

THE OFFICE OF SHERIFF IN HAMILTON COUNTY

The office of sheriff was first established in 1066 A.D. by the Normans. The word sheriff was derived from "shire" (the equivalent of today's county) and "rieve" (chief law enforcer). Thus, the term "shire rieve" was eventually shortened to simply sheriff. At the same time, the title of constable was also created, and this was the position of keeper of the rieve's stable of horses. Sheriff and constable were the first two titles for police officers in America, and each owe their origins to English ancestry.

Ohio sheriffs are elected at the county level by the people they serve. This office has become the oldest law enforcement position in the United States. It is also the only remaining law enforcement office which is filled through the election method. The term of office for county sheriffs in Ohio is four years.

In each of the 88 counties of Ohio, the sheriff is the chief law enforcement officer. The primary duties are to provide common pleas court services and corrections on a countywide basis, and full police protection to the unincorporated areas of the county. However, full police jurisdiction is maintained in all municipalities, townships and villages. Ohio sheriffs and deputies have worn a standardized uniform since 1960. All vehicles are marked in the same manner.

There are several interesting tidbits of trivia about our sheriffs. Asa V. Butterfield (1931-1934) was a candidate on two tickets (democrat and independent) and sheriff Dan P. Tehan (1949-1972) served the longest as sheriff with a total of 24 years of service (he declined to run for a seventh term), followed by sheriff Simon L. Leis, our current sheriff since 1987, and the third longest, sheriff Lincoln J. Stokes (1977-1987) with 10 years.

The Hamilton County Sheriff's Office is a full-service agency consisting of: Aviation, Marine, Road Patrol, Detectives, Computer Crime Section, Organized Crime Division, Regional Narcotic Unit, Dive Team, Information Systems, Internal Investigations, Court Services, Corrections, Records-Identification and Warrant Section.

Road Patrol personnel were uniformed in the 1920s. They were the first in this area to check airplane licenses. This program was started under Sheriff Anderson. A photo showing Hamilton County deputy sheriffs with Sheriff Anderson was taken at Watson Airport. As early as 1921, there were air shows held at Watson Airport. This airport was later renamed the Blue Ash Airport.

Through the years, the sheriff has appointed deputies who did not work directly for him. This is the reason you will find a variety of deputy sheriff badges. Some will indicate that they are special deputies but not all. In the course of reading this book, you will find several areas of the county where these appointments were made.

The Hamilton County sheriff created the position of captain of patrol. The news media referred to the deputies assigned to patrol as the county patrol. Patches were worn on the uniforms of the deputies in the 1940s who were assigned to patrol, indicating that they were the Hamilton County police. The badges read “Deputy Sheriff.” In 1949, sheriff Dan Tehan officially created the Hamilton County Police, and their badges and patches reflected that designation. In 1960, new 5-point star badges were adopted along with new patches, both using the term “Deputy Sheriff.”

Ranks within the sheriff’s office are as follows: deputy, detective, corporal, sergeant, lieutenant, captain, major, colonel, chief deputy and sheriff.

HAMILTON COUNTY SHERIFFS 1851 - PRESENT

1987-Present	Simon L. Leis, Jr.
1977-1987	Lincoln J. Stokes
1973-1976	Paul J. Fricker
1949-1972	Dan P. Tehan
1943-1948	C. Taylor Handman
1939-1942	Fred Sperber
1937-1938	George A. Lutz, Jr.
1935-1936	George A. Lutz, Sr.
1931-1934	Asa V. Butterfield
1927-1930	William Anderson
1923-1926	Richard B. Witt
1919-1922	Fred Bader
1915-1918	George F. Schott
1911-1914	Charles Cooper
1907-1910	Henry W. Hamann
1903-1906	Salmon Jones
1899-1902	Thomas A. Taylor
1897-1898	Chris Reichel
1893-1896	R.M. Archibald
1891-1892	Val Heim
1887-1890	Leo Schott
1885-1886	Samuel Beresford
1883-1884	Morton L. Hawkins
1881-1882	Samuel Bailey
1879-1880	George Weber
1877-1878	William Pitt Wallace
1875-1876	Fred Springmeier
1873-1874	George W. Zeigler
1871-1872	Joseph E. Heart
1869-1870	Daniel Weber
1867-1868	Henry S. Schotman
1865-1866	Richard Calvin
1863-1864	William Long
1861-1862	John B. Armstrong
1859-1860	Henry Kessler
1857-1858	Richard Matthews
1855-1856	Gassaway Brashear
1853-1854	Benjamin Higdon
1851-1852	Charles W. Smith