

PACIFIC AREA HISTORY

The origins of Pacific Division trace back to February 23rd, 1925, when the City of Los Angeles annexed the City of Venice. Abbott Kinney was a land developer who envisioned a “Venice of America”, which would have its own gondolas, canals, and Venetian architecture. Much of Kinney’s dream can still be seen today evidenced by remnants of buildings and canals that still exist in the area that was once marshland.

Former police officers for the City of Venice were given the opportunity to join the Los Angeles Police Department with the passing of a civil service examination. The original area consisted of approximately 4 miles and 30 officers. In 1930, the new police station for Venice Division opened at 685 Venice Boulevard. This location is a Historical-Cultural Monument for the City of Los Angeles and remains standing today.

After Pearl Harbor in 1942, the landscape of Venice beach changed. The piers closed at sunset to avoid a night-time aerial bombing. Speed boats patrolled the coastline in preparation for invasion or another attack. Local air hangars were a considerable target at the time. Owners had the roofs painted to give the appearance of an ordinary residential tract. Decoy hangars were built nearby to throw off potential Japanese pilots.

In 1968, racial tensions erupted at Venice High School. On the first day, officers arrested 1,000 students while being hit by objects thrown by students. An additional 600 students joined the protest on the second day to protest the school’s dress code. A list of grievances was drafted to address the concerns of the minorities on campus.

In 1974, Venice Station moved to a new its modern location at 12312 Culver Boulevard. In 1982, the LAPD and the community leaders agreed to rename Venice Division as Pacific Area to better reflect the entire community, including the Westchester, Mar Vista, and Palms neighborhoods.

The 1992 Los Angeles civil unrest rippled into Venice area when approximately 25 members of local street gangs began looting business and shops around the Venice boardwalk. Pacific Division quickly apprehended those involved - discouraging further attempts in the area.

The ever-growing threat of street gangs of the 1990s put the communities of Venice and Mar Vista on edge. In the summer of 1993, between 50-100 young gang members terrorized the Venice Beach

Officers assigned to Pacific Area assisted in mutual-aid efforts during the 2020 SAFE LA mobilization, responding to various parts of Los Angeles and outside City boundaries to the City of Santa Monica to quell violence and apprehend law violators seen vandalizing businesses and looting them at locations like Third Street Promenade.