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*Anniversary Edition*



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## PUTNAM POLICE DEPARTMENT

189 Church Street  
Putnam, Connecticut 06260



**CHRISTOPHER D. FERACE**

*Chief of Police*

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August 27, 2021

To the Citizens of Putnam:

Since becoming Chief of the Putnam Police Department, I sometimes feel like I've been a part of this community for my entire life. In the three years I've been here, the residents have made me feel like a "native son."

Speaking of native sons, one of Putnam's most famous is the late Governor, John N. Dempsey. In digging through some memorabilia at home, I have a photograph that was taken before I was born. In the photo, Governor Dempsey is presenting an award to my grandfather Angelo Ferace circa 1963. I think it's an omen of my connection to Putnam.

The 125th Anniversary of the Putnam Police Department has also served as another omen. In putting this historic keepsake together I've learned so much of the past regarding the Putnam community and the Department. It's almost like "déjà vu all over again" as one of my favorite New York Yankee players Yogi Berra would say.

This piece has been time consuming in many ways but pleasurable in so many other ways. The time and energy have been well worth the effort. My hope is that as you take the time to read, enjoy and peruse the words and photographs, you'll realize as I do what a wonderful town we have here in Northeastern Connecticut.

The Putnam Police Department has a storied history. It's one that will continue to evolve as times and customs dictate. Whatever the future holds, I'm certain that the traditions of community policing will always be part of the Department's success.

Enjoy and cherish the publication as much as I enjoy and cherish being a part of this great community called Putnam.



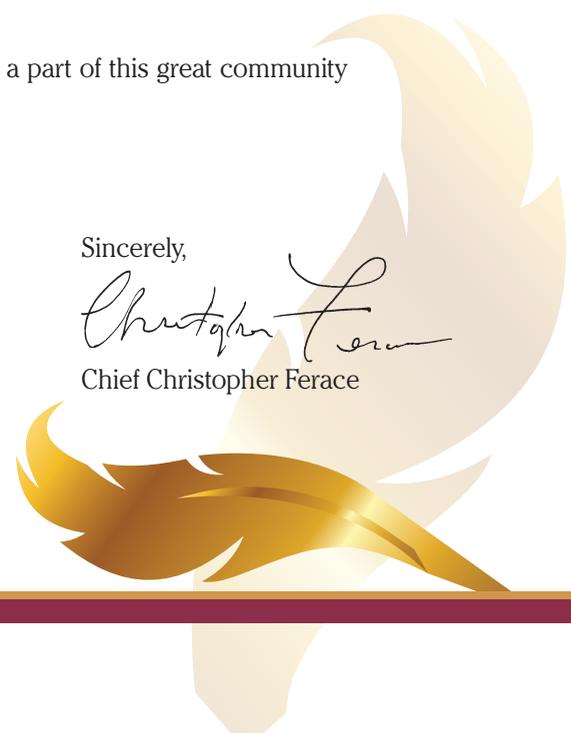
*Chief Chris Ferace with the  
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*Governor John N. Dempsey (R) of  
Putnam presents an award to Chief Ferace's,  
grandfather Angelo, circa 1963*

Sincerely,

Chief Christopher Ferace



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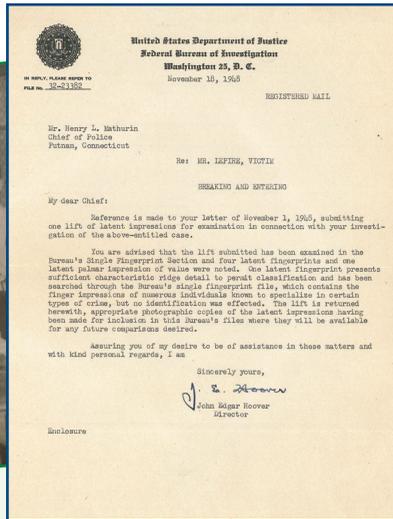
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St. Mary's Patrol Boys, 1953 - Left Front, Fr. Edward Dempsey; Third Left, Former State Rep. Bernard Auger; Top Right, Former Police Chief Edward Perron.



Letter to Chief Mathurin from FBI's Director J. Edgar Hoover Circa 1948



Putnam Police Department honored by The American Legion Dept. of CT as 2021 "Police Department of the Year"

## Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Putnam Police Department Celebrating 125 years committee, we would like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to those who gave their time to share information and to assist in the publication of the 125th Anniversary Booklet. With special thanks to Robert Beaudry, Tim Bly, Jennifer Brytowski of Jennerate, LLC and Chase Graphics, Michael "Peach" Campbell, Louis Cinque, Chief Chris Ferace, Kathy Guertin of Chase Graphics, State Representative Rick L. Hayes, Lee Konicki, Captain Justin Lussier, Gary "O" and WINY Radio, Ed Perron, Ronald P. Coderre of RPC Associates, LLC, Mayor Barney Seney, Jim and Deb St. Jean of Chase Graphics, and John Woznicki. For the continued support and guidance of our major sponsors, Putnam Bank – A Division of Centreville Bank, Putnam Business Association and Wheelabrator Putnam and to all the sponsors who helped make this commemorative booklet possible.



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# Chief's Corner

## 125th Anniversary



Chief Chris Ferace

Sitting down to compose Chief's Corner for the 125th Anniversary Special Edition of The Community Beat, I find myself falling back in time. It's almost like an 'out of body experience.' I've spent considerable time planning this publication with staff and community members. Our intent is that it will be a keepsake for those individuals who enjoy local history. I'm also finding the history of the Putnam Police Department extremely educational. In absorbing the information, I feel connected to the former Chiefs, as if they're saying "Welcome to our very small and exclusive fraternity."

Preparing this publication and the events that will surround it through the remainder of the year is an undertaking that's required time and close attention to detail. Each time I meet someone and listen to their anecdotes, it's like going back to school. I find myself taking copious notes in an effort to remember all the minute details. It's also provided me the opportunity to meet former members of the Department, some living and some posthumously.

As we move down memory lane in the publication, there will be nostalgic memories for some readers and there will be enlightenment for others, in the form of a history lesson. As one might imagine, much has transpired over 125 years as the Putnam Police Department has grown and progressed.

In looking back at the six men who have graced the position of Chief of the Department, many faced similar issues, albeit during different eras over the years. I picked up tidbits of helpful information as I read about each Chief's tenure. Like the position of Vice President of the United States, the reader will also get a close look at the individuals who held the 'second in command' positions, whether as deputy chief, captain, lieutenant or whatever the designated title may have been at the time.

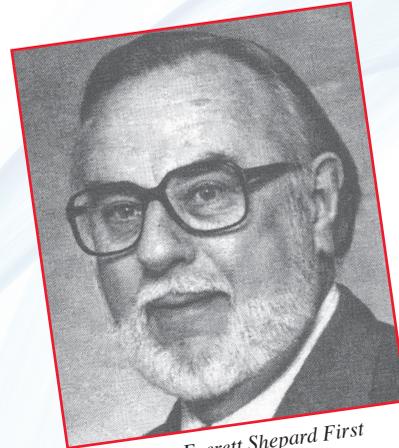
We'll move through the evolution of time with such matters as the photographic history of police badges in Putnam and locations of the Department headquarters from the early days to the present. The reader will get an eye-opening look at the rapid changes in communications, almost as if the Department has gone from the 'Pony Express' to the 'Cyber Age.' And older readers may chuckle when they see photos of the police cruisers over the years.

The Police Department wouldn't be the organization it is without a strong community government, supported by the citizenry. We'll recall some of the Mayors of Putnam and how the Department transitioned from the town or city Board of Police Commissioners to its current governing body, the Special Services District.

You'll be able to keep up with all our anniversary activities by

listening to WINY Radio, where we'll make periodic appearances, news releases in the local newspapers, displays at various locations throughout town and appearances around town at social and business events. Look for us as the Grand Marshal of The Holiday Dazzle Light Parade, as we conclude our year of celebration and thanks.

Finally, speaking of thanks, a special tribute is extended to our loyal community partners since the outset of this publication, Putnam Bank a division of Centreville Bank, Wheelabrator - Putnam, and the Putnam Business Association. The publication would not have been possible without the support also of those businesses, organizations and individuals whose ads are featured throughout the Anniversary edition of The Community Beat. We are grateful to a caring community.



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Current Mayor Norman "Barney" Seney 2017-2021



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# The Origins of the Putnam Police Department

Long before Henry Mathurin took office as the first Putnam Police Chief in 1947, there was law enforcement in effect in Putnam. Putnam was incorporated in 1855. In April 1895 a proposed city charter was sent to the Connecticut Legislature, which was approved and signed by the Governor.

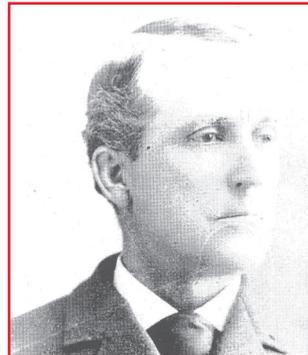
The Putnam City Charter was adopted at a special town meeting on Monday, June 17, 1895. Changes immediately began to take place with the new Charter. One of the changes was the organization of the Putnam Police Department on January 6, 1896. The need for a police department was evident for “the detention of suspects and criminals” who were being detained “in iron cages located on Providence Street and a location in the area of the present Montgomery Ward building. (Mayors of Putnam pg.1)”

According to a handwritten review of the Putnam Police Department history by the late Putnam Police Officer Donald Morrison, the first police officer was William Longdon, who was appointed Captain during the term of Mayor Lebbeus E. Smith. In the 40 years prior to the City of Putnam Charter law enforcement had been handled by constables.

According to Morrison’s historical recap, “in all criminal cases the city police exercised authority within and beyond the limits of the municipality.” They also worked closely with state and federal officers.



Captain William Longdon



Lebbeus Ensworth Smith  
First Putnam Mayor

The Police Department operated under the auspices of the Mayor and Board of Police Commissioners until the partial consolidation of Putnam. In 1984 the Department moved under the jurisdiction of the Special Services District Authority.

During the term of Mayor Francis H. Murphy (1934-1937) the Department boasted a stellar record, solving 98% of breaking and entering cases; it was also credited with recovering 82% of all stolen property. Much of the credit for the outstanding numbers was attributed to the work of Sergeant Homer Breault. The year 1936 witnessed discussion centering around the purchase of the first cruiser, which would occur in 1938. The inauguration of a radio communications system and finger printing services also took place in 1936. (Morrison notes)

The conclusion of World War II in 1945, with all members of the Department home from the military, brought about the much talked about and anticipated competitive exam for the position of Putnam Chief of Police. Henry Mathurin emerged as the individual selected as Putnam’s first Chief, continuing the honor initiated in 1896 by William H. Longdon.

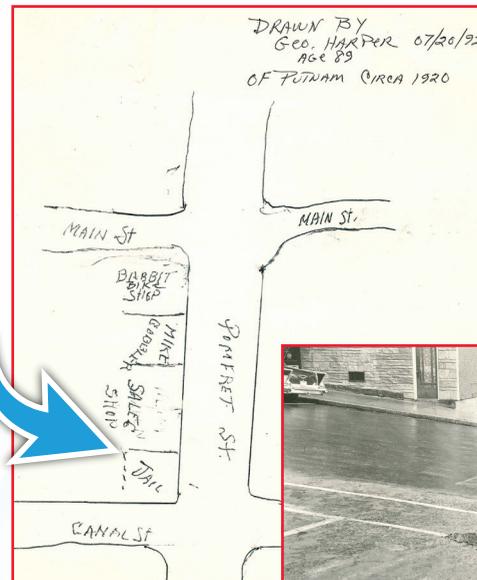


John J. McGarry, Sixth and Eighth Putnam Mayor

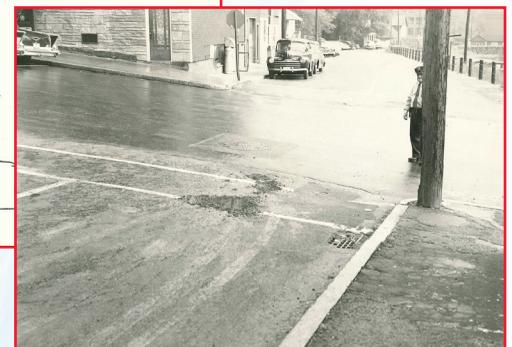
John J. McGarry, who immigrated from Scotland when he was seven years old, served as the sixth Mayor (1908-1909) and also the eighth Mayor (1916-1917) of Putnam. He was one of Putnam’s most active mayors in the affairs of the police department. McGarry, during his first term advocated for taking action on poor ventilation at the “lock up in Central Block.” In 1932 McGarry became the head of the Putnam Police Department. (Mayors of Putnam pg. 17) That same year he received an interim appointment as Sheriff from Gov. Wilbur Cross.

From the early years until 1915, William Longdon occupied the position of Captain of the Department. From 1915 until the appointment of Chief Henry Mathurin a number of men occupied the position of Captain. Notable among the Captains were John Murray (1915), Joseph A. Ryan (1918), Jack Bulger (1921), William Jarvis (1928), Alphonse Dubreuil (1931), Harry Wallen (1936) and Leo Dubois (1939).

Reference: *Aspinock Historical Society of Putnam; Connecticut* (2004).  
*Mayors of Putnam: A History of Mayors of Putnam; Connecticut, 1895-2004.*



Location of First Putnam PD, Canal Street, as related by Former Putnam Fire Chief, the late George Harper.



Canal Street Circa Early 1950's. Partially hidden Patrolman Arsene Houle.

# Police Department Homes Thru the Years

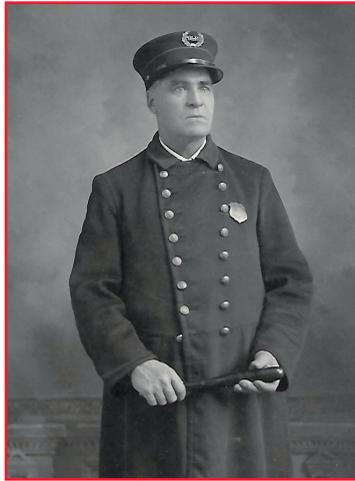
The current home of the Putnam Police Department, 189 Church Street, is most likely the location Putnam residents recognize when asked, “Where is the Putnam Police Department located?”

In the 125-year history of the Department, it's hard to believe that during that time span there have only been three police stations in our town. The place where the men and women of the Department currently hang their hats and holsters, sit to write reports, report for duty and call home has been in existence for 55 years.

Where did our officers conduct business during the previous 70 years? Digging through old photos and other historic sources there are numerous references to the headquarters of the Department.

## The Early Years

In 1895 the Putnam City Charter was adopted and in 1896 Lebbeus E. Smith was elected Putnam's first mayor. The new Charter prompted many changes in the community, including instituting law enforcement. Among the activities of the mayor and council was concern for “the detention of suspects and criminals.” According to a publication compiled by Fabiola Cutler entitled “Mayors of Putnam,” individuals who were apprehended or suspected of criminal activity “were placed in iron cages located on Providence Street in the upper village and on Pomfret Street at a location in the vicinity of the present Montgomery Ward building.”



Sgt. Julius Cordier, Circa 1915

Officially or unofficially these cages were the first detention centers in Putnam and the location in the Central Block, in the vicinity of the Montgomery Ward building, built in 1930, is referred to as the first Putnam Police Station. Sometime around 1908, there was a move circulating to find a new location for the Department. In “Mayors of Putnam” there's reference indicating, “Lock up in Central Block has poor ventilation, take speedy action to have it remedied or find better quarters.”

From its inception until sometime after 1911, when a new high school was constructed on property bordered by School Street and Providence Street, the police station remained located on Canal Street. Although there

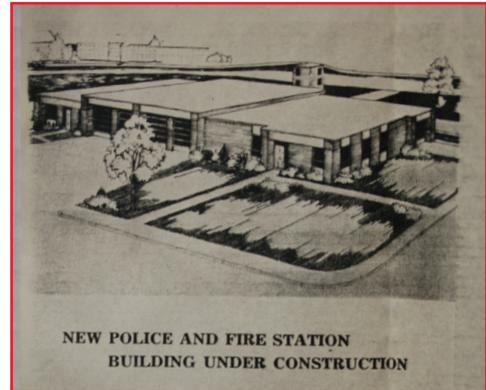
isn't any reference as to the move to a location in the basement of the current town hall at 126 Church Street, it's likely that the location became police headquarters for the next approximate 54 years.

During the years leading up to 1911, the mayors of Putnam in addition to

Mr. Smith included: Lucius R. Fuller, William R. Barber (not to be confused with his son William Perry Barber who would serve as mayor two separate terms during the decade of the 40's), Franklin W. Perry, Edward W. Mullan, John J. McGarry and Archibald MacDonald.

Mayor McGarry, who served two separate terms 1908-1909 and 1916-1917, was born in Scotland near Glasgow. In 1909, McGarry sold his business to become Captain of the Police Department. Later in his life, in 1932 he became the head of the Putnam Police Department and was appointed Sheriff by Governor Wilbur Cross. A position he held until 1935.

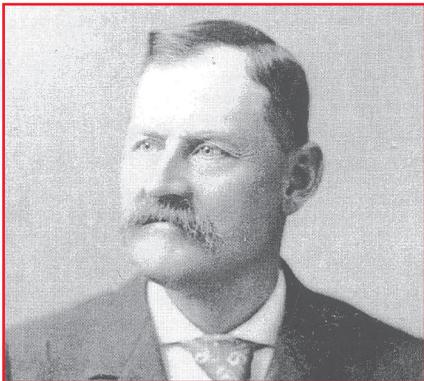
## The “New” Police Station



Architectural rendering of police and fire station, Circa 1965

Under the leadership of Mayor Paul J. Bourgeois, the city's 24th mayor, construction was begun on a new police station in 1965. The facility, located at 189 Church Street, is part of a series of municipal buildings that also include a Superior Court House, Fire Station and a garage for Emergency Medical Services, formerly Public Works Department.

The current police station, often referred to as the “new” police station has served Putnam very well, though the quarters are tight and beginning to feel the squeeze of modern-day policing and contemporary law enforcement. Although renovations have taken place inside the facility, including safety precautions in the cell areas, the current individual cell doors are the original, which were moved from 126 Church Street in 1965 when the “new” station was constructed.



William R. Barber Third Putnam Mayor





Former Chief Ed Perron, as a young patrolman, Circa 1967.

Since 1965, six men have served as Police Chief at the current location. Henry Mathurin, who is recognized as Putnam's first Chief of Police served until 1971. He was replaced by Omer Kentile, who served until 1982 when he was replaced by Michael Green. Green oversaw the department for 2.5 years until he was replaced by Putnam native Edward Perron. He

was Chief from 1985 until 2006, when another native son, Rick L. Hayes became chief. Hayes was succeeded by the current Chief of Police Chris Ferace.

Although Chief Mathurin served under seven mayors during his tenure, he served under Mayor Paul Bourgeois and R. Roger Brodeur in the current headquarters. Mayor Brodeur, Leo C. Tetreault and Michael D. Duffy were in office while Omer Kentile was chief. Chief Green served during the terms of Mayors Duffy and Stanley Ozog, who was the last mayor to be in office prior to the institution of the Special Services District.



Mayor Paul Bourgeois congratulates Chief Henry Mathurin as Fire Chief George Harper looks on.

Through the partial consolidation of governments in Putnam, the police department became an entity of the Putnam Special Services District. Chief Perron served under District Chairpersons Brian Kennedy, Armand Lafleur, Maxine Mann and Lawrence Chambers. During Chief Hayes' time as chief, the chairpersons were Chambers, Gerard E. Cotnoir, Raymond Lajoie and Gloria Marion. Chief Ferace assumed the department leadership when Marion was in office and is presently serving with District Chairman Normand L. Perron.

## Town Hall – Home for 54 Years

In the years between the original headquarters and the “cages” and the “new” police station, the basement of the Town Hall at 126 Church Street served as police headquarters. During that 54-year period, 16 different men also occupied the seat of Mayor of Putnam. The only individual to serve as chief in the basement headquarters was the first chief, Henry Mathurin.

Modern day Putnam is experiencing pedestrian and motor vehicle growth due to its reputation as a dining, shopping and entertainment destination. Consequently, adequate parking spaces are a concern that the town and police struggle with constantly. In 1918 Mayor Allie W. Marcy and the aldermen struggled with the issue of speeding and reckless driving. From the annals of “Mayors of Putnam,” “More attention to be given to reckless and fast driving of autos throughout our streets. Suitable signs should be erected prohibiting reckless driving.”



Putnam Police Department members pictured with new cruiser, Circa 1950.

During this era many of the government positions were political appointments. In 1922 under Mayor Archibald MacDonald a recommendation was proposed that “Each member in the Police Department would continue to work if their job proves to be satisfactory. Not to be dependent on the ups and downs of political favor.”

Some years later, in 1936 during Mayor Francis H. Murphy's term a Merit System was adopted for the Police and Fire Departments, which avoided potential political conflict or favoritism. During that same time period, approval was granted for “blue uniforms, brass buttons and weekly pay.”

During World War II fingerprinting of all civilian defense workers was completed by the Police Department. And the Connecticut General Assembly approved a charter change authorizing the Merit System be overseen by the Police Commission.

Mayor William Perry Barber and Mayor Harvey J. Grinsell, Sr. and their respective boards established two significant milestones. The Police Benefit Fund or retirement fund was established under Barber and parking meters were installed under Grinsell in 1945. During the term of Mayor Eugene “Dan” Cartier parking meter fees rose from one cent per hour to five cents. In 1970, under Mayor R. Roger Brodeur parking meters were discontinued after lining the streets of Putnam for 25 years. Officer Adolph Pempek is remembered by many as the man who checked the meters and collected the revenue for most of those years.

The headquarters of the Putnam Police Department has existed for 125 years in three distinct phases. The initial 15 years, from 1896 to approximately 1911, law enforcement operations emanated on Canal Street. From 1911 to 1965, approximately 54 years, the basement of the Putnam Town Hall was the Putnam Police Station. And for the last 56 years, from 1965 to 2021, 189 Church Street has been home to Putnam's ‘men in blue.’

If history repeats itself as we are often told, and as the people of Putnam have witnessed in 125 years, town leaders might possibly begin thinking of the next home in the history of the Putnam Police Department.



Sgt. Larry Hanley checking cell block doors. These are the same cell block doors that are in the current police department.





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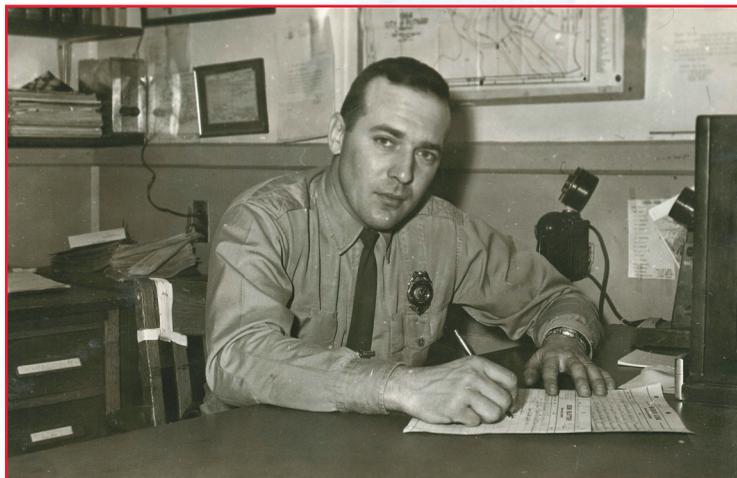
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## Communications: Call Boxes to Computers



Patrolman John Woznicki, Circa 1965, at the Police Department switch board.

The first Putnam police officers never had the luxury of patrolling in a police cruiser. The men of the Putnam Police Department primarily provided law enforcement on ‘foot patrol’ with little if any means of communication.

According to verbal anecdotal history and some photos and materials of former Chief Edward Perron, ‘call boxes’ strategically located on telephone poles were the first known forms of communication in the Department. Three ‘call boxes’ were located in Putnam – one in the Main St. area outside of the former Trudeau & Roy Hardware Store (now 88 Main Street), another just north of the Putnam Post Office (in the vicinity of current Massicotte Circle) and in Putnam’s North End on the corner of Church and Providence Streets (near the former Beausoleil Buick). A red light on the pole above the call box alerted the patrolling officer to contact the Department desk.

The call boxes were connected to the Police station and two-way calls made communication possible but not always instantaneous. Also, according to Perron, there was a switch board located in the police station, which was located in the basement of the Town Hall (current tax collector’s office). The switch board facilitated communications to locations outside the area to other law enforcement agencies such as the State Police.

Today, all Putnam Police cruisers are equipped with computers that give officers the ability to search and receive important information and data that assist in tracking and solving criminal matters. Putnam officers are also equipped with body cameras and the two-way radio communication equipment is clipped to their belt and the speaker/mic is attached to the uniform on the shoulder. A far stretch from the days of having to get to the ‘call boxes.’

Changes in communication began in the late 1960’s when the cruisers were equipped with large walkie talkies, which over the years evolved to the size they are today. These portable devices

had to be energized in charger holders following each officer’s shift. Scanners were another form of communication that were utilized as a method of being aware of any situation in the general vicinity.

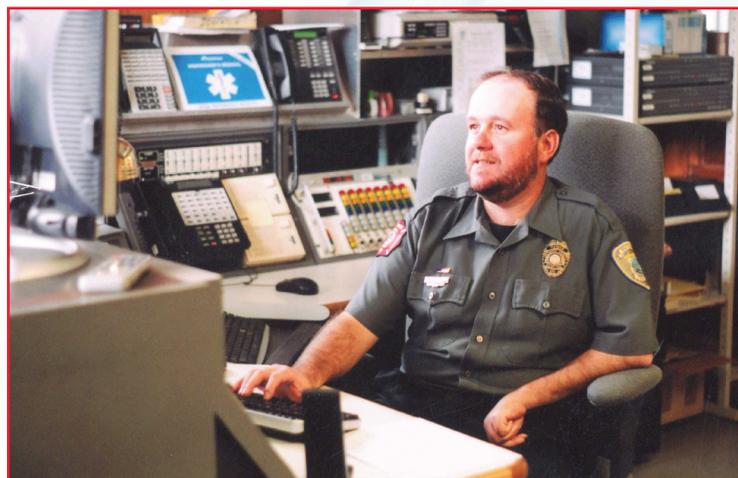
Putnam’s current Communications Supervisor Michael “Peach” Campbell, who came on board in 1985, recalls the days when the Department operated on a used dispatch console from Day Kimball Hospital. Thanks to the effort of Chief Edward Perron and then Detective Rick L. Hayes the use of computers in the Department became widespread circa 1992.

Today, with the advent and improvements in smart phones, officers can call and receive information or directions instantaneously. Circa 1994-1995 the Putnam Police enjoyed the luxury of the first cell phones, which were large ‘bag phones.’ The Department website is another modern innovation that provides instant information to citizens. It informs people of Amber alerts, road closures, parking bans, emergency weather situations and other useful information.

The Putnam Police Dispatch Center, manned by three full-time and six part-time dispatchers, is equipped with the latest in audio and video computers. Thanks to Chief Hayes the ‘911 system’ was modernized and video cameras inside and outside the building are monitored in the dispatch center.

Putnam citizens can dial or text 911 and be immediately in contact with the dispatch center. Calls are traced to the nearest cell tower and more exact locations can be located with a touch of a button. The dispatch center handles approximately 15 calls per day through 911.

Communications today, not only with the police, but with the fire department and emergency medical services, allow response within three minutes. It’s a far cry from the days of the officer on foot scurrying to get to three call boxes scattered about town.



Michael “Peach” Campbell, Department Communications Supervisor, on the alert Circa 2008

# Patrolling Down Memory Lane

In looking back through the years there are numerous stories and memories surrounding the 125 years of the Putnam Police Department. Rather than 'Strolling Down Memory Lane,' it seemed appropriate to go "Patrolling Down Memory Lane." All the individuals who were interviewed recorded many miles on foot, walking the beat in Putnam. Here are some of those memories.

## John Woznicki – Rank: Patrolman - 1962 -1967

John Woznicki, who wore badge #4 when he served on the force, is most likely the oldest living former member of the Putnam Police Department at age 86. Woznicki worked under Chief Henry Mathurin and was sworn in by then Mayor Eugene "Dan" Cartier.

"I joined the Department as a supernumerary in 1961, prior to becoming a regular officer a year later. I was asked by Lieutenant Omer "Mac" Kentile if I was interested in becoming a policeman. After agreeing, I was told to go to the station (in the basement of the Town Hall) that afternoon. I was sworn in, along with Omer Duff, by Mayor Cartier. That same day we were issued uniforms and weapons, with no training at all, and were out patrolling the streets of Putnam on the midnight shift. Quite different than today, when all officers attend the Connecticut Police Training Academy."

"In 1962 the Department had one cruiser, a Dodge, familiarly referred to as 'The Bubble Gum Machine.' Most shifts employed two officers, one on the desk and one on the street. The cruiser was parked outside the Department in the event the street officer requested assistance, at which point the desk officer would lock the station and respond in the cruiser."

"The walking beat began at the police station, proceeded up Woodstock Avenue to where Cumberland Farms is today, patrol down Providence Street and check in with the desk, using the call box located on the corner of Church and Providence Streets. We'd then walk to Belding Hemingway and turn down Main Street (Kennedy Drive today) and walk to downtown checking business doors along the way. We would then check in again using the call box on the telephone pole located by Trudeau & Roy Hardware (88 Main Street today). We were like the proverbial mailman, neither rain, nor sleet, nor snow kept us from our walking beat."

"Most of our cases in those days were related to medical emergencies, domestic violence and intoxication. We did have a murder in town, while I was a patrolman, but I wasn't directly involved in the case."



Patrolman John Woznicki by the 1962, Dodge cruiser, familiarly referred to as "The Bubble Gum Machine"



Remember when? Patrolman Raymond Donais, pictured near the former Union Block, which was located where the downtown parking lot on Main Street is in the heart of Putnam.

"The changes in police work today are very positive. As I look back, I can't believe I was a policeman and served without any formal training other than what I received on the job."

## Robert "Bob" Beaudry – Rank: Captain - 1975 – 2003

Bob Beaudry began his career with the Putnam Police Department in high school as a police cadet in a special program at the time. He officially joined the Department as a patrolman in 1975 and retired in 2003 at the rank of Captain. During his time on the force, he also held the rank of detective, sergeant and lieutenant. He was involved in numerous arson events and is proud of his record in solving these cases. He worked for three chiefs, Omer Kentile, Michael Green and Edward Perron. He's proud of being the first Putnam officer to attend and graduate from the prestigious FBI National Academy.

One case that Beaudry remembers that wasn't arson, involved an active robbery taking place at the former "Good Looks" women's apparel store in Putnam's North End. Beaudry and fellow officer, the late Donald Morrison, responded with caution and found a man and woman burglarizing the store.

The pair fled the store and ran to an automobile, which they crashed in an attempt to get away quickly. They were immediately apprehended by Officers Beaudry and Morrison.

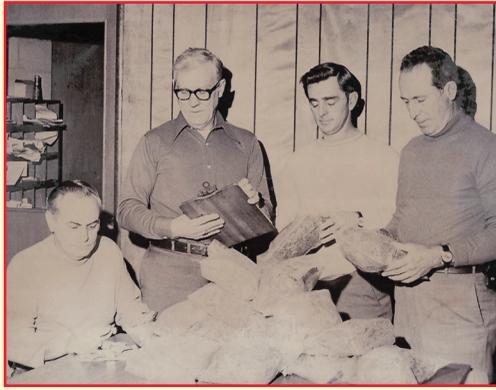
## Timothy "Tim" Bly – Rank: Sergeant - 1983 – 2010

Tim Bly was originally from Billerica, MA. He always wanted to become a police officer and fulfilled his dream, serving 27 years on the Putnam Police Department. Beginning as a patrolman, he also held the position of detective and sergeant prior to retiring.

Tim vividly remembers the fire at Putnam Herzyl, which paralyzed Putnam for an extended period of time. He's proud that during that event, no one died and with the exception of minor smoke inhalation cases those were the only injuries that occurred.

Bly also remembers the summer when he and Lee Konicki were called to Putnam High School to assist in extricating a deer that had inadvertently entered through an open door.

"The maintenance staff was cleaning the school and waxing the floor in preparation for the opening of school. Bambi entered the building and became very confused. Upon entering the building,



In the early 1970’s, Putnam Police officers, Lt. Omer “Mac” Kentile and Sgt. Larry Hanley, working with the Norwich and New London police departments pulled off a “drug sting” that netted 17 lbs. of marijuana. Pictured (L to R) Officer Del Ducharme, Hanley, Officer Richard Keeler and Kentile.

Konicki and I eventually coaxed the deer, which was like a kid on skates for the first time, into an enclosed hallway. Once cornered in the hallway, we tackled the deer and dragged it out the open door. As it scampered off toward Murphy Park it looked back perplexed. I still don’t know if it was saying thank you or simply amazed at what had just taken place.”

“On another occasion, I along with officers Tom Miller, Donald Morrison, Rick Hayes and Pete Bonin, responded to a call indicating a python snake was wrapped around a man’s waist and biting his arm and hand.”

Needless to say, this was a very unusual emergency call. Following some planning, strategizing and coaxing, the officers were able to eventually remove the snake. The team very carefully eased the snake into an unoccupied room, locked the door and called the Department of Environmental Protection for assistance. The DEP personnel were able to corral the snake and remove it to a safe location.

### Lee Konicki – Rank: Deputy Chief - 1985 – 2018

Lee Konicki joined the Putnam Police Department as a young patrolman in 1985 and served until his retirement in 2018. During his years on the force, he also held the position of sergeant prior to assuming the role of Deputy Chief.

“Two vehicular stops I conducted stand out in my mind. Circa 1988 I noticed a van with Massachusetts registration that was weaving down School Street. I stopped the vehicle thinking alcohol might be involved and to my surprise uncovered the fact that there was 37 pounds of marijuana on board.”

“The second stop occurred around 2 a.m., when I stopped an automobile for speeding. After questioning the driver, I called the license plate in to the desk where I was originally told the plate was stolen. The gentleman insisted he was the Connecticut State Treasurer and the plate was ‘Official 4’ not ‘Commercial 4,’ which was the stolen plate. After unraveling all the details, I ascertained that in fact the man was really the State Treasurer.

He was a graduate of Brown University and had been the speaker at an event at his alma mater. He was actually on his way home to New Haven. I wished him well, told him to slow down and sent him on his way.”

### Rick L. Hayes – Rank: Chief - 1986 – 2018

Rick L. Hayes joined the Putnam Police Department in 1986 as a patrolman, working primarily the midnight shift. Prior to becoming Chief of the Department in 2006, he also served as a detective and later as Captain.

“I have many memories of various events that I was involved in during my three decades in the Department. As a young officer in 1987, I joined with other members of the Department and the State Police in maintaining peace at an event that was staged by the KKK in Putnam. I’m also proud of being a pall bearer at the funeral of Governor John N. Dempsey and leading the hearse and funeral entourage from St. Mary Church as the large group of mourners marched in procession to the cemetery.”

“During my eight-year stint as a detective I was involved in solving numerous cases, including the death of two children, a drowning, several break-ins, arson cases and a number of sexual abuse cases.”

“During my tenure as chief, I instituted many changes and started programs aimed at making Putnam a safe and friendly community. The community policing program helped to connect the Department with the community.”



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# 125 Years - Six Men - A Safe Community

On September 18, 2018 when Putnam Police Chief Chris Ferace was administered his oath of office by Superior Court Judge Ernest Greene, little did he realize he was embarking on a position marked with historical significance. Three years after being sworn in, Chief Ferace leads the Department as it celebrates the 125th anniversary of its founding in 1896.



Chief Chris Ferace, Circa 2018

Chief Ferace, who is only the sixth Chief in the Department to wear “Badge #1,” is part of a lineage that boasts many similarities. All the Chiefs enjoyed long careers in law enforcement. They were all men who worked their way through the ranks and understood the role of a patrolman as “boots on the ground.” And all have had a sense of “community policing.”

The current Chief started his 31-year career as a reserve police officer on Block Island. After serving on the Plainfield Police Department, he spent a brief time as a Mashantucket Pequot Tribal officer. During the next 24 years he served on the Norwich Police Department, moving up through the ranks to the position of Deputy Chief.

Chief Ferace’s career, which spans more than three decades, has involved working in a wide variety of law enforcement areas. As a young officer he learned the trade literally from the ground up, walking the beat on Block Island. Through the years he’s been involved in narcotics investigation, served as a training officer, and been educated in police management.

Similar to his predecessor Rick L. Hayes, Ferace is a member of the Connecticut Police Chief’s Association. Ferace is also a graduate of the FBI National Academy.



Chief Henry Mathurin, Circa 1947

According to historical information, the Board of Aldermen noting an uptick in speeding and reckless driving due to the increase of automobiles being produced following the end of World War II, recognized the need to upgrade the police department. The position of Chief of Police was created by the Board in 1947. The title of Chief of Police was first bestowed on Henry Mathurin.

Mathurin, who attended the FBI Academy under then FBI head J. Edgar Hoover, was a very visible figure around the community. He was a popular speaker on the local “rubber chicken” circuit, a prominent personality directing traffic in downtown Putnam on Friday evenings, at a time when the community was buzzing with shoppers. He was adept at handling the needs of the small department. During his tenure the Department employed two sergeants and two patrolmen and enjoyed the luxury of one cruiser.

A story that circulated around town and is still remembered by some of Putnam’s older citizens involved a report of a deranged individual

armed with a rifle who was marching from Manhasset Village headed to the police station targeting the Chief. Fortunately, word arrived at the station, which at the time was located in the basement of the Town Hall on Church Street.

Mathurin in preparation for the alleged assailant positioned himself on a ledge near the entrance to the station. As the assailant started down the stairs, he was corralled from behind by the Chief and with the assistance of other officers was taken into custody.

Mathurin’s legacy extended for 25 years, until his death in 1971. He was felled by a heart attack while at his desk at the police station. The responsibility of Chief was passed on to Lt. Omer “Mac” Kentile, a veteran of the department. Kentile enjoyed an 11-year tenure as chief, retiring in 1982.



Chief Omer “Mac” Kentile, Circa 1972

Kentile can best be described as a taciturn individual who was respected by his officers, strong in his command, yet very effective in maintaining order in the community. Chief Kentile commanded an eight-member force, which included two automobiles and improved telephone communications. Under his watch part-time officers, called supernumeraries, increased substantially.

The shortest tenured Chief in the 125-year history of the Department was Michael Green, who came to Putnam from the Rocky Hill Police Department. He was described by a former officer as “a cop’s cop.” During his brief tenure, he brought a new perspective to the department, creating the position of detective/investigator, establishing new anti-theft programs and instituting a fingerprint identity program for kids in the community. He served as Chief from 1982 to 1985, when he was succeeded by Edward Perron.



Chief Edward Perron (center) and members of the department, Memorial Day Circa 1994

Chief Perron, who was affiliated with the Department for 39 years, 20 of those years as Chief, much like other Chiefs worked his way through the ranks, experiencing police work at every step. Moving through the ranks, initially as a supernumerary and then as a regular patrolman, to sergeant and detective sergeant and a stop as lieutenant prior to becoming chief. Perron was part of the department for approximately one third of its existence.



He brought recognition to the force as a town police department by growing the force, increasing the number of cars in the fleet, and moving the communications into the age of computerization. He retired due to ill health in 2006.

Rick L. Hayes, a Putnam native, held the office of Chief for 12 years following the retirement of Chief Perron. Hayes was responsible for a number of innovations during his tenure, including enhancing the concept of “community policing;” modernizing the dispatch communications center; and instituting areas of policing such as, foot patrol, bicycle patrol, canine corps and auxiliary officers. He also oversaw extensive renovations to the station and was heavily involved in the Connecticut and New England Police Chiefs Associations.



Chief Rick L. Hayes, Circa 2007

The goal of our forefathers in creating the position of Chief of Police was in maintaining law and order for the comfort of the citizens and visitors. Six men, 125 years, numerous similarities in style and one goal, maintaining Putnam as a safe and friendly community. That mantra proudly remains alive in 2021, more than 125 years later, from Chief Mathurin to Chief Ferace.

## The Men Behind the Chiefs



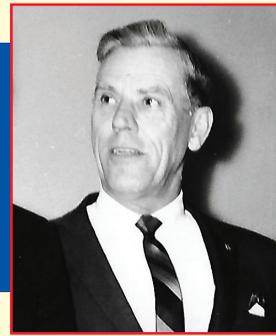
Captain Justin Lussier



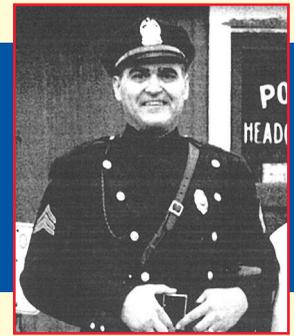
Deputy Chief Lee Kionicki



Captain Robert Beaudry



Lieutenant Lawrence Hanley



Captain John Daigle

One of the most memorable men to serve as ‘second in command’ of the Putnam Police Department was Captain John Daigle, who served with Chief Henry Mathurin. Since the time of Captain Daigle to the present Captain, Justin Lussier, eight other men have had the honor of being ‘second in command.’

The titles may have differed over the years, from Captain, to Lieutenant or Deputy Chief, but the duties remained essentially the same. These men, Lieutenant Omer Kentile, Lieutenant Larry Hanley, Lieutenant Edward Perron, Lieutenant Robert Ross, Captain Robert Beaudry, Captain Rick L. Hayes, Deputy Chief Joseph Froehlich and Deputy Chief Lee Konicki, were all on the ready to assist or step up when needed.

Captain Daigle was a mountain of a man of whom it was rumored found his way in the ring as a professional wrestler on his days off. He was a great complement to Chief Mathurin. Daigle was followed by Lieutenant Kentile and then Lieutenant Hanley, who served under Kentile when the former was promoted to Chief in 1971.

Kentile and Hanley were a good team for the community of Putnam. Kentile was a disciplined leader who was complemented by the ‘good cop’ Hanley. In the days prior to community policing, Hanley could best be described as the forerunner to that style of policing. He was known throughout the town and was able to handle most any type of situation diplomatically, yet officially and legally.

When Michael Green arrived from Rocky Hill and assumed the position of Chief, one of his first official acts was to appoint Edward

Perron as ‘second in command.’ Perron eventually rose to the rank of Lieutenant, prior to becoming Chief when Green moved on to Cromwell.

Under Perron from 1985 to 2006, three men sat in the ‘second in command’ chair. The first was Lieutenant Robert “Bob” Ross, a man well-liked by his fellow officers and the citizens of Putnam. Ross was succeeded by Captain Robert “Bob” Beaudry, who was a policeman in the true sense of the word. The last during Perron’s regime was Captain Rick L. Hayes, who would eventually rise to the position of Chief.

During Hayes’ 12 years as Chief, the ‘second in command’ position returned to the designation of Deputy Chief. A former State Police Sergeant, Joseph Froehlich, was the first in that role. He was succeeded by a Putnam resident Lee Konicki who joined the force in 1985. Konicki proved to be the right man for the job following Froehlich.

The current second in command Captain Justin Lussier was appointed simultaneously with the selection of Chief Christopher Ferace. Lussier is the ideal person for the job, having previously served in the Department in a variety of roles, including acting chief. Chief Ferace describes Captain Lussier as an invaluable Department asset.

Of the 10 men who have served as ‘second in command’ three have been elevated to chief, Kentile, Perron and Hayes. The men who have backed the Chiefs have all been credited as instrumental in the success of the Putnam Police Department.





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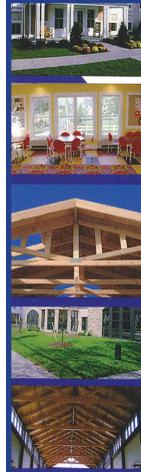


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# A Look at Today's Putnam Police Department

Putnam Police Sergeant Louis Cinque left home in East Haven, CT in 1997 to become a Putnam Police Officer because he had always dreamed of working on a small city police force. Nearly 25 years later, Cinque is the longest continuous service member of the Putnam Police Department.

Cinque, who has worked for three Chiefs, Edward Perron, Rick L. Hayes and current Chief Chris Ferace, reflected on his time in the Department, which spans approximately 20 percent of the 125 years it's been in existence. Serving under three chiefs hasn't been as complicated as it might seem for Officer Cinque. According to Cinque, each chief had his own style but all were focused on carrying out the mission of the Department.

"Getting to know each chief took a little time, but all were interested in building a rapport with their officers. Doing our job in a professional manner was what mattered to all three," summarized Cinque.

According to Cinque, he's witnessed many improvements and positive changes over his quarter of a century wearing the uniform. The equipment police officers use today, such as communications, body cameras, automobiles and firearms have advanced significantly in 25 years. The changes in training and the implementation of community policing, have also made it easier to connect with all segments of the people of Putnam.

"Being a police officer in Putnam you get to know and understand the needs of the community. We're able to talk to most people we encounter and prevent many situations from escalating because of our familiarity with individual backgrounds. This is much different than in large cities," said Cinque.

One aspect of the Department that's different today than it was when Cinque joined the force is the presence of a female police officer. Donna Brown, a U.S. Air Force veteran and former member of the Newport News, Virginia Police Department, joined the force in 2009 as the first female officer in Putnam. Brown, a Putnam native, is a member of the Department's Detective Unit, specializing in the investigation of crimes against children and cases involving child abuse.

"Donna provides our Department and staff diversity and flexibility, especially when we're confronted with situations dealing with children and females. She is an asset," said Chief Chris Ferace.

Cinque has seen many officers pass through the doors of the Department in his 25 years. The new officers always bring a renewed energy to the force, which is a true positive for the men and women of the Department. The ability of the veterans to feed off the energy while providing experienced police knowledge to the newer officers, has been part of the tradition that has been a key ingredient in the success of the Putnam Police Department for 125 years.



Chief Chris Ferace



Capt. Justin Lussier



Sgt. Louis Cinque



Sgt. Nikolos Sezenias



Sgt. Kevin Cardonne



Det. Donna Brown



Det. Bart Ramos



Off. Kristopher Bernier



Off. Kyle Maheu



Off. Mark Boulanger



Off. B. Joe Sharkey



Off. Jon Ley



Off. Charles Carney



Off. Nick Ustin



Off. Roy Hicks



Off. Richard Stringer



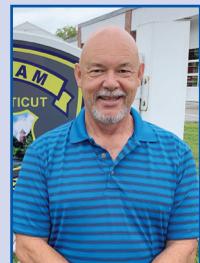
Communications Supervisor  
Michael Campbell



Dispatcher  
Michael Rivers



Dispatcher Duane  
Anderson



Evidence Tech. Mike  
Picard



Executive Assistant  
Carole Pacheco and  
Record Specialist  
Kristen Gillette

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## Canine Corps Adds to Department Success



Officer Kris Bernier and his K-9 Tink at work

Dating back to 2007, the Putnam Police Department has been fortunate to have four additional members who have brought special recognition to the Department. These members are not your normal patrol officers, they are the “four legged” members of the “Canine Corps.”

The first member of the “Canine Corps” was CERO, who joined the Department under the tutelage of Officer Brian Castle. The community’s response to CERO was so impressive that when he retired in 2012, the second member of the “Canine Corps,” ARON, was prepared to become Putnam’s “top dog.”

ARON, like his predecessor CERO and handler Officer Michael Termini went through a rigorous training program at the State Police facility in Meriden. Upon ARON’s retirement in 2020, he was replaced by ZORO and his handler, Officer Michael Einsiedel.

All three members of the “Canine Corps,” CERO, ARON, and ZORO were German Shepherd Patrol Dogs.

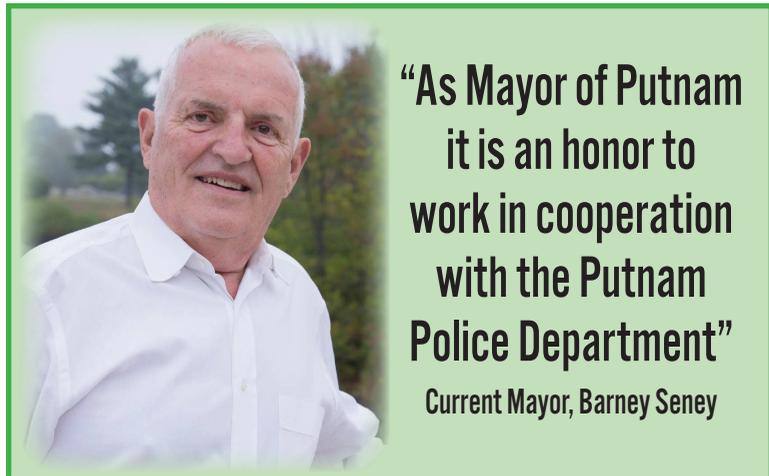
In 2017 the Department brought on another canine, whose specialty was narcotics detection. TINK, a yellow lab, who works with Patrolman Kris Bernier, has also gone through extensive training, albeit different than the patrol dogs.

As opposed to the German Shepherd Patrol Dogs, TINK is purely used for narcotics and drug detection. He’s not utilized for “high risk or dangerous police situations.”

The members of the Putnam Police Department “Canine Corps” have all proven invaluable in the performance of their duty. In many ways, they are celebrities and heroes in the Putnam Community.

**“Congratulations on continuing the traditions of a Safe and Friendly Community!”**

~ State Representative, Rick Hayes



**“As Mayor of Putnam it is an honor to work in cooperation with the Putnam Police Department”**

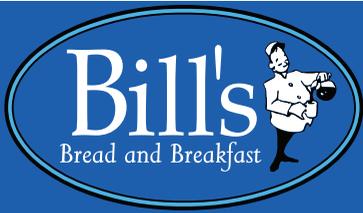
Current Mayor, Barney Seney

## Officers Who Served

- |                          |                         |                              |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Omer Allard *            | Christopher Ferace      | John Murray *                |
| Robert Alves             | Joseph Froehlich        | Joseph Nash **               |
| James Alvord * **        | Gene Gibney*            | Dennis Nielson               |
| Samuel Alvord * **       | Mitchell Ginalski **    | Jim O'Brien *                |
| Peter “Chico” Andersen * | Jamie Glaude            | Thomas Occalini              |
| Ernest “Cliff” Aubin **  | Michael Green *         | Timothy Oles                 |
| Bernard “Benny” Auger ** | Richard Green * **      | Stanley Ozog * **            |
| Louis Bates * **         | Leodore Gregoire * **   | Joseph Paige *               |
| Michael Bates            | Glenn Guay              | Tom Pallone                  |
| Robert Beaudry           | John Gucwa *            | Dana Peloso                  |
| Kristopher Bernier       | Lawrence Hanley *       | Adolph Pempek *              |
| Tim Bly                  | Patrick Hayes *         | Edward Perron                |
| Peter Bonin              | Rick L. Hayes           | Bill Purdon * **             |
| Julius Bordin *          | Irvin “Midge” Heathcote | Bart Ramos                   |
| Mark Boulanger           | Roy Hicks               | Herb Randolph * **           |
| John Bourdage *          | Jack Holden             | Terry Randolph               |
| Reggie Bouthillette *    | Arsene Houle *          | Andrew Reed                  |
| Napoleon Brazleon *      | William Jarvis *        | Peter Robitaille * **        |
| Homer Breault *          | Steve Jax               | Ed Rondeau                   |
| Zach Brignole            | Richard Keeler          | Mike Rosehoff                |
| Donna Brown              | Alan Kennett            | Robert “Bob” Ross *          |
| Alexander Buder * **     | Omer “Mac” Kentile *    | Malcolm “Mickey” Rovero * ** |
| Jack Bulger *            | Bob Kiley               | Joseph A. Ryan *             |
| Kevin Cardonne           | Philip Kingberger *     | Niko Sezenias                |
| Robert Carey             | Leonel “Lee” Konicki    | B. Joseph Sharkey            |
| Charles “Chip” Carney    | Alan Lafflamme *        | Tom Shields                  |
| Ken Carpenter            | Norman O. LaRose *      | Alferie Sponcey * **         |
| James Cartier * **       | Armand Lebeau * **      | Bruce St. Cyr                |
| Brian Castle             | Mark Leo **             | Edward “Buddy” Stocks * **   |
| Louis Cinque             | Jonathan Ley            | Richard Stringer             |
| Ernest Chandler *        | George Liard *          | Patrick Sullivan             |
| Thomas Cochran           | William Longdon *       | John Szmocki                 |
| Julius Cordier *         | Justin Lussier          | Michael Termini              |
| John Daigle *            | Kyle Maheu              | Ulde Therrien * **           |
| Martin Defocy * **       | Edmund Mahon            | Reginald “Reggie” Thibodeau  |
| Joseph D’Elia            | Henry Mainville         | Oragene Touchette * **       |
| Richard Dery **          | Pete Martin *           | Nicholas Ustin               |
| Norbert Desrosiers *     | Henry Mathurin *        | Joseph Valade *              |
| Frederick Dinsdale *     | Omer Mathurin * **      | Harry Wallen *               |
| Raymond Donais * **      | Rosario Mayotte *       | Don Warsop                   |
| Leo Dubois *             | Sean Mazzarella         | Fred Wellahan                |
| Alphonse Dubreuil *      | Paul McCormac * **      | CJ Woods                     |
| Adelard Ducharme *       | Vincent McEvoy *        | John Woznicki                |
| Omer Duff **             | John J. McGarry *       |                              |
| Benoni Durand * **       | Tom Miller              |                              |
| Joseph Durand * **       | Donald Morrison *       |                              |
| Michael Einsiedel        |                         |                              |

\*Deceased \*\*Supernumerary

(We apologize for any officers whose name may have been omitted.)



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# Humor in Blue

The responsibility of a police department and its officers is serious work. Police officers are trained to be unsmiling but yet friendly and respectful of people they encounter in all situations.

Much like every vocation there are moments of hilarity that occur, usually when least expected. As a demonstration that the Putnam Police Department is no different than its counterparts around the country here are some humorous anecdotes of events that have occurred in Putnam over the many years that the Department has been in existence.

## Michael "Peach" Campbell – Rank: Communications Supervisor - 1985 to Present

"The disastrous fire at the Putnam Herzyl Finishing Co. circa 1986 created a severe water shortage in Putnam as firefighters battled the stubborn blaze for days. The entire town was on orders that restricted any unnecessary water usage. While I was on duty in the dispatch center, the old 911 red phone rang. I picked the phone off the cradle and said, '911, what's your emergency?' An elderly lady on the other end of the line asked, 'how am I going to cook my hot dogs without water?' Stunned by the request during this very tense time in Putnam, I gave her the best answer I could come up with, 'I guess you'll have to fry them, ma'am.'"

*Dispatch Supervisor Campbell related this story to The Community Beat in 2021.*

## Anecdote related by more than one former officer.

In the days when Friday evening was shopping night in downtown Putnam, the streets were crowded and police were directing automobile and pedestrian traffic to accommodate the crowds. At the time, prior to outdoor dining, a parking space was reserved in front of Church Clothing Co. (currently the Victoria Station building) for the Putnam police cruiser. This space allowed easy response to any emergency call that might come in.

On more than one occasion, the car rolled down the slight incline into the center of the street where the officer was directing traffic. Can you imagine the look on the officer's face when he witnessed the driverless cruiser?

They say that the car either jumped out of drive or the emergency brake wasn't fully engaged. So, Putnam had a driverless car long before modern automobiles were thinking of this innovation.

*(This story was related by former Captain Bob Beaudry and confirmed by many others.)*



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**Rick L. Hayes – Rank: Chief - 2006 – 2018 &  
Lee Konicki – Rank: Deputy Chief - 2008 – 2018**

“As young patrolmen, circa 1989, we were working the midnight shift, when we received notification from a family that they were worried as they hadn’t heard from their father in a couple days. We went to the house. The door was unlocked and we found the gentleman laying very still on his bed. From the bedroom door, approximately six to eight feet from the man, we yelled at the gentleman with no response. At that point, we were preparing to report a dead person, when suddenly he rose up in the bed, startled, yelling ‘What do you want?’

Needless to say, we were as startled as the man was. After regaining some sense of self control, we explained why we were present. We departed, yet the memory remains with us all these years.”

“The second story also took place circa 1989. There was a man and woman who lived together on Pomfret Street. The Police Department was called to their apartment quite often because of disagreements that often escalated to near physical involvement. The two of us, as young patrolmen along with veteran officer Joe D’Elia responded to a call at the apartment. It was Thanksgiving and the couple was arguing about basting the turkey, of all things.

Officer D’Elia in reasoning with them, mentioned that they should get married, which might help them to get along. They agreed. D’Elia went to the cruiser to retrieve his motor vehicle manual. Upon his return, he read vows and told them they were married. We very seldom heard from them afterward.”

*(These stories were related by Hayes and Konicki in 2021.)*

Hayes tells one more story about his good friend and former Deputy Chief Lee Konicki. The incident took place circa 1989, when Hayes and Konicki were young patrolmen.

“Lee and I were assigned to 2nd shift and were preparing to go out on patrol, following our briefing with shift officer Lieutenant Bob Ross. We were each assigned a cruiser, which were parked in the bay in the rear of the station. As Lee was departing the station, he turned left on to Church Street when a call came in. He was in a spare cruiser and the radio was in an unfamiliar location, causing him to bend down to get to the mic. As he was down, he rolled into a telephone pole, necessitating his return to the station.

Needless to say, the Lieutenant was quite upset with the situation. Following his discussion with Lee, he told him to take the other cruiser, which a nervous Konicki did and immediately backed through the bay door, which was still down. End of story.”

**Patrick “Pat” Sullivan –  
Rank: Officer & Sergeant 1969 - 1995**

“As a rookie, while checking doors around 1 a.m., which was part of our routine, I found the rear door of the Methodist Church wide open. I entered cautiously with my weapon drawn and flashlight on. In the basement I found a door to a room partially ajar. I pushed the door fully open with my foot. I was stunned to see someone standing there. I hollered in a commanding voice, “Police officer – Freeze.” At that moment I discovered I was speaking to a mannequin. I was so keyed up, I damn near shot it.”

*(Officer Sullivan told this story to The Community Beat in 2013.)*



*Officer Ed Rondeau in a staged arrest photo with the late Chuck Etchells, former NHRA Funny Car Champion.*

**Edward Perron – Rank: Chief - 1967 - 2006**

“As a patrolman in the early 1970’s, we received what we thought was a prank call about an elephant on the loose in the vicinity of the Putnam Lodge of Elks. It turned out that in fact, there was a circus on the grounds of the club and an elephant chained to the building had broken loose when it scented apples from nearby apple trees.

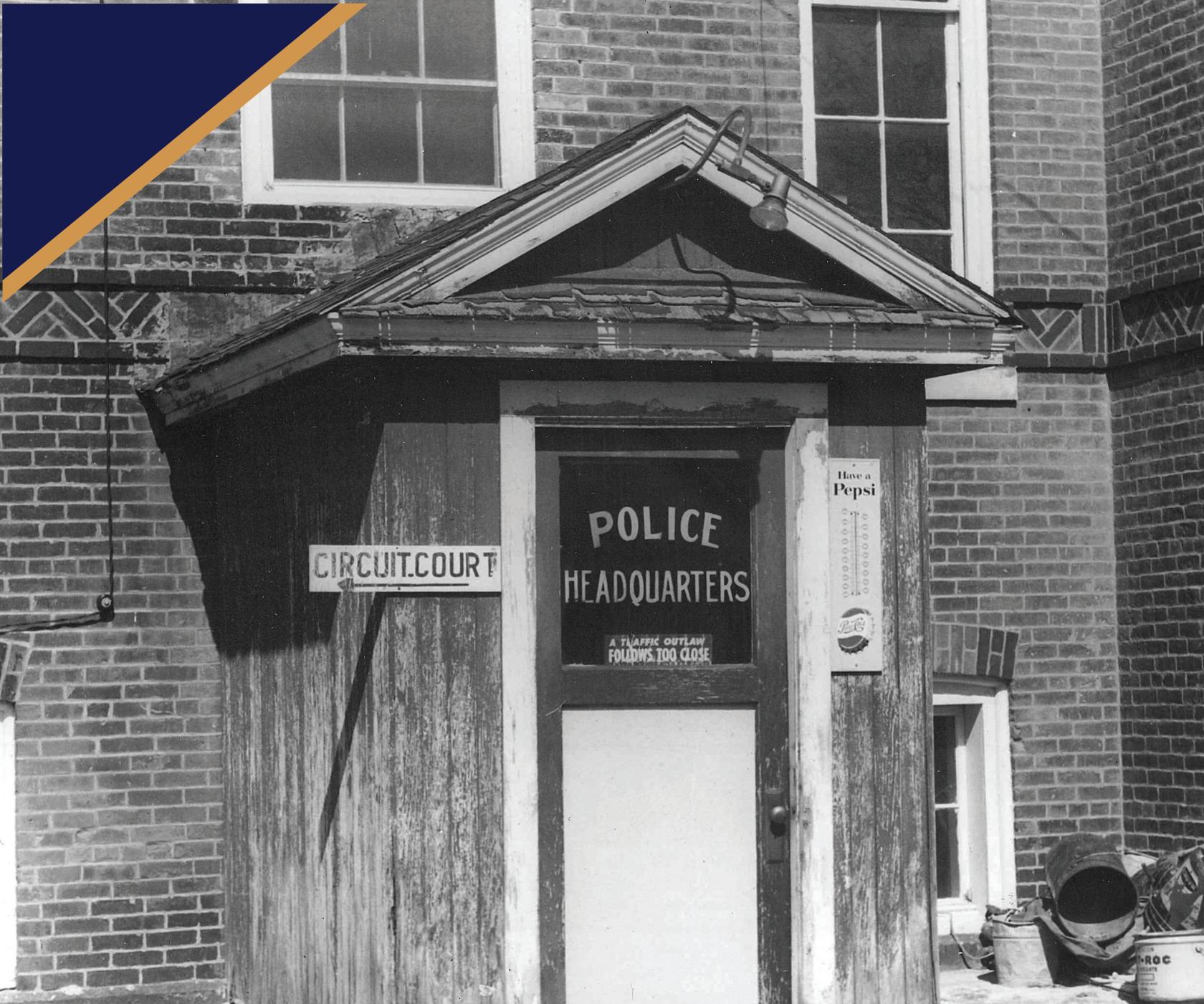
When I arrived, I attempted something I had read somewhere that noted, ‘grab the elephant by the ear’ and it will obey you. In this case, the elephant threw me 10 feet and knocked me to the ground. I then became resourceful and went to the cruiser and got a ‘tow strap.’

At that point, I attached the ‘tow strap to the elephant’s chain and attached it to one of the apple trees. I then went searching for the handlers, who were at Chickering Tavern. They got in the cruiser and we proceeded to the Elks, where by that time the elephant had uprooted at least four apple trees. One of the handlers then took over, kicking the elephant in the shins and calmly resecuring it to the building.”

The story made the national news headlines – Local Cop Captures Pachiderm. Following the event, Perron was often referred to as “Bwana” by his fellow officers.



*Book written by Ronald P. Coderre,  
coordinated by Jennifer Brytowski, designed by Kathy Guertin,  
and printed at Chase Graphics, Inc.*



Circa 1896



Circa 1945



Circa 1965



Circa 1986



Circa 2006



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