



Herstory: Milestones in the History of the Toronto Police Service Women

1888

Mrs. Adams, is the first woman to join the Toronto Police Department, she fulfills the role of matron.

1913

June 2 Mary M. Minty and Maria J. Levitt become the first women appointed and attached to the Toronto Police Department.

1918

Voluntary women patrols under the auspices of the YWCA are authorized as an experiment. After a short trial they are discontinued.

April 23 It is decided that women may receive medical attention from the doctors engaged by the Board of Police Commissioners.

1919

The two original policewomen retire and three more are hired to replace them.

1921

After a 1920 recommendation by the Chief of Police two additional policewomen are added to the Department.

1935

December The Local Council of Women send a delegation to the Board of Police Commissioners to recommend hiring six more policewomen on the Toronto Police Force. On the grounds of lack of funds, the Board declines to take any action that year.



1940

The first female clerk is appointed.

1945

The Board of Police Commissioners order that the salary range of policewomen be the same as that now in effect for policemen and that they be equipped with proper blue uniform clothing.

1960

Policewomen begin wearing derby style hats to prevent them from being mistaken for airline stewardesses or TTC guides.

1963

Fern Alexander is the first woman in a Canadian police force to be appointed to the rank of Inspector.

1967

The Women's Bureau and the Youth Bureau are combined.

1969

May Police Commission Chairman C.O. Bick states that, although there is no rule, he feels that "The woman's place is in the home with her child". This same year a woman is refused employment on the grounds that she had young children.

1972

Policewomen are granted an unpaid maternity leave of twelve weeks. During their leave they will not lose seniority or suffer a decrease in salary.

The dispatcher role is civilianized and goes on to become a female dominated role in the police force.

1974

June Police women are first placed on regular patrol duties with men and are expected to do the same work.

Thirteen policewomen are transferred from the Youth Bureau to Division 52 and 55 in the downtown core to decide whether or not women can perform the same duties as the men.

The decision is also made to arm these thirteen women with .38 calibre revolvers.

November Gladys Jolly becomes the first woman to command men assigned to a police station.

1975

The title "Policewoman" is changed to Police Constable (Female).

1980

June Terry James becomes the first black female officer in the Toronto Police Force.

1982

Hickling-Johnston Consultants Report is approved. It recommends numerous changes to the police force creating many significant changes and opportunities to civilianize roles traditionally performed by male police officers. Consequently, increasing the opportunities for civilian women to take on new roles.

Jane Pepino becomes the first female member of the Metropolitan Toronto Board of Police Commissioners of Police.

1983

A communications expert, Adrienne McLennan, is hired to join the Public Affairs unit and to advise the Chief of Police. This role is one of the many roles civilianized as a result of the Hickling-Johnston Report. Ms. McLennan goes on to become the first female unit commander of Public Affairs in 1991.

1986

May 12 First female police officer is assigned to Mounted Unit, P.C. Kathryn Farrell (5590).

First female police officers (cadets) are assigned to traffic units to ride motorcycles.

1989

Mrs. June Rowlands becomes the first female Chairperson of the Metropolitan Toronto Board of Commissioners of Police.

Dr. Leah Lambert becomes the first woman, and civilian, to head up any of the Service's planning units. She becomes the Unit Commander of the Strategic Planning unit.

1990

Helen Curtain becomes the Services first female Manager, Computer Operations.

1991

Dr. Leah Lambert becomes the first unit commander of the newly created Corporate Planning unit, an amalgamation of the Strategic Planning and Operational Planning Units. Dr. Lambert joined the Service in 1983 as a planner in the newly created Research and Development Unit that among its many responsibilities was responsible for the implementation of the Hickling-Johnston recommendations.

1993

The Toronto Police Service Senior Officers' Organization's recognizes in its official Meeting Minutes for the first time that one of its members gave birth to a baby (girl).

1998

March Sandra Califaretti became the Service's first female Manager of Financial Management.

2001

First female President of the Toronto Police Senior Officers Organization, Kristina Kijewski, a civilian unit commander of the Service's Corporate Planning Unit.

Elizabeth Hewner becomes the first female Manager of Budget and Control.

2005

August Chief William Blair opens a uniform Staff Superintendent promotional process to include civilian applicants for the first time. The successful applicant is Kristina Kijewski, promoted as first female civilian Director equivalent to the rank of Staff Superintendent. She oversees the Corporate Services pillar.

December 19 Staff Inspector Jane Wilcox becomes the first female Unit Commander of the Sex Crimes Unit.

2007

Brenda Radix becomes the first female civilian promoted to position of Unit Commander of the Property and Evidence Management unit.

2008

Judy Sandford becomes the first woman promoted to position of Unit Commander of the Records Management Services unit.

2009

March 31 Kathryn Martin was transferred from 41 Division to the Homicide Squad to become the first female unit commander of the Squad.

December With the promotion of a second female Assistant Manager, Rita Vigna, in the Records Management Services unit (Paula Wilson promoted to Assistant Manager in 2006), the formerly male dominated Records Bureau, is for the first time in its history managed by an all female team with the majority of its members being women.

2010

May The Women's Internal Support Network (W-ISN) Charter is approved by Command and the women of the Service are given approval to form an internal support network.

June Elections are held and the Women's Internal Support Network is formed: the first Co-Chairs are Judy Sandford, Manager RMS, and Sgt. Andria Cowan 55 Division.

Contact Information

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