

# Pre-Amalgamation Police Department Histories

On November 8th, 1873, the Manitoba Legislature passed the City of Winnipeg Act, with the date of 1874 being set as the official beginning for the "Capital City" of Manitoba. The population of Winnipeg was 1,869 persons around this time and the first elections were held on January 5, 1874, with Mayor Francis E. CORNISH being elected along with 12 Aldermen.

The Winnipeg Police Force came into existence on February 23, 1874, and originally consisted of 1 member being 23-year-old Chief Constable John S. INGRAM. On March 16, 1874, two additional constables were appointed with the hiring of Frank A. EDGAR and David B. MURRAY. EDGAR however, quit on March 30 after two weeks of employment and was replaced by Constable William BRUCE.

Winnipeg grew steadily as the years passed and many other communities formed around the outskirts. In the late 1960s, these areas began discussions on amalgamating to form a single city. This came to be on January 1, 1972, when the official amalgamation of these 13 communities created the unified City of Winnipeg:

1. The Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg
2. Rural Municipality of Charleswood
3. City of East Kildonan
4. Rural Municipality of Fort Garry
5. Rural Municipality of North Kildonan
6. Rural Municipality of Old Kildonan
7. City of St. Boniface
8. City of St. James-Assiniboia (formerly RM of Assiniboia, Village of Brooklands and City of St. James)
9. City of St. Vital
10. City of Transcona
11. Town of Tuxedo
12. City of West Kildonan
13. City of Winnipeg

Though officially joined in 1972, the total amalgamation of all areas and their respective civic departments was not completed until 1974.

## **OVERVIEW**

With the joining of their communities in 1967, the 5 members of Brooklands Police Department amalgamated with the St. James Police (61 members). The Brooklands officers left their station at #9 Dee Street and moved into the St. James Police building located at 210 Lyle Street.

Two years later, with the joining of their communities in 1969, the 16 member Assiniboia Police Department amalgamated with the St. James Police to create the St. James-Assiniboia Police Department. The Assiniboia officers left their station at 3100 Portage and also moved into the St. James Police building at 210 Lyle Street.

On July 27th, 1971, Bill 36, being Chapter 105 of the Statutes of Manitoba known as the City of Winnipeg Act, received Royal Assent. This bill officially incorporated the remaining 13 separate communities into the City of Winnipeg, with one Mayor and City Council. The first civic election was held on October 6th, 1971, and the new city of Winnipeg came into legal existence on January 1st, 1972.

Despite the amalgamation of communities, the various Police Departments were not all immediately joined together and continued working as independent forces. They maintained their own radio systems and used a Civil Defence radio network to connect all the Departments in case of an emergency. The existing forces were combined into eight working districts.

As a result, the 18-member North Kildonan Police Force left their offices in the basement of 1400 Henderson Highway and moved in with the 39-member East Kildonan Police Department to work out of their station at 545 Watt Street.

As well, the 7 member Old Kildonan Police Force left their building at McPhillips/Jefferson (now the Garden City Inn) and moved in with the 22 member West Kildonan Police Department to work out of their Station at 260 Hartford Avenue.

The remaining forces consisted of the Winnipeg Police, St. James-Assiniboia Police, Transcona Police, St. Vital Police, St. Boniface Police, Fort Garry Police, and Tuxedo Police. Each force continued wearing their respective shoulder flashes and worked out of their own stations.

On October 1st, 1972, the 5 member Tuxedo Police Force amalgamated with the 528 member Winnipeg Police Department. Winnipeg also took over policing the Rural Municipality of Charleswood upon the expiration of their contract with the RCMP, and Winnipeg Officers used the former Tuxedo Police Station at 2020 Corydon Avenue as a satellite office.

On October 21st, 1974, the 8 remaining Police Forces amalgamated to form the City of Winnipeg Police Department. Based on geography, 6 separate districts were created:

**District** Former Winnipeg (Inner City) Area.

**1**

**Station:** Winnipeg Police building at 151 Princess Street.

**District** St. James-Assiniboia Area.

**2**

**Station:** Former St. James-Assiniboia Police building at 210 Lyle Street.

**District** West Kildonan area, including former Winnipeg area  
**3** north of the CPR Main line tracks between Higgins Avenue and Sutherland Avenue.

**Station:** Former West Kildonan Police building at 260 Hartford Avenue.

**District** Areas of North Kildonan, East Kildonan, Transcona,  
**4** and "Elmwood" area of Winnipeg.

**Station:** The East Kildonan Station at 545 Watt Street was closed and all officers moved into the former Transcona Station at 730 Pandora Avenue.

**District** Areas of St. Boniface and St. Vital.  
**5**

**Station:** The St. Vital Police Station located within the fire station at 598 St. Mary's Road was closed, and all officers moved into the St. Boniface Station at 227 Provencher Avenue.

**District** Area of Fort Garry including Tuxedo, Charleswood,  
**6** and the "Fort Rouge" area of Winnipeg.

**Station:** Fort Garry Police building at 1350 Pembina Hwy

As of January 1975, all members were required to wear the newly designed Winnipeg Police Department shoulder flash, thereby completing the transition to a new force.

Chief Constables of the Winnipeg Police from its establishment in 1874 to the unification of all Greater Winnipeg Police Forces in 1974 were as follows:

John S. INGRAM      1874 - 1875

D. B. MURRAY      1875 - 1887

John C. MCRAE      1887 - 1911

Donald MACPHERSON      1911 - 1919

Christopher H.  
NEWTON      1919 - 1934

George SMITH      1934 - 1947

Charles MCIVER      1947 - 1953

Robert T. TAFT      1953 - 1965

George S. BLOW 1965 - 1970

Norman S. STEWART 1970 - 1974

Chief of Police N. M. STEWART was appointed to command the new unified City of Winnipeg Police Department.

---

## Shoulder Flashes (continued...)



1974



1974



1967



1967



1961



1961



---

## Helmet Plates



**Sergeant Major**



**Sergeant**



**Sergeant**



**Patrol Sergeant**



**Constable**



**Constable**

**Epaulets**



## Other Winnipeg Police Service Shoulder Flashes



**Cadet - 1967**



**Cadet - 1974**



**125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

*The Winnipeg Police Museum is always seeking information, pictures or stories about the pre-amalgamation forces. If you have information on this department, please send an email to Staff Sergeant Rod Hutter.*