



HARRISONBURG VA
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(Above, from left) Sgt. LaPrevotte, Lt. Grubbs and Det. Diaz with their 150th anniversary badges, one of many ways the department is honoring the important milestone. (Right) The new HPD anniversary badge.

HPD reflects on, honors 150 years of service to Harrisonburg

Events to take place throughout fall to recognize milestone anniversary

HARRISONBURG, Va. – As the Harrisonburg Police Department nears the 150th anniversary of serving The Friendly City, the important milestone will be celebrated through a collection of events and recognitions focused on honoring all those who have contributed to HPD over the years.

The department officially was founded on Nov. 12, 1872, when the then Harrisonburg Town Council selected the first paid Chief of Police – Joseph Kelly. Chief Kelly was joined by one paid police aid. In the intervening years, the department has seen another 21 chiefs serve and has grown to more than 100 officers.

In addition to custom anniversary badges officers are now wearing to mark the occasion, HPD will place a time capsule in the Public Safety Building courtyard, create a video of stories and interviews from HPD retirees about the department’s history,

host a banquet to celebrate 150 years of service, and will place a memorial stone at the gravesite of Lt. Leon Byrd – HPD’s first African American member to make the rank of Lieutenant – among other events. A series of social media posts will offer historical spotlights, showcasing department “firsts,” notable stories, advancements, projects, and people who made HPD what it is over the many years.

The Harrisonburg community is invited and encouraged to join in on the celebration.

“We’ve been serving the people of Harrisonburg for 150 years, and every one of us over those many years has been honored to do so,” HPD Chief Kelley Warner said. “A lot has changed since November 1872, from equipment and crime solving techniques to policing models, and we will always strive to continue to grow and evolve to provide the best service we can to our community. I hope many of you will join us in the coming weeks in reflecting on the history of our department, and in looking forward to the future we build here together.”

Follow HPD on Facebook to see 150th anniversary posts at www.facebook.com/HarrisonburgPoliceDepartment.

The City of Harrisonburg is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to 51,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.



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Notable Milestones in HPD History

Nov. 12, 1872 – Police department approved and incorporated by Harrisonburg Town Council

1873 – Jos T. Williams becomes first African American to serve as a Harrisonburg Police Officer

1956 – First female traffic officers/crossing guards join HPD

1959 – Sgt. Manuel Trenary, only HDP officer ever killed in the line of duty, shot and killed at L&S Diner break-in.

1972 – HPD’s first fully-trained K9 unit, Atlas, handled by Officer James D. Jones

1977 – Christine Teney, first fully-sworn female/African American female officer, joins HPD