



The Greater Cincinnati Police Historical Society Museum

"Preserving the history of law enforcement in the Greater Cincinnati area"



Message from the President

Greetings!

It brings me great pleasure to announce that the Museum has launched our new website. You can find it at www.police-museum.org - please go there and take a look.

I am also pleased to announce that Cincinnati Police Sgt. Tom Lind RET has joined our effort as a webmaster. Tom is a certifiable genius with information technology. When I took over the Planning Section, he was the first guy I recruited because it was clear that strategic planning in 1993 would necessarily involve IT. By 1994, we took over the Computer Unit and began designing and building modern networks. By 1997 we were literally leading all of the City government toward 21st Century IT. Tom was the chair on two city-wide subcommittees planning the future network standards and architecture.

On July 27, 1997, the Information Technology Management Section (ITMS) was born and Tom, Sherry Schultz, and I were it. Soon, we hired the first civilian, Jim Olthaus, who now runs it, and then another, and by 2000, another. After 25 years on the Division, SGT Lind retired, became a computer professional, and served another 18 years! He is now fully retired and realized that retirement isn't all that it's cracked up to be.

Quite frankly, while I have asked anybody and everybody over the last 10 years to take over as Webmaster, Tom was the 1st, 10th, 50th and now last that I asked. I am extremely pleased that he has joined us.

I think the improvements in the website have been phenomenal. Please feel free to tell us what you would like to see on our site. Future plans include working with the Gift Shop for e-commerce.

Please feel free to forward this email so we can widen our reach, and let me know if there is anything you'd like to see us report on in future issues. You can email me [here](#).

Snapshot: a view from the past

In this new feature, we'll take a closer look at an artifact or story featured at the police museum. In this issue, we trace the trajectory of a police firearm through the years.

Have gun, will travel

The story of Lt. Corbin's Sidearm as told by Steve Kramer

So, I was working at the Museum one day several months ago when John Hollingsworth called from St. Charles, MO. He asked one of our volunteers about a Colt revolver he had and wanted to know if we could



Meet your GCPHS!

*We continue to introduce you to the people who work to keep the traditions and history of law enforcement alive in Greater Cincinnati. This month, we feature **MaryLou Berning**.*



MaryLou began her service to the City of Cincinnati during April 1975. She worked as a Clerk Typist in the Health Department, Cincinnati Police Records, and as Secretary to the commanders of Police Districts 7 (Beecher Street), 4 (Reading Road), 3 (Warsaw Avenue), and 5 (Ludlow Avenue).

During 2000, she was promoted to Clerk Typist III and assigned as Criminal Offense Collator in the District Five Investigative Unit. While there, she delved into "old" cases where warrants were signed and "cleared" more cases in one year than all of the detectives of the unit combined. She also filled in and proficiently handled every possible civilian job including Front Desk operations, Time Keeper, and Detail Coordinator, and sometimes took on Police Officers' and Administrative Sergeant's duties.

On May 12, 2002, she transferred to the Time

verify that it was issued by the Cincinnati Police Division. When it comes to guns, badges, uniforms, and other specialized equipment, there is none more experienced or knowledgeable than our Curator, retired Cincinnati Specialist "Detective" Dic Gross.

The volunteer transferred the call to the Curator. During the short conversation, Dic and John discussed the revolver. Dic explained it is a rather rare piece, being a .32 caliber Colt New Police model. He asked John to look at the butt strap to see if "CPD" was stamped in the steel. He explained that "CPD" could mean Cincinnati Police Division, but also any other police division in any village, town, or city beginning with a "C". But, alas, there was no such stamp. Dic told John that it was probably not a Cincinnati Police Division gun, but that John could send a letter to Colt with the serial number. Colt, for a fee, will send back certification as to where the gun was sold. If it came back to one of a couple of local gun dealers that the Police Division worked with back then, it might still be a Cincinnati Police gun.

One of the great things about working at the Museum is that we get those kinds of calls on a regular basis. Very often, through our daily contact, we get to share in a piece of the investigation and getting closure on an item, person, or event. At this point, the story pretty much died there.

Until...

One day I and several others were eating lunch when John Hollingsworth called again. One of our volunteers brought the phone back to Dic and said, "He wants to talk to you," and handed the phone over. On our end, I heard Dic say, "You're kidding!" Then he uttered, "I wonder how it got there." I'm not paying any attention at all, but then he said, "He has a great-grandson who works for the Police Department." That piqued my interest. Then, Dic handed the phone to me and said, "He wants to talk to you."

Somewhat confused, I took the phone. "Hello?"

"Sir, I just want to thank you..." John then went on to explain that he found this revolver in a shop in Missouri. He didn't know anything about it other than it looked to be in functional shape and thought it was rare, so he paid a good amount of money for it. He then took it out and fired it. He took it home to clean it and for the first time saw an engraving on the back strap, "Lieut. Corbin."

John is an older gentleman and has almost nothing to do with computers; but his wife is web-literate so he asked her if she can find anything on "Lieut. Corbin" on the web. They assumed it was a police lieutenant, so that's what she Googled. The third hit was our website under "Line of Duty Deaths." That's when he called us and asked us how he could verify that the pistol was from Cincinnati.

He further explained that he took Dic's advice during the first phone call and requested from Colt a certificate of shipment. Those take a few weeks, but when he got it, sure enough it was shipped to one of the Cincinnati gun dealers that was a vendor for the Cincinnati Police Division. This was more than acceptable provenance that the Colt was purchased by or for or at least given, to our Cincinnati Police Lt. Samuel T. Corbin before he died in the line of duty at the Greater Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce fire.

John then knew that he had a much more valuable find than he originally thought and being somewhat of a collector and historian, he had every intention of keeping it. But, on this day, Dic had told John that Corbin's great-grandson works for the Cincinnati Police Division. John made the decision right there and then; "Steve, Dic tells me his great-grandson works for you all... Will Kinney... this gun needs to get back to him and his family."

Keeper's position in the Criminal Investigation Section. While there, she again served beyond her classification on dozens of Dignitary Protection Details (including a few for President Bush), Robbery Task Forces, the Crime Stoppers International Training Conference, and as Secretary for the Regional Investigative Supervisors Meetings. During 2006, the City's Municipal Records Commission asked her to serve as their Secretary, a position she still holds.

Ms. Berning was promoted to Administrative Technician on Feb. 24, 2008 and assigned to the Police Chief's Office. At one time or another, has served as the administrative assistant to the Commander of every bureau, the Executive Assistant Chief, and/or Police Chief and, during the 2013 transitions, all of the bureau commanders simultaneously.

She has also served the Hamilton County Police Association helping to plan and work at their August meetings at Coney Island and January Installation Banquets. Most recently, she has accepted a request for her to serve as Secretary on their newly established Records Commission.

When in 2015 Mt. Healthy suddenly lost their Mayor's Court Clerk, Ms. Berning came to their rescue and filled in, part time, for a year.

Ms. Berning joined the Cincinnati Police Historical Society in February 2002 as a Volunteer. She was quickly elevated to the Board of Directors. During August 2008 she was elected as Board Secretary as still serves as such. During 2009 she added Officer Manager to her functions. For years she

He then went on to tell me that he is a part-time historical, biographical writer - usually Civil War personages - and that he would like to drive to Cincinnati, interview us, interview Officer Kinney, and then visit Lt. Corbin's grave and leave a memento. "This is what I do," he said.

I said, "Well, then you'd be interested to know that very near Lieutenant Corbin's grave is that of his cousin, one of the very few Confederate spies that President Lincoln didn't spare the gallows." John couldn't believe his ears. He was now going to do a dual historical biography.

So, on Monday, June 20, John Hollingsworth came to the Police Museum to meet Officer Kinney, presented him with his great-grandfather's sidearm, and interviewed Dic and me. We then traveled down into Kentucky to Lt. Corbin's grave and left him some flowers and a fifth of whiskey. "It's what I do," said John. Incidentally, this was all covered in a story on Local 12.

Find out more fascinating facts and examine three rooms of artifacts at the Greater Cincinnati Police Museum, open Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

In Memoriam

This regular monthly feature lists those in local law enforcement who have passed away. Please send recent news to director@gcphs.com. And as always, keep these individuals, their families and friends forever in your prayers.

- [Officer Arthur Bachelier \(1946-2016\)](#)
- [Lt. Richard Beyer \(1932-2016\)](#)
- [Officer John Bullock \(1936-2016\)](#)
- [Officer Jana Cruse \(1961-2016\)](#)
- [Detective Daniel Furnish \(1939-2016\)](#)
- [Sheriff Harold "Don" Gabbard \(1931-2016\)](#)
- [Officer Dale Gadberry \(1929-2016\)](#)
- [Major Keith Groppe \(1949-2016\)](#)
- [Officer Gary Huddleston \(1951-2016\)](#)
- [Sergeant Edward Strietelmeier \(1945-2016\)](#)
- [Div. Mgr. Ella "Ellie" Topham \(1953-2016\)](#)
- [Chief William Verst \(1931-2016\)](#)
- [Deputy Dennis Witham \(1942-2016\)](#)
- [Officer Janice Wood \(1964-2016\)](#)

has initiated or proofed almost all of the outgoing correspondence for the Historical Society, Police Museum, Benevolent Committee, et al., keeps the Museum in office supplies, and volunteers to work at almost every Museum-sponsored event. During May, she escorted Lieutenant Robert Andriot (Retired) in laying the Museum's wreath at the foot of the Police Memorial Statue.

In her spare time, Ms. Berning volunteers as a Lay Minister at St. James of White Oak and flies occasionally to see her grandchildren who live out of town.

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