Department History

We Are The Community – Leading the Way in Law Enforcement

The Redondo Beach Police Department dates back to May 9, 1892, when Marshall S. Rogers was appointed as the city's first marshal. One of the first city ordinances prohibited the discharge of firearms within the city limits and provided the option for hiring of a deputy "if needed." This provision was needed, of course, as the city would grow into a major west coast resort by the 1920’s.

The department adapted through the changes brought on by the Depression, World War II, and the postwar boom. The Roaring Twenties and the Depression brought about the challenges associated with homelessness and illegal alcohol production. During the 1930's, a variety of gambling barges were anchored off the coast, including Redondo Beach and Santa Monica. Many of these barges were controlled by the mob. It wasn’t until 1939 when state attorney general Earl Warren led the fight in the courts and won a ruling outlawing the gambling barges.

The forties brought about World War II and the birth of the boomers shortly thereafter. The population of this growing beach town increased significantly and was no longer just a place for Angeleno's to take a vacation. Accordingly, the police department needed to grow with the city and this resulted in the building of a new police station, at the site of the current station, in 1959.

The sixties through the end of the century was a period of modernization in law enforcement and the Redondo Beach Police Department kept up with the best. Automated Records and Information systems, UHF radios and in-car computers, Special Weapons and Tactics teams, the use of police K-9's, the establishment of Neighborhood Watch and the D.A.R.E programs, and the use of multi-jurisdictional teams were just some of the more sophisticated programs that were implemented over that time. It was also during this period that the department was recognized as one of the top police departments in California.

The new millennium brought with it a down turn in the U.S. economy and the increase in homelessness that typically accompanies such periods. But this provided the department with the opportunity to get even closer to our community in an effort to reduce any of the challenges presented by this period through the use of the Community Based Policing, the Citizens Academy and other proactive law enforcement strategies.

Today, over 200 sworn officers, civilian support personnel and volunteers serve one of Southern California’s most respected and innovative departments by serving and protecting citizens and fighting crime both unique to beach-city life as well as rapidly changing times, while enforcing all laws for residents and tourists alike across the dawn of two centuries.