

Gloucester County K9 Display

There is a rich history involving the use of Police Canine Units within Gloucester County. Although there is documentation that the City of Woodbury used bloodhounds for tracking purposes during the turn of the century, it is believed that the first official Police K9 Unit was established in Glassboro in 1958. The German shepherd dog's name was Harras Von Stangenbrunnen, otherwise known as "3-D", and his handler was Patrolman Robert Toughill. In August of 1958 "3-D" was featured in National Geographic Magazine with a story entitled, "Dogs Work for Man" where he was shown walking up a ladder to apprehend burglary suspects for the Baltimore City Police Department. Shortly after that, he began working for the Glassboro Police Department.

During the 1960's many other Gloucester County Police Departments started using canines in Law Enforcement. Over the years, dogs have been an extremely valuable tool in police work, whereas they are used in a variety of situations, such as tracking lost children, apprehending violent criminals, protecting handlers and officers, locating evidence of crimes, and sniffing for illegal narcotics or dangerous explosives. They are also used for educational purposes including K9 Demonstrations for school children and civic organizations.

The patches and photos represent the police departments that have active or past K9 Units. Because there were so many agencies utilizing K9 Units within the county, several active and retired K9 Handlers joined together and founded the non-profit, Gloucester County Police K9 Association (GCPK9A) in March of 2010. It is supported by each individual handler's law enforcement agency and has been sanctioned by the Gloucester County Chiefs of Police Association.

In fact, the GCPK9A was formed as a result of a tragic and deadly illness suffered by a little boy named Jesse Bright Glaser. Jesse's love for Police Dogs was and still is the driving force behind the association. In his memory, handlers came together to form this association realizing that the value of the Police K9 is more than just a law enforcement tool. For it is also a vehicle or platform to raise awareness for what officers do, including tackling issues and causes that support the "greater good."

Although policing in Gloucester County has become more challenging over the years since "3-D" first walked the beat, one thing has remained constant. Police dogs work for nothing other than praise and love from their handlers while giving their protection, heart, soul, and unconditional love!