

## CENTRAL AREA HISTORY

The modern boundaries of Central Area are home to the origins of the City of Los Angeles and its Police Department: long before the establishment of the Department in 1869, the majority of Los Angeles' population, government, and economy resided in the areas known today as "El Pueblo," near Union Station. The murder of Marshall William Warren by Officer Joseph Dye on October 31, 1870 would be the first known instance of an officer killed in the line of duty under the newly established Los Angeles Police Department. Not even a year later, on October 24, 1871 the City would experience a racially-charged riot resulting in at least 19 known deaths in Los Angeles' Chinatown. This incident is known as the Chinese Massacre of 1871.

With the growth of the Los Angeles Police Department in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the need for a police headquarters and a station independent from City Hall to serve the needs of the rapidly growing community became evident. On August 26, 1896, Central Station entered in to service on the south side of 1<sup>st</sup> Street, between Broadway and Hill Street. Central Division would be the main police facility serving all of Los Angeles until University (Southwest) Division opened in 1905. Before then, sub-stations existed in the Boyle Heights and University of Southern California campus areas. While Central Division remained in service at this location, incidents such as the bombing of the LA Times Building in 1910, the 1918 Flu Pandemic, the Prohibition era, and "Zoot Suit Riots" of 1943 occurred.

Central Area would relocate to the even larger building in 1955 with the opening of the Department's second Police Headquarters Facility, later named "Parker Center." During this time, the Civil Rights Movement of the mid-twentieth century was occurring across the United States, and the Department was desegregated. Also within that time, the 1965 Watts Rebellion occurred and would influence policing methods and community relationships across many US Cities.

Central Area would move once again to its current location at 251 East 6<sup>th</sup> Street in 1977. Since then, its employees have been called to service in numerous critical incidents such as the 1984 Olympic Games, Visit of Pope John Paul II in 1987, the 1992 Los Angeles Uprising, the 1994 Northridge Earthquake, 2001 Democratic National Convention, 2011 Occupy LA Protests, COVID-19 Pandemic, and George Floyd Protests Against Police Brutality.

Many notable figures who influenced the history of the Los Angeles Police Department have served the community at one of Central's three locations, they include: Robert Stewart - the Department's first African-American police officer; Lucy Gray – the Department's first female employee; Alice Stebbins-Wells, the first sworn policewoman; Lung Yep – the first Chinese police officer; Georgia Ann-Robinson – the first African-American policewoman; Charles Williams - the first African – American officer killed in the line of duty; Joseph Romero – the first Hispanic officer killed in the line of duty; Josephine Serrano-Collier – the first Latina policewoman; Sergeant Fanchon Blake – whose 1973 lawsuit would strengthen diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Department; and numerous Chiefs of Police.