

History of the Foxborough Police Department

Chief Michael Grace



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(Including the death of Officer Fred Pettee)

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Introduction

Before sinking into the Foxborough Police history we want to provide you with a little town history. We think that this information will help you better understand the Foxborough Police Department and what makes us unique. This page will be updated on a regular basis as we learn more information about the Police Department.

Foxborough is a small community of about 16,000 residents with five major highways that go through the town. There are two ways to spell the town, Foxborough VS Foxboro, both are correct however the first is the technically correct spelling. The Town of Foxborough has two subjects that strongly define its history. First was the straw-hat factory that first became functional back around 1798. Next came the New England Patriots in 1971. A short time ago Patriot place was added to the Patriot Family. Both of these rich pieces of history strongly involve the Foxborough Police Department. We hope to help you see how the Foxborough Police Department can serve a small town of 16,000 and within hours convert into servicing around 1000,000. This is a unique responsibility placed on the Foxborough Police.



Straw Factory

Photo credit: web site of the Foxborough Historical Society



Gillette Stadium & Patriot Place

The straw hat factory had a lot of employees who had immigrated to the United States, many of these came from Ireland. So, it only makes sense that the first Police Officer would be of Irish heritage. The job of a police officer was not considered to be the best job available but it was usually a secure one. There was a great deal of political influence with it as well.

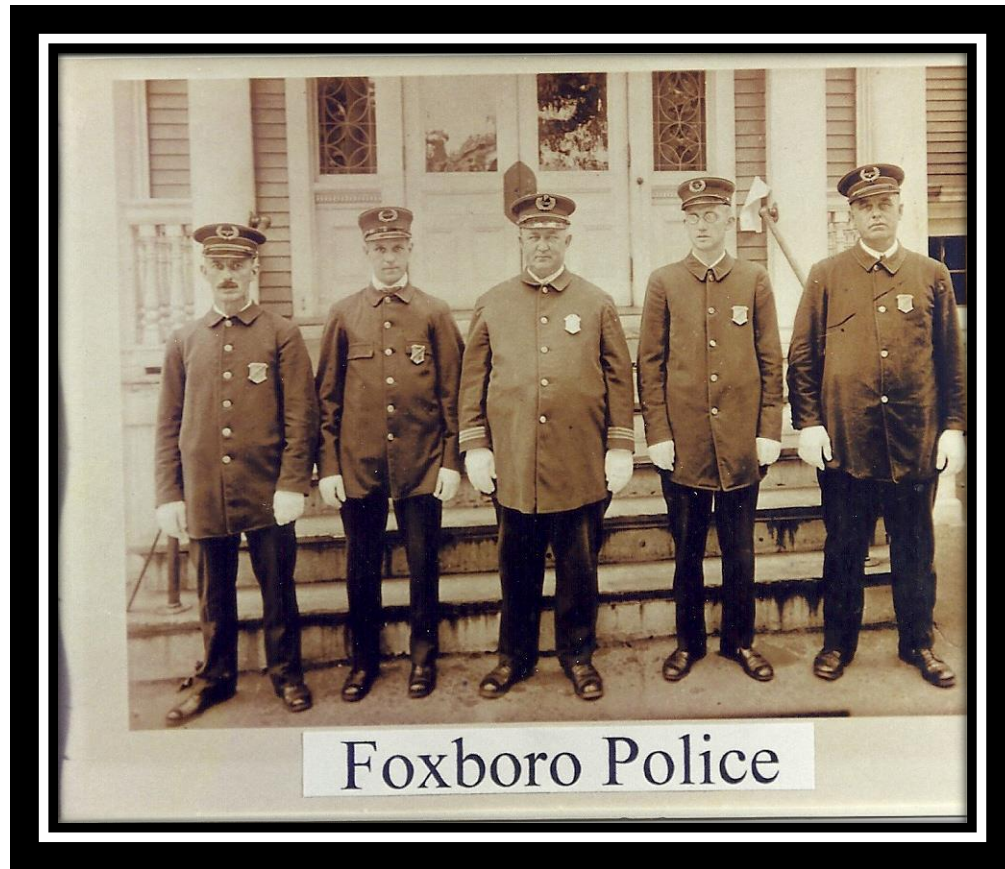
We will be following up with additional information for this page. The coronavirus has prevented us from conducting proper research.



The Foxborough Police Department

Not much is known about the early days of the Foxborough Police but we will provide you with as much as we can.

Foxborough's first actual Police Officer was hired to control the rowdy Irish workers at the Straw factory. It was felt that an Irish Chief of Police would be able to communicate with the local Irish community.



August 16th, 1919 one of the earliest photos of the Foxborough Police Department. The members are not identified with the exception of the officer on the far right who we believe is Fred Pettee. The location is also unknown but believes to be at a municipal building where the police had an office.

1870: Frequency of burglaries call for action. Goods stolen at stores of James Stiff, Guy and Brothers, G. H. Butterworth. Need detective

1870-80s: G. R. Lewis kills erring wife Caroline Ellen ... Lewis convicted of adultery 3 yrs. ago

Fiendish Attempt at Poisoning in East Foxboro. London Purple, 43% arsenic, put in wells of E. A. Kingsbury, Esq. and Mrs. Alfred Hodges, packages on Sharon road

Elizabeth Arrington killed in home. Died December 25, 1885

Rumors ... Inquest closed ... Wm. Lyons, Foxboro, arrested ... Lyons evidence=reputation

William A. Lyons, suspect in 1885 murder, arrested for assault and battery and property damage, fined for assault, sentenced to six months for damage

Skeleton found in Dudley Hill woods

Terrible event. C. W. Cormac kills daughter, commits suicide. Death notice - May 6, C. W. Cormac, 46, Gertrude M. Cormac, 13

1880-1900:

Former resident, John P. Ross shot by his wife, Mary E. Ross in Sharon. Mrs. Ross claims she shot in self-defense; husband abused her. She is in Dedham jail

Bail reduced. Public opinion reported (reprint Sharon Advocate) ... Mary Ross indicted for manslaughter

Mrs. Ross acquitted of murder April 28, 1899 in Sharon of her husband, former Foxboro resident. Claimed self-defense. First case under new indictment procedure

Both are Dead: Mr. and Mrs. David L. Shepard died. Found, with their throats cut September 21 in their home on South St.

William Shepard found September 21 drowned in Factory Pond. Proof he killed parents.

1880's: Selectmen appoint Thomas McNamara to night patrol, handles loiterers on Memorial Hall wall, FC Jul 22, 1882

1896: Friend P. Carpenter appointed Chief of Police, Mar 14, 1896

1900's: Town Meeting: Committee appointed on aiding merchants by establishing a police or detective organization:

1900: Police regulations printed on cloth and posted in various portions of the town. Necessary because of disgraceful and persistent violations, May 5, 1900

1900: *Our New Lockup: Portable lockup placed in old engine house, recently used as a band room. Two rooms, description. Unruly boy taken to Bridgewater State farm, Sep 8, 1900

1900: Officers Cady, Pond and their associates raid camp near Neponset reservoir. One of the Italians of Chestnut St. before District Court, sentenced liquor sale, Oct 27, 1900

1901: Charles H. Cade appointed as policeman and lock-up keeper. Also appointed chief of police.

1902: Town Meeting article 24, to maintain a night police. Left in hands of selectmen. (Night Police were also referred to as the Night Watch).

1902: Raids recently on Foxboro House and Cocasset House and fines paid to District Court for illegal sale of liquor, Oct 18, 1902

1919: Selectmen appoint eleven special policemen

PROHIBITION 1926

1927: Appointed: Police force listed. Chief Ernest A. White, May 7 1927

1927: Police Chief White and officers raided three locations. Some evidence found at Foxvale and South Foxboro, Jun 4, 1927

1930's: Changes Made: Chief Dean supplanted with former Chief Ernest A. White. Other appointment changes

Six Men Arrested After Shooting and Holdup: Trash camp Beach and Mechanic St owned by Mrs. McGrath. Shoot pig next door, car jack Nathaniel Johnson. Arrests

Selectmen: Chief Ernest A. White resigns

Selectmen: Twenty-two applicants for position of Chief of Police listed. Joseph P. Dean voted Chief.

New Chief Takes Over: Joseph P. Dean

Alleged Burglars Shot In Fight With officer, One Man Killed, Other Wounded Resisting Arrest. Criticism unfair (Officer Hansen?)

1931: Town Meeting: Article 17 Vote to build Police Station and Lock-up as addition to Fire Station. Article 27 Vote civil service for police

State Board of Health approved plan for addition to Fire House to house Police Dept. ...
Selectmen: Bids on station opened. Award M. E. Allen

Occupy New Quarters: Description

The first known police station was located at the side of the fire station located on the common at Rockhill Street as mentioned above. Prior to that we believe that they had a room within a municipal building.

Above are some of the actions of the early Foxborough Police Department. Below the photo we will move ahead a little.



Pictures here are five Foxborough policeman. This is believed to be for the funeral of Officer Fred Pettee who was hit by a car on Rt. #1 while backing up the State Police at an accident scene in December of 1934. Notice the armbands and badge backings. The location is the side entrance of the old firehouse on Rockhill. It is also believed that the horses were kept in the space behind the large garage door. There was an addition put on the building sometime after this photo.



The Tragic Death of Officer Fred Pettee

On a cold December night Officer Fred Pettee was dispatched to Rt #1 to assist the State Police with a motor vehicle accident. This is something that the Foxborough and State did back then and continue to do so today on a regular basis. Motor vehicle accidents are unfortunately a very common call for service.

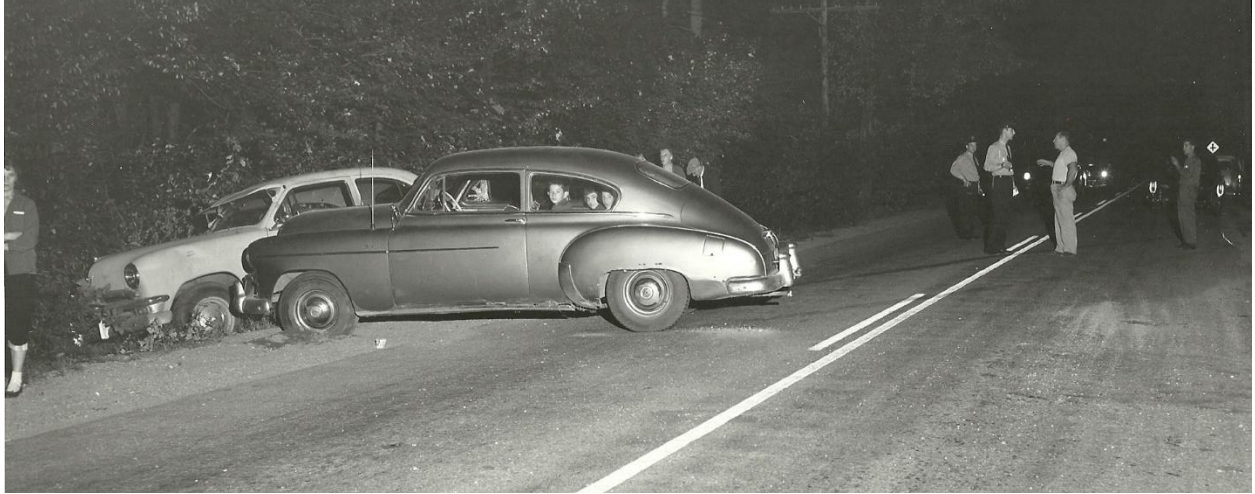
While assisting the state police a vehicle struck and killed Officer Pettee. He was conducting his daily expectation in guiding motorists when he had the bad fortune of this accident. In 1997 the Foxborough Police with the kind donations of many Foxborough residents and business owners had a memorial placed on the Foxborough Common. The design was intended to compliment the Fire Department's memorial on the opposite side of the common. Around this same time period, the Foxborough Police had the name of Officer Pettee name added to the Police Memorial located in Washington D.C. A short dead-end, off of Main street was also named after him, Pettee Way.



1940's

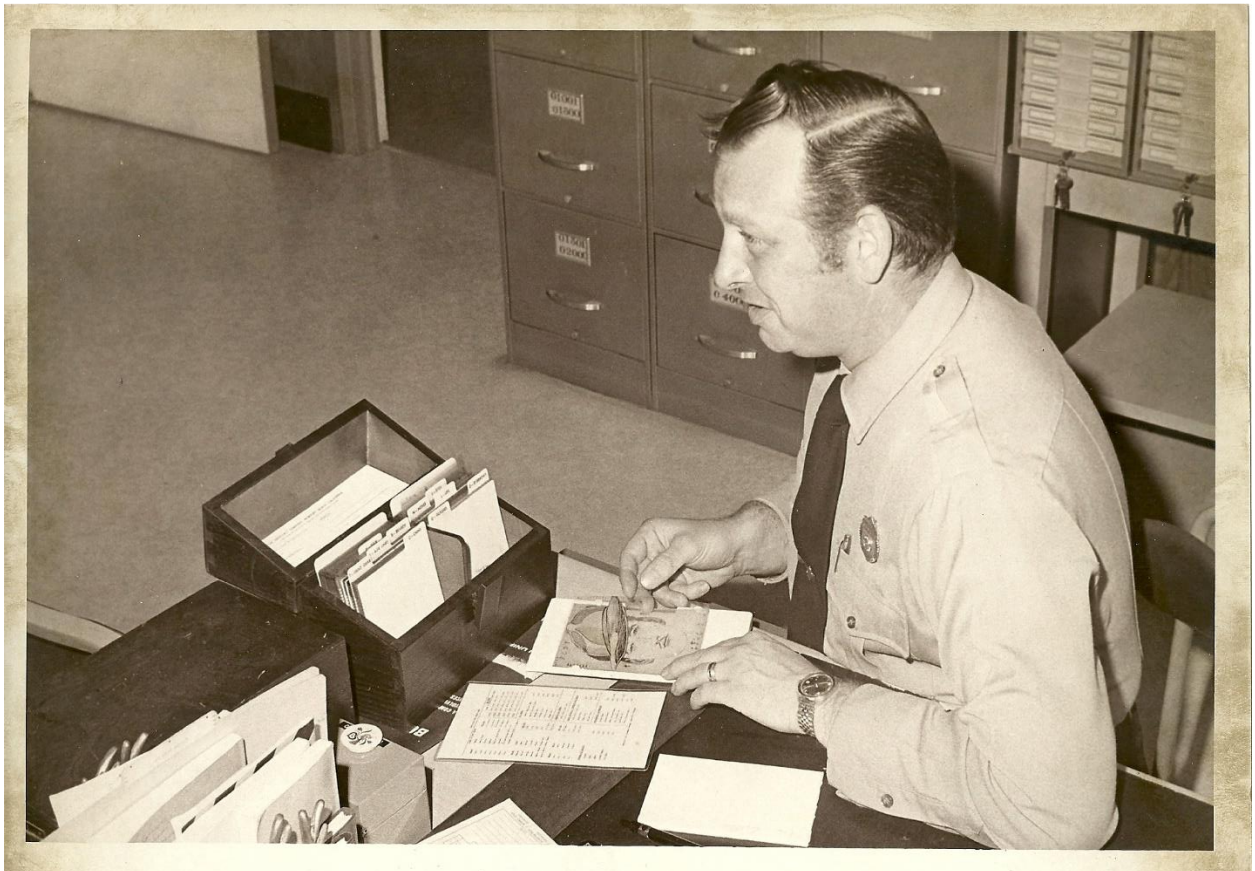
STILL GATHERING INFORMATION. IF YOU HAVE ANY TO SHARE, PLEASE CONTACT THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

1950's



This is a call that we will be responding to as long as vehicles exist, the "MVA". A motor vehicle accident is a routine call for a policeman however we are fully aware it is anything but that for the people involved.

1960's

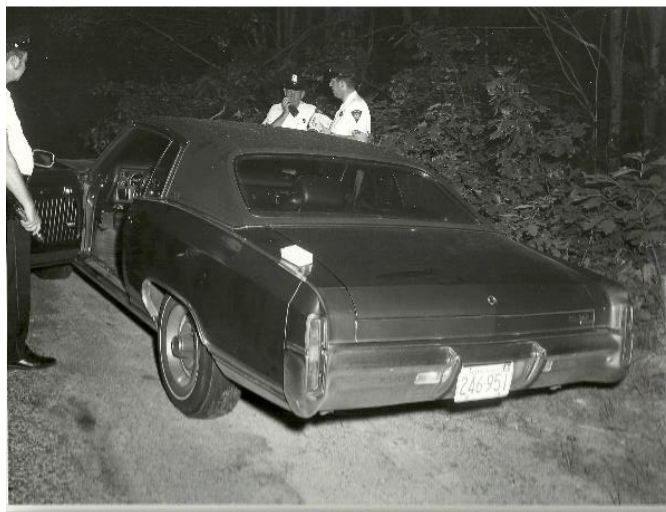


This officer is in the process of putting together a composite, notice the picture, it was done in layers of different facial parts that you would put together until you achieved the results needed.



F.P.D. responding to an MVA at the intersection of North and Chestnut.

1970's





Chief McCarthy with what appears to be a retirement gift?



Notice the tiny shirt badge and triangle patch.
This is what gives us an idea on the era of the photo.



1980's

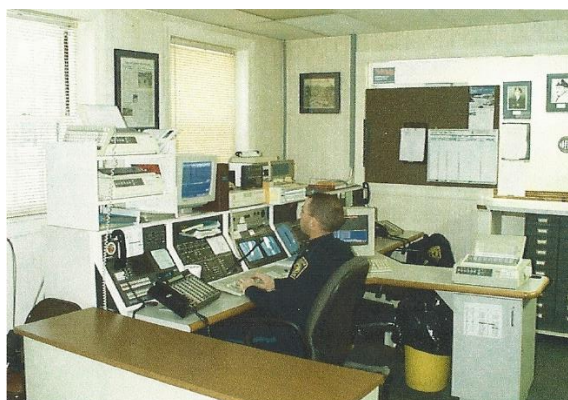
In the late 1980's some major renovations were done to the police station located at 40 South Street, the building where the police and town offices were located. Town hall was located on the top level and the police station on the bottom level. Below there are a good amount of photos of the old station. They are before and after the renovation, but you will see the huge difference between where we were and where we are...



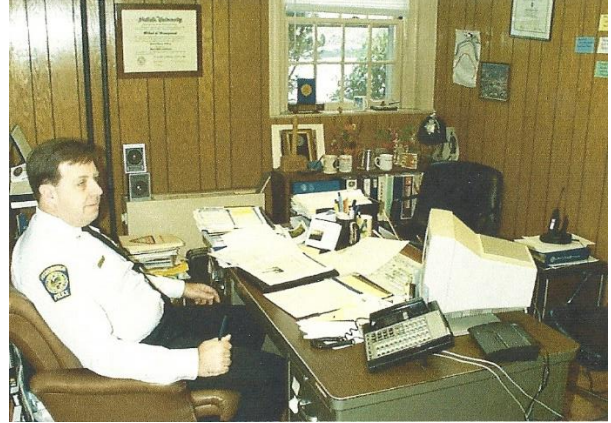
The door located on the bottom left of the building was the entranceway to the police station for the general public. This location is now the parking lot in front of the current town hall.



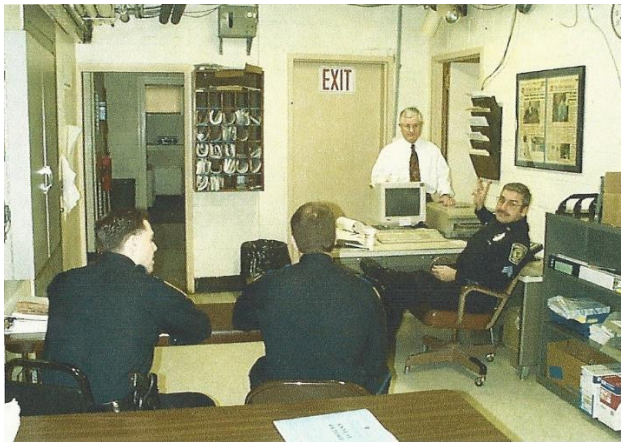
You are looking at the lobby where the public would come to seek police assistance, It was not uncommon to get rain in here that would funnel into the rest of the building.



This is a view of the dispatch area which was on the opposite side of the public entrance. Then Patrolman Thibedeau would have responded to the window to assist the citizen.



Thru dispatch would bring you to the department's secretary, here showing Nancy Bach when she was working for the Police. From this office you would have entered the office of the Chief of Police.



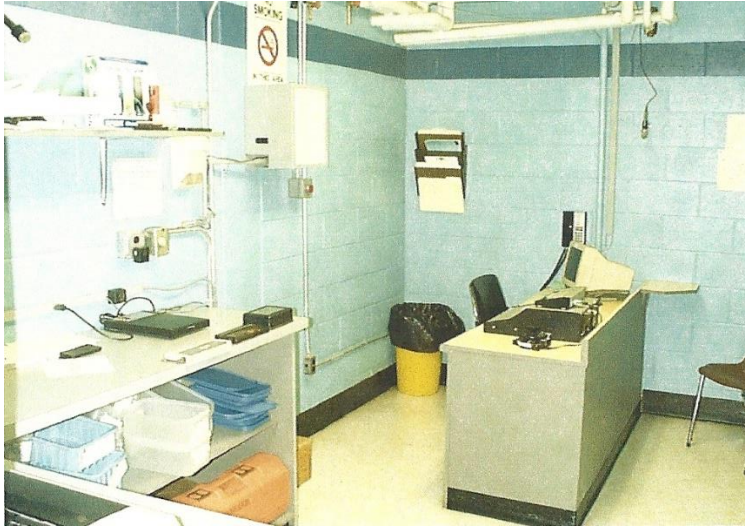
On your left was where roll call was held as well as report writing. On your right was the Detectives office.



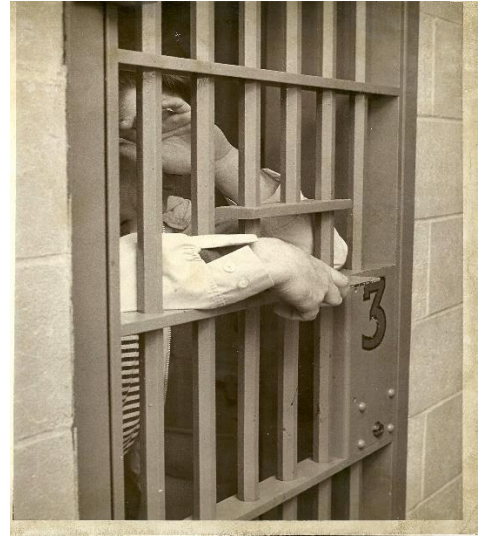
Firearms were kept in the room to the left. They could have been held for evidence or for safe keeping at the owner's request. The locker room was outdated to say the least, rain came in from the exercise room regularly which was just to the right of the last locker in the photo.



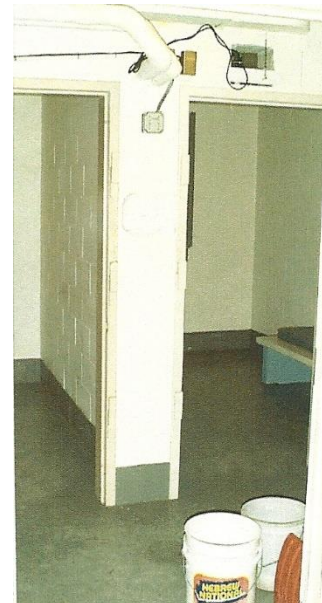
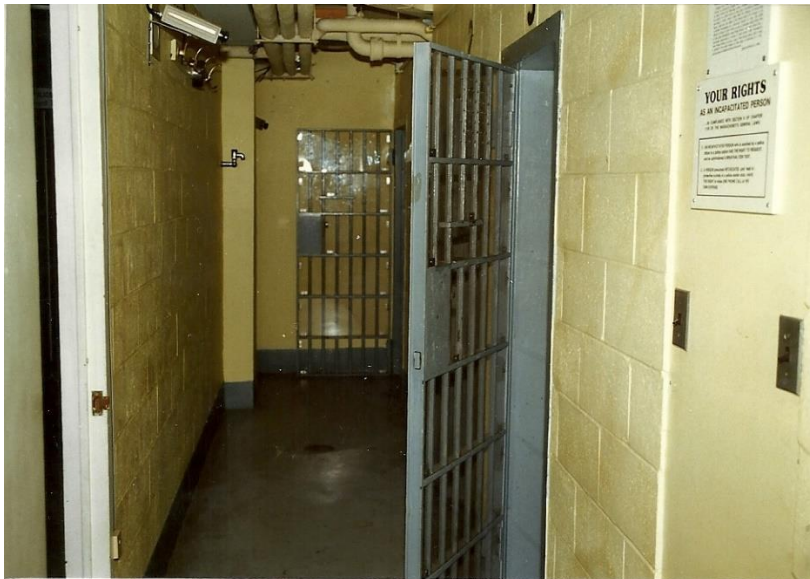
The exercise room on the left that always got water. The exercise room, locker room, evidence room and several storage rooms were formerly a firing range that the department had.



The booking room could tell a few stories.



Nobody knows the trouble I see....



The left shows the 4 male holding cells and the right photo shows the female cell to the right and the juvenile cell on the left. You should have seen these hallways on a busy stadium night....



This area was known as, "The Ramp" This is where the cruisers were kept and where the officers would come and go. Inside the garage doors as you see maintenance equipment was kept. The bay to the left stored the department motorcycles.





1985

Front Row left to right: John Chandler, Doug Ivarone, Thomas Blasdel, Anthony Medeiros, Paul Shi, Ray Smith, Thomas Kirrane, Gary Maitland and Allan Haskell.

Back Row left to right: Sue Kronmiller, Kurt Ludwig, James Kozak, Stephen Brightman, Billy Graham, Edward O'Malley, Chief Edward O'Leary, Peter Thibeault, Francis Bennett, Paul Conant, Francis Strickland, Peter Taggart and Paul Doherty.

1990's

FLAG DAY — Foxboro's reserve police unit received a special flag last week, compliments of local businessman Gerry Rodman. From left: officers Robert Mignone, Tony Gallo, Rodman, Gary Carter and Sgt. John Chandler, liaison with the police department. The reserve department is comprised of 20 men and women who meet monthly for training at the Igo Building. (Photo by Vin Igo)

85%



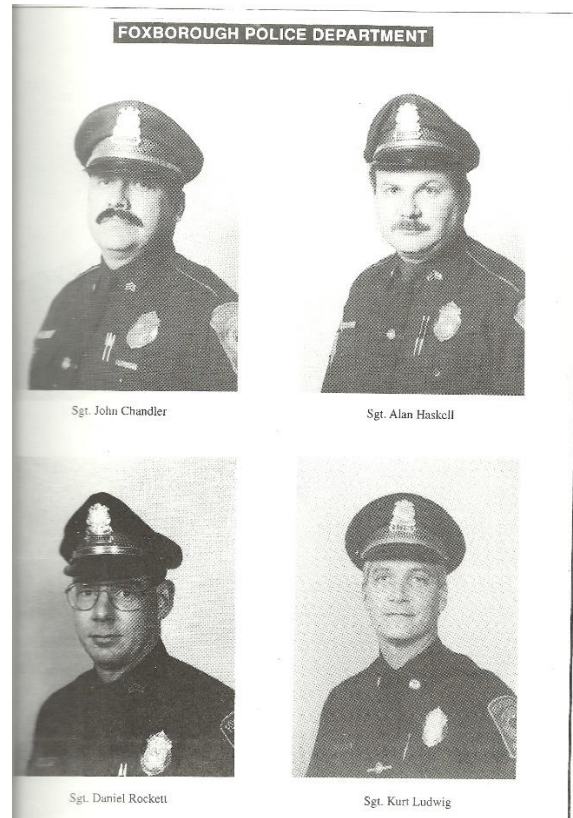
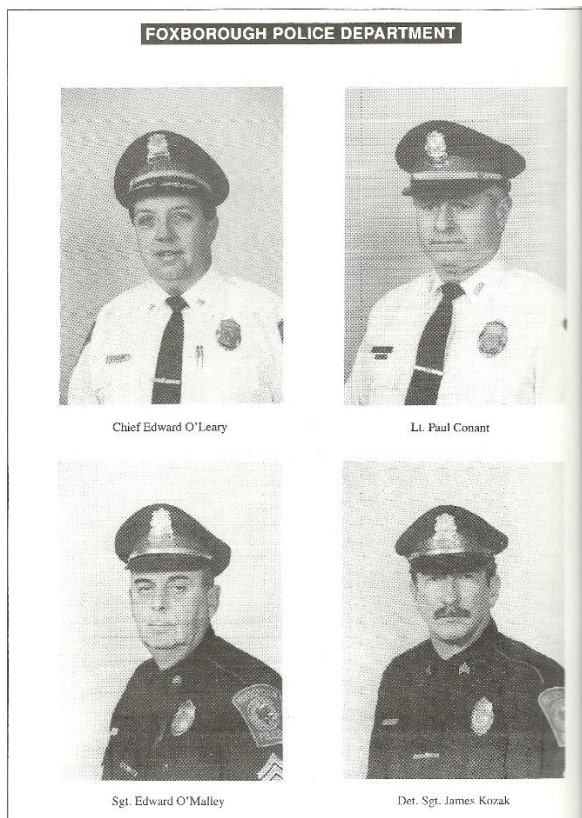
1993

The Foxborough Reserve Force has always been an important part of the department's structure. From Founders Day to day to day functions our reserves have contributed a great deal to the department.



Patrolman Doherty and Chief O'Leary in 1993 at High Rock Road inspecting the communications tower.

1997



FOXBOROUGH POLICE DEPARTMENT



Ptlm. Brian Gallagher



Ptlm. John Thibedeau



Ptlm. Thomas McGuire



Ptlm. Joseph McDonald

FOXBOROUGH POLICE DEPARTMENT



Sgt. John Hannon



Ptlm. Paul Doherty



Ptlm. Raymond Smith



Ptlm. Thomas Kirrane

FOXBOROUGH POLICE DEPARTMENT



Ptlm. Scot Taggart



Ptlm. Scott Austin



Ptlm. Robert Ford



Ptlm. Timothy O'Leary

FOXBOROUGH POLICE DEPARTMENT



Det. Ptlm. Gene Bousquet



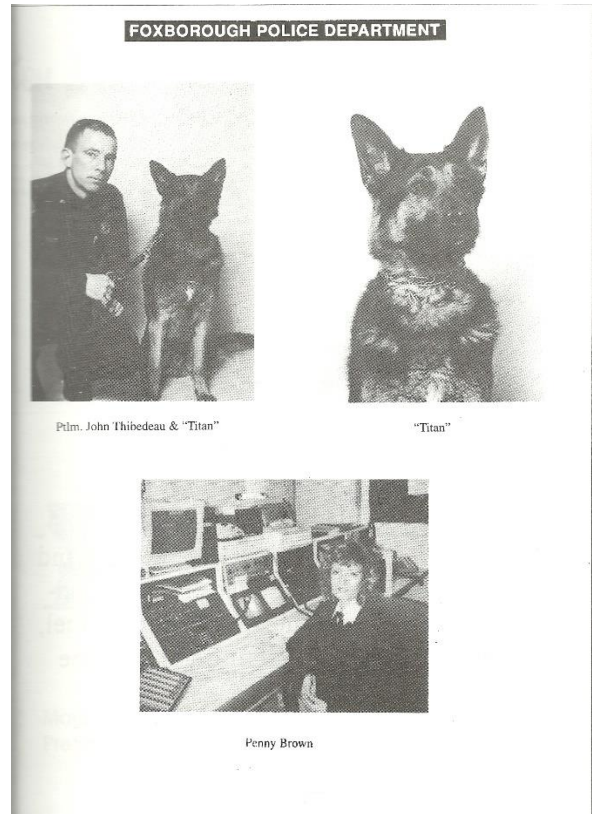
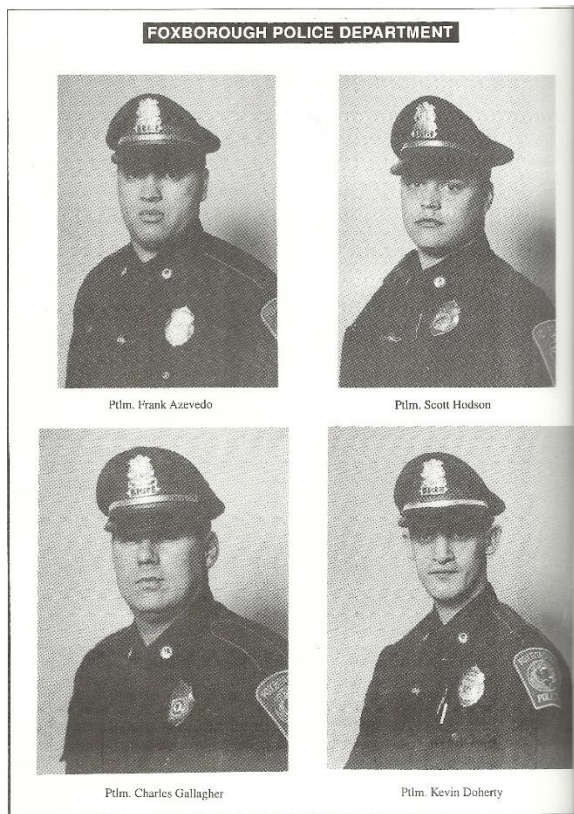
Det. Ptlm. Gary Maitland



Ptlm. Paul Shields



Ptlm. Anthony Medeiros



Retired Detective Brian Gallagher getting ready for his plain clothes assignment at an event in Gillette stadium. Uniformed are Officer Paul Doherty and Lt. Conant. Notice the Paddy Wagon in the background?



This 1998 newspaper article shows the Foxborough Police and Fire Department's reenacting a serious Motor Vehicle Accident, (MVA). This was conducted for the High School students. Today our School Resource Officers are tirelessly working with the schools to ensure the best possible prevention they can provide.



We took this just before they demolished the old stadium. It's easy to forget just how close it was to the highway.

International Guests



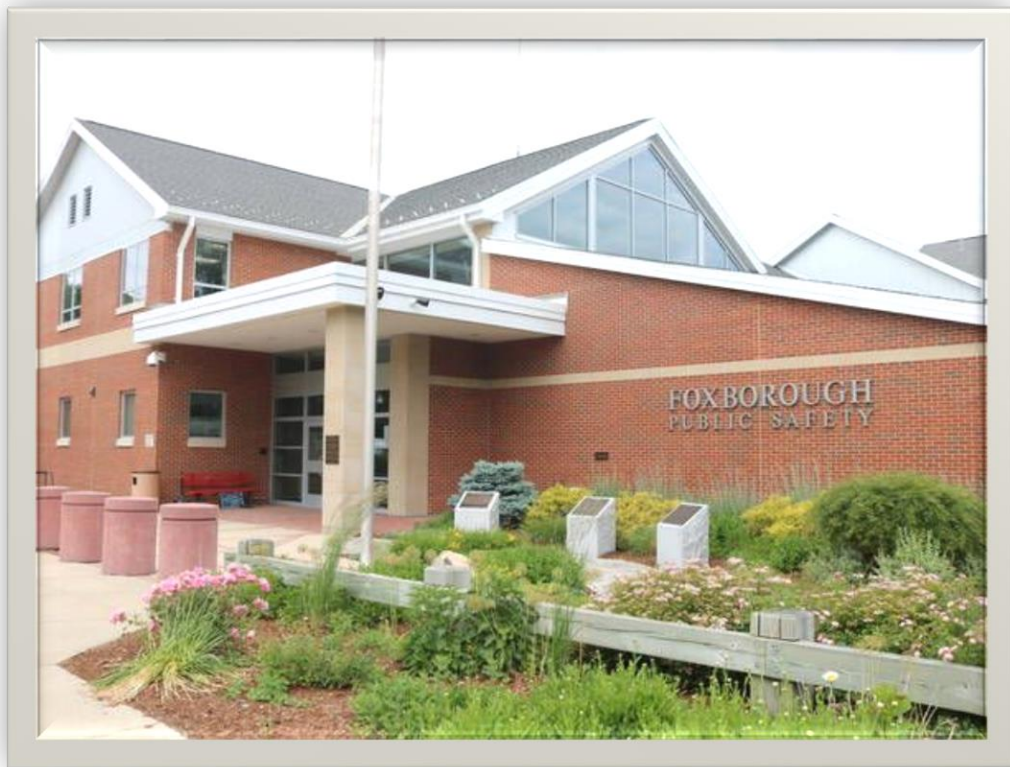
It is common for law enforcement guests to visit the area during the events at Gillette. Once in a while we have international guests. Above is Officer Gallagher who is hosting a London, England, Detective Constable Graham Hempstead. D.C. Hempstead has made several additional trips to our area since.

2000's

In 2002 The Kraft organization bought the New England Patriots and in 2002 built the stadium of today which seats 65,878 people. In addition to the football game there is also the New England Revolution. As well as a shopping center throughout the entire property, two medical facilities, a movie theatre, two full size hotels, a commuter rail station, several night clubs and numerous restaurants and stores. So, as you can see the number of people that the Foxborough Police department protects increases dramatically over a short period of time. We transition from a nice and quiet

We do have back up. Along with the Foxborough police working these details are the Massachusetts State Police and the overall majority of surrounding community police agencies. On average, we have about a dozen different community police agencies working with is on event days.

2010's



Today's Foxborough Police Department



Now retired Lt. Austin welcomes Kelly Colvin as he graduates from the Academy and onto the force.



Chief Michael Grace is "pinned" by his wife



Donut Day with the New England Patriots as Chief Grace, Deputy Noonan, Sgt Foscaldo and Detective Bohnenberger spend some downtime with one of the New England Patriots that stopped by.



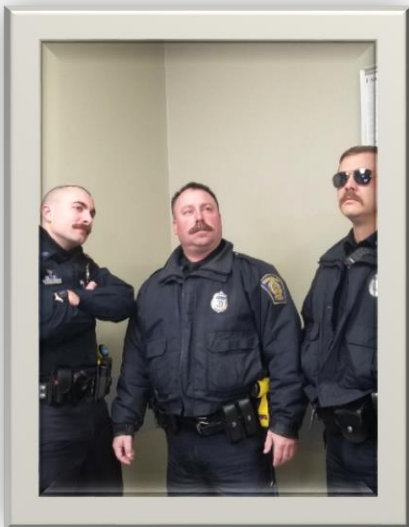
Lori McDonald and members of the Police Department are seen here with toys and donations for the Foxborough Discretionary Fund. Lori's late husband, Officer Joseph McDonald, died in 2019. Joe and Lori were very active in supporting the Discretionary Fund throughout the year.



On the left are Officer Kerry Kilroy and Officer James Fahey (Retired). On the right, Officer Francisco Azevedo shows off one of our Harley Davidson motorcycles.



Above photo is Patrolman John Chamberlin with his K-9 Jada. Sgt. David Foscaldo discussing the seriousness of hands-free driving with a local motorist.



Some say the Three Amigos and some say the Three Stooges,-you decide. Officers Easter, Buckley and Parah having a little fun just before "No Shave November" was ending. On the right are Officers Mattson and Easter.



Officers visiting from Haiti. This was part of an exchange program that Sgt Hoffman and Patrolman Steven McGrath participated in. Police officers can learn a great deal when interacting with other officers from around the world.

The Stadium

*In 1971 The Boston Patriots / The New England Patriots, moved their NFL franchise to the small town of Foxborough, Massachusetts. Throughout the country the overwhelming majority of professional sports teams are located in major cities. To move to Foxborough was a challenging and bold decision. With Foxborough located between the city of Boston and the city of Providence R.I. it would easily attract patrons from two states with little difficulty. Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine are all also relatively short drives to Foxborough as well. A major impact of its success was the ability of the Police and Fire Departments to handle the sudden impact of patrons in a very short time frame.





The above 1976 photo shown an Officer removing some Schlitz beer from patrons.

Although the stadium does bring a lot of attention to the department, it is far from all we do. We deliver professional services year-round at one of the most demanding locations in town. The Foxborough Police Chief has authority over stadium events.

And then there are the Foxborough Police of today...



Row #1 bottom: John Chamberlin, Michael Grace, John Hannon, Chief Edward O'Leary, Allan Haskell, Scott Austin, Richard Noonan and John Thibedeau

Row #2: Kenneth Fitzgerald, Shawn McKay, Frank Azevedo, Luke Drayton, Steve McGrath, David Foscaldo and James Cannata

Row #3: Shawn Buckley, Kerry Kilroy, Scot Taggart, Mark Bohnenberger, Adam Byrnes, Val Collins and James Parah.

Row #4: James Mattson, James Fahey, Chuck Gallagher, Patrick Hoffman, Timothy O'Leary, James Headd, Kurt Pollister and Patrick Morrison.



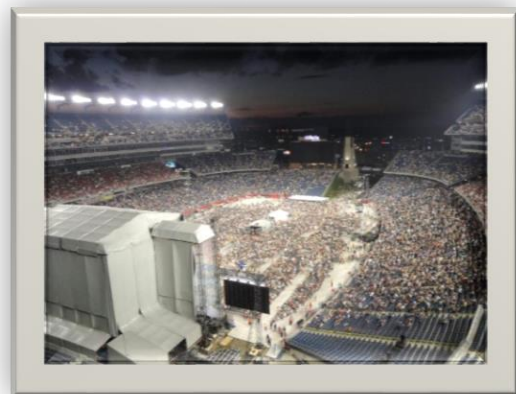
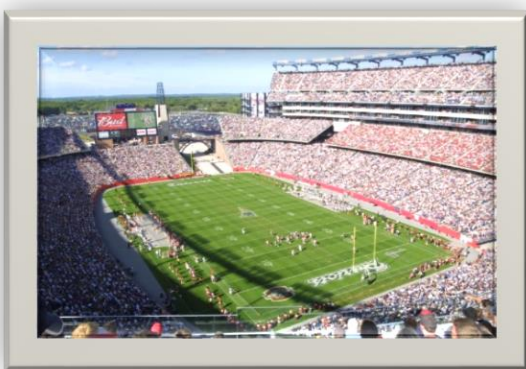
Civilians at bottom of photo, L to R: Lee McCarthy, Maria Nagle, Sean McRae, Rick Parker, Jessica Gallagher and Donna Driscoll.

Row #1, Bottom: John Chamberlin, Michael Grace, John Thibedeau, John Hannon, Chief O'Leary, Alan Haskell, Scott Austin, Rich Noonan

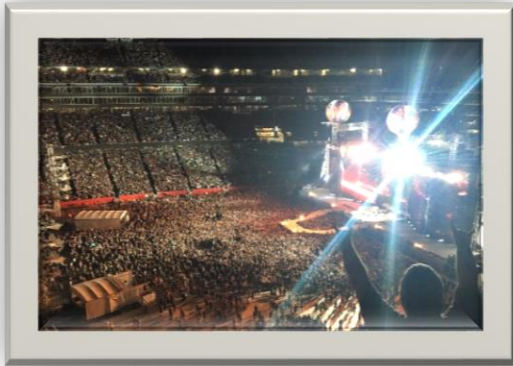
Row #2: James Fahey, Shawn McKay, Scot Taggart, Steven McGrath, David Foscaldo, James Cannata, William Fitzpatrick, Kenneth Fitzgerald.

Row #3: Chuck Gallagher, Patrick Morrison, Kerry Kilroy, Mark Bonhenberger, Luke Drayton, Adam Byrnes and Val Collins.

Row #4: James Mattson, Patrick Hoffman, Timothy O'Leary, Frank Azevedo, James Headd, James Parah, Kurt Pollister, and Shawn Buckley



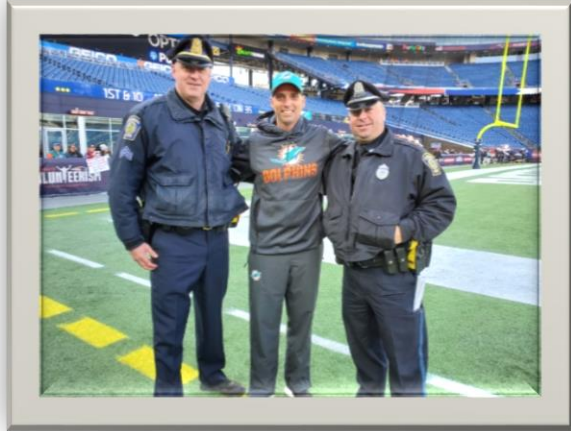
Regardless if it's a football game or a concert the F.P.D. is there to provide professional services as expected of us. In the past, to have 100+ custodies at a football game or concert was not unusual. Over the years with cooperation of the Kraft Organization we have crunched those numbers down drastically, especially with the football games.



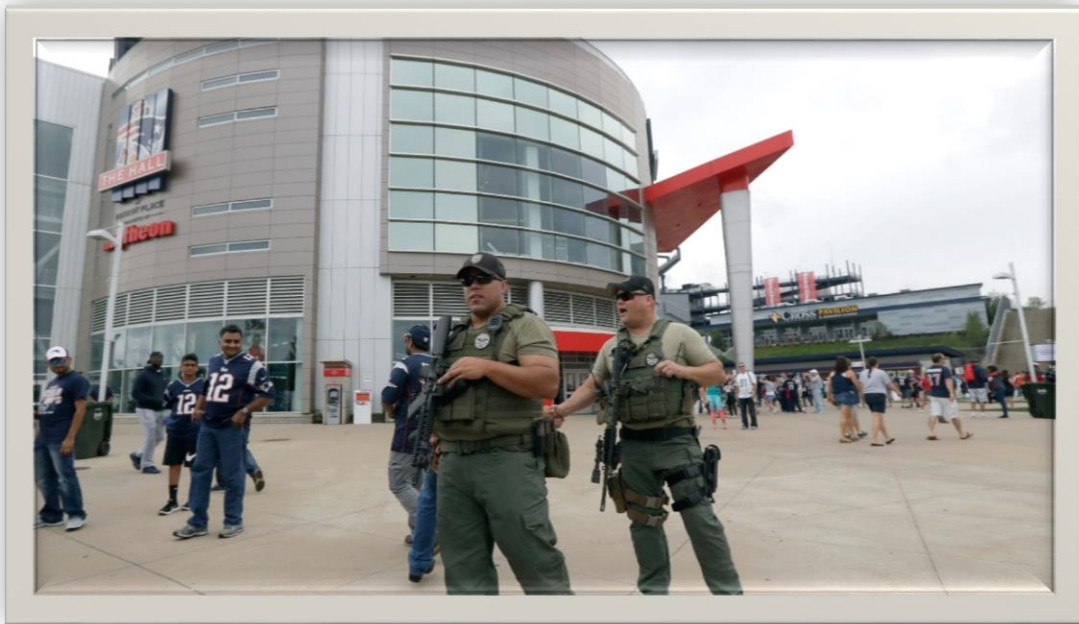
It doesn't matter if it is Metallica or Kenny Chesney the job is the same, Public Safety is our priority!



Tailgating is a great deal of what the patrons look forward to when attending a stadium event. Although the overwhelming majority of people are respectful and have a good time, there are occasional issues. The department is ready to deal with them directly.



Left: Jim Parah, Adam Byrnes and Shawn Buckley stand by one of the Army's mean machines. Adam Byrnes is not only a Police Officer for the town of Foxborough but he is a helicopter pilot in the National Guard. Right: John Chamberlin and Shawn Buckley flanking Chad O'Shea



On event days at the stadium you will see members of the METROLEC Unit throughout the property. They are utilized to reduce the threat of a major incident. On the property is also the Mass State Police who also bring in other state police agencies to assist them with their responsibilities given to them by our Chief.

Our Patches and Uniforms Throughout Our Years



Over the years the Foxborough Police have had several uniform changes that brought us to today's standards. This is something that is always changing and adjusting to the different needs and wants within the agency. Here are a few of our patches both past and present.



This is our first known patch; we have not been able to find a photograph of anyone wearing it.



This is the second known patch of the Foxborough Police Department. You will see several photos of officers wearing this patch on this page.



This is the patch that we wear today. Each patch has lasted a couple of decades each before they were changed.



This patch was first worn on our ceremonial raincoats. It is not currently being worn for anything else.



This patch was introduced by Detective Patrick Morrison around 2019. It was initially a novelty patch to raise funds for the American Cancer Society. Since then it has been approved to be worn for the month of October, as a sign of support to those who in one way or another have been affected by Cancer. Foxborough P.D. raised more money towards fighting Cancer than any other police department in the state selling these patches. Officer Taggart (retired) and Detective Morrison stand by a stack of patches.

These two patches have been worn by members of the department's Pipe and Drum unit that had just been delivered.



These two patches have been worn by members of the departments Pipe and Drum unit. This is a fine tribute to a tradition within Law Enforcement and our history.



Here are a couple of our old Reserve patches from years past.



This patch would be worn by a Field Training Officer. This officer will assist any new officer for several months in getting them to know our rules and regulations and more. If the new hire does not meet department standards then that would be addressed.



This patch is worn by a Police Officer who has completed Motorcycle training school. This is an intense course where the officer focuses on difficult riding with their 800-pound full dresser. The "T" in the center stands for Traffic, many patches do not have the "T" in it but some do.



This patch was produced for public awareness and as a fundraiser for children with Autism.

Badges

Since badges are more controlled there are much fewer of them. A badge is often seen as the single item that shows the authority a police officer carry's. In reality it is the I.D. that truly gives them the authority and shows them to truly be a police officer.

Gifted by the Foxborough historical society a number of years ago is the first badge of the Foxborough Police Department. Back in the day there was often just the Chief as a full-time officer, who would have had Special Officers (part-time).

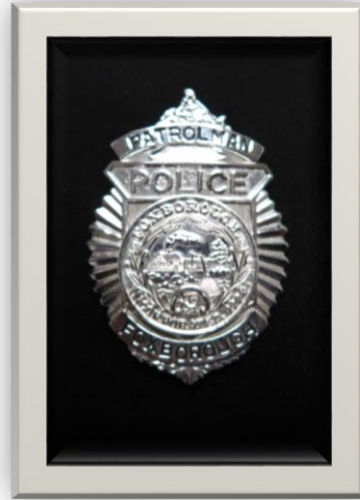
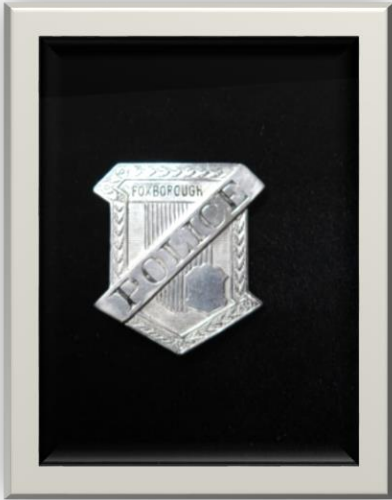
Chiefs badge's



This badge hangs in Chief Graces Office, it is believed to be the very first badge the Foxborough Police had. It is from around the 1800's and common in Mass for the times. This style of badge is known as a Radiator badge due to its shape looking like the front of a radiator on the cars of the day.



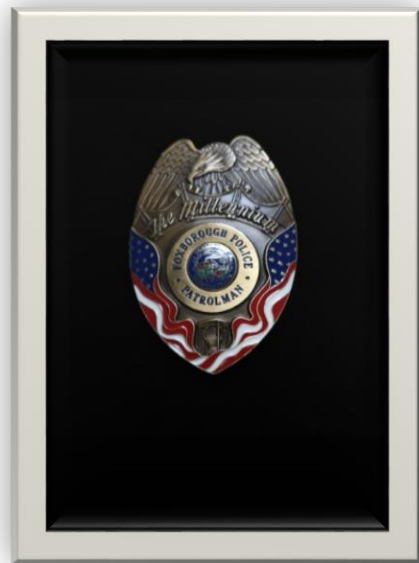
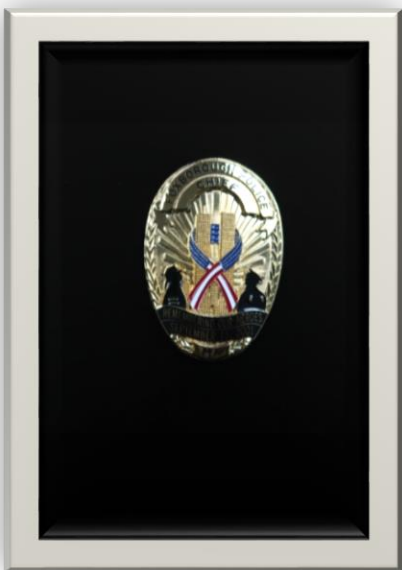
The Foxborough currently wears two different badges, the one on the left is the older style and has a solid seal and is worn on our shirt. The badge on the right has an enamel seal and worn on our jackets. This badge style followed the Radiator is known as a Clamshell badge.



The badge on the left is a Patrolman's Radiator badge from the same era as the Chief's badge above. On the right is a current Patrolman's shirt badge. Both the Chiefs and the Patrolman's badges are very rare.

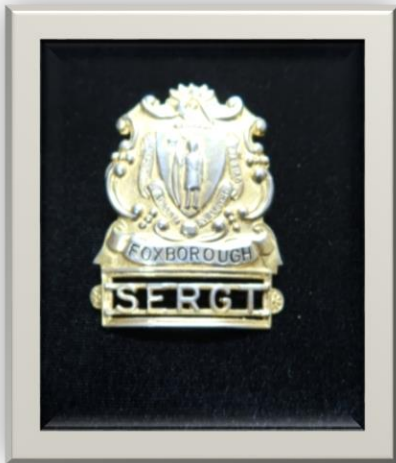
Other badges throughout the years

This badge is one that an Officer had made up and use to wear it only on St. Patrick's Day. The badge has since been retired.



The badge on the left is one we wear during the month of September for those who lost their lives on September 11th, 2001. The badge on the right we wore for the year 2000 in celebration of the new millennium.

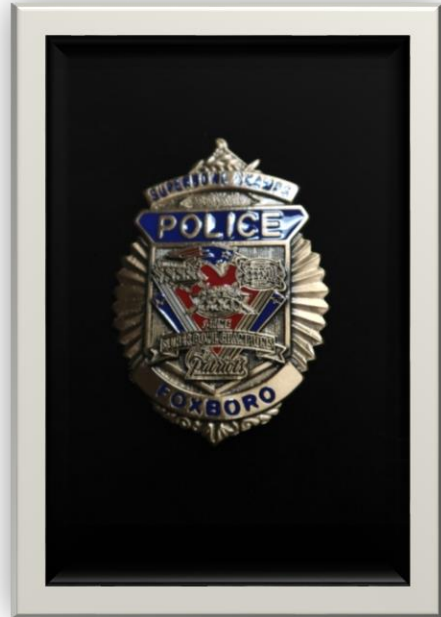
Hat Badges



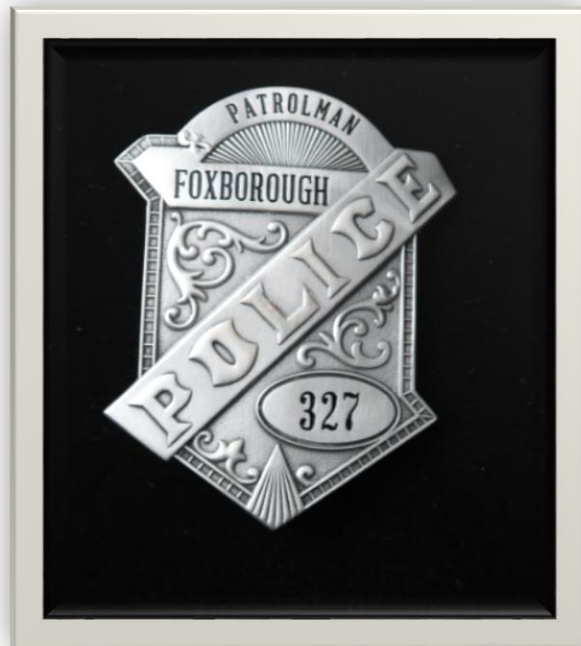
The Sgt. badge on the left is an older badge with a more current style on the right for Patrolman. As you can see there isn't much of a difference.

Novelty Badge

A novelty badge is a badge that is made for display rather than to be worn. They hold no police authority and are often traded with collectors or sold as a fundraiser.



Although these were not made by the Foxborough Police they were discovered in the collector's market.



This is a very nice novelty badge with the traditional look. It displays the high class that is often forgotten about when badges are put into production.

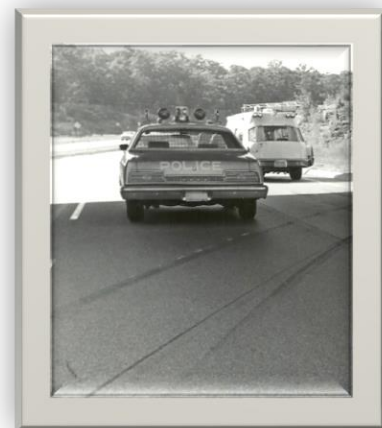
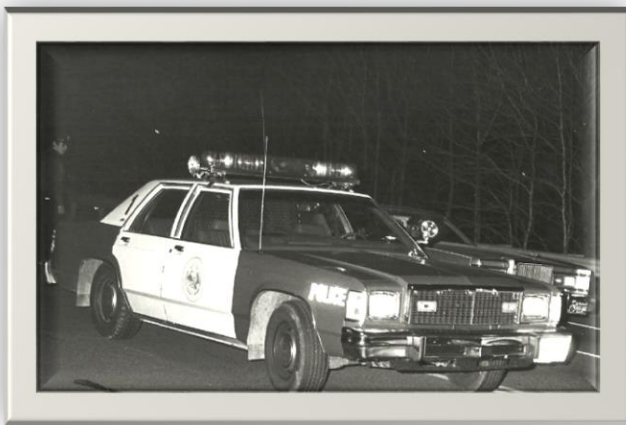
Some of our fleet over the years



A low-profile vehicle on the ramp and our first full size SUV which our entire fleet is now



CAPPY was a popular attraction for parades such as Founders Day.



The old box car from the 80's at an accident scene with a curvy cruiser from the 70-80s on the right. The photo on the right is under the route one bridge on route 140.



Here are a couple older cruisers that are standing by while officers investigate an M.V.A.



The older cart we had up at the stadium

A photo of the older motorcycles.



This is the cruiser of today, with hidden LED lighting all around it and the low profile lightbar. This is probably the best police car to date with all of the safety features, space and appearance.

Thank you for visiting our history page. We will continue to add and correct this page as time allows.

Please Be Safe,
The Foxborough Police Department



*This history page is dedicated to the memory of Officer Joseph
“Big Daddy” McDonald. Joe was taken from us too soon in
2019 after serving 28 years with the
Foxborough Police Department.*