

Police heroines

Since 1970, 33 women officers have been killed while on police duty. Here, *Police Review* publishes, for the first time, a record of sacrifices women officers have made. Anthony Rae reports in the first of a two-part series

The first women police officers in the UK went on patrol during the First World War. Many were volunteer workers from the suffragette movement, and some were even prosecuted for impersonating police officers. But they proved their worth and by the Second World War, 'police women' departments were established nationally.

Equality of work brought equality of sacrifice, with the first death of a female officer on duty in an air raid. The first peacetime death on operational duty occurred in 1965 in a traffic patrol accident.

In the 1970s, with the introduction of equal pay and full integration of women into male ranks, came the true cost of equality – in the 30 years from the outbreak of the Second World War, only five deaths in the line of duty were recorded, in the 32 years since 1970, 33 have paid the ultimate price.

Of the 38 on the record kept by the Police Roll of Honour Trust, there have been 22 deaths in road accidents, three deaths by drowning, one by enemy action and one collapse during training. Eleven women officers have been unlawfully killed: six RUC officers by terrorist acts, and in mainland Britain two have been killed by vehicles and one each by stabbing, shooting and terrorist bomb explosion.

Bertha Massey Gleghorn
woman police constable
Metropolitan Police
Died – June 19 1944, aged 33

While on duty during an air raid she was fatally injured by the explosion of a flying bomb, which struck Tottenham Court Road police station.

Catherine Phyllis Godfrey
police woman
Leicestershire Constabulary
Died – May 3 1947, aged 31



All by supplied by Tony Rae

Having been recalled to duty to deal with a violent female prisoner late on the night of April 23, she was cycling to Hinckley police station in a severe gale when she collided with a fallen tree and sustained fatal injuries.

Myra Waller
police woman
Lancashire Constabulary

Died – June 20 1965, aged 24

While attending an emergency call at the scene of a road accident, her traffic patrol car was in collision with another vehicle at Halton, near Lancaster, and she sustained injuries from which she died the next day.



June Randell
Police Woman
Hull City police
Died – March 10 1966, aged 21

Killed in a road accident when the scooter on which she was riding to report for duty was in collision with a lorry.

Carol A. Waddington
police woman
Rochdale Borough police
Died – December 21 1968, aged 19

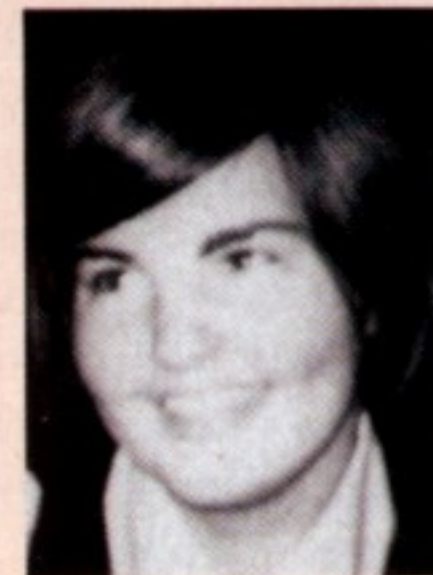
Fatally injured when the car, in which she was returning to Rochdale from the Police Training

Centre at Bruche, was in collision with a stationary lorry at Prestwich.

Ann Lakey
police woman
Teesside Constabulary
Died – October 19 1970, aged 24

Fatally injured when the police patrol car, in which she was the observer, was involved in an accident while answering an emergency alarm call.

Lesley Ann Beet
police cadet
Essex & Southend-on-Sea Joint Constabulary
Died – March 13 1974, aged 18



While she was canoeing with a supervised party of cadets on the River Chelmer, her canoe capsized and, despite attempts to save her, she was drowned.

Mildred Ann Harrison
woman reserve constable
Royal Ulster Constabulary
Died – March 16 1975, aged 26



A canister bomb, placed by terrorists on the windowsill of licensed premises, exploded while she was on foot patrol with a colleague in Bangor, County Down. She was killed almost immediately.

Margaret Cherry Campbell
woman reserve constable
Royal Ulster Constabulary
Died – November 21 1975, aged 24

Died from injuries received while she was assisting other officers at the scene of a road traffic accident in Londonderry.

Linda Emmeline Baggley
woman reserve constable
Royal Ulster Constabulary
Died – June 2 1976, aged 19

While on foot patrol with a colleague in Londonderry, she was shot at point-blank range in a terrorist attack, receiving gunshot wounds from which she later died.



of Transport examiner, when their patrol car collided with one lorry and was thrown into the path of another on the opposite carriageway near Johnstonebridge.

Sharon Bury
police cadet
Avon and Somerset
Constabulary
Died – February
8 1980, aged 16



She was swept off rocks while with a party of cadets during an adventure training exercise at Foreland Point, North Devon. Despite attempts at rescue, she was washed out to sea and drowned.

Joanne Margaret Best
woman constable
Royal Ulster Constabulary
Died – October 28 1980, aged 21

Together with four colleagues she was fatally injured in a road traffic accident when a police vehicle collided with a lorry in Belfast.

Martha Doreen E. Harkness
woman constable
Royal Ulster
Constabulary
Died – July 25
1981, aged 22



She was struck and fatally injured by one of two vehicles, which failed to stop at a vehicle checkpoint that she was operating near Magherafelt, County Londonderry.

Mabel Elizabeth Cheyne,
woman reserve constable
Royal Ulster Constabulary
Died – April 23 1982, aged 29

She was fatally injured together with two other colleagues while responding to an emergency call concerning an assault at a pub in Armagh City. Their police vehicle went out of control and struck a bridge wall.

Mandy Dawn Rayner,
woman police constable
Hertfordshire Constabulary
Died 13 October 1982, aged 18

Killed when the stationary patrol car in which she was the observer was in collision with a vehicle being pursued by police at Royston.



Angela Bradley
woman police constable
Lancashire Constabulary
Died – January 5 1983, aged 23

She and two colleagues were swept away by waves while they were attempting to rescue a man from a rough sea at Blackpool. All three officers and the man were drowned.



Jane Philippa Arbuthnot
woman police constable
Metropolitan Police
Died – December 17 1983,
aged 22

While investigating a reported terrorist car bomb outside Harrods store in Knightsbridge, a device exploded and she was killed together with two colleagues.



Anthony Rae is a sergeant in Lancashire Constabulary and chairman of the Police Roll of Honour Trust

The second part of this feature next week will feature more women officers who have lost their lives while on duty, from 1984 to the present.

Shirley Moses
woman police constable
Northumbria Police
Died – August 29 1976, aged 21

Her police car skidded and crashed through a fence while she was on mobile patrol in Sunderland. Part of the fence broke through the car windscreen and struck her head, killing her instantly.



Elizabeth Burton
woman police
sergeant, aged 40
West Yorkshire
Police



Lillian Sullivan
woman police
constable, aged 41
West Yorkshire
Police

Both officers died
May 15 1978

The two officers were killed with three colleagues when the coach taking them to a Police Federation conference at Blackpool suffered a brake failure and overturned near Wakefield.

Isabella Harris
woman police constable
Dumfries and
Galloway
Constabulary
Died –
November 7
1978, aged 27

Killed with two
other officers
and a Ministry

