

KF Police Force Modernized To Handle City's Needs

The Klamath Falls Police Department has more than doubled in size in less than 20 years due to the increasing complexity of providing 24-hour police protection for 20,000 people.

The cop leisurely strolling along his beat has vanished with zoot suits and hula hoops. Since 1956, Klamath Falls policemen have covered their beats in patrol cars. This method has proven much more efficient.

The first records kept by city police were begun in 1914. A record of arrests and horse sales was maintained by the police department. With the laws less formalized than they are today, a variety of charges appeared in the early records. One Chinese gentleman was charged with operating an opium den and another citizen for "using profane language in front of a lady."

Chief Charles A. Howard joined the department as a recruit in 1943. He was promoted to sergeant in 1948 and named chief 10 years later in a department reorganization. He replaced Orville Hamilton. Patrolman Fred Olin has been on the force longer than anyone—27 years.

Klamath Falls was once regarded as a "wide open" city but that situation has changed in recent years. The police department has been expanded and appointments are made on the basis of mental and physical ability. A new building was constructed in 1952 to serve as a combination office headquarters and city jail. The local department is as modern and up-to-date as any in the state. It is linked to other city and state police offices by means of a statewide teletype network. City police attend several schools each year to improve their skills.

It costs almost \$160,000 a year to operate the Klamath Falls Police Department, but the cost to the law abiding taxpayer is small. Almost half of this amount comes from parking meter revenue. Fines and bail forfeitures are also applied by the city to the police department budget.

The organization of the police department is similar to a military chain of command. Two lieutenants, R. N. (Bud) Adkins and

Archie Huff, work directly under Chief Howard. The remainder of the force is divided into three platoons, each headed by a sergeant. The platoon sergeants are Jim Brown, Odell Olson and John Kenard. The platoons rotate on the three different shifts of the day: 12 midnight to 8 a.m., 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 12 midnight.

The heart of the platoon patrol system is the four beats in the city. One car drives each beat and, by means of a two-way radio system, other cars and additional officers can be summoned

to the scene of a crime or an accident within minutes.

Specialists are commonplace in modern police work and the local department is no exception. There are three detective sergeants, three policemen and four meter maids. Sgt. Oscar Gerleve is the identification officer while sergeants Dennis Lilly and Walter Conrady handle bad checks and other types of investigation.

Policemen on the force are Bernice Mattson, Ava Becton and Dorothy Kirkpatrick. They handle

clerical duties and deal with women prisoners.

The meter maids are a relatively new innovation. By working exclusively on parking violations, they leave beat officers free to concentrate on more serious types of crime. Since the advent of the meter maids in the summer of 1958, revenues from parking violations have increased drastically.

The meter maids are Betty Schuldheisz, Jody Kitchen, Peggy Glasscock and Betty Daniels. New officers are added to the

force as vacancies occur. Potential policemen are subjected to a battery of civil service examinations and a rigorous physical test. There are generally only one or two successful young men out of a total of 20 or 25 applicants. Progress brings problems in many areas, among them law enforcement. Chief Howard believes, however, that with continuing public support and respect for the law, that the Klamath Falls Police Department can cope with the problems.



THIS SMILING GROUP is the Klamath Falls Police Department, charged with maintaining law and order in the city. This picture was taken in front of police headquarters at 425 Walnut Street. Front row, from left, are Bernice Mattson, Betty Schuldheisz, Lt. R. N. (Bud) Adkins, Sgt. Oscar Gerleve, Sgt. Dennis Lilly, Juvenile Officer Ray Howard, Chief Charles A. Howard, City Manager G. S. Vergeer, Jody Kitchen and Peggy Glasscock. Second row, from left, are Carl Jennings, Victor Murdock, Norman Mitchell, Grady Gavlord, Sgt. Jim Brown, Sgt. John Kennard, Sgt. Odell Olson, Phil Chloppek, Gerald Flacchini and Darrell Hilliker. Top row, from left, Ava Becton, Al Bianconi, Melville (Bud) Richardson, Fred Olin, Floyd Pierce, Jim O'Neil, Rex King and Gordon Ramsey. Not pictured are Lt. Archie Huff, Sgt. Walter Conrady, Charles Shioman, Betty Daniels, Vernon Jones and Dorothy Kirkpatrick.

Club Boosts Gun Handling

Today's Klamath Falls Rifle and Pistol Club, its accommodating indoor range and the interest shown in target shooting by numerous Klamath Falls youngsters, all had beginnings locally in an organization known as the Pelican Rifle Club, says Maurice Athey, one of the most prominent marksmen in the area.

Athey is currently busying himself in work with future sharpshooters as are Bud Adkins and George Malley.

Athey recalls vividly the progress of the sport in Klamath Falls. In his recollection the Pelican Rifle group used nothing but large bore (30 caliber) on an outdoor range, the indoor or "gallery" shooting not becoming popular until 1935 or 1936.

When the "gallery" shoot moved in, the Pelicans switched to the indoor shooting using reduced loads in cast bullets and printed their own targets to simulate outdoor firing conditions.

Shortly, the club's charter was changed to the American Legion Rifle Club and the group utilized the old Long Bell commissary which was located on the present site of Radio KLAJ.

When this location became inconvenient in 1939, the club moved its operation to the old army on Main Street, and changed the size of ammunition used from the 30 caliber to 22.

The scarcity of ammunition and other problems made it hard to keep the club operative during the World War II years, however a nucleus of real "bugs" continued its interest and reactivated the activity as soon as the war was over.

This was born, in 1946, the Klamath Falls Rifle and Pistol Club.

When the Naval Air Base at Kingsley Field was decommissioned the club was offered the use of one of the barracks provided the building would be moved to make way for the airport terminal.

The membership bent its backs to this project under severe weather conditions in the early part of 1950 and for the next five years the club saw its most active participation.

They competed against Malin, Langell Valley, Dorris, Chiloquin, among other clubs, as well as vying in the Cal-Ore Pistol League made up of clubs from Coos Bay, Medford, Roseburg, Ashland, Malin, Dorris, Langell Valley, and even one from so far away as Anchorage, Alaska.

In 1956 the group organized a junior program to be directed by Athey, Jess Freitas and Axel Jacobson.

Soon the club felt strong enough financially to consider building its own indoor range and began work on an extremely modern range at 808 Adams Street, its present home.

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During the critical fire season of each year, 60 employees, manning 15 forest lookouts, 8 guard stations and operating many pieces of fire equipment will protect 1,250,000 acres of our forests. The annual budget for this big job will run \$282,000, with \$182,000 of this going into payroll.

The equipment includes 22 pickups, 10 pumpers, 2 Cats and their transports, such as the one pictured above, and 2 road graders. Each vehicle, lookout and guard station is linked to KFPA headquarters by radio, from where all work is correlated. Lately, aircraft have been used extensively for patrol, and in the past season, the use of Borate dropped from a Liston Aircraft PBV has proven most successful in helping to control fires.



In the past 10 years, KFPA has handled approximately 70 fires per year. 35% of these were caused by lightning and 45% of these were man-caused fires, but . . . 93% of the total area burned was by the man-caused fires.

Pictured at left is the lookout tower overlooking Klamath Falls on Hog's Back Mt. This is one of 15 towers now in use that are manned at least 5 months out of each year. These tower operators are in constant touch with KFPA headquarters and KFPA equipment as needed.

We wish to thank the many private citizens, lumber companies and logging operators who gave their time, effort and money in controlling and reporting fires over the years. Without this cooperation we would not have been able to save many acres of valuable timber each year.

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