

Tenth Anniversary: The Greater Cincinnati Police Museum

by Lieutenant Stephen R. Kramer, Director

Numerous times over the last dozen decades, the concept of a police museum and/or research library has been discussed; sometimes at high levels within the City of Cincinnati and the Hamilton County Police Association; and even formally in staff studies. The Cincinnati Police Department formed committees to research the idea in 1896 and 1955; as did the Police Association in 1977. The Cincinnati Police Division even collected a few artifacts during the 50s, 60s, and 70s. But, no museum ensued.

During the 1990s, several police artifact collectors informally discussed pooling their collections for the purpose of a museum. After Cincinnati Police Officers Daniel Pope and Specialist Ronald Jeter were murdered in 1997 the mother of Cincinnati Police Sergeant asked why there was no place to honor police officers; not just those who died in their service, but all officers. Prompted by the inquiry, the aforementioned collectors and other interested people from various agencies met in August 1998. They continued to meet, adopted a vision and organizational structure, and incorporated themselves in July 1999 as the Greater Cincinnati Police Historical Society.

The Cincinnati Police Federal Credit Union provided to the Society warehouse space in which to store artifacts, display cases, and other items as they were acquired. By 2001, the Society signed a lease with the Credit Union for the warehouse space with the intention of renovating it into a temporary museum. Architectural drawings were rendered. Contractors were hired.

After a century of talking about it, decades of studying it, seven years of formally planning it, and four years of constructing it – mostly by volunteers – on June 21, 2006 Cincinnati Police Chief Thomas H. Streicher, Jr., Hamilton County Sheriff Simon Leis, Jr., and Kenton County Sheriff Chuck Korzenborn cut the ribbon formally opening the Greater Cincinnati Police Museum.

By 2014, the Museum was stable enough to move to a permanent home and it reopened during April 2015 at 308 Reading Road. The re-opening ceremony was attended by senior command officers, rank-in-file men and women, and civilian law enforcement employees from the entire region; and ribbon was cut by the Hamilton County Police Association President, Forest Park Police Chief Phillip Cannon.

As of June 21, 2016 the Museum will have served **for ten years** the law enforcement and citizens of Boone, Butler, Campbell, Clermont, Dearborn, Hamilton, Kenton, and Warren Counties of Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio.

The all-volunteer staff still works diligently to obtain, identify, preserve, present, and interpret thousands of law enforcement artifacts. We have become the principle repository of thousands of law enforcement archives. We believe there is no other regional law enforcement museum in the world, no museum with a greater number of diverse law enforcement artifacts on display, and no greater law enforcement library and research center. And we hope to continue to improve and serve for decades to come.