

# Metropolitan Police Academy



## 1.6 History of MPD

### **1.6.1 Summarize a basic overview of the history of the Metropolitan Police Department**

The early history of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) is bound together with that of the American Civil War. The events that sparked the war led to the founding of the department and defined its early mission. Many of the men who were among the first Metropolitan Police officers served in the war. The aftermath of the war would lead to a low mark in the history of the department.

The election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 as President of the United States sparked a national crisis, as South Carolina, soon joined by several other states, seceded (or withdrew) from the union and declared themselves a new country: The Confederate States of America. On April 12, 1861, confederate forces fired cannons at Fort Sumter, which was held by U.S. Army troops in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina. The bombardment of Fort Sumter resulted in the outbreak of war between the northern (Union) states and the southern (Confederate) states.

The capital of the Confederacy was located in Richmond, Virginia, which is less than 100 miles from Washington, DC. Many people in the Union believed that the war would be a quick and easy victory. The small number of U.S. Army troops were supplemented with a large number of volunteer soldiers as the Union marshaled an army near Washington DC. In July of 1861, General Irvin McDowell led an army of 35,000 Union soldiers towards Richmond. It was expected that the army would easily defeat any Confederate troops that opposed them, then march to Richmond and end the conflict in short order. McDowell's army encountered a Confederate army in Prince William County, Virginia and fought the First Battle of Bull Run on July 21, 1861. The Union lost the battle, and the retreat from Bull Run quickly turned into a complete rout. Many of the citizens of Washington, DC had accompanied the army and watched the battle; their panicked flight back to DC choked the roads and complicated the army's withdrawal.

As news of the defeat spread in Washington and throughout the North, President Lincoln and his ministers realized that the war would be neither quickly nor easily ended. Massive numbers of soldiers would have to be enlisted and trained, and a large number of them would need to be stationed in Washington. The city would remain under threat from Confederate troops for the remainder of the war.

Sixteen days after the Battle of Bull Run, on August 6, 1861, the Metropolitan Police Department was created. Congress passed an act which created the Metropolitan Police District, combining the District of Columbia, the then-separate city of Georgetown, and Washington County into an area to be patrolled by a single police department. Congress appointed President Lincoln to oversee the creation of the Metropolitan Police Department. Lincoln modeled the department after New York City's police force, and selected William B. Webb to be the first major and superintendent of the department.

William Benning Webb was a lifetime Washingtonian. He had been a lawyer and member of the DC bar prior to the outbreak of the war. He joined the DC militia and was eventually promoted to the rank of major. President Lincoln selected him to be the first chief of MPD not only because of his connection to Washington, DC but also because his military experience had taught him how to drill men and act decisively.

MPD was initially structured into ten (10) precincts of fifteen officers each, with one sergeant running each precinct. In 1862, MPD added a total of six detectives to the department. Officers worked shifts of twelve (12) hours on duty followed by twelve (12) hours off duty, with virtually no days off. The annual

salary was \$480. Initially, officers were only issued badges that they would wear over their civilian clothes, and they would have to provide any additional equipment they wanted to carry. The MPD badge has retained the same basic shape and design from its creation in September of 1861 to the present day. MPD soon began to issue officers revolvers and uniforms.

Officers initially had to contend with a wide variety of duties. MPD was responsible for patrolling urban city blocks, rural farmland, and the tens of thousands of Union soldiers garrisoned in the city.

As MPD continued to grow and develop out of its infancy, the fighting in the Civil War continued. President Lincoln had appointed General Ulysses S. Grant as the supreme commander of Union forces. On April 9, 1865, General Grant forced the surrender of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox Courthouse in Virginia. Although it would take several months to complete the final surrender of all Confederate military units, this was a major defeat and signaled the eventual victory by Union forces and the collapse of the Confederate States of America.

The mood in Washington, DC was one of celebration as the population anticipated the end of the long, bloody war. On the evening of April 14, 1865, President Lincoln went to Ford's Theatre located at 511 10th Street NW to see a popular play, *Our American Cousin*. Lincoln was late to the play, and when he entered the play stopped so the band could perform *Hail to the Chief*. The crowd cheered.

Presidential security at the time was very different from what it is today. The Secret Service did not take on the task of providing around the clock security to the President until 1902. In 1865, MPD had established a detail of only four (4) men to guard the President. When the President went to Ford's Theatre, only a single MPD officer—Private John Parker—was assigned to protect him.

John Parker was born in Virginia in 1830, and initially worked as a carpenter. He was one of the original officers to join MPD in 1861 and had a poor work record. He faced several administrative charges, to include conduct unbecoming an officer, being drunk on duty, intemperate language, and sleeping while on duty. Parker avoided serious punishment for these infractions, and somehow was appointed to the Presidential detail.

The day of the assassination, Parker continued his substandard performance. He was supposed to relieve Private William Crook at 1600 hours but did not arrive for work until 1900 hours. He accompanied President Lincoln to his private booth at Ford's Theatre but did not remain at his post outside the door. Parker initially went down to the first floor so that he could see the play and is then believed to have gone across the street to the Star Saloon to have a drink during intermission.

Ironically, an actor named John Wilkes Booth was also drinking in the Star Saloon at the same time. Booth was a relatively famous actor in those days, and Lincoln had previously seen him perform at Ford's Theatre. Booth was a southern sympathizer who organized a plot with a cell of other southern sympathizers to attack the president, vice president, and secretary of state.

After intermission was over, Booth returned to Ford's Theatre but Parker did not return to his post. Booth made his way through the theatre and to the unguarded entrance of President Lincoln's private box. He entered the box and shot Lincoln in the back of the head, then leapt out of the box onto the stage and escaped through the crowd. Lincoln survived through the night, but died early in the next morning.

The official MPD police blotter, which was the forerunner of today's daily Command information Center (CIC) report, recorded the assassination with the following entry: "At this hour, the melancholy intelligence of the assassination of Mr. Lincoln, President of the U.S, at Ford's Theater was brought to this office, and information obtained from the following persons goes to show that the assassin is a man named J. Wilks Booth..."

Booth escaped Washington but was eventually cornered by soldiers and killed in Virginia. Private Parker was initially charged with neglect of duty but, as had happened many times before, he was not punished. Not only did he escape any discipline for failing to guard the President, he also remained on the White House detail! Parker encountered Mrs. Lincoln once more before she moved out of the White House, and she violently objected to his continued presence on the grounds. Eventually, Parker was terminated, on August 13, 1868, for sleeping on duty.

The department continued to grow in size and scope after the assassination of President Lincoln. To increase the efficiency of directing the growing organization, the ranks of captain and lieutenant were added to the management structure. A Board of Surgeons was created to evaluate the health of new recruits and officers who were injured on duty. The mission of the Metropolitan Police Department expanded to encompass additional duties such as enforcing liquor sales regulations, taking the census while patrolling beats, and even running an ambulance service. The membership of the department created a relief fund to provide for the families of officers who were no longer able to work.

On December 29, 1871, the Metropolitan Police Department marked another sad milestone when the first member of the department was killed in the line of duty. Francis Michael Doyle was born on September 29, 1833 in Limerick, Ireland and immigrated to the United States sometime prior to 1852. He married and moved into a house located in today's southwest section of Capitol Hill and worked as a blacksmith at the Washington Navy Yard. On April 24, 1861, he enlisted in a Union infantry company formed in Washington, DC. One day later his younger brother Peter enlisted in the Confederate Army. After Doyle's enlistment in the Union army ended, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served aboard the *USS Wasp*. On February 15, 1868, Francis Doyle joined the Metropolitan Police Department.

On May 12, 1871, Private Doyle arrested a young boy for stealing eggs. The arrest was not politically popular in the press which began to publish stories describing the arrest as "police brutality." The department reprimanded Doyle, but this did not placate the press. The famous American poet, Walt Whitman (who was a friend of Doyle's younger brother Peter), wrote an influential editorial defending Private Doyle and attacking the press for valorizing "juvenile thieves and vagabonds." The famous poet's editorial and lobbying was successful in deterring the newspapers from continuing their attacks and Doyle kept his job on the department.

Part of the problem with the scourge of "thieves and vagabonds" Whitman wrote about were the "fences" who would buy and re-sell their stolen property. The southwest quadrant of the city was well-known for being the home of many such fencing operations at that time. On December 29, 1871, Sergeant Duvall and Private Doyle went to 329 Maryland Avenue SW, the home of John and Maria Shea, to search for a stolen pocket watch. They were greeted at the door by a maid and shown into a parlor to wait until Mrs. Shea came down to meet them. Sergeant Duvall told Shea that she was under arrest, and initially agreed to allow her to leave the room to get a coat. However, the sergeant rethought his decision and ordered

Private Doyle to place Shea in handcuffs. Shea asked for a moment to compose herself and the two officers initially allowed her to wander to the other side of the room by a piano. When Doyle went to attempt to handcuff her a second time, she grabbed a pistol that was hidden near the piano and fired a single shot that struck Doyle in the chest. Although Sergeant Duvall was able to disarm and handcuff Shea before she could do anything else, the gunshot wound was fatal. Doyle died inside the house three hours later as surgeons attempted to save his life. Mrs. Shea was tried for his murder but was acquitted because the jury stated that it did not want to convict a woman. Doyle's son Robert, who was less than a year old at the time of his father's murder, would follow in his footsteps and also join the Metropolitan Police Department, eventually becoming a captain.

In 1877, the Metropolitan Police Department would make American history with an event that has never been repeated, and in many ways could only happen in Washington. Private William Henry West joined the Metropolitan Police on September 21, 1871 and was the eighth African American to do so. He quickly became a well-known mounted policeman in the area of Northwest that is today's Third District. West was a very skilled rider—there are reports that his horse "Dan" was so well trained that West used him to help apprehend criminals by grabbing their clothing with his mouth.

Ulysses S. Grant, who had risen to fame as the commander of the Union Army at the end of the Civil War, was also a skilled rider and loved to speed on horseback throughout the city. While still serving as a general in the army, Grant was arrested on both April 11 and July, 1866 by the Metropolitan Police Department for speeding. Both times he was fined \$5 by the courts and released. Later, in 1869, General Grant was elected the eighteenth president of the United States.

In 1877, the Metropolitan Police Department was reacting to an increasing numbers of traffic accidents by conducting traffic enforcement missions to reduce the reckless driving of horses and carriages through the streets. Private West was at the corner of 13th and M Streets NW when he observed a team of horses being driven in excess of the speed limit. West stopped the team and approached the driver, who turned out to be President Grant. West warned the President about speeding and allowed him to continue about his business. The following day, President Grant again came speeding through the same intersection. West again stopped the President's carriage, but this time arrested him for speeding and brought him to the station.

None of the police officials disputed Private West's arrest of the president, but they weren't sure if they had the legal authority to indict a sitting president who had not been impeached on traffic charges. Ultimately, the department decided to release President Grant with a \$20 fine and impounded his horses, forcing him to walk back to the White House. This marks the only time in American history that a sitting U.S. president has been arrested!

The history of the Metropolitan Police Department again intersected with national history on July 2, 1881. President James Garfield had just been elected after a narrow victory. An emotionally disturbed man named Charles Guiteau believed that he was the reason that Garfield had won the election. He repeatedly asked government officials for a job but had been told bluntly that he would receive no employment. On July 2, President Garfield left Washington to take a short vacation. On his way, the president walked through the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Station accompanied by two cabinet officials but no bodyguards. Guiteau had been stalking Garfield and purchased a revolver. He shot the President twice and attempted to flee from the station.

Private Patrick Kearney had not been assigned to guard the President but was on patrol nearby. Upon hearing the gunfire, Kearney made his way into the station and disarmed and arrested Guiteau. Kearney brought Guiteau to police headquarters for booking and seized the revolver as evidence. Guiteau was executed nearly a year later. Guiteau's pistol was given by the superintendent of the department to an unknown citizen as a gift at the end of the trial, and its location remains unknown to this day.

Patrick Kearney was not the only MPD member close by during the assassination of President Garfield. Retired Superintendent A.C. Richards also happened to be walking down the street and heard the gunshots. This was the second presidential assassination Richards was present for—he was the head of the department the night President Lincoln was shot, and he was off duty and in the audience watching the play that night.

As the nineteenth century came to a close, the Metropolitan Police Department had grown greatly in its first thirty-eight years. By 1899, the department consisted of nine (9) precincts, with 443 officers and three (3) female police "matrons." The department had formed various special units, to include a mounted unit, bicycle unit, harbor unit, and motorcycle unit. The department had incorporated advances in policing, such as keeping records of the fingerprints of known criminals, issuing daily bulletins to its members, and adopting a civil service test to become eligible for promotion to the rank of sergeant.

#### **1.6.2 Identify the current chief of police and the most recent MPD officer killed in the line of duty**

MPD started the twentieth century by handing over the task of protecting the President of the United States to the newly created U.S. Secret Service. Although the Secret Service protected the president, White House buildings and grounds continued to be protected by MPD officers. These officers were part of a detail initially composed of twenty-seven (27) MPD officers. The White House detail was established at the request of President Grover Cleveland during his second term of office. It would grow to thirty-four (34) officers after World War I and keep growing throughout the twentieth century.

The MPD police superintendent controlled this detail and staffed it according to the needs of both the MPD and the White House. This changed, however, with President Warren G. Harding who was upset to learn that MPD's best officers were not necessarily on the White House detail. It also bothered the president that the officers were supervised by an outside agency (MPD). At the White House's request, Congress passed legislation that established a separate organization of thirty-three men called the White House Police Force. The statute created the force "for the protection of the Executive Mansion and grounds." The members of the force would have privileges, powers, and duties "similar to those of the members of the Metropolitan Police of the District of Columbia, and such additional privileges, powers, and duties as the President may prescribe." (Public Law No. 300, 67th Congress, S. 3659 (1922)).

This law allowed the White House to choose which MPD or U.S. Park Police officers would guard the White House buildings and grounds. It also meant officers on the detail no longer answered to any outside agencies. These officers were now called the White House Police and they remained separate from the U.S. Secret Service until the Secret Service took over all aspects of White House security.

With home rule authority fast approaching in Washington, DC, the U.S. Congress again changed the security arrangements for the White House and MPD's involvement. In 1970, Congress changed the detail's name to the Executive Protective Service (EPS), to reflect the force's expanding responsibilities to also provide protection for the many foreign embassies in Washington, DC. MPD's role in protecting the U.S. President was abolished in 1970, with EPS officers no longer required to be recruited from the Metropolitan Police Department or the U.S. Park Police.

Modernization was a hallmark of MPD for most of its history in the twentieth century. By about 1912, DC started using a technological advancement that allowed police officers to make voice calls to their precincts. They were called call boxes and each consisted of a blue box with a telephone handset inside. Call boxes were easily identified by their one-sided flat panels with a curved top, and without an extended pole. Police call boxes were locked and patrol officers for most of the twentieth century kept a call box key on their belts. A foot beat officer could use the call box to request a "wagon" to transport a prisoner back to the station. They can still be seen as a relic of the past in Washington, DC today.

The Patrol Signal System or "PSS" with its PSS book also came about during this period at MPD. Officers on foot patrol beats could flip a switch to notify their precincts that patrols were proceeding without issue. Later, a phone handset replaced the switch so MPD officers would call their precinct, and the PSS book was updated accordingly.

Early MPD call boxes also had a citizen's key for access. Prominent businesses or citizens in the area would have a key and this allowed citizens to request MPD assistance. This was useful for crimes in progress or traffic accidents. By the 1920s, there were approximately 500 police call boxes in the District of Columbia. These call boxes were connected to precincts via underground cables that ran throughout the city. The 1968 riots destroyed many of the call boxes as they were an easy target for protesters.

The Gamewell Corporation initially manufactured call boxes for MPD with Lorton prisoners later taking over the manufacturing. The call boxes were maintained by the Department of Public Works (DPW) and were in use until handheld radios became common. By 1976, MPD ceased using the call boxes.

### **1932 Bonus Army/Riot**

The Metropolitan Police Department has dealt with civil disturbances for most of its history. One of the most famous riots that the MPD handled was the Bonus Riot of 1932. This depression era march of thousands of World War I veterans was a demand that the U.S. Government finally pay out the bonus that the U.S. House authorized for them. These protesters would become known as the Bonus Army or Bonus Marchers. The Metropolitan Police were called in to disperse the protestors and violence erupted that resulted in the deaths of two policemen and two veterans. The protest swelled to 20,000 and it became apparent that the MPD alone could not handle the riots. The U.S. Army, led by General Douglas MacArthur, was brought in and they eventually brought the situation under control. The protesters main encampment, at what is today Anacostia Park, was burned to the ground. The Bonus Army veterans finally received their payout in 1936.

## **1968 Riots**

The April 4, 1968 assassination of Martin Luther King led to widespread rioting in the District of Columbia. The riots engulfed the U St. NW corridor, Columbia Heights, H St. NE, and parts of downtown Washington, DC. The entire 2,800 member MPD police force was mobilized, and 7,600 arrests were made in just a few days. Again, the MPD required the assistance of the U.S. Army in order to quell the riots. The 1968 riots affected DC for decades afterwards, with the riot-stricken neighborhoods becoming hotspots for crime.

The election of Richard Nixon in 1968 brought with it a keen interest by the president in the governance of the District of Columbia. This interest extended to the Metropolitan Police Department, with the president successfully increasing its funding. President Nixon also passed a crime bill in 1970 which gave MPD several new tools such as the “no-knock” warrant and a greatly expanded assault on police officer (APO) statute. It is ironic, then, that diligent police work by MPD on a call for a possible burglary brought down his presidency.

The recently built Watergate complex housed the offices of the Democratic National Committee (DNC). On June 17, 1972, a security guard called MPD believing that someone broke into the DNC headquarters inside the Watergate complex. Although the burglars had a lookout across the street in what today is a shuttered George Washington University dormitory, the lookout failed to notice the officers who arrived. This was because the responding officers were part of a plainclothes unit, in an unmarked MPD vehicle. Once inside, MPD caught the burglars. All those arrested were wearing business suits and had surveillance equipment in their possession. One of them even had the contact number to a White House official. The arrests led to the Watergate Scandal and President Nixon’s eventual resignation from office.

## **Home Rule**

As noted earlier, the Metropolitan Police Department saw one of the biggest changes in its history with the advent of home rule authority in 1973. The Chief of Police position went from being a federally appointed figure to one under full local control. MPD officers were no longer federal employees, and the community became involved in the day-to-day running of the department.

## **Drug Epidemic**

The 1980s and 1990s saw many urban areas in the United States plagued by drug-induced violence, and Washington, DC was not immune to this development. The murder rate in Washington, DC climbed to new heights with 482 murders in 1991 alone. MPD was sometimes ill-equipped to handle the rapid increase in crime during the 1980s and 1990s. The end of the twentieth century saw an MPD that was very much in turmoil with crime rates rising and MPD having the highest amount of per capita officer-involved shooting incidents in the nation. Nevertheless, MPD was able to take thousands of guns off DC’s streets and make progress in curtailing the drug epidemic.

Some of the troubles at MPD mirrored the problems that the DC government was experiencing, and the U.S. Congress stepped in to help the city out of its fiscal mess. A financial control board was set up in the city, and this led to the appointment of Charles Ramsey as the new police chief. Chief Ramsey had been a deputy superintendent at the Chicago Police Department. His appointment would transform the Metropolitan Police Department. Mayor Anthony Williams and Chief Ramsey invited the U.S. Department



of Justice to investigate MPD's uses of force. What resulted was a full-scale audit of MPD, from training to street supervision.

After the publication of a 1998 Washington Post article titled *District Police Lead Nation in Shootings*, MPD underwent a thorough, two-year DOJ civil rights investigation focused on the department's use of force. In 2001, under the leadership of Chief Ramsey, MPD voluntarily entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the DOJ to address concerns regarding the use of force. The MOA led to broad reforms in MPD's use of force policies, training, investigations of use of force incidents, imposition of discipline, use of canines, and manner of resolving citizen complaints related to alleged misconduct. Pursuant to the MOA, MPD agreed to the utilization of an independent monitor for the purpose of evaluating reform. In 2008, the independent monitoring team recommended termination of the MOA, citing MPD's substantial progress in addressing force-related issues. A decade later a review concluded that changes by MPD had remained in effect and the organization was committed to improvements in the areas identified.

The Metropolitan Police Department saw a major reorganization under Chief Ramsey. Some of the changes were cosmetic, such as new uniforms and a different police cruiser design. Others were more substantial, such as patrol being split up into Regional Operations Commands (ROCs). The new leadership at MPD and in Washington, DC helped lower crime rates from their peaks in the 1990s. The onset of the twenty-first century also forced MPD to handle novel civil disturbances and crime patterns.

During 9/11, MPD provided critical support to police operations at the Pentagon. MPD secured critical government buildings throughout DC and officers worked extended tours. This helped DC. through one of the more challenging periods of its twenty-first century history.

### **Pershing Park**

On November 30, 1999, thousands of protesters converged on Seattle, Washington to protest the World Trade Organization (WTO) meetings being held there. These were anti-globalization protesters who felt that the WTO was a nefarious organization bent upon exporting corporate greed to the developing world. They were highly organized and shut down most of downtown Seattle. They also caused millions of dollars in damage by smashing windows and storefronts throughout the city in what is sometimes referred to as the *Battle of Seattle*. Several other violent protests occurred in the ensuing months. Washington, DC was particularly vulnerable to these violent protests in that the headquarters to both the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank are located in the city.

Although MPD was more experienced at handling civil disturbances than any other police department in the nation, there were issues with the way MPD handled a protest at Pershing Park. *Kettling* is a police tactic used by numerous police departments across the world when handling large demonstrations. It prevents people from leaving and allows police to control entry and exit points to the protests. MPD restricted the park to entry and exit of protesters and then proceeded to arrest all the people located inside the park, including people who were not there to protest. A lawsuit challenged the probable cause for the arrests and the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia sided with the protesters. As

a result, MPD must now articulate individualized probable cause in the narrative for each arrestee. This is one among other wholesale changes that occurred to MPD civil disturbance tactics and procedures.

## **Summer 2020**

May 25, 2020 marks the murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin, who knelt on Floyd's neck for over nine (9) minutes. Public outrage sparked renewed efforts for police reform throughout the nation. Officers were called to respond to peaceful First Amendment demonstrations as well as rioters who vandalized property within DC for several days after Floyd's death. A very large crowd of demonstrators marched the streets of DC and surrounding DMV area on June 6, 2020 to speak against racial injustice. The National Guard was dispatched as well as several other agencies to support MPD. Lafayette Park became focal point for the ongoing protests in DC. Black Lives Matter Plaza was constructed over a two-block portion of 16th Street NW and now serves as a permanent mural.

## **January 6, 2021**

January 6th will forever be known as the Capitol Riots or Capitol Insurrection. On this day, numerous individuals trespassed, damaged, and vandalized the Capitol Building. Several agencies responded to aid Capitol Police, including MPD. For those who did respond, each officer had a different experience. For some it was traumatizing, and they did not think they would make it home, while others helped contain and disperse crowds late into the night. All responders played a role in securing The Capitol and ensuring the safe return of those who work in it. There were several medical emergencies as well as a few deaths during and after the insurrection.

## **Current Chief**

On December 22, 2020, Mayor Muriel Bowser announced that she selected Robert J. Contee, III to serve as Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department. He was sworn in as acting Chief of Police on January 2, 2021. On May 4, 2021, he was officially confirmed as Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department.

Robert J. Contee, III joined the Metropolitan Police Department as a police cadet in November 1989. He became a sworn member of the department three years later and quickly rose through the ranks, serving in a variety of assignments. He started as a patrol officer in the Third District, then served as a sergeant in the Second District and the Metropolitan Police Academy. As a lieutenant, he served as a Patrol Services Area leader in the Second District, served in the Regional Operations Command-East, and led the Intelligence Branch. In January 2004, Chief Contee was promoted to captain and was responsible for leading the Violent Crimes Branch, including the Homicide Branch and the Sexual Assault Unit.

Contee was promoted to Second District Commander in August 2004 and was transferred to the Special Operations Division (SOD) in April 2006, where he was responsible for overseeing tactical patrol, special events, and traffic safety functions. Following his post at SOD, Chief Contee became Sixth District Commander in 2007, before taking command of the Recruiting Division in October 2014. He was named First District Commander in January 2016 and was appointed Assistant Chief of MPD's Professional Development Bureau in the summer of 2016, where he oversaw the Human Resources Management Division, Disciplinary Review Division, Metropolitan Police Academy, and Recruiting Division. In April 2017,

Chief Contee was named Patrol Chief of Patrol Services South (PSS), which included maintaining oversight of the First, Sixth, and Seventh Police Districts. He was named Assistant Chief of the Investigative Services Bureau (ISB) in March 2018.

Chief Contee grew up in the Carver Terrace community in Northeast, DC and is a DC Public Schools graduate. He holds a bachelor's degree in Professional Studies with a concentration in Police Science from The George Washington University. He completed programs at the Management College at the Institute for Law Enforcement Administration and the Senior Management Institute for Police (SMIP) of the Police Executive Research Forum in Boston, Massachusetts.

### **Line of Duty Deaths**

Unfortunately, like all law enforcement agencies, MPD has experienced a number of officer deaths. While this section does not tell the stories of all who gave the ultimate sacrifice to the profession, it highlights just a few examples of some of our heroic men and women. The first female MPD officer killed in the line of duty was Gail Cobb, who was working a downtown foot beat at 20th and L St. NW. She tried to apprehend an armed suspect who was running from police. He turned and shot her in the chest. She died on September 20, 1974 at the age of twenty-four (24), leaving behind one child who was raised by his grandparents.

On February 5, 1997, Fourth District Master Patrol Officer (MPO) Brian Gibson was stopped in his patrol cruiser at the intersection of Missouri Ave. NW and Georgia Ave. NW when he was shot by someone upset that he had just been kicked out of a nightclub. MPO Gibson was just twenty-seven (27) years old at the time and left two children. His murderer was arrested shortly thereafter and is currently serving life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Less than two years prior to the murder of MPO Gibson, Officers Lewis and Deville were responding to a call on the 1400 block of H St. NE. A random stranger stepped out of his car and shot Officer Lewis from behind before turning his .380 semiautomatic on Officer Deville. Officer Deville was able to fire his own semiautomatic pistol and kill Officer Lewis' assailant. Officer Lewis succumbed to his gunshot wounds three days later and he was just twenty-eight (28) years old.

The 1990s were a violent time for Washington, DC and the MPD. Eight MPD officers lost their lives due to gunshots during this period.

The most recent MPD officer killed in the line of duty was Officer Paul Dittamo of the Seventh District. While responding to a call for assistance by another officer, his cruiser collided with a pole on Martin Luther King Ave. SE. This occurred on October 30, 2010 during the midnight tour. He succumbed to his injuries that same night.

### **Summary**

In this lesson plan, you should have learned about the history of the MPD. The police department you have decided to join is like no other in the country. The Metropolitan Police Department has

had to handle issues of crime, disorder, and societal change like any other big city department. However, since it is also located in the nation's capital, the history of MPD has been intertwined with presidents and national politics since the founding of the department.