who broke in the back door. Officer Wiggins stopped the car across the bridge and a second car pulled up and the men in it fired at him. The burglars escaped, but were captured later.

"Another time, Officer Wiggins pursued a stolen car driven by two bandits west to Ivar street, then north, and at Lower Azusa road Wiggins crashed in making the turn, just as the bandits fired five shots at him. When arrested later, the bandits confessed that they had killed an El Monte police officer. Deputy sheriffs hurried to El Monte, where they found Wiggins very much alive.

"Then there was the time three years ago when two bandits looted Mason's Hardware store of some guns, and, in trying to escape in an armored car, crashed into another car, and leaped out and ran. Officers Wiggins and Fritsch were on this job, and Fritsch caught one of the bandits in the lot back of Mrs. Anna Vise's home. The other burglar escaped.

"Through the years, we have gone out and arrested many highwaymen when shots were exchanged, and we have 'staked out' many times when we had reason to believe stores might be held up."

Chief Burdick also recalled the time when he was quizzing a man in a car when his partner shoved a gun against him and told him (the officer) to get into the car. Lester ducked and ran into Murphy's shoe store and the car drove away, the chief being afraid to shoot for fear of hitting pedestrians or of precipitating shooting from the car which might have killed innocent spectators. 21

the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Homicide Bureau, unsolved case unit. Graves was investigating the unsolved murder of Alhambra Police Officer James H. Nerison, shot to death while responding to a robbery at the Alhambra Theater on January 3, 1933.

Lost to history, the sheriff's department became aware this case was unresolved due to a conversation between an Alhambra Police Department member

General Order of the City Council of the
City of El Monte

To Chief of Police, Lester C. Burdick and to all
police officers of the City of El Monte:

Effective May 1, 1937, all city police officers,
other than the Chief of Police, will be granted a ten per
cent increase in salary.

Also effective May 1, 1937, all gasoline allow-
ances from the city to the police officers will be dis-
continued.

Effective on and after May 1, 1937, no police
officer of this city will be permitted to do any police
work or accept or continue any employment involving the
duties of a police officer other than or in addition to
the performance of his work and duties as a police officer
of the City of El Monte.

Chief of Police, Lester C. Burdick, is hereby
given full authority to make such rules, regulations and
orders for the proper and efficient functioning of the
police department as he may from time to time deem
advisable and all police officers are instructed that
prompt and strict observance of and compliance with all
such rules, regulations and orders must by them be made.

Chief Burdick is hereby authorized and instructed
instantly to dismiss from the force any officer guilty of
insubordination or conduct unbecoming an officer or failure
to comply with this order.

City Council of the City of
El Monte

By A. B. Nichol
Mayor

Dated: April 21, 1937

and a POST commissioner related to Alhambra Of-
ficer M.L. Thompson.

Based on available records, including the origi-
nal El Monte police report, Detective Graves closed
the Nerison killing, determining that, based on sev-
eral factors including descriptions provided by two

witnesses to the theater robbery, Officer Nerison was
probably murdered by Clarence Smith—all of the
parties by this time being deceased.

The original Southern Counties Bank robbery
report has since been replaced into El Monte Police
records and remains the oldest report of any crime

still on file within the department.

On January 6, 1937, at 10:00 P.M., the El Monte Police Department recorded its first indexed arrest. The report, written by Officer Wiggins and documenting the defrauding of an innkeeper, read "Moved from apartment and failed to pay rent."

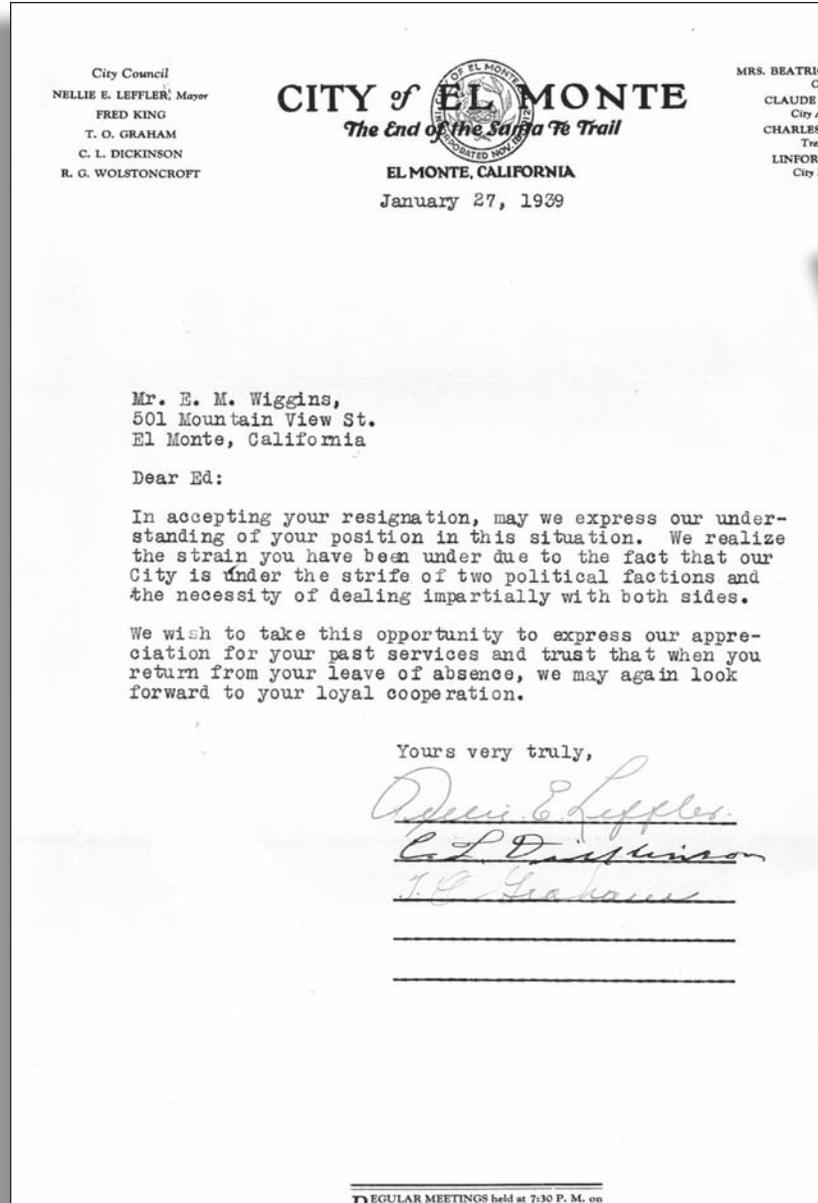
Lester Burdick, ill for quite some time, retired on September 1, 1937, having served slightly less than twenty-five years at the department's helm. Burdick remains El Monte's longest-sitting chief of police. He may also have been one of its most popular—even among the bad guys. Once, having denied guilt after hours of questioning, two thieves confessed after hearing that Burdick was ill, one saying he thought a lot of the chief and apologizing for committing a crime in his jurisdiction.

Longevity would not be a trait common amongst any of Burdick's immediate successors. Of the four chiefs following in his footsteps, the longest any would last in office was ten months.

Burdick was replaced by Alexander Mackay, who was sworn in as chief on September 20, 1937. Mackay had been El Monte's Police Commissioner before taking the chief's position. Mackay led the department for seven months, stepping down to the rank of patrolman on May 1, 1938. This was the rank he would retire at in 1954.

Edwin Wiggins replaced Mackay as chief on May 1, 1938. Shortly afterward, Wiggins ran afoul of El Monte's mayor, who favored legalized draw poker in the city. Wiggins decided to clean up El Monte, and, before the mayor had him removed as chief, had closed down fifteen gambling houses—"knocking them over one by one."

Wiggins was demoted to the rank of patrolman for the remainder of time "the irate Mayor" held office, being reappointed as chief after the mayor lost his bid for re-election. The sheriff's vice detail soon stepped in and ended all gambling within the city. A later report would say, "Politics has not bothered the



Department since.”

After his reinstatement, Wiggins served as chief until 1939, when he voluntarily resigned the position, requesting a leave of absence due to poor health. The document accepting his resignation, dated January 27, 1939, was signed by three of the five city council members. It was startling in its candor, stating in part: "We realize the strain you have been under due to the fact that our City is under the strife of two political factions and the necessity of dealing impartially with both sides."

E. DARLING
rk
A. SHUTT
Attorney
T. MYERS
Lawyer
O. C. LULL
Engineer

ARRESTING OFFICER'S REPORT

1938

Every officer making arrest, where prisoners are held for investigation or on detention, will report below circumstances of the arrest in detail.

Name Billy Martin Date of Arrest Feb 3rd Time 8:45 A. M.
Address 308 St. Washington City El Monte
Place of Arrest Valley Blvd Date to Appear Feb 4th 1938
Charge Intoxicated Section I Viol. Ord. _____
Complaining Witness _____ Address _____
Witness _____ Address _____
History of Arrest in Detail Pick up on side walk after he was told to go home brought to office book and Jailed

ARRESTING OFFICER'S REPORT

1938

Every officer making arrest, where prisoners are held for investigation or on detention, will report below circumstances of the arrest in detail.

Name F.I. Santiago Date of Arrest March 14th Time 12:50 A. M.
Address _____ St. Lower Azusa Rd. City El Monte
Place of Arrest Valley Blvd. Date to Appear _____
Charge Intoxication Section _____ Viol. Ord. _____
Complaining Witness J. Sherman J. Bancroft Section _____
Witness _____ Address _____
History of Arrest in Detail This man was riding in Paul Jaimillos Car and was brought to Office Booked and Jailed on City Ord 124 Sec 1

City of El Monte, California

4877

ARRESTING OFFICER'S REPORT

1938

Every officer making arrest, where prisoners are held for investigation or on detention, will report below circumstances of the arrest in detail.

Name Carlos Ramos Date of Arrest 3-17-38 Time 2:25 P. M.
Address 1720 1/2 St. E. 37th City Los Angeles
Place of Arrest Valley Blvd. Date to Appear _____
Charge Drunk Driving Section _____ Viol. Ord. _____
Complaining Witness Jay Sherman Section _____
Witness R.C. Carey Address _____
History of Arrest in Detail Was checking doors on Valley Blvd. when a Pedestrian

called my attention to a drunk driver who was in front of the Justice Court. Running to this point I found Carlos Ramos pulling away from the curb. Was brought to office where he admitted that he had been drinking and that he had been crazy Drunk, a short time before he was picked up. Booked on C.V.C. 502.

Above right, and right: Contrast these rather brief 1938 Arresting Officer's Reports—more typical for the era—with the lengthier Southern Counties Bank robbery report, pictured on page 20.



This damaged, but rare original photo depicts one of the departments marked patrol units, c. the late 1930s.

Before leaving office, Wiggins requested the city pay for a filing system for reports and records. The city council thought the idea “foolish” and initially refused. Wiggins finally prevailed, and the city replaced the older, unreliable “system” which mostly consisted of personal memory. The new system lasted, with periodic updating, until replaced by computers.

Wiggins later rejoined the department as a captain, serving at that rank for eight more years. After World War II, he voluntarily stepped down in rank to patrolman “to allow the younger boys a chance at the top seats.” That was the rank he retired at on December 14, 1956.

The day Wiggins resigned as chief, January 26, 1939, Glen E. Bodell was sworn into the position. He served the shortest term of any chief in the department’s history, resigning from the department on

July 7, 1939 to pursue outside business interests. El Monte Police Captain Guy Welch served as interim chief until Gene B. Woods assumed the office on July 18, 1939. Woods resigned as chief on May 16, 1940.

The first police car purchased by the city was a 1938 Plymouth. Bought new, it cost the department \$1,074. Used on all shifts, it lasted well into World War II.

The 1930s ended on an interesting note. The nation had lived through Prohibition and survived the Dust Bowl. The Depression would continue into the next decade, when it, too, would end, due to a national economic boom.

Unfortunately, that boom was brought about by the international conflagration of World War II.

5 WHERE IS PEARL HARBOR?

War and Peace: the 1940s

Anyone of an age sufficient to have experienced the event remembers exactly where they were and what they were doing, when they first heard of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii that signaled America's entry into World War II. When the news hit the nation's radios the first words uttered by the majority of stunned Americans was: *Where is Pearl Harbor?*

The attack staggered the nation.

To understand the changes in the city and the department during this time, one must appreciate the circumstances surrounding America's entrance into the war.

In December of 1941 alone, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese submarines attacked merchant vessels nine times off the California coast—several times within sight of land, once less than four miles off Los Angeles, and once less than one mile off San Pedro. In 1942, a Japanese submarine surfaced just offshore and shelled an oil refinery in Santa Barbara. This does not include the Japanese shelling and bombing of Oregon—twice—the Germans landing saboteurs on the other side of the country—also twice—and the German mining of New York Harbor, which caused it to be closed to sea traffic for two days.



The entire El Monte, California Police Department, as it appeared circa 1940.



PATROLMAN J. DRYSDALE



MOTOR PATROL G. RENNISON



DESK SARG. A. MACKAY



MOTOR PATROL O. DAVIS



PATROLMAN W.L. MASON



CAPT. E. WIGGINS

ELMONTE
POLICE
DEPT.



CHIEF CARL VONN

NINETEEN
HUNDRED
FORTY-FIVE



CAPT. J. J. SHERMAN



PATROLMAN H. B. GIST



PATROLMAN J.L. BLACKWILL

DILL BOIS STUDIO



PATROLMAN J. DRYSDALE



MOTOR PATROL G. RENNISON



CAPTAIN E. WIGGINS



MOTOR PATROL O. DAVIS



PATROLMAN W.L. MASON



DESK SARG. A. MACKAY

ELMONTE
POLICE
DEPT.



CHIEF JAY J. SHERMAN -

NINETEEN
HUNDRED
FORTY-SIX



PATROLMAN H. B. GIST



PATROLMAN J. BRUTON



PATROLMAN J.L. BLACKWILL

DILL BOIS STUDIO

People in the United States, especially those nearest the coastlines, genuinely believed—and wholeheartedly feared—an impending invasion, and this included those people living in El Monte. Shortly after war was declared, the El Monte Police Department bought a case of .30-30 caliber Winchester Model 94 lever action rifles, issuing them to officers for use in battling any possible invaders. Although the threat was real—and the department was prepared—no such attack ever materialized, and the department eventually moved back to more routine policing duties. The department disposed of its remaining Winchester rifles in the early 1970s.

As the war materialized, El Monte's farms and dairies dwindled, replaced by the factories, plants, and housing that sprouted within the city much as had the crops of earlier times. Housing was not only required for those working within the city, but also for workers flooding the area to work at war-production plants, government facilities and military bases throughout the area.



Chief Jay J. Sherman. He served as El Monte's Chief of Police for more than 12½ years.

One example of the growth affecting El Monte during this period is particularly telling: El Monte High School required the scheduling of five different starting and ending times to accommodate the influx of new students enrolled by 1948—an increase of almost 250% over the start of the decade.

During this time, El Monte's second city-provided police car, a 1940 Ford, suffered a premature end in an accident during a pursuit. A 1942 Oldsmobile, obtained through the War Ration Board, replaced the Ford, but the Olds itself would require replacement fairly quickly. Officer James Drysdale, used to driving his own 1928 standard transmission Buick on patrol, crashed the automatic transmission-equipped Olds through a billboard.

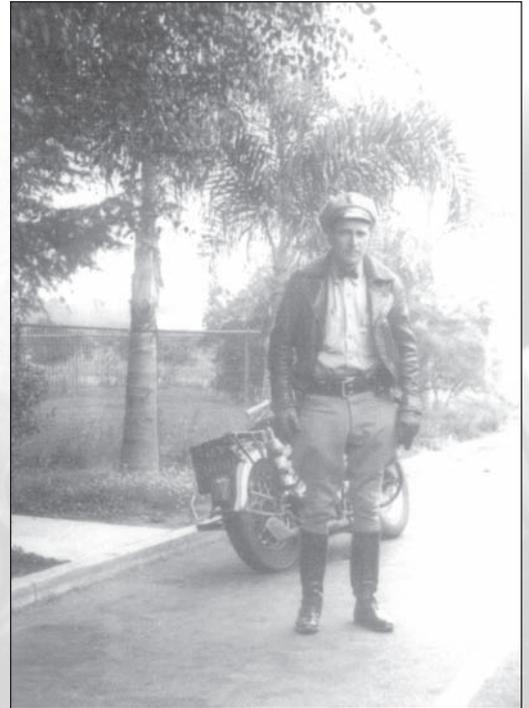
From 1944, the police station—as well as all department patrol cars—would be equipped with two-way radios. In 1948, the department was able to expand its fleet of cars to two.

In 1946 the police department came under state civil service rules, with the result that the hiring process became competitive and merit-based. The department would no longer hire employees based upon a criterion that was other than neutral.

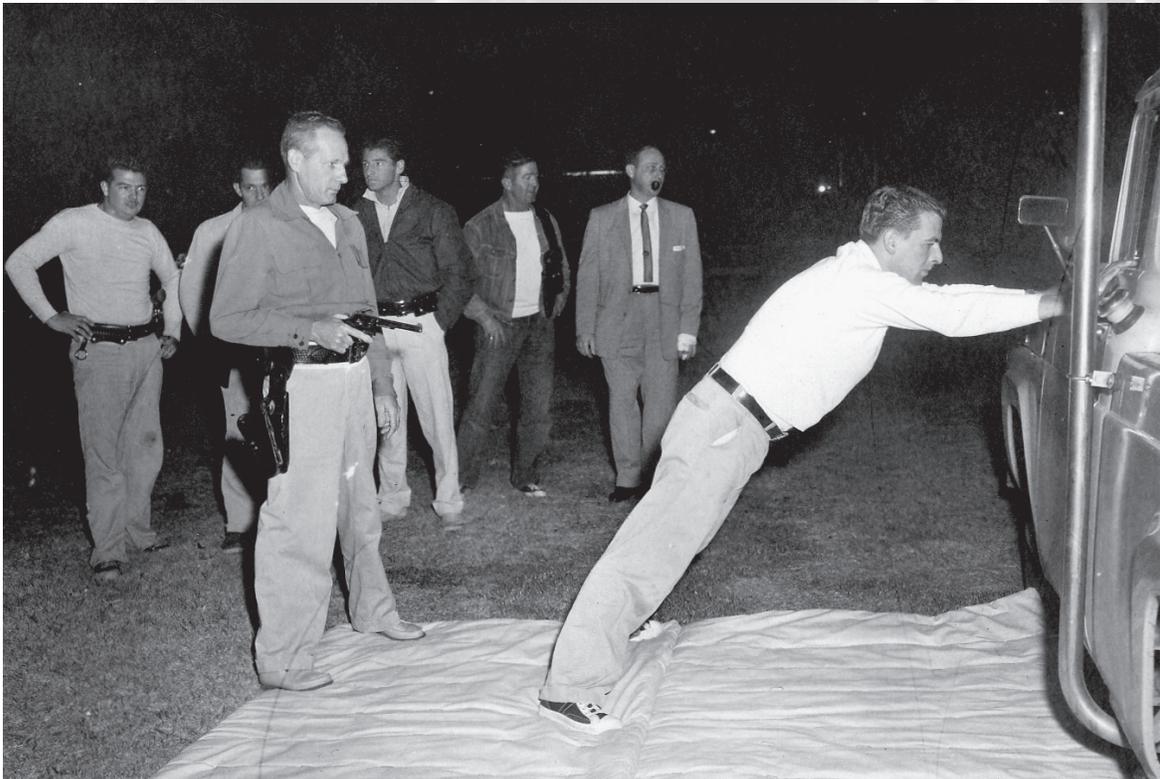
By the end of the decade, the El Monte Police Department would lose fourteen sworn members, and add seventeen. Carl Vonn, who had become El Monte's sixth chief of police on May 16, 1940—the day that Chief Gene B. Woods left office—would see the department through World War II, resigning as chief on September 1, 1945. He would be replaced by Chief Jay J. Sherman on the same day.

By the time World War II had formally ended on September 2, 1945, the metamorphosis begun in the 1930s was virtually complete. El Monte had become largely a residential community. The returning veterans wasted no time in settling in and starting families (sometimes sooner than even the most eager of them had planned).

On October 6, 1947, El Monte Patrolman Joseph V. Ervin delivered a seven-pound, six-ounce baby boy in a back room at the police station. Assisted by Patrolman Harry Gist, the birth was uneventful, with both mother and son doing fine. The mother was



Above and at right: Early day El Monte Police Department motor officers.



Department members undergoing training in the most modern techniques of the era. The "suspect" leaning against the car is an E.M.P.D. officer; Officer Clarence Johnson stands at far left.



Motor Officer Joe Fritch, shown with his two-year-old son, Joe Jr.



Below: El Monte's Chief of Police, Edwin Wiggins, cavorts at a 1940s Pioneer Days celebration.



so pleased that she named the boy Joseph in Ervin's honor. Ever-after, Ervin would be known as "Doc" among department members. This remains the only time a baby was born in the city's police station.

As for crime during the era, one incident notable enough for mention in the contemporary *El Monte Police Officer's Association Benefit Dance and Show* booklet, and interesting enough to repeat here, was the capture on August 8, 1949 of the robber dubbed "a one-man crime wave."

This suspect, who had committed a string of armed robberies covering El Monte and three other cities—including stealing six automobiles and robbing the El Monte Western Union office on three separate dates—was captured after his new bride confessed her knowledge of his crimes, as well as her participation in one of the robberies. He did not go peacefully, however, violently fighting officer Ervin at the time of arrest, punching him and tearing his jacket before being subdued.

Were this not already enough to make this case memorable, the robber subsequently confessed that

he was married to another woman at the time he married his present wife.

As for the El Monte Police Officer's Relief Association itself, which dated at least as far back as 1940, it served "to comfort and assist our sick and needy members, their widows and orphans, and to contribute financial relief at time of death." The association also took "an active part in promoting and sponsoring El Monte Boy Scout Troop 17, in sending them to camp each summer" and to "sponsor local soft-ball teams."

The 1940s ended on a high note for the department. In addition to now having three patrol cars and one "motorcycle three-wheeler," Chief Sherman's September 1949 graduation from the FBI's National Academy would bring many new ideas and practices. These would be implemented through in-house training.

The dawn of the decade of the 1950s would hold much potential for the city of El Monte, as well as for its police department.



*El Monte P.D.
Motor Officer
George "Red"
Rennison, shown
here circa the late
1940s.*

THE SPACE RACE

The 1950s

The El Monte Police Department ended the year 1950 with eighteen sworn personnel. The department would add an aggregate of thirteen sworn members during that decade. But by the end of the 1950s, the police department would lose thirty of this number. During the same period eight officers would be promoted to the rank of sergeant. The department would appoint its first lieutenant, James Bruton, on September 1, 1953. Orval Davis would become the department's first deputy chief of police on July 1, 1957.

By the end of the decade Davis would replace retiring Chief Jay J. Sherman, who served twelve years and seven months at the department's helm, having replaced Carl Vonn who had seen the department through the uncertainty of World War II. Carl Vonn served as chief for just over five years and three months.

Upon announcing his retirement, Sherman told the City Council that he had reached the time of life when he would "like to forego the necessity, among other things, of attending every City Council meeting."

Chief Sherman, not unlike Chief Wiggins in the 1930s, was at odds with council members over gambling in the city—in this case, pay-outs from pinball machines owned by a council member. Almost eerily, history virtually repeated itself; this form of gambling was also held illegal, and the council-member involved was defeated in his bid for reelection. Unlike before, however, the now-former council member was convicted of operating illegal gambling equipment, his machines were destroyed, and the

money inside each was confiscated by the city.

In 1951, the police department changed several aspects of its operation. It expanded its fleet of patrol cars with three new Pontiacs, authorized the hiring of sixteen reserve officers, and shortened the work-week of full-time officers from six-day, 48-hour work weeks to five days, 44 hours.

Some things did not change, however. Although officers no longer had to supply their own patrol cars, gas and oil, they still had to provide their own uniforms and equipment.

The October 15, 1951, *El Monte Police Officer's Relief Association Benefit Dance and Show* booklet notes: "El Monte policemen still provide their own equipment and uniforms. A good service revolver costs around \$76; handcuffs cost \$17.50; their pants, shirt and cap together cost between \$40 and \$50. Their Sam Browne belt costs \$21; a leather jacket comes to another \$50, not to mention the insignia which they wear, summer shirts and gloves for winter."

A barometer of crime and law enforcement during this period might well be interesting to consider. Both of the following, major-for-the-time, drug busts drew notable contemporary coverage by the *Los Angeles Times*.

On April 20, 1952, a joint Los Angeles County Sheriff-El Monte Police operation resulted in the arrest of two adults and two juveniles for possession of nineteen concealed marijuana cigarettes, and on May 14, 1953, El Monte officers arrested two women who

EL MONTE POLICE DEPT.



Sgt. VIRGIL ERVIN



Lt. JAMES BRUTON



Chief JAY J. SHERMAN



Capt. ORVAL DAVIS



Sec. MARY HECK



Sgt. WALTER MASON



Sgt. KEITH PLEHN



Ptlm. EDWIN WIGGINS



Ptlm. ALEX MACKAY



Ptlm. GEORGE RENNISON



Ptlm. LEONARD BLACKWELL



Ptlm. CHARLES MOLLETT



Ptlm. HUGH MARTIN



Ptlm. CHESTER ATKISSON



Ptlm. DAVID WIRE



Ptlm. HARRY HILL



Ptlm. OWEN CHRISTIANSON

“offered two classes of heroin, one priced at \$350 an ounce and the other at \$450” to a sheriff’s investigator the previous day. Their arrest was the result of “an all-points bulletin by the Sheriff’s office.”

Prior to 1955, the department stopped using inmate trustees. Previously used for washing police cars and keeping the station clean, the program’s death-knell rang when Chief Sherman found one “trustee” uproariously drunk after consuming all the confiscated liquor previously stored in the station’s evidence locker.

Dedicated on May 4, 1956, El Monte’s new po-

lice station was considered “spacious,” certainly capable of meeting all foreseeable department needs. Scarcely two years later, however, the department doubled its graveyard patrol from one car to two, with Valley Boulevard dividing their patrols. It was a precursor of growth to come.

During this time—before the city adopted the county’s numbering system—the El Monte police station’s address was 505 E. Valley Boulevard. Its local telephone number was GILBERT 8-6191; its out-of-area telephone number was CUMBERLAND 3-4942.

The changeover to county addressing would

NINETEEN HUNDRED & FIFTY-FOUR



Ptl. HAROLD BETTELMAN



Ptl. KEITH TEDROW

prove problematic in the mid-1980s, when El Monte detectives—asked to arrest a murder suspect last reported to be living at 522 Ramona Boulevard, and unaware of any three-digit addresses remaining within the city—were unable to locate the house until provided cross-streets by the requesting agency.

Canvassing just east of Santa Anita Avenue, the detectives noted a barely visible “522” on one home and arrested the suspect when he answered the door. The house, its original address still faintly visible, still exists.

In 1956, Mary D. Heck became the department’s first uniformed female employee, being appointed to the position of “secretary-matron.” Already

with the department for three years, Heck wore civilian attire when working as a secretary and a skirted uniform with badge while serving as matron. She was non-sworn.

On May 11, 1957, one of El Monte’s more interesting criminal cases would unfold when anonymous calls led a party of “Eight El Monte police officers under Sgt. Keith Plehn” and an equal number of sheriff’s deputies to a “Dad’s Night Out” at El Monte’s American Legion Hall.

Forty-two men were arrested and booked for gambling after authorities entered the hall and found

“three poker tables were in operation, and a chuck-a-luck cage was whirling merrily.” All charges were later dropped after a legal technicality blocked prosecution, although the judge admonished those present that he truly believed the defendants were guilty.

On November 11, 1957, Reserve Officer Manuel Serrano, a Mexican-American, became the first minority to be hired by the department as a full-time police officer.

On June 22, 1958, one of the city’s most infamous murders took place, though it would not garner much attention until the victim’s son, Lee Earle Ellroy, then ten years of age, later wrote a book about the crime. *My Dark Places*, published in 1996, garnered both popular and critical acclaim for its author—the victim’s son—who since the murder had legally changed his name to James Ellroy.



Mrs. Jean Ellroy, murdered in El Monte in 1958. Half a century later, this homicide is still unsolved.

Eerily, a day or two before the murder, Officer Jim Tedrow asked Lieutenant James Bruton if there was ever any excitement—perhaps any murders—in El Monte. Bruton testily told Tedrow that to talk about such things was bad luck.

While the city does not investigate homicides—instead requesting the assistance of the larger and better-equipped Los Angeles Sheriff’s Homicide Bureau—the police department does assign two detectives to assist deputies with each such case.



These views show the new El Monte P.D. headquarters. At right and in the background are views of the site and excavating for the new building's foundation, taken in 1955. Above: Chief Jay J. Sherman (left) and Officer (and former chief) Edwin Wiggins stand proudly in front of the finished building in 1956.



The El Monte, California Police Department, pictured in 1956. From left to right, top row: Harry Hill, Dave Weir, Leonard Blackwill, Owen Christianson, Keith Palen, Virgil Faulkner, Chuck Mollet, Keith Tedrow, Larry Duke and Edwin Wiggins. Front row: Mary Heck, Hugh Martin, Sgt. Virgil Ervin, Lt. James Bruton, Chief Jay J. Sherman, Capt. Orval Davis, Sgt. Walt Mason, Sgt. Harold Bentleman, Chuck Attkisson and George Rennison.

The Ellroy murder remains the oldest relatively active case in El Monte's history. Now the purview of the El Monte Police Cold Case Unit—due to the fact that unsolved homicides never close—Sergeant Tom Armstrong and Detective John Eckler were the first department members to reexamine the case after Ellroy and retired Los Angeles County Sheriff's Homicide Detective Bill Stoner visited the department in the mid-1990s.

The oldest open case in El Monte, although there remain no workable leads, is that of Alexander Dawson, "robbed and assaulted on a lonely road by three men, after his car was forced off the road. The

victim died later in the hospital, but was not coherent enough to state what took place." Found at "Peck Rd. & Blue Diamond Gravel Pit" a day after the February 12, 1930 attack, the victim died at "Garfield Hospital" on March 22, 1930.

In 1958 the department formed a detective bureau, centralizing all investigations that had previously been handled by a sergeant, lieutenant, or captain. This was also the year Keith "Dad" Plehn accidentally locked himself in the department's jail, and had to be released from behind the self-locking door by officers who had returned to the station and found him peering sadly from behind the door's small window.

Although training academies existed in the 1950s—Chief Sherman having attended perhaps the most famous, the FBI’s National Academy, in 1949—as of the late 1950s El Monte, as many other law enforcement agencies, required no formalized training for its officers. California’s Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission (POST) would not even exist until 1959.

The department’s newly-hired officers, both reg-

the department operated three-wheeled Cushman scooters for parking control in downtown El Monte. Tickets carried a fine of fifty cents. Much of the initial parking enforcement was done by Officer George “Red” Rennison, nicknamed for his red hair and ruddy complexion. Red was also readily identifiable by the khaki-colored pith helmet he regularly wore while riding his tricycle. After Rennison left the department, scooter duty was rotated among the officers.



A busy downtown El Monte thoroughfare, circa 1958-1959.

ular and reserve, received two hours of training each shift for their first eight weeks, then the new officers were sent out with those more senior until it was felt they could do the job on their own. Trainees were not allowed to drive a patrol car until they knew all the streets in the city, and where all of the city employees lived. At that time, all city employees were required to live within the city boundaries.

From the late 1940s well into the mid-1960s,

Because the Cushmans had no radios, and El Monte never had call-boxes, the city continued to use the water tower light until the Cushmans were retired. Officers having to contact the station would ask to use the telephone of a friendly merchant or, if in a car, radio the station to telephone them back at a local phone. Pay telephones cost a nickel a call.

Continued from this era into the 1960s, the badges of patrolmen were periodically collected by

supervisors, then reissued based on shifting seniority. Generally accomplished by the following shift, woe would befall any officer forgetting to leave his badge in his mailbox on the date set for exchange. This did not affect detectives, however, who had badges lacking numbers, or those at the rank of sergeant or above, whose badges did not reflect seniority.

Some of the more interesting assignments of officers were required to work during the 1950s, were the dances and concerts held Saturday evenings at the El Monte Legion Stadium, which used to be located on Valley Boulevard where the Marisol Heredia Post Office now stands. The officers were paid through the city by the promoters. The shows often attracted people from well outside the area. Crowds numbering from 2,500 to 3,000 were common, as were fights and even riots on Saturday nights.

American Legion Stadium was *the* place to be in the 1950s and early 1960s, and attracted such names of the era as Tennessee Ernie Ford—who made his television debut there—Molly B., Ritchie Valens, Ray Charles, Little Richard, Huggy Boy, and Fats Domino. Prime-time television's most popular show during the era, Cliffy Stone's "Hometown Jamboree," was filmed there.

On one occasion a major disturbance almost erupted at the stadium, not because of a lively act, but rather due to the sudden lack of one. An El Monte officer had arrested the members of a popular band found gambling before their appearance. It was one time that the show did *not* go on.

In 1974, while razing the stadium, workers discovered several old slot machines inside a forgotten room long ago sealed behind a wall. The machines were destroyed, and the coins within were turned over to charity.

In the late 1950s, Chief Davis, recognizing the diverging needs and maturing professionalism of the police department's officers, encouraged the curtailing of the rather casual El Monte Fire and Police Association in favor of a more formal body representing



Motor Officer George "Red" Rennison (left) and Officer Ed Wiggins enjoy a light moment in front of E.M.P.D. headquarters, 1956. The occasion marked Wiggins' retirement, and the presentation of E.M.P.D. badge #1 to Rennison.

only the city's police. Thus was given rise to the formation of the El Monte Police Officer's Association.

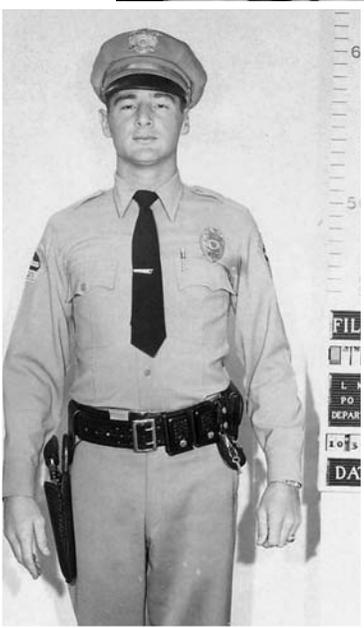
As the 1950s started, El Monte was still one mile square, and bordered roughly by Lower Azusa Avenue on the north, Garvey Avenue on the south, Five Points on the east and Temple City Boulevard on the west. As a maturing city, El Monte had developed rather than expanded. While this internal evolution would continue, the city was about to grow outward this time, nearly as fast and furiously as the crops in its rich alluvial soil once did.

By 1964, the city's boundaries would expand to over seven square miles. By the end of the 1960s they would expand to nearly ten.

El Monte's own "space race" had begun.



El Monte P.D. officers attend to a variety of training activities during the Fifties. In the staged photo below, Traffic Enforcement Officer Leonard Blackwill issues a good-driver certificate at Valley Boulevard east of Peck Road, circa 1960.



Left: Regular officer (and El Monte P.D.'s future tenth chief) Wayne C. Clayon, as a rookie in 1957.



An El Monte P.D. motor officer investigates a traffic collision at the intersection of Center and Valley Boulevard, circa 1960.

SOONER OF LATER, EVERYBODY COMES TO EL MONTE

“There’s Something Happening Here” El Monte in the 1960s

The Buffalo Springfield’s *For What It’s Worth* morphed itself into the national consciousness as a sort of sacred song of the era, by stating simply a witheringly accurate appraisal of the decade: “There’s something happening here.”

While what was happening might not have been clear to the Buffalo Springfield or, for that matter, to many others at the time—it remains vividly clear that what was happening in and to El Monte, the city itself, as well as the city’s police department—was very clear. They were on a growth spurt unprecedented in their history, the police department guided in its growth by Chief Orval Davis’s new *Rules, Regulations and Policies* manual.

In 1961, the job of dispatching, which was performed during the police department’s earliest days by the city’s firefighters, later by sergeants and officers, was civilianized. That same year, Shirley Louise Bassford was hired as El Monte’s first policewoman.

Bassford blazed quite a trail for herself, both in and outside the department. Hired originally as a juvenile officer, Bassford worked juvenile, sex crimes and records, until Chief Maurice Matthews approached her one day and asked, “Shirley, are you about ready to earn your keep?”

This preceded an updating of Bassford’s training and her promotion to sergeant. As a policewoman, she had received no training in weaponless defense or in the use of firearms. Bassford later became the department’s night shift supervisor—also becoming the first woman to enroll in the supervisor’s course at Rio Hondo Police Academy. She would later head

the department’s training division, working with new officers in all aspects of training, including patrolling with and evaluating them in the field.

Bassford retired from the police department on March 4, 1977. She and her husband then moved to Arizona, where she became chief of police for the city of Parker. She eventually left that position to set up the police department in Lake Havasu, and, that job completed, returned to Parker as city manager.

In 1964, a 3,000 square-foot expansion to the police station was completed, and personnel were able to move back into the enlarged structure from the trailers that had been their temporary home.

During the decade, the department gained an aggregate of thirty-four sworn members. Due to the expansion of the department—as well as the changes in laws, training requirements and professional standards—recruitment, training, and supervision were prominent problems of the era.

Toward this end the department promoted nineteen sergeants, ten lieutenants, and four captains throughout the decade. There would now be two sergeants working each shift, with a lieutenant as watch commander. Maurice Matthews served as the agency’s deputy chief from August 1, 1968 to June 1, 1973. Orval Davis, who continued as one of the department’s most enduring chiefs of police, and also one of the most progressive, would head the agency into the 1970s.

In 1963, Chief Davis championed a police station wagon that was truly a *station* wagon. Revolu-

tionary for the time, and studied by many other agencies, this car could be used for patrol, prisoner transportation, as a crime lab, and for traffic accident investigation. Chief Davis is quoted as saying that he hoped to add “a battery-powered tape recorder” to the car for recording statements in an investigation.

In 1966, Davis’ hope was fulfilled. The police department purchased ten hand-held recorders and transcription devices to speed and simplify report taking. Although each recorder cost \$442.50, the department foresaw a savings of \$77, 958.00 per year over the cost of officers hand-preparing the average of 950 reports then faced on a monthly basis.

In 1967, Davis implemented a “Technical Research and Development Commission” consisting of department personnel, private persons and local aerospace and scientific industry representatives, “to aid police in the development of up-to-now science fiction devices for crime fighting.”



Above, standing left to right: Capt. Jim Bruton, Policewoman Shirley Bassford, Lt. Keith Tedrow. Seated: El Monte’s Chief of Police, Orval Davis. Seen at below left: Officer Donald Ness fingerprints a suspect in jail, circa 1965.

Davis also became known for his huge collection of police badges. No mere hobbyist, Davis saw the collection as bridging a gap between the public, especially children, and the department. During the then-annual department open houses, he had noticed that his small collection of badges received more attention than did the guns or other police equipment also on display.

A letter to the International Association of Chiefs of Police garnered an article in *Police Chief* magazine, and the collection took on a life of its own. Davis promised to remove the pin and catch from badges he received, and also drilled small holes into many to secure them onto display boards. The collection eventually grew to well over 2,500 badges, portions of which remained on display in the police station until reclaimed by Davis’ family in the early 2000s.



Davis started the department's "Officer Friendly" program in 1968, in which once a week a patrol officer would eat lunch with the children at a local elementary school cafeteria. John Eckler, Rick Main and Jerry Stapleton were the first patrol officers assigned to this program. Davis continued his penchant for innovation and community relations in 1968 when he appointed, later that same year, the first community relations officer in the police department's history—the first within the San Gabriel Valley.

As for training, the 1960s were a time of transition. Officers were no longer seen as fit to police, once they knew all the city streets and home addresses of city employees, but from 1962-on were required to have two years of college before hire.



This page, left and above, and next page: Three views of the El Monte P.D.'s Training Division, showing the sophisticated equipment and supplies of that day. The photos were taken circa 1963.



Wayne Clayton, one of the era's newly-minted sergeants, submitted a training plan to Chief Davis that was approved by POST and implemented department-wide. The training of new officers, mainly in-house in the first few years of the decade, became more standardized—though not necessarily less interesting—than it had been in the old days.

For instance, it was common practice in teaching new officers how to handle inebriates, to simply load a number of new officers into a police car, find a cooperative drunk who would allow himself to be repeatedly searched and handcuffed, and let each officer take turns doing so until they were familiar with the process. The inebriate, in exchange for his cooperation, was then released or taken home and not booked.

Another facet of training, instituted in early 1965, was the sending of sworn personnel to a "five-part institute on arrest, search and seizure at the Pasadena Civil Defense Training Center." This training was considered sophisticated enough at the time that it garnered contemporary newspaper coverage, in-

cluding the names of those attending. The El Monte contingent consisted of patrolmen Gary E. Elliott, Leon N. Hansen and Keith R. Plehn.

By 1966, El Monte had—for the time—an enviable training program in place. Officers underwent fifteen days in-house indoctrination to the city and department, studied arrest techniques and other job-necessary material, followed by supervised traffic duty for a month-and-a-half.

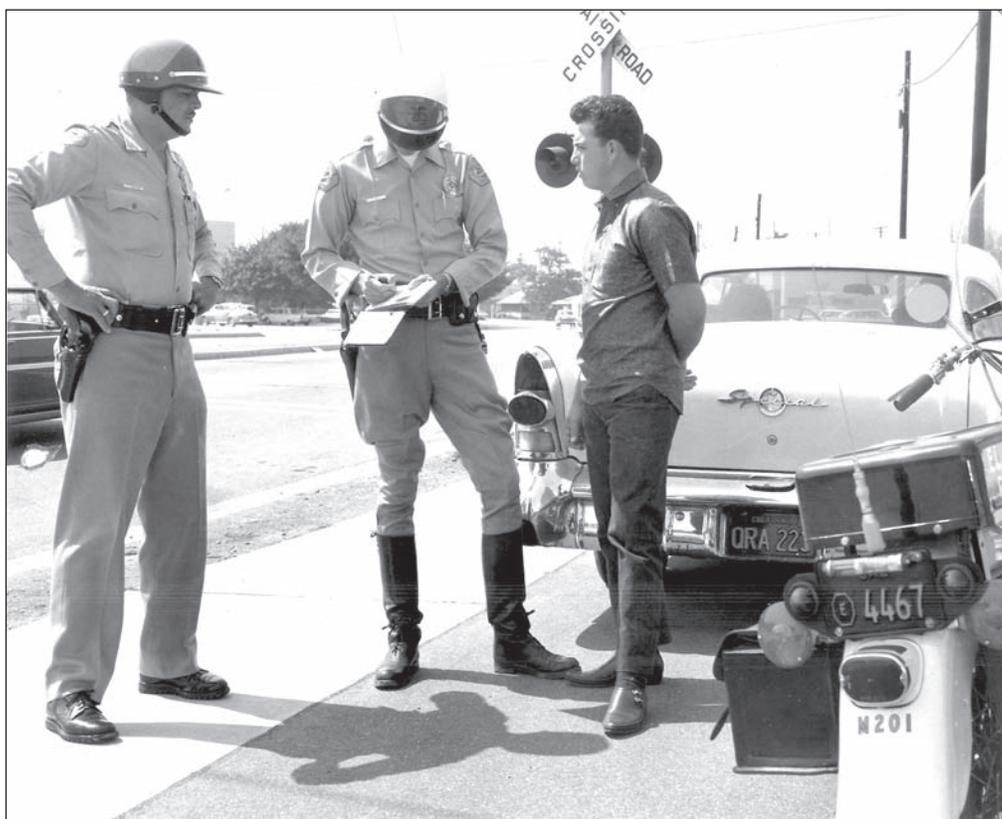
This was all before assignment to the then-new 270 hour long POST certified basic training course at Rio Hondo. The department had used the Pomona Police Department's basic academy for its few previous academy-trained officers—with the exception of Leon Hansen and Walter Mante, the very first officers sent through formal training, who attended the Pasadena Police Department's academy in 1963.

In February of 1966, the police department transitioned to .45 caliber semi-automatic pistols. Officers had previously carried .38 caliber revolvers, with two-inch barrels for plain-clothes or detective work, or longer barrels for uniform use. Authorized revolvers had to be of Smith & Wesson or Colt manufacture. The only thing the new weapons had in common with the old was the fact that both were self-purchased by the officers.

The .45s were adopted after a series of contemporary officer-involved shootings in which violent suspects were not stopped by the less-powerful .38 caliber revolvers. One such incident was an El Monte drugstore robbery in which off-duty officer Marvin Martin assisted an on-duty officer in arresting the suspect, who was subdued only after being repeatedly struck with a heavy Colt Python revolver—after having already been shot near his eye with a .38 caliber bullet that traversed his skull without stopping him. In another incident, a burglary suspect was not



Above: Dispatcher Nelson Vanderwall at the E.M.P.D. Dispatch Center, circa 1962. Below: Officer Clarence Johnson (left) and another officer conduct a traffic stop at Ramona Boulevard and the railroad tracks, circa 1960.



stopped by a .38 fired by officer Ronald Scheidel, and, finally, there was the shooting by a deputy sheriff (unrelated to El Monte) of a suspect, again with a .38, who actually spat out the projectile after having been shot in the head!

Chief Davis reasoned, “If we are going to shoot a suspect, we want to knock him off his feet and make him inoperative.” When asked by the press if the department had needed the additional firepower represented in the .45, deputy chief Matthews replied, “It hasn’t necessarily been needed yet, but it only takes once.”

The first of the new weapons were factory-standard Colt Model 1911 Government Models, self-purchased by individual officers, toward which the department contributed \$50.00 per officer. Officers had a choice of nickel plated or blue finish. Since the transition, the department has remained with the .45, although the particular weapons have changed over the years.

In the 1970s, the department transitioned to the Colt Series 70. In the 1980s, to the Colt Series 80, this model having a firing pin safety that would prevent accidental discharge should it be dropped. It was available to officers in their choice of stainless steel or blue finish, of which the majority of El Monte’s officers selected stainless.

A HISTORY OF THE EL MONTE POLICE DEPARTMENT



Above: Northbound Tyler at the Valley Mall. Below: Southbound Tyler at Ramona Boulevard, circa the 1960s.



Top photo at right: Officers Ed Shubert, Bill Usher, Mel Shearer and Leon Hansen at the Pasadena Police Academy graduation, on November 1, 1963.



Middle photo: El Monte P.D. officers Gary Elliott, Chuck Ormuston, Bruce Randall and Roger Konoske about 1964, outfitted with white gloves and safety helmets.



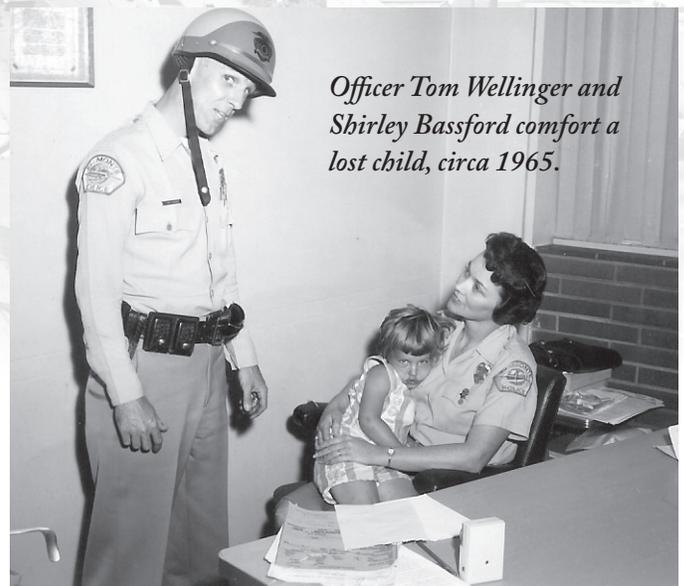
In 1996, the department transitioned to the Heckler & Koch USP, with night sights. Since February 2007, the department has issued the Springfield Model XD, also with night sights.

After the 1960s, each issue sidearm has been fully paid for by the department.

In December 1964, a situation developed for El Monte Police Lieutenant Harold Bettelman and patrolmen Ronald Strauss, Fred Dahm, Marion Childress, and Charles Kelly in which the police use of firearms of any type was rendered moot by the very nature of the violence involved.

The El Monte Greyhound station had been robbed, and the officers responding to the silent alarm were immediately confronted by two robbers, one a convicted felon. One robber got the drop on patrolman Strauss, a motor officer who had arrived before the others. At the cost of a broken right hand and with the assistance of a helpful civilian, Bettelman subdued this robber by brute force. Dahm, Childress, and Kelly captured the second robber after a lengthy standoff, during which they eventually convinced the armed man to surrender.

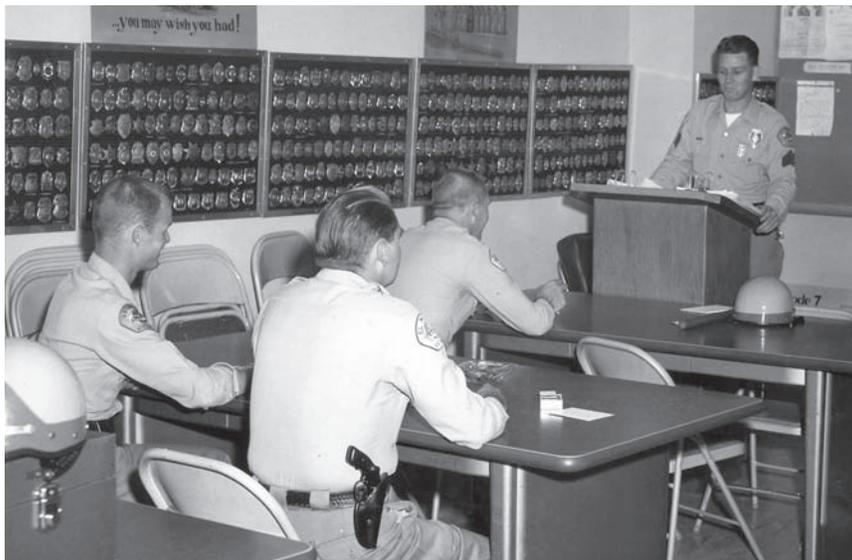
What made this robbery particularly noteworthy—and the reason the officers did not use their weapons—was that the entire situation unfolded during the city’s annual Christmas parade. The area was saturated with an estimated 30,000 revelers who would have been in considerably more danger had any shooting taken place, or if the violent felons escaped.



Officer Tom Wellinger and Shirley Bassford comfort a lost child, circa 1965.



Above: The El Monte Police Department, circa 1962. Chief Orval Davis sits in the front row, center, in the light-color suit. Below: Sgt. T.J. Newberry briefs officers Donald Ness and Bob Kolter, circa 1960. The third officer is unidentified. Note Chief Davis' collection of law enforcement badges displayed on the left wall.





*Left: The south side of Valley Mall at Clem-
inson. This view is shown facing
west. It was
taken in May,
1965.*

On November 8, 1966, El Monte Policeman Marion Childress issued a motorist a citation for failing to stop for a red light. The ticket would later be posted in the police station for department members to see, not because of the violation issued *for*, but rather the violator issued *to*: Sirhan Bishara Sirhan who, nineteen months later, would assassinate Senator Robert F. Kennedy at a political rally in Los Angeles. After the assassination, Chief Davis wrote on the citation's border: "verifies our claim that, sooner or later, everybody comes to El Monte!"

Below: "Sooner or later, everybody comes to El Monte!" Chief Orval Davis' words were never truer when, on November 8, 1966, Sirhan Sirhan—future assassin of presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy in 1968—was issued this ticket at the intersection of Baldwin Avenue and Valley Boulevard.

A fitting end to an era of extraordinary turmoil and exceptional professionalization, changes in state law now obliged local governments to recognize unions representing the majority of employees within a bargaining unit. Keeping pace, Chief Davis would no longer represent the department in negotiations with the city, being replaced in this capacity by the El Monte Police Officer's Association, in 1969.

But not all events that affect an officer's future are foreseeable—much less negotiable.

INFO ONLY PASS IT ON

VERIFIES OUR CLAIM THAT, SOONER OR LATER, EVERYBODY COMES TO EL MONTE !!

S.I. M.A.S.

NOTICE TO APPEAR 97306

DATE: 11-08-66 TIME: 5:25 A.M. DAY OF WEEK: TUES

NAME (FIRST, MIDDLE, LAST): SIRHAN BISHARA SIRHAN

RESIDENCE ADDRESS: 696 E. HARVEY CITY: PASADENA

BUSINESS ADDRESS: CITY:

DRIVER'S LICENSE NO.: 1B23R247 YR. EXP.: 69 STATE: CALIF. BIRTHDATE: 3-19-44

SEX: M HAIR: BRN EYES: BRN HEIGHT: 5-2 WEIGHT: 115

VEHICLE LICENSE NO.: JWS053 STATE: CALIF. PASSENGERS:

YEAR: 56 MAKE: DODGE BODY STYLE: 2DR COLOR: W/PINK

PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA VS. DEFENDANT NAMED ABOVE. YOU ARE HEREBY CHARGED WITH A VIOLATION ON THE ABOVE DATE OF SECTION(S):

(1) 21453A V.C. (2) V.C. (3) V.C.

LOCATION OF VIOLATION(S) ON: BALDWIN AT VALLEY CITY: EL MONTE

DESCRIPTION OF VIOLATION(S): (1) FAIL TO STOP FOR RED SIGNAL

UNIT NO.: 228 APPROX. SPD.: — PE/HAZ. SPD.: — VEH. SPD. LMT.: 25

I DECLARE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE FOREGOING IS TRUE AND CORRECT. OFFICER'S SIGNATURE: M. Childress SERIAL NO.: 90

COUNTY ON THE ABOVE SHOWN DATE: LOS ANGELES

TRAFFIC: HEAVY MED. LITE PAVEMENT: WET DRY VACATION DATES: TO

WITHOUT ADMITTING GUILT, I PROMISE TO APPEAR AT THE TIME AND PLACE CHECKED BELOW

X SIGNATURE: [Signature]

X BEFORE THE MAGISTRATE OR COURT CLERK OF THE MUNICIPAL COURT, RM. 100 AT 11301 VALLEY BLVD., EL MONTE, CALIFORNIA

ACCOMPANIED BY PARENT OR GUARDIAN, BETWEEN 8:30 A.M. AND 12:00 NOON AT JUVENILE COURT, TRAFFIC DIVISION, 11301 VALLEY BLVD., RM. 207, EL MONTE, CALIFORNIA

ON THE 28 DAY OF NOV 1966 AT 9:00

* SEE REVERSE SIDE

IT IS EASY TO BE BRAVE FROM A SAFE DISTANCE

Burying Our Dead El Monte in the 1970s

The 1970s would see the El Monte Police Department add 130 officers, and lose 119. Two of that number were lost to gunfire: one paralyzed—one killed. The 1970s would be as, if not more, violent than the 1960s had been turbulent. It would also be a decade of great transition—for the profession as well as the department.

No longer would officers forgetting to sign out or turn in their car keys be required to return to the station unless necessary for some unavoidable reason, nor would supervisors remove the microphone from a police car found unlocked in public—going so far as to follow officers just to monitor their car-locking habits.

Eliminated, also, was the requirement for officers to constantly wear a helmet, chin strap fastened, whether in or outside of their patrol car, the requirement that all jackets be zipped a minimum of three-quarters of the way up and the seasonal wearing of long sleeve shirts—regardless of the weather. Officers were now able to remove their tie, undo their top button and roll up their sleeves—one roll only—but only if the temperature went above the mid eighties as measured on the thermometer at the Valley Mall. Authorized only on approval of the sergeant, the resulting all-units “code 11”—when given—was one of the most welcome of radio broadcasts.

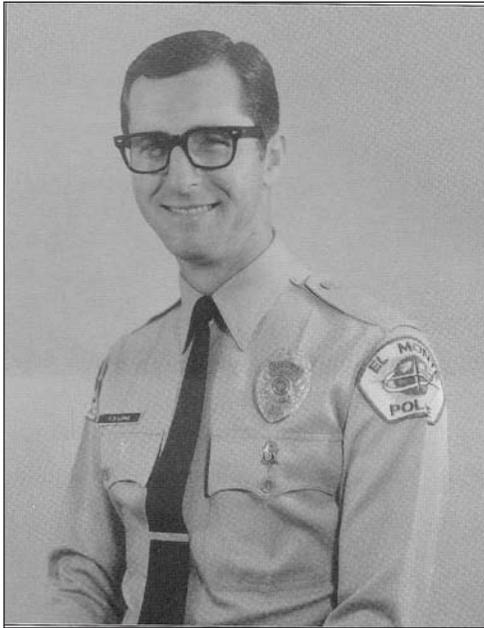
The 1970s would also see department rules ease concerning the pencil and disposable pen then issued each officer. No longer would replacement require supervisory approval of unserviceability, nor would officers leaving the department—even retiring—be required to surrender or pay for them. These pencils and pens are considered prized mementoes by many

officers from this era, often displayed along with other reminders of their service with the El Monte Police Department.

Orval Davis would retire as chief on May 31, 1973, after fourteen years and ten months in office. Davis was replaced by Maurice Matthews, promoted from deputy chief on June 1, 1973. In 1976, Chief Matthews became the founding president of the San Gabriel Valley Police Chiefs’ Association, the first professional organization reserved exclusively for law enforcement executives in the area. Chief Matthews would step down five years and two months after taking office, and was replaced by El Monte’s tenth police chief, Wayne C. Clayton.

At 3:00 A.M. on June 18, 1970, Officer Terry DeWitt Long, riding with Cadet Kent Livingston, stopped to assist Officer Gary Lee Slattery, who was out investigating a possibly-intoxicated pedestrian in front of a driveway on Monterey Avenue. Livingston pointed out two armed men to Long, who radioed for assistance before losing sight of the men, who had by then moved toward the rear of the house.

On the arrival of assisting Officer Bryan John Hatch, Hatch and Long confronted one of the suspects, who held an object in his hand. The suspect fled and Long, who had taken a position of concealment, then saw the second man about twenty feet in the distance, holding a rifle. Long ordered the armed man to drop his weapon, at which time the suspect fired at him, striking him about two inches above the waist. The bullet shattered Long’s spine, paralyzing him from the waist down. Long said later that being shot was the last part of the incident he remembered.



*El Monte Police Officer Terry Long, 1970s.
This is the only known photo of Officer
Long in uniform.*



Officer Tony Arceo, El Monte Police Department.

Long's life was saved by Officer Manuel Anthony "Tony" Arceo, who, braving continued gunfire, crawled on his belly to where Long lay, pulling him from his exposed position to a safer one with better cover.

Long's assailant was struck by a round fired by Officer Hatch. Paralyzed from the waist down, the suspect was convicted of the attempted murder of Officer Long and sentenced to state prison.

Interestingly, the prosecutor, Head Deputy District Attorney Leo Chaus, would have been unable to connect the firearm used to shoot Officer Long to the suspect (it had been removed from the immediate scene of the shooting, unloaded and hidden by the assailant's nephew), had opposing counsel not grown suspicious of the firearm's absence and introduced it into evidence by his own motion.

After the incident, Arceo wrote his friend Long a letter of encouragement. "Listen, Partner, the road

ahead of you will be long and hard to overcome. I know within myself, from knowing you for almost two years that you will make the best of your life."

Long's recovery was slow and difficult. Although the department offered him a position dispatching, Long said later "I just couldn't see myself hanging on." Long attended law school and established a successful law practice. He died in 2004 of cancer, his death, in the very least, contributed to by the effects of his paralysis.

It would be during his legal studies, on July 9, 1974, that Long would hear of the tragic death of his friend Tony Arceo, who had responded to an assistance call put out by the Baldwin Park Police Department of an armed man holding hostages. The incident came to be known as the "Buy Back" shooting, as it took place during the robbery of a pawn shop by that name.

Arceo, off-duty and in El Monte due to a court appearance, volunteered to help. Told the El Monte officers at the scene needed flak jackets, Arceo gath-

ered them at the station and drove to the area of the robbery to distribute them. While there, Arceo was struck by a round which ricocheted twice before striking his chest, killing him instantly.

Arceo, who had been due to receive an award from the El Monte City Council that evening—for his heroism in saving an elderly blind couple from inside a burning mobile home—instead was mourned. The commendation would have been his second. He won the first for saving the life of Terry Long.

As a truly living memorial, made upon motion of the El Monte Police Officer's Association, the city council approved the renaming of El Monte City Park to Tony Arceo Park on October 8, 1974.

In 1970, the El Monte Police Department first experimented with a four-day, ten-hour work week for officers. The experiment was a resounding success—in popularity among the officers, overtime savings to the city, and as a force-multiplier for the

El Monte Police Officer Tony Arceo, moments before being struck by a fatal bullet, July 1974.





department.

Also in 1970—the station’s windows already being old and brittle, and it being a symptom of the times that government buildings across the country were being bombed—El Monte bricked over nineteen of the police station’s windows to better protect the offices and office holders within. Although the station was never bombed, the courthouse, then adjacent to the station, was.

On January 1, 1971, an explosion rocked that building, shattering a dozen windows, tearing large chunks of concrete from the walls, and ripping a heavy wooden door from its hinges.

On Monday, the second of April, 1973, a sixty-five car Southern Pacific freight train traveling at approximately sixty miles per hour collided head-on with another, twenty-seven car, S.P. freight train as it sat stopped on a siding just west of Tyler Avenue in El Monte. The resultant collision was heard and felt for several blocks. It derailed five locomotives and seventeen train cars, caused two deaths, four injuries, and snarled traffic for several days afterward until the wreckage could be cleared away with a large crane.

In July of the same year, the El Monte City Council faced a dilemma such as never before, when Police Chief Maurice Matthews proposed to hire women as reserve police officers. The city council was

not at all comfortable with the idea, although ultimately it voted unanimously to experimentally approve the program.

Indeed, the great fear that women could not do the job of male officers—or do so without the assistance of male officers, or without endangering male officers—caused one councilman to comment that “Women who will qualify will not be the feminine type that needs protection,” and another to say, “Once it starts, where does it stop? This could go into the fire department, and we’ll have women on top of burning buildings.”

Indeed.



1970s E.M.P.D. new-hires. Above, left to right: Arlene Dominguez, Craig Sperry and Margaret Seither (Schuster).

The first two women appointed as reserve officers were Janis Cavanaugh and Mary Thelander. They were paid \$2.50 per hour.

Chief Matthews championed the cause of wom-

en in law enforcement, not only with word, but in deed. In 1974, Matthews filled all seven of the police officer openings for which he had been budgeted with women, planning to have one female officer on duty each shift. These women would be among the first law enforcement officers trained at the then-recently relocated Rio Hondo Police Academy.

Female patrol officers being then rather novel, these first women initially had to wear uniform skirts, followed by custom-made pants having side zippers, then regular men’s pants, and eventually the women’s cut uniform pants common today.

This was also the time during which the department instituted the rank of Agent, recognizing

the unique positioning and work done by senior officers, training officers and acting sergeants. Officer John Eckler, who had suggested the new position, was among the group of ten officers first assigned to the new rank.

In 1975, all new officers would undergo approximately 470 hours of training over twelve weeks. In June of that same year, the El Monte Police Explorers acquired, renovated (with the help of friendly merchants) and donated to the city, its first municipi-

lent confrontations between the Nazis and Tommasi's self-formed National Socialist Liberation Front. On August 15, 1975 things came to violent end, when Tommasi confronted Jones in front of the Nazi headquarters at 4375 Peck Road. Tommasi was shot once in the head with a .45 and fell dead. Jones was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 300 days in the county jail, minus time already served.

Ironically, Tommasi could not be immediately



Orval Davis, El Monte's eighth chief of police.



Maurice Matthews, El Monte's ninth chief of police.

pal bus. The explorers earned the money necessary through car washes and other events.

1975 was also the year in which the frequent and frequently-violent disturbances at the American Nazi Party headquarters in El Monte came to a head, with the shooting death of former party leader Joseph C. Tommasi by party member Jerry Keith Jones. Tommasi had been ousted by the Nazi Party in 1973 over personal disagreements with the group over what Tommasi had considered to be overly liberal policies.

Since his ouster, there had been a series of vio-

identified after his death due to dirt and leaves which obscured his face when he fell. He was initially identified at the scene by Chief Clayton who, ironically, recognized him from the pieces of cardboard used to patch the almost non-existent soles of his boots.

The Nazis were in El Monte from 1966 to 1976, with the most notable event concerning their stay before the Tommasi killing being a riot on January 30, 1972. On that date, following a peaceful march by approximately 100 Jewish Defense League members, a crowd estimated at over 1,000 began exchanging rocks and bottles with the approximately twenty Nazis in their compound. Police and sheriff's personnel broke

up the melee, during which one El Monte officer had his nose broken and forty rioters were arrested.

Conceived in November 1975, and quite removed from the reactive nature then generally associated with law enforcement anti-gang measures, the El Monte Police Department embarked upon an extremely proactive program in conjunction with Mr. Clayton Hollopeter, Executive Director of the Boy's Club of San Gabriel Valley. It was an offshoot of the



Wayne C. Clayton, El Monte's tenth chief of police.

Boy's clubs of America's World of Work program. Formally titled The El Monte Plan, the idea came to be known informally, if not also colloquially, as "Hire a Gang Leader."

The traditional law enforcement response to gangs had not done much to reduce gang violence in El Monte, and came to be seen as ineffectual at best. The intent underlying El Monte's program was to undermine these gangs by introducing members to "economic dependency and family responsibility."

The operation was straightforward. Started by Chief Matthews—who called the program "crime

prevention in its best form"—and continued by Chief Clayton, the set-up and operation of the program fell to a relatively new officer, Kenneth Weldon, then just recently assigned to community relations. He would work in conjunction with Clay Hollopeter.

The young people considered most likely to be helped by the program came from a review of two lists of El Monte's most at-risk gang members. Weldon submitted a list of the ten most troublesome young people after consulting with other members of the police department, and Hollopeter submitted his list of the ten young men he felt most needed employment. Eight of the names on each list matched, and the young man named as number one on both lists was the same.

Those selected for the program were first put through training to help them understand the employment process, and how to apply for work effectively. Many participants had work experience, but were unable to convey their job skills to potential employers. A young job applicant might list "helped in shop" as his qualifications, when in reality he "may have used metal grinders, packaged, shipped, or received items."

While this might seem a small point, it was one that had a major—and positive—impact. Additionally, some job applicants listed fellow gang members as references; or, worse yet, random names selected out of the telephone directory. Those in the program correctly learned who to use as references and how to use them.

Once the young men gained these and other related skills, they often became sought-after employees. The program really took off, and the results were as gratifying as they were startling.

In its first thirteen months, the program placed 150 gang members: eleven were enrolled in school, one went into the military, five entered the job corps, three had been promoted to foremen, and fifteen had received promotions and raises. Ten of those placed were female, and the program already had a waiting

list—including gang members from areas outside El Monte.

Attributed directly to the program, the number of gangs in El Monte fell from seven to two, with a corresponding drop in gang membership from 1,500 to less than 100. Gang violence fell from a level “virtually terrorizing about one-third of our residential areas,” to “a rare, generally spontaneous offense.”

Then there was this: gang-related homicides in El Monte plummeted from twelve between 1975 and 1976 to one in 1981, and none in 1982.

Employers repeatedly returned to the program for additional employees, and this to recruit from a group generally considered virtually unemployable. The positions were non-subsidized, and employers received no benefits other than the work ethic and ability of the young people they hired.

The program had five parts, all equal in importance: remove the gang leadership, cut off avenues of gang recruitment, help those already in gangs to get out, modify the community environment, and preven-



El Monte's City Park was renamed Tony Arceo Park in 1974.

Below: In the early 1940s American Legion Post 261 bought the old El Monte High School stadium and auditorium, which was known as Legion Stadium. Opened to the public for a variety of sports and entertainment events, it attracted crowds for decades to come. In the 1970s the structure was razed and the present U.S. Post Office was built on the site, where it remains today.



tion by vigilance. It used the very strengths of gang members—intelligence, strength, loyalty, and persistence—against the gangs, instead channeling these qualities away from criminality and toward peaceful productive pursuits. As the program evolved, it was found that the gang members actually worked quite well together, although not necessarily associating with potential rivals on breaks or during meals.

Then there were the broader results. Young men in the program began to see the value in their own

labor and the results it reaped, and separated themselves from previous hangouts and associations which represented a threat to their new-found earnings and acquisitions.

Employed gang members deterred others from vandalizing the companies where they worked. Gang members not in the program sought to enter it, and gang members and the police officers having job-related contacts with them soon began to see each other as friends who could be trusted, rather than as enemies. New avenues of communication opened up between the gang members and police.

This not only benefited each group, but the community as a whole. Many crimes were solved, and an untold number prevented by the trust and communication that the program fostered. Gang members returning from jail, camp, or even prison, often made their first stop back in El Monte the police department's community relations office.

Although it earned the department recognition as a finalist for the prestigious James Q. Wilson Community Policing Award in 2002, the program's most meaningful tribute may well have been the remarkable request made by a gang member in the program, who wrote Officer Weldon a letter asking "the best cop in El Monte" for a picture of him "in uniform to show to my friends, because they don't believe I really know you." The Wilson award recognizes "California law enforcement agencies that have successfully institutionalized the philosophy of community-oriented policing."

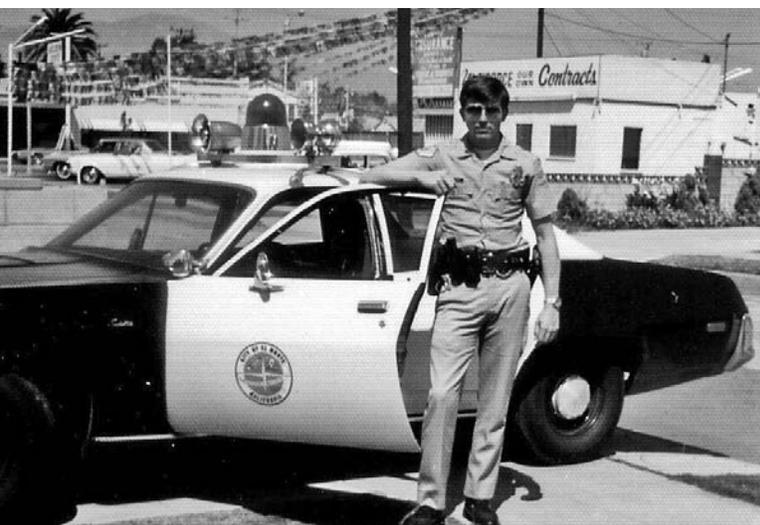
In 1977, the city's police station was remodeled, and enlarged to twice its previous size. During the remodeling the police department operated from ten trailers, and for the only time in its history had no jail. Adults were primarily booked at the Temple City sheriff's station, and juveniles were released to their parents or taken to county facilities.

Expansion of the police station had been planned to take place two years earlier, in 1975. The city postponed the process, however, due to an on-going con-



The latest in modern patrol units, such as this Chevrolet, were in use by the El Monte Police Department during the 1970s.

Below: Officer Ken Whary stands beside his new black-and-white patrol unit, circa 1974.



tract dispute with officers. During that time the city considered disbanding the police department and contracting for services with the sheriff's office.

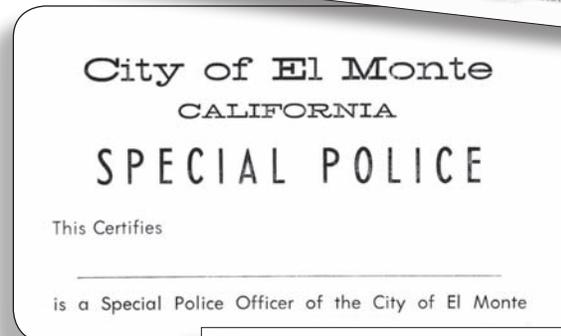
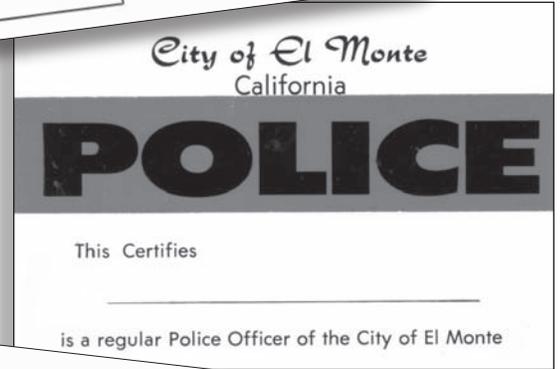
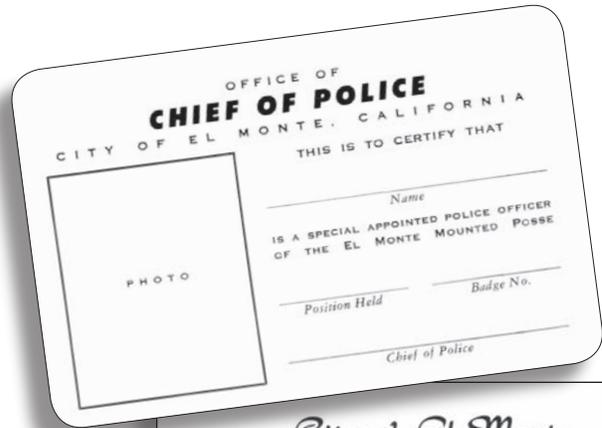
A state-of-the-art computer system, an up-to-date communications center with eight incoming telephone lines and capable of broadcasts on four radio frequencies, and cutting-edge night vision and videotaping equipment for surveillance were added to the department at the time of the update. All impacted positively on department output and working conditions.

Another event that would have tremendous impact on department working conditions took place on January 1, 1977, when California enacted the Peace Officer's Bill of Rights. This was the first such legislation in the country, and afforded protections to officers that provided security, stability and predictability related to employment and working conditions. Up until that time sworn personnel had little if any protection against arbitrary employment decisions.

Pre-bill, sworn members literally came to work each day not knowing if they were on full-duty, in some or another non-paid status—or even if they were still employed—until they looked at the department's bulletin board. Officers could be and were reprimanded or even fired for reasons that today might seem almost non-events. Officers had been fired for their personal marital problems, or even things now considered positive, such as marriage to a fellow department member or city employee.

In 1979, the Rio Hondo Courthouse opened for service across the street from the police station. The former court building, located at the corner of Valley and Johnson, was converted into a private cable company office before becoming part of the police station in the 1990s.

The El Monte Police Department exited the decade of the 1970s sadder yet stronger, sobered by the lessons learned from two brave men who epitomized the law enforcement ethos to move toward that from which others flee.



GOING TO THE DOG

El Monte in the 1980s

Through the 1980s the El Monte Police Department continued to operate under the stewardship of Chief Wayne C. Clayton. During this time the department would see three different seconds-in-command. The rank of deputy chief had been eliminated by the city after Clayton's promotion, and Robert Wiles assumed the newly-created position of commander on September 28, 1978. Clayton later had the title of this position changed to assistant chief, the position from which Wiles would later retire.

When Wiles retired he was followed in office by Thomas Millett, upon whose retirement Walter H. Mante assumed the post. The decade of the Eighties would also see the promotion of twelve sergeants, four lieutenants and four captains, as well as the hiring of seventy-three officers.

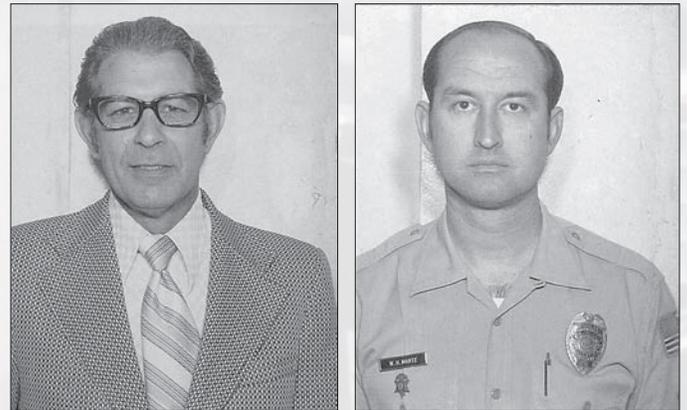
In 1980, Chief Clayton became the first department member to attend the FBI National Academy since Chief Jay J. Sherman in 1949. Clayton gained much from this experience and—renewing department ties with the Academy—moved the city council to approve sending department members as an ongoing practice.

The 1980s saw other changes within the department, including the 1981 addition of the department motto “Courtesy and Service” on all of the department’s patrol cars, and the 1985 change of officer’s uniforms from tan, back to dark-blue.

“Courtesy and Service” had been the department’s motto since Orval Davis incorporated it in the department’s original manual, and Chief Clayton had it added to the department’s patrol cars out of

respect and as a tribute to Davis. El Monte was one of the first of the smaller local law enforcement agencies to opt for a motto.

The uniform change resulted from the belief that blue uniforms were more visible than tan, and the trend of local police toward blue, leaving tan for state and county agencies. The old uniforms were donated to El Monte’s sister city, Zamora, Mexico.



*Commander Thomas Millett, left, and
Commander Walter H. Mante, right.*

In 1982, the police department acquired its first police dog, Paul, a ninety-five pound German Shepherd. Trained in patrol, narcotics and crowd control, Paul was purchased after El Monte became interested in the concept of one dog working with different handlers, and performing multiple tasks. Officers Linda Morris, Brian Richardson and Gregory Carroll each worked with Paul.



Officer Richard Thomas, E.M.P.D.'s commercial enforcement officer, circa 1988.

Paul worked for the department for approximately two years. He was then transferred to the sheriff's department for \$1.00 and, retrained to work with one handler, served out the remainder of his successful law enforcement career.

Also in 1982, the department faced a most unusual crisis, a so-called cancer cluster. This came to light when it was discovered that eleven of the department's 138 police employees had been diagnosed with one of three types of cancer within the previous year.

Two medical teams were brought in to investigate: one from UCI, and one from USC. Both concluded the cancer rates were excessive, but not job related or caused by any single source. None of the employees had been on the job long enough for there to be an environmental cause, and the types of cancers involved differed from one another.

If anything positive came from this, it was the support shown by department members who formed an overtime bank from which stricken coworkers could draw, should they become unable to work and their sick and vacation times became exhausted. The plan was administered through the El Monte Police Officer's Association.

1982 was also the year the department inaugurated a chaplain program, with Chief Clayton appointing Reverend Frank Wann as a Level I Reserve. Wann, uniformed and armed, performed both law enforcement and ministerial duties, ministering to officers, department employees, members of the public, and those arrested—as chance presented. He served the department until 1987.

Later in the decade, Clayton sought to cure an injustice he saw first hand when two of his officers were ordered to pay punitive damages stem-

ming from an alleged use of excessive force. At the time, government employers could not indemnify an employee against punitive damage awards. This was unfair to both the employer and employee, as it often dehumanized the claim, making it easier for a jury to return a large judgment against a nameless and faceless governmental defendant—not always in accord with the actual facts.

Chief Clayton discussed the situation with El Monte City Attorney Sidney Maleck, who then teamed with George Franscell, an attorney specializing in police-related liability cases, to craft a new law. Maleck later lobbied city attorneys behind the proposed legislation, while Clayton did the same with sheriffs and police chiefs as well as law enforcement and firefighter associations.

Organized opposition to the legislation came from the California League of Cities and the American Civil Liberties Union, as well as several attorney organizations. With the support of Sally Tanner, El Monte's State Assemblywoman, State Senator Alan

Robbins and Speaker of the House Willie Brown, whose support Assemblywoman Tanner personally secured, the bill passed—despite an editorial strongly opposing it that was published in the *Sacramento Bee* the morning of the vote.

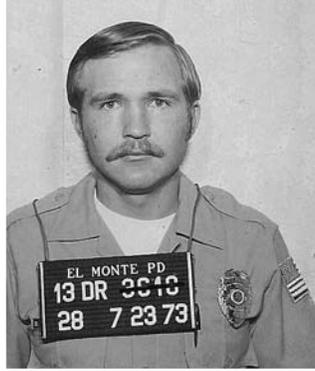
The new law gave public entities the discretion to defend an employee—and to pay any resulting damage awards—if the act or omission in issue had been done in good faith, in the apparent best interest of the employer, in the course and scope of employment, and if the payment of damages would be in the employing agency's apparent best interest. Disclosure of the employing agency's assets or the fact that it may pay any award could no longer be entered into evidence.

In April 1988, the police department formed a motorcycle unit to deal with increasing traffic safety concerns inherent to the city's growth. Officer Richard Thomas' proposal for such a unit was acted upon by Chief Clayton, even before formal submission of the final written version.



Left: E.M.P.D. Patrol Officer Steve Reneer stands in front of his new Ford Police Interceptor, circa 1985.

In February 1988, Officers Richard Thomas and Daniel Mackintosh, riding their new Kawasaki Police 1000s, became El Monte's first motor officers since the mid-1950s. Joined by Officer Al Tromp, the unit was later expanded by three additional officers and a sergeant, paid for by virtue of a state grant. Since its reformation the unit has used motorcycles from BMW, Harley Davidson and Honda.



Left: El Monte P.D. Motor Officer Daniel Mackintosh, as a new-hire in the 1970s.

This was also the year the department adopted the three-day, twelve-hour work shift. It was found that the new plan provided personnel so scheduled more time to rest and to reduce stress, thus resulting in better public service.

The 1980s closed with the El Monte Police Department undergoing many changes, some major and some minor. Yet all set the stage for even more change to come in the next decade. The city would continue to expand its boundaries, as would the department. But the 1990s would see the department expansion move in a direction it had never before explored—up.



Above: Traffic Officer Richard Thomas, circa 1988.



Left: El Monte Police Department officers, Christmas Eve, 1989. Left to right: Dan Buehler, Dave Rowe, Joseph Prieto, Don Johnston, Stephen Hager and David Schowen.

10 BACK TO THE FUTURE

Where Future Meets Past El Monte in the 1990s

For El Monte's Narcotics Task Force, the 1990s did not begin much differently than the 1980s had ended. These detectives bridged the changing decades by periodically watching a La Puente apartment that the California's Bureau of Narcotics (BNE) suspected was being used as a cocaine trafficker's counting house.

Shortly after noon on January 3, 1990 the task force's vigilance paid off. Following two suspects seen leaving the location, detectives in a marked car stopped the pair for speeding, receiving permission from the two men to search their car. The men, by then under arrest, were considerably less cooperative concerning ownership of the approximately twenty-five pounds of cocaine the officers had found in the trunk.

Having probable cause to search, and fearing a delay might lead to destruction of evidence—the two men arrested were not going to be showing up wherever they were expected—task force detectives gathered back-up and, joined by the BNE case agent, secured the apartment awaiting a search warrant. Upstairs, where the lone suspect was found, task force members saw a counting machine and piles of bundled cash sitting out in the open.

With a warrant secured and the search underway, the detectives, unable to turn on the chilly apartment's heater, checked the vents and discovered them filled with sixty-one kilos of cocaine. Detective Steve Krigbaum, asked to drive the suspect's Mercedes Benz from the apartment's garage to the police station, found six sea bags full of U.S. currency in the trunk.

El Monte's Narcotics Task Force—consisting of Sergeant Mike Wolf, Detectives Steve Krigbaum, John Eckler, Randolph Lovelace, Dan Burlingham, Paul Bunnell, Jon Ciauri, Rex Fisher, Keith Gee, and Gee's K-9 partner, Bart—had been instrumental in the seizure of eighty kilos of cocaine worth \$3 million, and \$3,740,410 in U.S. currency. Ultimately resulting in the largest asset forfeiture payment in the police department's history—\$1,390,565.75—it was the largest asset seizure in the department's history and, at the time, the second-largest in the history of Los Angeles County.

Unfortunately, however, twenty-six days after the seizure, the resulting department-wide euphoria would evaporate.

On January 29, 1990, El Monte Police Officer Donald Ralph Johnston responded to the call of a man trying to pass a bad check at the El Monte branch of Security Pacific Bank. Johnston, entering the bank just as the suspect was leaving, found himself facing the suspect in the vestibule between two sets of bank doors. Selflessly shoving a bank customer from harm's way, and before he could draw his own weapon, Johnston was shot.

The bullet entered Johnston's throat and exited his lower back, leaving him, the doctor would later tell a stunned Chief Wayne Clayton, paralyzed from the neck down. Immediately after Johnston had fallen, the suspect stepped over his prone figure firing a second shot point blank at the paralyzed officer's head. Miraculously, the second shot missed.

The suspect, captured without incident within the hour, committed suicide in prison.

Hospitalized, Johnston told Chief Clayton that he did not want to lose his job, and friends from the credit union who visited him that he would one day walk into their office and say hello. Clayton assured him his job was secure. Although there were many operations and much physical therapy in-between, Johnston eventually walked unassisted through the credit union to thank his friends for their support, and returned to full duty as a detective.

Johnston initially worked with juveniles at the community relations office. Later, he investigated missing persons. Still later, he administered the department's background investigations process. He culminated his career with the department as its first tactical flight officer, also developing and presenting the department's STRIVE (Success Through Recognizing Individual Volition and Excellence) program to inspire young people.

Because he had been on the department a relatively short period before he was shot, Johnston did not have the seniority required to land the flight position. Chief Clayton discussed this with POA President George Hopkins, and Hopkins discussed this with the almost thirty officers who had applied for the position. All voluntarily withdrew.

Johnston served in this position until physically unable to continue. He suffered chronic pain since the shooting and this, coupled with worsening, injury-related, cancer, finally became too much. Johnston's final act, when no longer able to work full-time, was to request appointment as a level I reserve—the

same position in which he had begun his career with the department.

Donald Johnston was the second of three generations of his family to serve El Monte as a police officer. His father, Loren "Corky" Johnston, served the department from 1968 to 1987, and Johnston's son Eric—only 14 when his father was shot—joined the department in 1998.

Out of respect for Officer Johnston, who succumbed to cancer on November 22, 2002, Motor Officer David Garcia spearheaded an effort to honor Johnston's memory. His efforts led to the dedication of a portion of Interstate 10 through El Monte as "The El Monte Police Officer Donald Ralph Johnston Memorial Highway."



E.M.P.D. Air Officers Don Johnston (left) and Robert Muse, 1995.

In 1990, the department revisited the use of K-9s with Henry, Karr, and Bart, K-9 immigrants newly arrived from Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Belgium. Henry, the department's first single-handler dog, worked with Mickey Roman, who revived the department's K-9 unit. Karr worked with Dan Glass.



K-9 Officer Ervin "Butch" Reyburn and Alf, 1997.

Both dogs were patrol K-9s, trained to search for persons and for initial approach of felons, on foot or during high-risk vehicle stops. Bart, a narcotics dog, worked with Keith Gee. Over his career, Bart uncovered illegal drugs having an aggregate street value of well over \$1 million.

In February 1990, the department implemented a commercial enforcement unit and began performing detailed carrier safety inspections, including the use of portable scales to check vehicle weight. This unit also dealt with hazardous materials and toxic waste transported through the city.

Started in December 1990, the department's bicycle unit bridged the gap between motorcycle and foot patrol, maximizing the best qualities of each to make otherwise inaccessible areas of the city inhospitable to crime. The bicycles brought new definition to the term "stealth," and introduced a new level of public contact. In their first three weeks of operation, department bike officers logged over 500 miles and made fifty arrests.

While the city suffered no turmoil, nor was it asked for mutual aid during the 1965 Watts riot, the same was not true of the April 1992 Los Angeles riot. Faring much better than many other cities, El Monte's single riot-related incident occurred when several young people looted a Valley Mall furniture store, and carted off a pickup truck full of merchandise. The suspects did not get far. Colliding with a car as they fled, one suspect was catapulted from his place in the cargo box over the cab and through the windshield of the car they had hit. Though the suspects fled, and later reported the truck stolen, the department cleared this case with relative ease.

As tragic as the Los Angeles riot was, its occurrence may have benefited the department in the long term. Foreseen by the always innovative Wayne Clayton, the department secured the commercial helicopter services of Bob Muse to patrol the city for four nights during the unrest, agreeing to assist neighboring South El Monte with over-flights. This experience brought home the usefulness of aerial patrol, and took the department in a new direction—up.



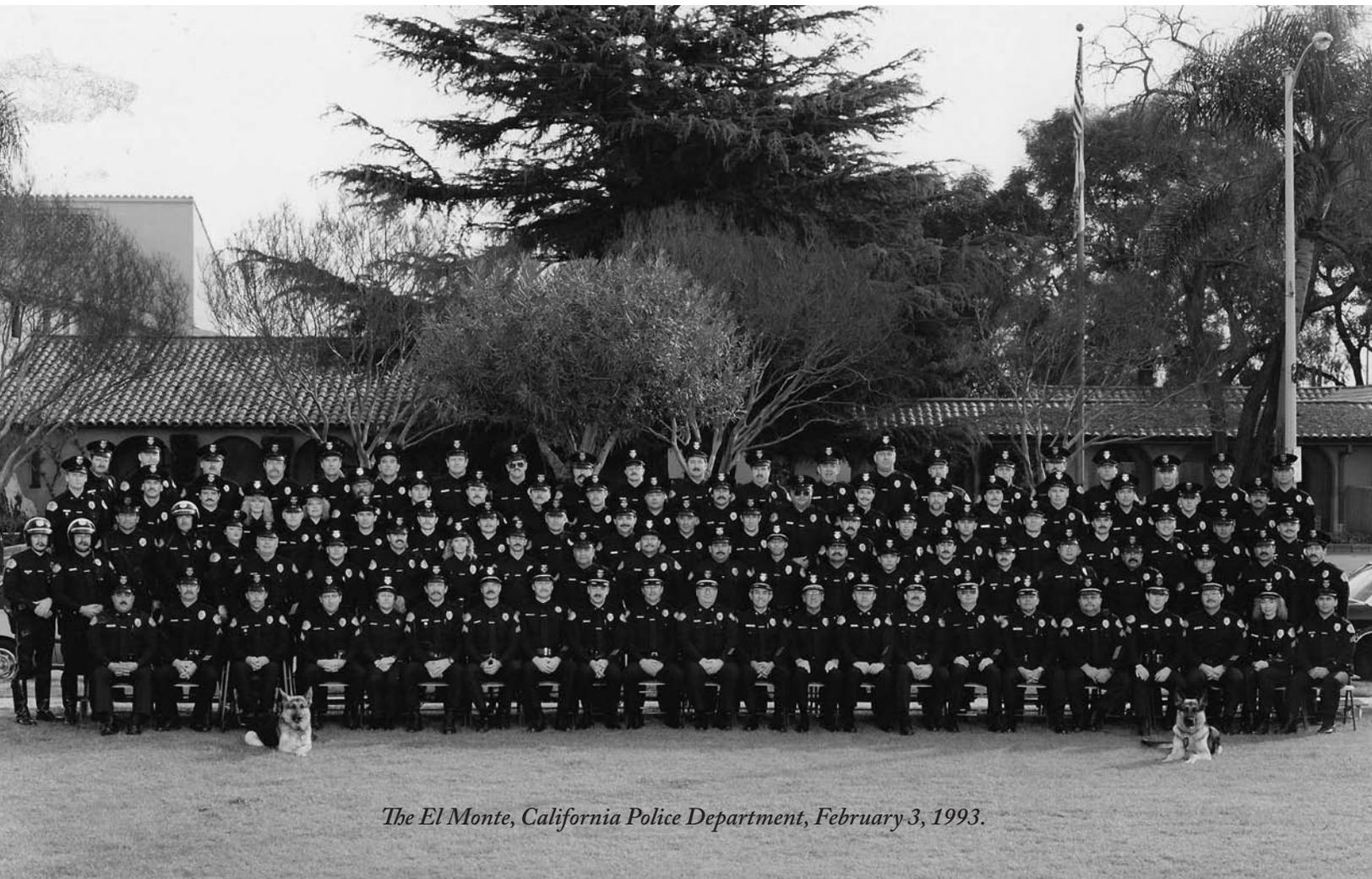
El Monte P.D. Bicycle Officers Edward Nafarrate (left) and George Fierro.

The department initially leased services from Muse, who piloted his firm's Robinson R-22, with Don Johnston as observer. This pairing would continue until Johnston's retirement. By 1995 the department had bought its own R-22, hiring Muse as chief pilot and mechanic. Muse had been through the Basic Course years before, updated his POST certification, and was sworn in as an officer.

Bought with forfeiture funds as well as a grant from the Upper San Gabriel Municipal Water District—and christened with some of the district's water at its dedication on September 7, 1996 at Pioneer Park—Air One, a Robinson R-22, tail number N968EM (back-up en-route El Monte), became the city's first dedicated helicopter. Equipped with a 12

million candlepower searchlight, as well as a FLIR (Forward Looking Infrared) recorder-capable camera, and able to reach any point in the city within one minute, it became the first sole-purpose law enforcement helicopter in the western United States.

In 1997, the department became the first U.S. law enforcement agency to use the larger and more deluxe, four-seat R-44 model. Buying this helicopter, Robinson's factory demonstrator, saved the department \$60,000 up-front. Trading in the R-22 brought the cost down even further, with the \$80,000 originally budgeted toward refurbishing that craft going toward the R-44's purchase. A \$260,000 state grant also helped with the initial cost. This ship, as the department's later R-44s, would carry a computer-



The El Monte, California Police Department, February 3, 1993.

Right: El Monte P.D.'s air and ground units, 1996.

ized moving map to most effectively guide crews to specific locations, and was equipped with a Lo-Jack tracker.

El Monte's first R-44, tail number N171WC—"71" was Chief Clayton's badge number and the "WC", of course, his initials—provided lone aerial coverage of the city until joined in 2000 by a second R-44, tail number N108DJ (in service Don Johnson), and in 2007 by yet a third R-44, tail number N968RM, the letters being Robert Muse's initials.

Jeff Girgle was the force behind the unique tail numbers of each helicopter.

Growth of what became the Region I Air Support Program drove the expansion of the department's aerial fleet. The Baldwin Park Police Department contracted with El Monte for air coverage in 1999, as did Montebello and Irwindale in 2001, West Covina and Baldwin Park School District in 2006, and Azusa in 2007. As of 2007, El Monte's nine pilots and eight tactical flight officers operated the largest full-time regional air support program in the country.

In 1992, Detective John Eckler proposed the idea of forming a dedicated internal investigations unit to Chief Clayton. Previously performed by randomly assigned supervisors, and ancillary to their regular duties, Eckler foresaw the need for specialists trained to ensure the highest level of professional standards while recognizing the rights of employees. When it was approved, Eckler—by then an agent—and Ser-



geant Tom Armstrong became the first members assigned to the new unit.

When Steve Reneer rotated into the detective bureau, he had no idea that the missing person case he inherited on November 16, 1992 would evolve into the longest criminal investigation closed by conviction in El Monte's history.

With no more than the initial report—and information from the victim's father of strange rumors concerning his son's purported murder—Detective Reneer and his partner, Detective Ken Whary, spent over four years following the barest of leads. Reneer continued to investigate what had become—with the finding of the victim's body—a homicide investigation, even after he was rotated out of the detective bureau.

On March 5, 1997, over four years since their investigation had begun, and following the service of four separate search warrants and the conviction of one suspect for the manufacture and possession of explosive devices (found inside the suspect's home and car ancillary to the homicide investigation), two suspects were convicted of murder and sentenced to

terms that would result in each spending a minimum of twenty-four years in prison before either would become eligible for parole.

In June 1993, the police department extended itself outside the police building for the first time, opening the El Monte Police Community Service Center on Santa Anita near Valley Mall, making it the new home for the department's community relations staff, and a full-time family and youth counselor.

1993 was also the year the department spent \$1.8 million of asset forfeiture funds putting on-board computers in twenty patrol cars, computerizing the dispatch system, and adding computers for the use of others in the department, particularly detectives—twenty-four of whom had previously shared three terminals.

Given little media attention outside the local area, what became known as the Maxson Road Murders—El Monte's largest mass-murder—was the horrific culmination of events set into motion much earlier than the April 22, 1995 deaths of Anthony Moreno (42), Gustavo Aguirre (36), Moreno's sister Maria Moreno (39), and two of Ms. Moreno's four children, five-year-old Laura and six-month-old Ambrose. Maria Moreno's two other children—a six-year-old boy and a two-year-old girl—survived only because the killers ran out of ammunition.

The murders were triggered when Raymond "Hueroshy" Shryock's well-respected La Eme carnals (brothers) found that Anthony Moreno, a La Eme "dropout" was living openly next to Shryock—an insulting violation of the gang's "blood in-blood out" ideology. Forced to take action, Shryock contracted with Luis "Pelon" Maciel, an El Monte Flores and up-and-coming EME gang member, to kill Moreno.

Young and inexperienced, Maciel, looking to build his reputation in the gang, had just been put into a position to make life and death decisions. It was a combination that would indeed lead to death—both intended and unintended.

Although Shryock had since moved from Maxson Road, and the hit had languished due to his inaction, Maciel was told to continue and eventually subcontracted the killing to the San Gabriel area Sangra gang, with orders to kill Anthony Moreno and any witnesses.

Much planning took place between Maciel and members of Sangra, including a reconnaissance of the area the day before the planned killing. Maciel had given Anthony Moreno and Gustavo Aguirre heroin to gain their trust and to leave them unable to defend themselves. Although both suspected they had been given "hot shots" for past gang-related transgressions, each took the offered drugs.

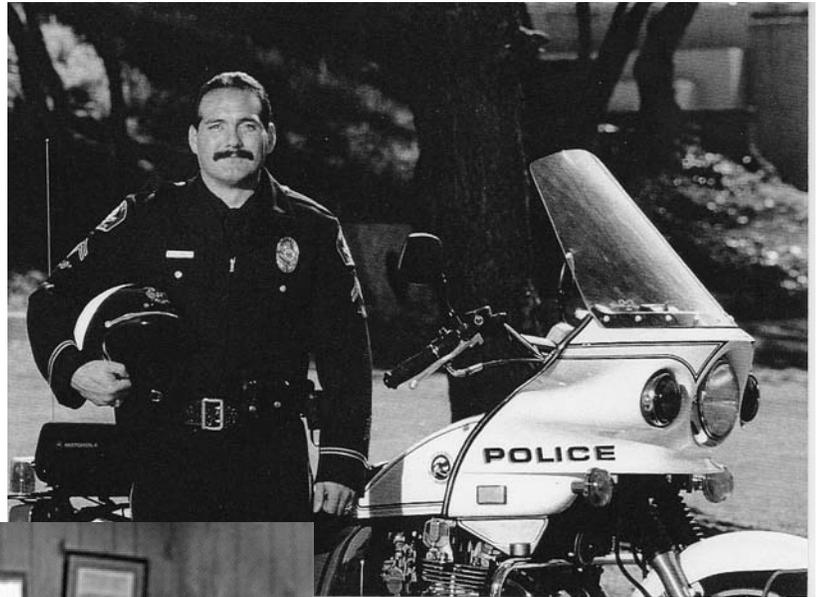
On the day of the murders, Maciel attended his child's baptism in Montebello, leaving the rite to drive to El Monte to issue final orders to the killers—in front of witnesses—then returned to the observance to ensure an alibi. The murders took place even as the religious celebration continued.

Jimmy Palma, in the lead of two cars carrying the seven assassins to Maxson Road, begged hit team leader Anthony Torres to be allowed to participate in the actual killing instead of acting as a lookout. Due to Palma's persistence, Torres gave in.

Aguirre, outside the house, saw the killers drive up. One of the killers, Richard Valdez, chased Aguirre as he ran into a bathroom, shooting him to death as he tried to barricade himself. Valdez had already killed Moreno, who had been seated leaning back against a wall, as he ran past while chasing Aguirre. While this occurred Palma shot Maria, Laura and Ambrose to death.

Valdez, seeing that Palma had murdered an innocent woman and two children, was livid, wanting to kill him on the spot. Palma was spared because Torres forbid his murder, fearing the large "Sangra" tattoo on his neck would implicate the gang, and also because Palma was engaged to Maciel's sister.

The case broke, when gang investigator Marty



*Above: Motor Officer Rich Cano, 1997.
Left: E.M.P.D. Patrol Division, circa 1999.*

*Below, right : Aubrey "Bud" Scroggins,
Victor Hernandez and Jaime Diaz-
Fonseca at the "Memories of El Monte"
car show, circa 1998.*



Above: E.M.P.D. Records Division.



Penney learned of a witness who saw her brother, a Sangra member, with bloody clothing shortly after the murders. Detectives Penney and Phil Arellano developed suspects and witnesses within the El Monte Flores gang, and, working closely with sheriff's homicide detectives, brought the case to prosecution.

In the end, Valdez, Maciel and Palma were sentenced to death. Raymond Shryock was convicted under the RICO statute for his overall involvement in La Eme, and sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Jimmy Palma, sentenced to die by lethal injection,

Maciel, also sentenced to death, refuses to leave his prison cell for fear of the fate that befell Palma.

Originally called the El Monte Police Department Mounted Posse, the department's equestrian unit, which was the first in the San Gabriel Valley, operated as far back as the early 1940s. Not only did the unit win a great many parades and competition-related awards, but it also was called on to aid in searches for suspects as well as "any emergency, such as fire, earthquake, flood or war." Called upon "On eventful nights like New Year's Eve or Halloween," the all-volunteer unit dissipated itself by the end of the era.

While in existence it was often accompanied by its own auxiliary—the Santa Fe Trail Riders—a group originally composed of posse members' wives and later expanded to include other interested parties. A colorful group in their own right, the Trail Riders also "established an enviable reputation through weekly rides, social events and constant drilling toward improvement of horsemanship."

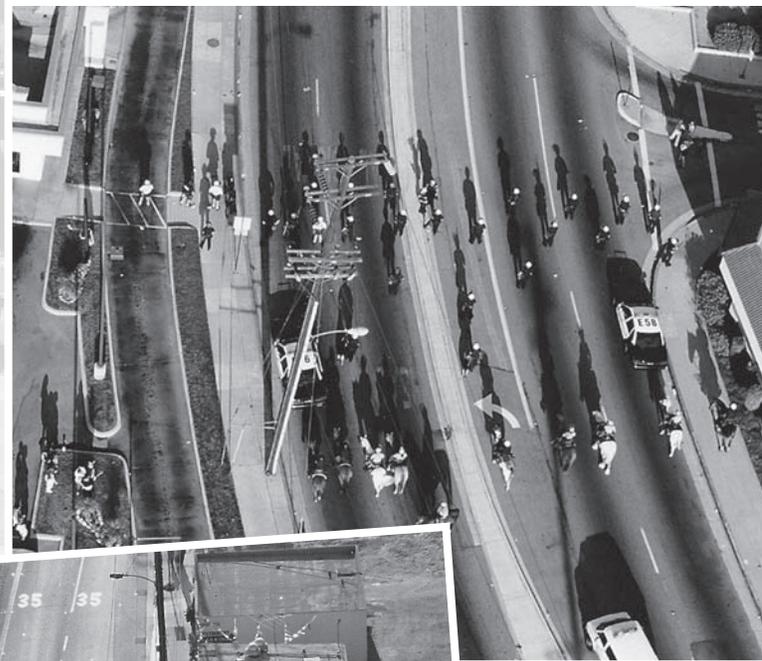
Responding to Chief Clayton's interest in a contemporary mounted unit, Sergeant Marcia Vail reincarnated El Monte's mounted past in April 1996. Formally titled the El Monte Mounted Police, the new unit originally comprised Sergeant Vail and Agent Robert Roach. Their first assignment was crowd management at the "Memories of El Monte" car show later that same year. In 1998, the unit added a civilian component, the El Monte Mounted Volunteers.

Modernly, the unit provides services to the department including crowd management, crime pre-



Winners of the California Mounted Officers Association trophy. Left to right: E.M.P.D. Volunteer Jerri Beebe on "Dusty," Captain Marcie Vail on "Sunny," Volunteer Teresa Lopez on "Chaparrita," and Angel Amos on "Tucker."

tion, met his end at the point of prison shanks in the exercise yard at San Quentin. The sheer savagery of his murderous spree brought much unwanted attention onto La Eme, and much flak to male members from wives and girlfriends who had always believed females not directly involved in gang activities—and certainly children—were off limits. To this day, Luis



*Shown on
this page: The
"Memories of
El Monte" car
show, 1997.*



vention, targeted patrol, and mutual aid for other agencies as requested. Its participation in public events and parades included the 2005 Pasadena Rose Parade, for which the unit was selected only after surmounting a quite extensive application process. While this might seem to be the unit's crowning achievement, it was not.

Composed of both sworn and civilian members—the sworn members serving ancillary to their regular duties—El Monte's mounted personnel have achieved recognition of their excellence by winning state-wide competitions in 2005 and 2006, besting several other teams including those from full-time, dedicated mounted units. Proof of the truthfulness underlying El Monte's former motto, "Where Future Meets Past," El Monte's last city-owned and maintained police horse, "Black," served as the back-up mount when the unit participated in the 2005 Rose Parade; her last assignment before retirement.

In October 1996, the department received its initial order of 343 newly-designed oval badges, these reflecting El Monte's most recent of three city seals—and second motto—"End of the Santa Fe Trail." Worn by all badge-carrying department employees, these are the latest of eight styles of badge issued by the department since 1912.



Previous department badges have included Lester Burdick's city marshal shield worn in the department's earliest days, another shield worn by officers, various teardrop designs the ovals had replaced, ear-



Millenium badge worn during 2000.

ly different teardrop styles worn by reserves in the early days of that program, a seven-point star worn by traffic officers in the 1950s and 1960s, a shield followed by two different circle-stars—worn by the department's mounted members since that unit's re-emergence—and a uniquely-shaped badge issued to both regulars and reserves during the Millennium.

The Millennium badge was inspired by Chief Clayton's visit to a local badge manufacturer, with the final design being selected by him from several ideas submitted by El Monte's Police Officer's Association. These badges were issued to all regular and reserve personnel for use during 2000, then given to each as a memento.

During the same period, department members had the option of wearing a special Millennium shoulder patch designed by detective Steve Hager. This patch was one of six general-issue styles issued over the agency's history.

In October 1997, the department procured a military-surplus Peacekeeper through California's Counter-Drug Procurement Program. This seventy-miles-per-hour-capable, multi-purpose armored car greatly broadened the options available to El Monte's SERT (Special Emergency Response Team).

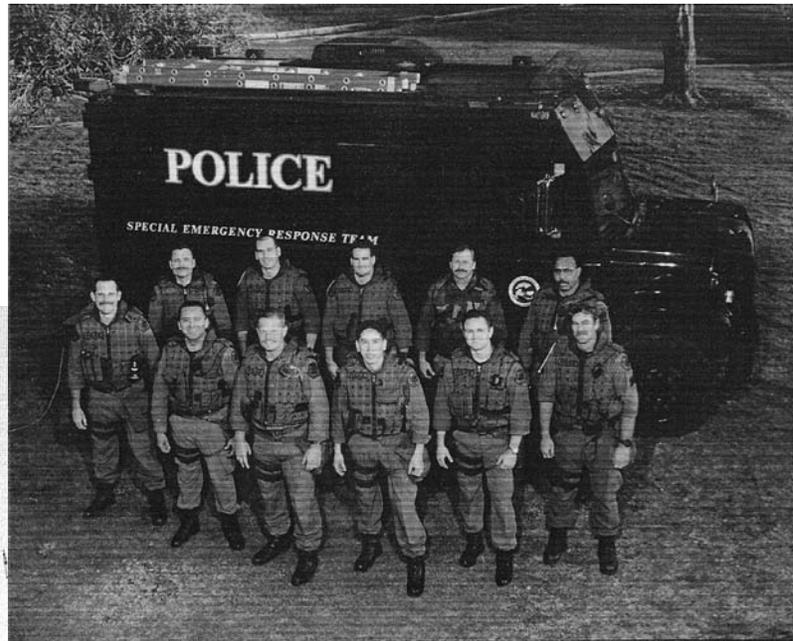
In June 1999, the department started an administrative (level III) reserve officer program. Instituted



Above: E.M.P.D. SERT Team members Ronald Nelson and Eric Youngquist ready for action, 1997.

Above: The Peacekeeper, as it originally appeared before being renovated to E.M.P.D. specifications.

Below: El Monte P.D.'s original SERT Team, 1996.



Above: The El Monte Police Department SERT Team, 1997.



*Right: Three years of
E.M.P.D. Explorers.
Top to bottom:
1992, 1994, 1995.*





El Monte P.D.'s SERT team, circa 1999. Standing, left to right: Brett Lakin, Jack Jenkins, Richard Williams, George Hopkins, Tim Langan. Seated: Jeff Girgle, Jack Rodriguez.

by Chief Wayne Clayton, the program was formed and initially administered by Agent Dan Buehler. Unlike the department's level I reserves, who had always been paid, the administrative reserves have never been paid more than the legally mandated \$1.00 per year required to make them compensated department employees.

Administrative reserves have been assigned to units as different as backgrounds and training, community relations, investigations, bicycle, dirt bike, and mounted patrol, and to duties as diverse as the department's brass band and designing and conducting specialized medical, legal, and other intra-departmental training courses, DUI checkpoints, prostitution stings, media production/relations and legal research.

On August 9, 1999, El Monte's SERT assisted the department's narcotics unit in executing a search warrant on a residence in Compton. This was in follow-up to evidence found in two previous searches that had resulted in the seizure of 400 pounds of marijuana, \$75,000 cash, four assault rifles and the arrests of two suspects.

Evidence leading to the raid included a driver's license renewal form, vehicle registration, cellular phone bill, bank statement, two refund checks, and an envelope from the U.S. State Department Passport Agency—all naming one of the previously-arrested suspects and listing the Compton address as his residence.

This background led to what the media would report as the "Paz Shooting," dramatically focusing on the unfortunate death of Mario Paz, the 65-year-old resident killed during the warrant service, while virtually ignoring all other facts surrounding the case.

Before SERT's entry, Mrs. and Mr. Paz each looked out their window directly at the gathered officers—Mrs. Paz once, and Mr. Paz twice. The officers repeatedly told the Pazes, in English and Spanish, that they were police officers there to serve a search warrant, a fact that the Paz's son, also inside the house, later admitted.

Upon entry into the senior Paz's bedroom, SERT leader Sergeant George Hopkins saw Paz digging through a box on the floor. Officer Jeff Girgle, standing behind Hopkins, also saw Paz's arm in the bedding and ordered Paz in English and Spanish to show his hands. During this sequence Mrs. Paz grabbed Hopkins near his holstered sidearm. Hopkins glanced at Mrs. Paz, then back toward Mr. Paz, seeing his hand emerge from under the mattress holding something shiny. Believing it was a gun, Hopkins responded with deadly force.

Lt. Craig Sperry said that when he entered the room he saw the wounded Paz with his left hand inside a dresser drawer. The drawer contained a loaded .22 handgun and an unloaded .40 handgun, which were two of the three stolen firearms recovered from the home.

Although all governmental investigations determined the shooting was justified, a civil suit by the



Left: El Monte Police Department Detective Bureau, circa 1999. Left to right, standing: Paul Bunnell, Aubrey “Bud” Scroggins and Dave Lazzarini. Seated are Don Luman, Stephen Hager, Randy Lovelace, Dennis Miller and Eric Walterscheid.



Left: E.M.P.D. Motor Officer Albert Tromp (at left) and an officer from another department, 1992. Below: Officer Rob Sherwood (standing, at left) and the original El Monte P.D. VCAPs (Volunteers Caring And Patrolling), 1996. Included in this picture are present-day E.M.P.D. Officers Victor Polanco (middle row, second from right) and Joe Garcia (kneeling, at far left).

family was settled out of court by the department’s insurance carrier, based on a cost/benefit analysis weighing the cost of settlement against that of litigation.

The 1990s saw the department hire an aggregate of eighty-one officers, and promote nine sergeants, five lieutenants, and three captains. Walter Mante, Peter Mireles and James Ankeny would each serve, in turn, as assistant chief during the decade.

Wayne Clayton, as he had done so ably since 1978, continued to use his vision to guide the department into the new millennium.



MAKING AN IMPACT

The New Millennium

By the end of 2000, Assistant Chief James Ankeny would be El Monte's Chief of Police, Mark Gibboney assistant chief, and Wayne Charles Clayton—who Ken Weldon had described as the man whose “job was his hobby”—would retire as the department's tenth chief executive, becoming the only employee in city history to be awarded the title *Emeritus*.

Clayton, whose major extra-departmental legacy is the charitable *Chief Emeritus Wayne C. Clayton Foundation*, began his career with the department as a reserve officer, serving El Monte for over forty-three years as a compensated peace officer. Twenty-two years and five months were spent at the agency's helm, with Clayton continuing to serve the agency as a volunteer consultant and administrator of the agency's level III reserve program after his retirement.

As Chief, Clayton transformed the department into a much more hospitable and productive workplace than it had been, improving both intra- and inter-departmental relations and communications, streamlining and expanding the department's operations and programs, and expanding opportunities for training and promotion.

If a single example best exemplifies Chief Clayton's administration, it could well be the open letter he wrote in response to Los Angeles Police Chief Bernard Parks' November 21, 1997 column in the Los Angeles *Times*. Clayton intended his letter for publication, and indeed it was published in the December 5, 1997 “Letters to the Editor” section of the *Times*:

This letter is in response to my colleague Chief Bernard Parks' Nov. 21 column, “Community Needs Outrank Some Officers' Preference.” The article involves his decision to reject continuance of the Los Angeles Police Department's trial “3-12” work plan for patrol officers. The decision to discontinue the compressed workweek is because “Compressed schedules go against the very core of community policing,” Parks states.

Community-based has been our department's hallmark for the past 40 years I have been a police officer in El Monte, the last 20 serving as chief.

I can report that our patrol officers worked the 10 plan beginning in 1970, and the improved 12 plan since 1988. It works exceptionally well for both employees and management. El Monte was the third safest city in Los Angeles County in 1995 and 1996, in comparable 100,000 to 499,000 population cities.

I believe the key is that whether police officers work the 10 plan, 12 plan or 9/80 they still all work 173.33 hours average per month. The exact same number of hours as the traditional five-day 40-hour workweek. The significant differences in the compressed plans are the flexibility in deployment of patrol officers, cost savings in overtime and the enhanced morale gained with more personal time for the officers.

WAYNE C. CLAYTON
El Monte Police Chief

The foregoing is an amazing testament to the principles and passion with which Clayton ran the department, made even more remarkable when con-



*Wayne C. Clayton, El Monte P.D.'s
tenth Chief of Police.*

James Ankeny—*Medal of Valor*
Phil Arellano and Victor Hernandez
—*Unit Citation Award*
William Fetner—*Medal of Valor*
Dan Glass—*Unit Citation Award*
Clarence Johnson —*Purple Heart*
Don Johnston—*Distinguished Service and
Purple Heart*
Edward Pawasarat—*Meritorious Service
and Purple Heart*
Steven Reneer—*Medal of Valor*
Kurt Timken—*Distinguished Service*
Debbie Turner—*Distinguished Service*
Dennis Turner—*Distinguished Service*
Marcie Vail—*Distinguished Service*
Eric Youngquist—*Meritorious Conduct*
Carlos Zamora—*Purple Heart*

A second ceremony held on May 5, 2004, honored the following personnel:

Manuel Anthony Arceo—*Medal of Valor
and Purple Heart*
Kristin Armstrong, Ruth Bonneau,
Delia Calderon and Daniel Marin
—*Unit Citation Award*
Christopher Cano and Roger Cobian
—*Medal of Valor*
Wayne C. Clayton (Retired)
—*Distinguished Service*
Roger Cobian and Patrick Reilly
—*Unit Citation Award*
Bruce Curnow (Retired)—*Medal of Valor
and Purple Heart*
Keith Gee, Rick George and
Eduardo Nafarrate—*Unit Citation Award*
Raul Linn—*Meritorious Conduct*
Terry Long (Retired)—*Medal of Valor and
Purple Heart*
Rick Main (Retired)—*Medal of Valor and
Purple Heart*
Jack Rodriguez—*Distinguished Service*

sidering the politics attached to public office.

Clayton left office on December 30, 2000, one of many beneficiaries of El Monte's new "three-percent at fifty" retirement plan. James William Ankeny assumed the chief's position on December 31, 2000.

While in office, Chief Ankeny changed the department's employee performance and evaluation system—it was an issue addressed in his inaugural speech to department personnel—from an almost mechanical process having little if any subordinate input to an interactive approach encouraging active involvement between participants.

Chief Ankeny also instituted the department's Meritorious Service Awards Program. The first ceremony, held on May 30, 2002, honored the following department members:



*James W. Ankeny, El Monte P.D.'s
eleventh Chief of Police.*



*Kenneth P. Weldon, El Monte P.D.'s
twelfth Chief of Police.*

The same day Ankeny retired, January 4, 2002, Kenneth P. Weldon, who had previously retired from El Monte's Police Department on September 15, 2001, re-joined the department as chief.

Having spent the majority of his virtually thirty years with the department in ever more responsible positions within the Community Relations Office (CRO), Chief Weldon immediately brought his experience and passion for community outreach to the forefront, instituting in August, 2002 Sergeant Steve Krigbaum's proposal for a "true city-wide community policing model."

A natural outgrowth of Weldon's initial assignment of getting the CRO "up and running" following Chief Clayton's 1974 emphasis on the "problem-solving style of community police," the CRO's many programs had always targeted various elements of the city's population.

Krigbaum's proposal, however, was different. Krigbaum envisioned a city-wide program benefiting the entire community, and using not only all of

the department's members but personnel from other city departments, as well. Weldon saw it for exactly what it was: true *community*-based law enforcement.

After digesting his idea, Weldon looked at Krigbaum and said, "it won't work." When Krigbaum asked why, the Chief responded succinctly: "Because it just makes too much sense."

In August 2002, the El Monte Police Department's IMPACT (Improving and Maintaining Public Awareness and Community Teamwork) Program was launched.

IMPACT originally divided the city into fifty-nine Reporting Districts (RDs), each approximately five square blocks in area, and each under the care of an officer who is the "mini" Chief of Police for his or her RD. The program proved so popular with officers that the city was later sub-divided into sixty-six RDs so more officers could participate.

IMPACT started with a two-day training program presented to El Monte's sworn personnel, de-



Detective Ralph Batres at Tony Arceo Park for Operation Sparkle, the citywide clean-up event, March 2003.

partment heads, supervisors and any other interested city employees. Several of the city's elected officials also attended.

El Monte's Code Enforcement, Parks and Recreation and City Yard personnel participated in inter-departmental training and familiarized other participants with El Monte's "applicable Municipal Code and Building Code regulations." Cellular telephone numbers were exchanged between members of the various city departments.

This was the precursor to the initial door-to-door contact between El Monte's police officers, volunteer participants, and city residents and businesses. On IMPACT's launch, El Monte Police Officer Arturo Gutierrez said of his RD—the area in which he and his family live—"I hope I can make a difference. I totally expect to hear from my mom if I'm not doing a good job."

Momentous as it was, the initial department/community rollout was simply the precursor to many meetings within the individual RDs. The meetings



themselves are precursors to each officer's formulation of their program goals. Weldon had hit it on the head when he said:

"We expect our officers to hold town meetings, to come up with solutions, to meet people on social issues and beautification issues and to really get involved in their personal lives. We expect officers to go door-to-door, introduce themselves and basically say, 'I'm Ken Weldon, and I'm going to be your officer for, perhaps, the rest of my career.'"

A team-building workshop addressed issues and concerns raised during the program's initial rollout, and with new guidelines in place the program became fully operational.

Each officer was tasked with the responsibility of instituting projects for reaching their goals, and vested with the authority to get the job done. Officers were issued cellular telephones so they could be more easily reached by residents of their RD, and

Targeted owners were encouraged to improve their properties, and in many cases they were assisted in making improvements they were willing but unable to make due to hindrances beyond their control.

Transients and panhandlers within El Monte were made aware of programs and organizations that would assist them in assisting themselves. Constructive alternatives to unemployment, homelessness and other problems were also made available to them,



Left, above: Officer Raul Linn with his daughters and SERT vehicle, during department photo day at police station, April 2003.

Left: Department Bicycle Enforcement Team. Left to right: Officer Chris Cano, Det. Ralph Batres, Lt. Ken Jeske, Sgt. Marcia Vail, Agent Chuck Carlson and Officer Eduardo Nafarrate. Taken circa 2001.

Right: Operation Sparkle. Officer Jack Rodriguez (wearing hat) joins volunteers in his RD(44), March 2003.

Below, right: Operation Sparkle. Left to right: Det. Aubrey "Bud" Scroggins, Det. Richard Williams, Det. Stephen Hager and Det. Dave Lazzarini.



so they, themselves, could in turn contact the other city departments necessary to carry out the particular tasks required.

As part of IMPACT, El Monte Police and Community Development officials formulated respective "Ten Worst Properties" and "Thirty Worst Properties" lists, with all city departments working together to improve the problems that had been identified.

with the enforcement process being reserved only for those unwilling to be helped otherwise.

Special attention was also given to persons having chronic alcohol problems. Assistance was provided to those who would accept help, and the city's liquor stores were enlisted to cut off the availability of alcoholic beverages to those who would not.

Recognizing outstanding efforts among those participating in the program, the police department implemented an RD Pin Award, initially honoring sixteen officers for their outstanding IMPACT-related efforts. This was not, however, the only official recognition associated with the program. In 2003, the El Monte Police Department was again a finalist for the prestigious *James Q. Wilson Community Policing Award*, this time for efforts that included IMPACT, it being recognized that:

“This police department has evolved into an organization that embraces the concepts of community policing and problem solving by actively seeking out partnerships within the community. They have a number of innovative programs which, combined with the conventional police work of patrol, have led to an improvement in the quality of life for the people who live and work in El Monte. They have several successful programs and, in the summer of 2002, they launched their IMPACT program (Improving and Maintaining Public Awareness and Community Teamwork). It was designed to place personal accountability of each member of the department for the improvement of the quality of life. El Monte has also decreased their overall crime rate. Specifically, they had a 17.5 percent reduction in crimes against persons in 2003 from the previous year. Aggressive enforcement of transients has decreased calls for service on transient related calls by 21 percent. There has also been a 35.9 percent increase in local real estate property values.”

The department was also a semi-finalist for the equally-prestigious 2003 International Association

of Chiefs of Police *Webber Seavey Award for Quality in Law Enforcement*. The IACP noted that:

“This department developed an innovative program to involve patrol officers and residents in fighting crime and improving quality of life in the community. The city was divided into 64 neighborhoods, called reporting districts. A police officer is assigned to each district, encompassing about five city blocks, and is accountable to the residents. The officer is responsible for quality of life issues and for the identification of long-term neighborhood problems. Officers have voice mail boxes and cell phones to make them more accessible to residents. Within two months, the department began seeing results. Officers all over the city were conducting town meetings, and beautification projects were undertaken in most districts. The number of crimes reported has decreased, and arrests have increased.”

In 2005 IMPACT won the James Q. Wilson Award, it being recognized that:

“El Monte created and institutionalized their Improving and Maintaining Public Awareness and Community Teamwork (I.M.P.A.C.T.) program. This program was en-





Above: A volunteer paints over graffiti on an El Monte fence during Operation Sparkle.

Left: IMPACT Conference at El Monte High School. Standing, left to right: Officer Craig Montierth, Agent Gary Antonitis and Officer Richard Gonzalez. Seated: Daniel Jauregui.



Left: Motor Officer Richard Cano, circa 2003. Right: Mounted Unit Volunteers at IMPACT Conference. Left to right: Lindsey Cravy riding "Tioga" and Patricia Cravy riding "Sable." Monique Forcier stands at right.



*Left to right:
Kurt Timken,
Andrew Mora,
Brett Lakin,
Gabriela Albizures,
Roger Cobian,
Victor Hernandez,
Marty Penny,
Richard Luna,
Joe Garcia,
Blaine Shimazu,
William Acosta,
Aram Choe,
Jack Jenkins,
David Darrow
and Ray Larriva.*



E.M.P.D.'s SERT team. Left to right: Jack Rodriguez, Brian Glick, Richard Cano, George Hopkins, Carlos Zamora and Ernie Cramer.

visioned as an evolution of the police department's existing community based and problem oriented policing programs. The goal of IMPACT was to create a better and more effective line of communication and interactions between the residents and business owners of their community, their police personnel and other city staff members to identify community concerns and implement effective solutions.

The IMPACT program is supported by the full resources of the El Monte Police Department and the City of El Monte, including the full support of the Mayor, City Council and City Administration.

No other program initiated by the city in recent memory has generated such enthusiasm from the public, the business community, and the City Council. Calls for Service have been reduced and crime has dropped significantly since the implementation of the program in 2002."



Above: Volunteers at the IMPACT Conference at El Monte High School: Jake Perez and Ginjing Estrada.



Right: Department helicopter Air 44, with Pilot / Officer Robert Muse and Sgt. Ronald Stacy aboard, circa 2000.



Above: Officer Eric Johnston takes a suspect into El Monte jail, circa 2005.

Left: Agent Alex Martinez gives a TORCH participant some instruction, May 19, 2007.



Above, left: Detective Dennis Turner with Police Explorers during department photo day in front of the E.M.P.D. station, April 2003.

Left: Members of the Detective Bureau and other departments stand in front of the police station. Left to right: Sgt. Albert Reneer, Sgt. Dennis Demerjian, Detective Mark Leonard, Sgt. Eric Stanley, Detective Ed Parwasarat, Detective David Garcia, Detective David Smith, Detective Aubrey "Bud" Scroggins, Detective Eric Johnston, Detective Randy Lovelace, Detective Tim Siedentopp, Detective Mike Buckhannon, Detective Gabriel Santana, Detective Brian Glick, Sgt. Chuck Carlson and Detective Daniel Glass.



Above: IMPACT Conference at El Monte High School. Committee members (left to right): Robert Roach, Patrick Reilly, Gabriel Santana, Mike Buckhannon, Eric Sanchez, John Batres, Jack Coleman, Eric Walterscheid and Ralph Batres.

The success of IMPACT, the umbrella under which several of the police department’s more than fifty community outreach programs operates, has had such widespread recognition that Chief Ken Weldon and Assistant Chief Tom Armstrong have been repeatedly invited to present the program before professional and other organizations across the country.

Attributed directly to IMPACT, El Monte’s Part I crimes decreased 9% overall between 2006 and 2007 (violent crimes by 12% and non-violent crimes by 8%). Priority I (emergency or urgent) calls for service dropped from 42,810 in 2003 to 25,408 in 2006—a decrease of over 40%—with response times decreasing by 17% for Priority I, by 41% for Priority II, and by 46% for Priority III calls over the same period.

Recognition and statistics aside, the human results of IMPACT have been nothing less than remarkable, with loitering gang members, open drug dealing and use, the homeless, public drinking and

intoxication, transients, panhandlers, and graffiti becoming almost as scarce now as are the walnut orchards that once covered much of the city.

The IMPACT program—as well as many other aspects of the way the El Monte Police Department does business—has greatly restored the rapport once common between the police and public, but that had become increasingly unusual since law enforcers “progressed” from foot and horse into motorized patrol.

But then, El Monte—from the quality of its rich alluvial soil, the persistence of its wild willows, the grit of its pioneers, and the strength, bravery and innovation of its police—has never been known as a place for the *usual*.



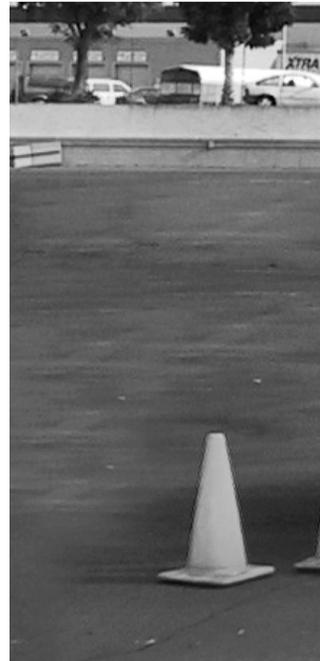
Left: Picture of the E.M.P.D.'s, S.E.R.T. Rescue Vehicle.

Below: Detective Don Johnston's funeral honor guard, December 2005.

Left to right: Stephen Hager, Brian Glick, Julian Urias, Jack Jenkins, Carlos Zamora, David Avalos, Albert Reneer, Bagpiper (name unknown), Brett Lakin, Jack Rodriguez, Mike Buckhannon, Adrian Aguilera, Daniel Glass, Jason Chao and Eduardo Nafarrate.



Below: Officers Jack Rodriguez and Jack Jenkins next to E.M.P.D.'s S.E.R.T. rescue vehicle.





Above: Picture of the E.M.P.D.'s, S.E.R.T. equipment vehicle at the IMPACT Conference held at El Monte High School, circa 2005.

Below: E.M.P.D. Motor Officers at the El Monte Airport. Left to right: Sgt. Ken Alva, Officers Richard Cano, Derek Merritt, Darrell Carter, Rickey Metoyer and Glen Eugenio, circa 2003.





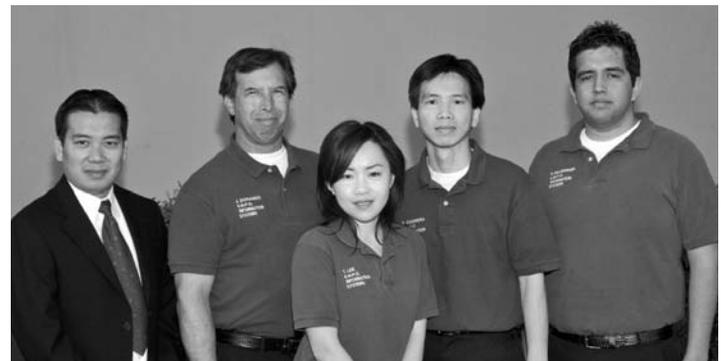
Above: El Monte P.D. Mounted Police Unit (left to right): VCAP of the Year Don Travis, Officer Sergio Enriquez and "Billy," Volunteers Jim Beebe and "Missy," Jerry Beebe and "Dusty," Tom Knight and "Sagebrush," Judy Van Houten and "Momma's Boy," Reserve Officer Kirk Van Houten and "Scooby," Captain Marcie Vail and "Shooter," Assistant Chief Tom Armstrong and "Skipper."



Right: E.M.P.D. Crime Scene Unit (left to right): Carmella Barrientos, Ed Delgado and Nicole Salim.



Above: El Monte P.D. Code Enforcement Unit (left to right): Virginia Gonzales, Jim Beres, Elizabeth Roach, Israel Raygoza and Desmond Quon.





Above: El Monte Mounted Police (left to right): Captain Craig Sperry and "Doc," Reserve Officer Mike Webb and "Mo," Agent Shane Buckhannon and "Shonee," Officer Randy Marsh and "Ranger," Volunteer Patricia Cravy and "Googley Bear," Volunteer Lindsay Cravy and "Zahara," Volunteer Irene Lara and "Kisamee," Volunteer David Cravy and "Sable," Volunteer Monique Forcier and "Tioga," and Lt. Dan Burlingham and "Sunny."



Opposite page, center: El Monte P.D. Communications Unit.



Above: Building and Vehicle Maintenance (left to right): Richard Hernandez, Alan Wong and Julio Contreras.

Right: 2008 E.M.P.D. Cadets (left to right): Melissa Ortiz, Jessica Serrano, Guadalupe Delgado, Sandra Carillo and Aaron Armstrong.

Opposite, left: Information Systems Unit (left to right): Anh Tran, Joe Dorando, Tammy Lee, Yohan Chandra and Rick Balderrama.



EL MONTE P.D.

SEPTEMBER

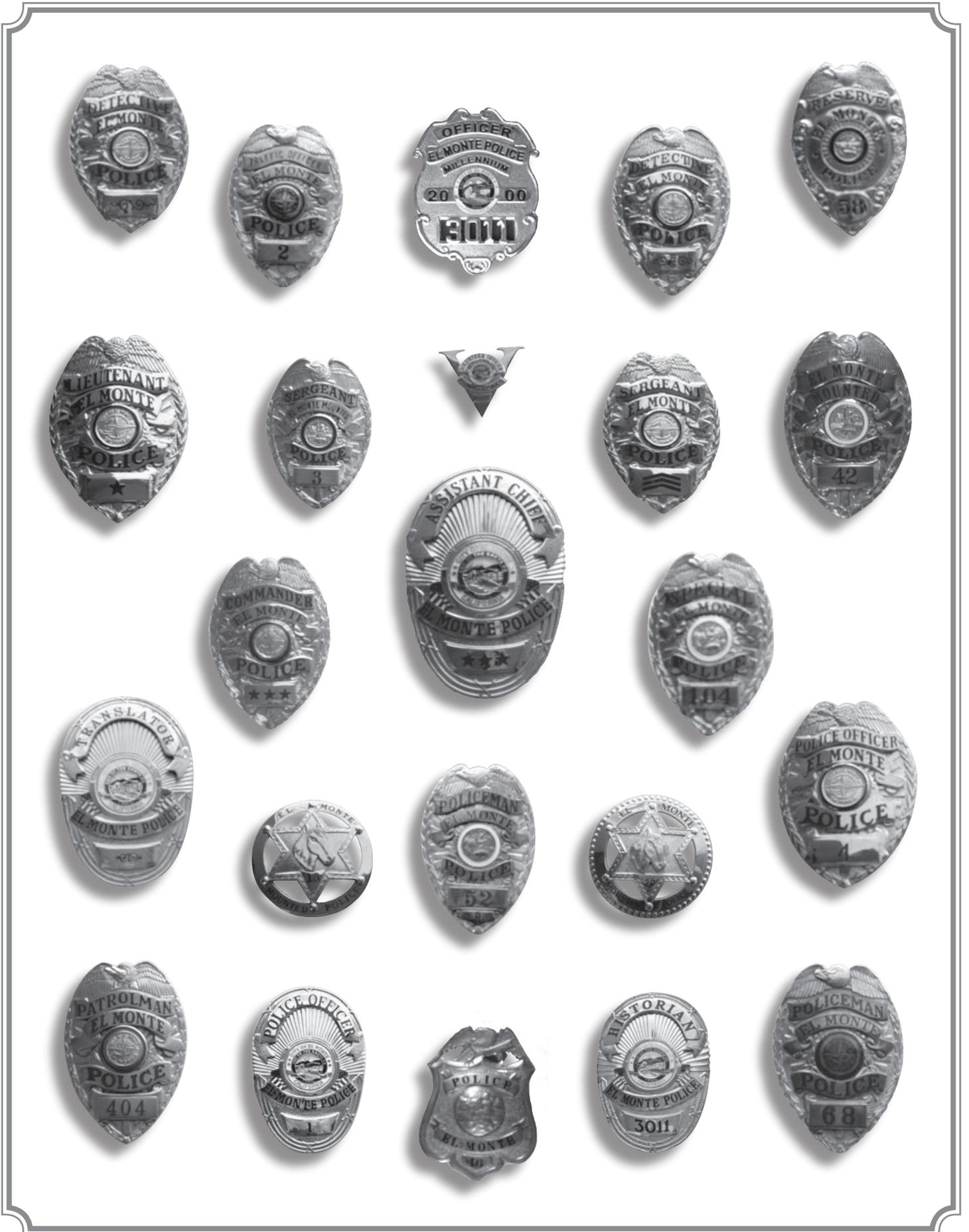


OPEN HOUSE

20TH, 2008



A HISTORY OF THE EL MONTE POLICE DEPARTMENT





PATROLMAN J. DRYSDALE



MOTOR PATROL G. RENNISON



MOTOR PATROL O. DAVIS



PATROLMAN W.L. MASON

EPILOGUE



CAPT. E. WIGGINS



PATROLMAN H. B. GIST

El Monte The Past and Present

In 1950, the El Monte Police budget was \$52,349.44. The top patrolman salary was \$276.00 per month. The city's population—stretched over 1.84 square miles—was estimated to comprise 8,101 residents.

As of January 1, 2008 the department's budget was \$22.3 million. The top police officer salary was \$5,795.00 per month. The city's population—compressed into 9.67 densely populated square miles—was estimated, in 2006, to exceed 122,500 residents.



CAPT. J. J. SHERMAN

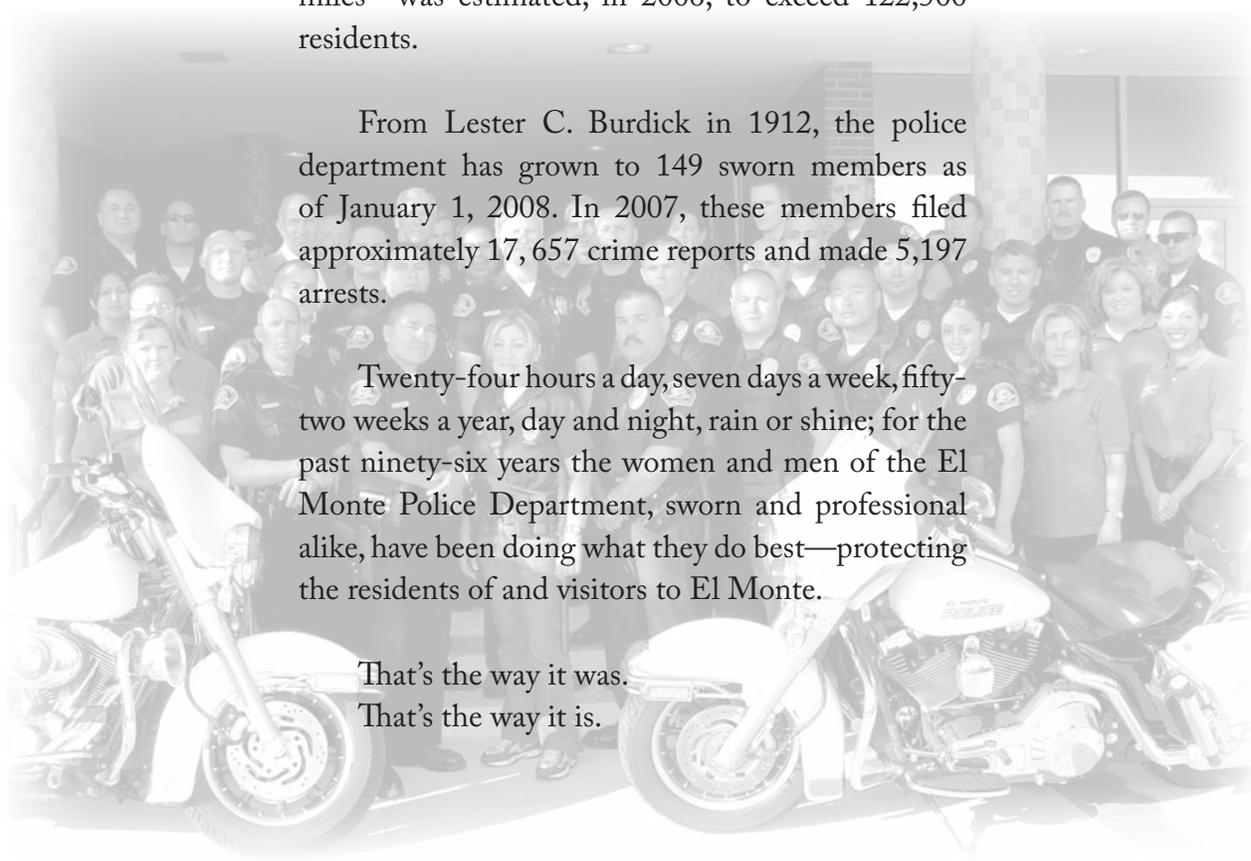


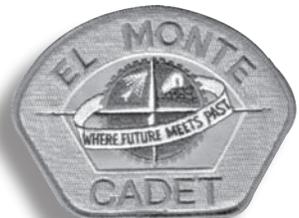
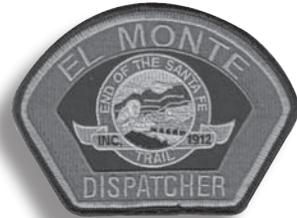
PATROLMAN J.L. BLACKMILL

From Lester C. Burdick in 1912, the police department has grown to 149 sworn members as of January 1, 2008. In 2007, these members filed approximately 17,657 crime reports and made 5,197 arrests.

Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, fifty-two weeks a year, day and night, rain or shine; for the past ninety-six years the women and men of the El Monte Police Department, sworn and professional alike, have been doing what they do best—protecting the residents of and visitors to El Monte.

That's the way it was.
That's the way it is.





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