

May

1 May 2007 - Detective Raul V. Gama, Automobile Accident

Detective Raul Gama was killed when a vehicle went out of control and drove into the unmarked van he was in.

The deputy was conducting surveillance at the time and was parked on Oxnard Street, in North Hollywood, when the van was struck. He was transported to a local hospital where he succumbed to his injuries a short time later.

The driver was arrested and charged with felony manslaughter.

Detective Gama had served with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department for 20 years. He is survived by his wife, four children, and his mother.

2 May 1981 – Deputy Constance Ellen Worland, Accidental Gunfire

Deputy Constance Worland was accidentally shot and killed by her partner following a call involving a man with a gun in a high-crime area.

After arriving at the scene, the deputies were told the suspects had gone to another area of the housing complex. As the deputies got back into their patrol car, their shotgun discharged as it was being placed into the shotgun mount. The blast struck Deputy Worland in the side.

Deputy Worland had been a member of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department for four years and was assigned to Carson Station.

3 May 1978 – Deputy Walter William Hannan, Jr., Automobile Accident

Deputy Walter Hannan was killed while responding to an officer needs assistance call at the intersection of Avalon Blvd and Domingues Street in Carson. He and his partner, Deputy Archuletta, were responding with their emergency equipment activated to assist another deputy who had requested assistance.

A Chevy Nova pulled in front of Deputy Hannan's patrol car, causing him to take evasive action to prevent hitting the vehicle. He lost control of the patrol car, which struck a metal utility pole killing Deputy Hannan instantly. Deputy Hannan's partner was severely injured and was later medically retired.

Deputy Hannan was assigned to the Carson Sheriff Station.

11 May 1992 – Deputy Richard B. Hammack, Gunfire

Deputy Richard Hammack was shot and killed while serving a high risk drug warrant. He was struck in the neck, face, and upper body by rifle fire as he ran to assist two other deputies who had been fired upon.

12 May 1995 – Deputy Stephen Wayne Blair, Gunfire

Deputy Blair was shot and killed while attempting to contact two known gang members. He was shot as he stepped out of his patrol car. The shooter was arrested and charged with murdering a peace officer. The man was convicted and sentenced to death.

Deputy Blair is survived by his wife and three sons.

12 May 1995 – Deputy Jimmie Richard Henry, Duty Related Illness

Deputy Henry died of a disease contracted as the result to being exposed to burning jet fuel following a military plane crash on Santa Catalina Island. He and two other deputies were attempting to rescue the pilot. As a result of being exposed to the burning jet fuel, all three deputies developed pulmonary fibrosis which causes scar tissue to build up in the lungs.

Deputy Henry was forced to medically retire in 1984 as a result of developing the illness. He died 10 years later shortly after undergoing a lung transplant as a result of the illness.

Deputy Henry had served with the agency for 18 years. He was survived by his wife and child.

14 May 1922 – Constable William E. Funkhouser, Gunfire

During the early morning hours of the 14th of May 1922, a burglar stalked the quiet streets of San Dimas Township. His illegal activities began shortly after 3 AM at the Esparza residence at First and Depot Streets where he lifted a pocketbook containing \$75 and escaped undetected. At the second residence he entered he was not as fortunate. Mrs. Blackwell, who rented out rooms at her home at 316 West Third Street, heard the suspect and confronted him shortly after he stole a watch and jewelry belonging to two of her boarders, newspaperman Thomas Cervantes and his wife. Mr. Cervantes was alerted by Mrs. Blackwell's cries of alarm and together they chased the man out the back door. Mrs. Blackwell wisely gave up the chase once the suspect re-crossed her threshold, but Cervantes followed the man and alerted Township Constable William E. Funkhouser.

Funkhouser, a fifty-year-old, married, father of ten, had been the San Dimas Township constable for a number of years, but only two months before the break-ins on May 14th he was hired by local business owners to also serve as the town's night watchman. Cervantes climbed into Funkhouser's car and they drove east following the suspect's trail to the pumping plant at Cienega Avenue and the Santa Fe railroad tracks.

Cervantes described the suspect as a Mexican man, about twenty-five to thirty years of age, five feet six or seven and one hundred thirty to one hundred forty pounds with a scar on one side of

his face. They spotted the man on the tracks and Funkhouser got the drop on him and he threw up his hands in surrender. Funkhouser began to search the suspect with one hand while attempting to keep him covered by holding his revolver in the other. When jewelry taken from Cervantes was recovered in one of the suspect's pockets, the man suddenly turned on the constable and struck him sending the gun tumbling about fifteen feet away. The suspect drew a revolver of his own and fired at Funkhouser, but missed. Funkhouser closed on his attacker and got one hand on the barrel of the weapon. The suspect was able to wrestle his gun away from Funkhouser cutting the constable's hand with the sight in the process. He then fired one round into the lawman's chest striking him in the heart killing him.

Fearing for his own life Cervantes began to grapple with the suspect for the revolver. He managed to wrestle the gun away, but the man refused to submit to Cervantes commands to stop and ran off into the darkness. Cervantes fired two rounds at the suspect as he fled but did not hit him. Cervantes immediately reported the tragedy to Deputy Constable Fairbanks who notified the Sheriff's office before leading seven other men in pursuit of the suspect. The man's trail was lost on Foothill Boulevard at the base of the mountains.

A posse of two hundred lawmen was organized and personally led by Sheriff Traeger. It was comprised of sheriff's deputies and peace officers from La Verne, Azusa, Glendora, Pomona, Covina, as well as San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. The interest of officers from Riverside County was particularly keen because the circumstances of the assault on Funkhouser were similar to those of the shooting of Corona Chief of Police Frank E. Redans six weeks before by a Mexican named Jack Mais. Chief Redans was shot in the right breast, right arm and left thigh, but survived his wounds.

Later in the day a man roughly matching the suspect's description was spotted exiting Dalton Canyon in Azusa by Constable William I. Hamblin. He took off running but Hamblin cornered and subdued him in a section house after a hard fight. Due to the circumstances of the man's capture, together with the general match of his physical description it was felt certain that this was Funkhouser's slayer. Constable Hamblin and El Monte Constable Lester C. Burdick took the prisoner to El Monte where he could be held in the town jail until Cervantes could arrive to make a positive identification. Unfortunately, Cervantes was certain that the man Hamblin arrested was not Funkhouser's slayer. It was later rumored that the suspect might have fled toward Fullerton in Orange County, but a search of this community failed to locate him.

Constable Funkhouser received laudatory praise from lawmen who knew him. Constable Alex B. Chambers of Pomona said that, "Funkhouser did not know what fear was." Funkhouser told one Pomona police officer shortly before his death, "What's the use to fear if one goes into this business."

Along with an official letter of condolence from the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, Constable Funkhouser's widow received ninety-five percent of his salary for three years totaling \$3,420. There is no evidence that Funkhouser's murderer was ever apprehended or that he was Jack Mais the man wanted in the assault on Corona Chief Redans.

22 May 1971 – Deputy Gary David Saunders, Gunfire

Deputy Gary Saunders was shot and killed with his own service weapon following a foot chase of a suspect near the intersection of Florence and Holmes Avenues. During the ensuing struggle the suspect was able to gain control of Deputy Saunders' service revolver and shot him. The suspect fled the scene but was apprehended a short time later after being surrounded. The suspect was convicted of second degree murder.

24 May 1972 – Deputy Charles O. Ley, Automobile Accident

Deputy Sheriff Charles Ley was killed in an automobile accident while on patrol.

When he and his partner were stopped at an intersection, they observed a car run a red light and pursued after the car. As they were entering the 605 Freeway southbound, they lost control of their patrol car on the curve. The vehicle went off the road, rolled over twice, and landed upside down against a fence. Deputy Ley was pronounced dead at the scene.

His partner survived with minor injuries. Both deputies had been wearing their seatbelts and helmets.

Deputy Ley had served with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department for four years.

26 May 1964 – Sergeant William R. Ballard, Heart Attack

Sergeant Ballard suffered a fatal heart attack while investigating a burglary. He had been with the agency for 26 years and was assigned to the East Los Angeles Station.

29 May 1979 – Deputy Jack Don Williams, Gunfire

Deputy Jack Williams was shot and killed as he and other members of the Narcotics Bureau served a warrant on a home.

When the officers attempted a forced entry into the home, one of the suspects opened fire with a shotgun, striking Deputy Williams.

The suspect was sentenced to death.

Deputy Williams had served with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department for nine years. He was survived by his wife and two children.

29 May 1992 – Officer John A Hoglund (Maywood PD), Gunfire

Officer John Hoglund was shot and killed while responding to a robbery alarm at a liquor store.

He was shot three times as he exited his patrol car. The assailants were later arrested and convicted of his murder. The subject who shot him was subsequently sentenced to death.

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