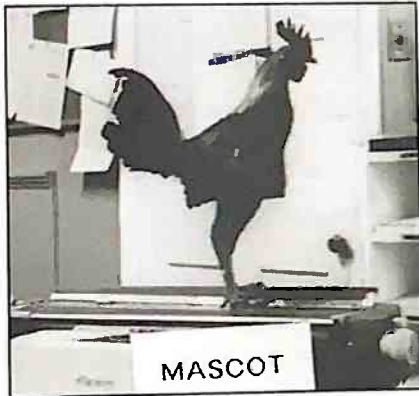


Historical Commission

Memories of the Northampton Police Department



The Northampton Township Police force around 1964 under the command of Chief Jack Frey.



Mascot the rooster, a frequent early morning visitor, would sneak in through an open window at the police headquarters, and perch itself on the Chief's desk.



The Northampton Township Police force in 1970 under the command of Chief Anthony Fergione.

*Last summer's issue detailed the history of our police department. This addition is to extend details to create a better sense of the memories that went into process of transitioning into today's department.

The population of Northampton Township in 1960 was 6,006 and just ten years later it was 15,807. Northampton, which was once a rural community of farms, was very quickly becoming developed. It was a department in transition.

During the first half of the twentieth century the Northampton Township police department operated as a part-time, volunteer force under the command of Chief Jack Frey. Northampton's first police station operated from Chief Frey's property, located at the intersection of Second Street Pike and Bustleton Pike, which coincidentally was the location of one of the first stop signs in the Township. The location was ideal for the Chief who, partnered with his wife, could watch for violators with a pair of binoculars from their ranch house, located on what would later become part of the Davis Pontiac property. At the rear of the property was Chief Frey's Machine Shop, in which he set aside a small storage room in the front as the first Township police headquarters. One Halloween, pranksters placed an outhouse on the triangular median at the intersection and painted a sign on the structure that read, "CHIEF'S OFFICE." This became a time-honored tradition with outhouses often being painted blue. When outhouses became scarce, construction potties took their place until local builders complained.

Around the time the Northampton Township police department became a full-time law enforcement agency in 1964, the police headquarters was moved into a shared two-story Township building formerly located near the Spread Eagle Inn a short distance from the intersection of Newtown-Richboro Road and Second Street Pike. At this time, the police force had grown to four officers and had been taken over by a new Chief, Anthony Fergione. In 1972, the Township was divided into three districts, each having their own car. Sergeant Charles "Chuck" Quaste recalls that when he first joined the force the entrance to the police headquarters building was similar in appearance to a guard shack, and it contained a pay phone which was used on weekends to call the main Bucks County police radio room in Doylestown for police assistance. On weekdays, a secretary would dispatch calls and take complaints from residents from a small interior booth. Adjacent to the secretary's booth was a small cubicle for the Lieutenant. Behind the Lieutenant's cubicle was the Chief's office, which was painted police blue and appropriately named the Blue Room. There were also two small rooms on the second floor, one for the Sergeant and another used as the Detective's Office. With Northampton still being a farming community, the Chief was

often greeted by an early morning visitor, a rooster which snuck in through an open window and perched itself on his desk. The officers named their feathered friend Mascot.

By the mid-1970s, with the extensive population increase, the Township employed roughly a dozen officers. Once again it was time to find a new home for the Township's ever expanding police force. In 1976, the Township built a state-of-the-art headquarters (still used to this day), complete with its own radio room, on present-day Township Road.

Over its 50-year history, the police department has added to its ranks many fine officers. Today, the police force contains over 40 sworn officers.

The Northampton Township Police force in 1976 under the command of Chief William Feeny posing in front of the newly completed police headquarters on Township Road.



A view inside the radio room of the new state-of-the-art police headquarters shortly after it was completed in 1976.