



HEATH POLICE DEPARTMENT

A History



The Heath Police Department was established in 1963 with a Chief and one full-time patrolman. The Heath Police Department, currently headed by Chief David W. Haren, has eighteen full-time sworn officers, five reserve officers, six full-time dispatchers, and two clerks.

The Heath Police Department is a progressive and service oriented agency that responds to approximately 16,000 calls for service a year. In July of 1997, the Heath Police Department became an internationally accredited law enforcement agency through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies [www.calea.org] of Gainesville, Virginia and was reaccredited in 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012, and 2015.

In 1963, the newly chartered Village of Heath appointed Richard (Rex) Steele as the first Chief of Police. Steele was a Licking County Sheriff's deputy and had one full-time patrol officer. Chief Steele served only a year when he resigned July 15th, 1964 to become a pilot. On September 4, 1964, Ptl. Theodore Losey became the second Chief of Police. Losey came to Heath after 13 years with the Knox County Sheriffs' Office.

During Chief Losey's tenure, the village grew and became a city in 1965. Losey also adopted a new uniform and badge. Also in 1968, the department promoted the first sergeants, Gerald Mills and Kenneth Duncan. Both men served until retirement. The department reported 368 traffic crashes in 1967 and 408 in 1968, already a high number for a small town.

In 1967, Chief Losey hired Don Lecik and assigned him to set up the record system. Ptl. Lecik had worked in the Uniform Crime Section of the F.B.I. in Washington, D.C. His job was to set up HPD's system to coincide with the FBI system. Ptl. Lecik submitted the monthly FBI Uniform Crime Reports until Betty Jacobs was hired as an administrative assistant. The manuals they used were obtained by Lecik when he left the bureau in 1965.

In 1969, the first stationary radar machine was purchased and put into use by patrolman Don Lecik and the department had three leased Pontiac cruisers.

The department grew to ten officers and 13 auxiliary officers by 1970. In 1969 a new radio system was installed for \$30,000 and they moved into what is the current headquarters. The department was originally housed in an old farmhouse at the present location. A mobile trailer was used after the farmhouse was demolished to make way for the new building.

In 1971, Chief Losey appointed the first full-time detective, Patrolman Charles Pinney, on January 1. Pinney was replaced by a new patrolman, Thomas Sutton, who later served as a long-time detective himself, being appointed in 1997. Chief Losey died in March of 1972 and officers of the department served as his pall-bearers at the request of the widow. Detective Charles Pinney was appointed as the new Chief on April 18th by Mayor Glen Porter. He was 32 years old with nine years law enforcement experience.

Chief Pinney grew the department during his tenure adding a sergeant to the detectives. Pinney also put the four, ten-hour-day work week in place for the patrol officers. This schedule is still in place today. A cadet program was started and a "moving radar" machine was purchased.



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Chief Pinney resigned in 1975 to take a position with the Licking County Sheriffs' Office and Sgt. Thomas Ewing became the Chief of Police. Ewing served 18 years as the Chief until his retirement in 1993. Ewing oversaw many changes during his time and grew the department to 15 officers. The advancement of technology saw radars in every car become a reality, as well as equipping the officers with Colt 1911 semi-automatic handguns. The department installed the first 800 MHZ radio system in Licking County in 1992, replacing the old VHF system from 1969. The first DARE program in Licking County began under Ewing's administration when Ptl. Parry Broseus was appointed as DARE officer. By his retirement in 1993, the department had grown to 18 officers.

In February of 1994, Gordon Ellis was sworn in as Chief, the first since Richard Steele, selected from outside the department. Chief Ellis was selected after a written examination and assessment center was administered for the first time. Ellis had been a sergeant with the Lebanon, Ohio Police Department. Chief Ellis changed the design of the cruisers for the first time in many years and incorporated the new city seal into the department shoulder patch. The patch was designed by Patrolman John Mason and included details from the former patch that most officers wanted to retain.

In 1996, Sgt. Scott Ingersoll became the first Lieutenant of the Heath Police Department in charge of patrol and accreditation.

Chief Ellis and the department began the CALEA accreditation process in 1995 and quickly became accredited in 1997 at the summer conference in Cincinnati, Ohio. During Ellis' time as Chief, the department added three more positions through President Clinton's "Cops More" grant program. Ellis resigned in 1999 to become the chief of police in Austintown Township, Ohio.

After administering an open exam and an assessment center, the department's own Lt. Scott Ingersoll became Chief of Police in 2000. The department was reaccredited in July of 2000 at the summer conference in Schaumburg, IL. Ingersoll's tenure was short as he resigned in 2003 to join the private sector and moved to Scottsdale, AZ.

In 2003, Lt. Kevin Vermillion was acting chief when the department became reaccredited in July at the conference held in Detroit, MI. Anthony Shepherd was selected as the next chief after competing in the written exam and assessment center. Shepherd was sworn in July 3rd, shortly before the conference.

Shepherd spent the majority of his career (21 years) with the Gahanna Police Department where he rose through the ranks with a multitude of assignments attaining the rank of Lieutenant. After 7 years as a Lieutenant in various command roles, he retired in 2001. After yearning to return to law enforcement he came to Heath.

During his time at Heath PD, Chief Shepherd has overseen the installation of a new 800mhz digital radio system and total remodeling of the communications center in 2008. Chief Shepherd designed new modern graphics for the police cruisers in 2007. The department began using mobile data computers in patrol vehicles in 2005, and the installation of patrol rifles in 2011. Chief Shepherd is also known nationally for his participation in the Beat the Heat program delivering a message against street racing and impaired driving. He and his race car, a 1970 Dodge Dart acquired through the courts from a convicted habitual impaired driver, have appeared in numerous national publications. Shepherd retired April 18, 2014 but remained a reserve officer.



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On April 18, 2014 Lt. John R. Mason became the Chief of the Heath Police Department after being sworn in by Mayor Mark Johns. At the new Chief's request, it was a small ceremony in council chambers attended only by friends and family. Mason retired March 25, 2016 with 30 years of service.

On April 11, 2016, David W. Haren was sworn in as the new Chief of Police. Haren started his law enforcement career in 1991 at the Erie County Sheriff's office. In 1992, he was hired as a Patrolman at the Newark, Ohio Police Department. He was involved in the Special Operations Group (SOG), starting out as a team member and worked his way through the ranks to the SOG Team Commander. Chief Haren was promoted to Sergeant in 1998, with supervisory duties which included the responsibilities of supervising the Neighborhood Impact Unit, Patrol Bureau Supervisor, Training and Detective Bureau Supervisor. Haren was promoted to Captain at NPD in 2013. He assumed the administrative role as the Commander of the Support Bureau, Patrol Bureau, and the Detective Bureau at different times. Chief Haren earned a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and Sociology from Ashland University in 1991. Chief Haren also completed the Northwestern University Police Staff and Command course in 2005. In 2012, Chief Haren graduated from the FBI National Academy, Class #250 .