

ASHBURNHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT HISTORY

According to town reports, in 1867, the earliest term for law enforcement was known as, *Constable*. Along with the term *Constable* was also a title of *Keeper of Lock-up*. These positions appear to have been made by election of the residents in Town. In 1903 the term, *Special Police* came into effect in addition to a term of *Game Warden* which appears in 1923.

The Town report for 1928 lists three (3) Constables who were, Ralph Parkhurst, Elmer Russell, and Leon Waltz. The Constables had an annual appropriation of approximately \$425.93 dollars. During that year, \$436.40 was actually spent. In 1944, the annual appropriation increased to \$800.00 and then increased again in 1946 to \$1000.00

According to Article 11 from the Town meeting on 3/8/1947, the first Police Chief position was enacted where Frank S. Braman was appointed. On 12/31/1947 Chief Frank S. Braman submitted a report of the activity of the Police department from 3/11/1947 to 12/31/1947. This was the first known activity report which listed 31 arrests, 7 break & entering crimes, 5 larcenies, 247 motor vehicle violations, and 31 motor vehicle accidents.

In 1949 the Town report listed Ralph W. Parkhurst as the Chief of Police with an annual appropriation of \$4,300.00. It wasn't until 1950 that the Police Department purchased their first cruiser. Until this time Chiefs used their own vehicle.

After the leave of Chief Parkhurst, Chief Eino Moisio was appointed who served many years and then retired in the early 1970's. Upon his retirement, Chief James Platt was appointed.

In 1974 Ronald P. Laplante was appointed as Police Chief. Chief Laplante headed the department for over 24 years until his retirement in 1998. As of this time Chief Laplante is the longest tenured Police Chief for the town of Ashburnham.

John E. Murray Jr. was then appointed as Chief who then retired in December 2002. Chief Roy Bourque then was appointed Chief from June 2003 until February 2005.

In July of 2005, Chief Loring Barrett was appointed as Chief for the Ashburnham Police Department. At this time, the Ashburnham Police Department is now staffed by a Chief, 2 Sergeants, 1 Detective Patrolman, 6 Patrolman, 4 Reserve Patrolman, 1 Head Dispatcher, 3 Full time Dispatchers & 4 Reserve Dispatchers.

The Police department was located in the Town Hall from the 1950's until early 1980's. The Police Department then moved into the vacant Veterans Memorial School building. The Police Department stayed there until 10/7/2008, when it moved into a newly constructed 7.5 Million Dollar, Public Safety Complex that now houses the Police-Dispatch-Fire Departments which is located at 99 Central Street

The cruiser fleet now consists of, four (4) fully marked units, and two (2) unmarked units. The department also has a fully marked boat unit which is used for patrol on the many lakes within the Town.