

## **September - 13**

### **1 September 1969 – Reserve Deputy Lionel W. Dashley, Motorcycle Accident**

Reserve Deputy Dashley was killed in a motorcycle accident while pursuing a vehicle on the Pacific Coast Highway. During the pursuit his motorcycle went out of control and struck a truck head-on.

Reserve Deputy Dashley had been with the agency for six years and was assigned to the Special Enforcement Bureau Reserve Motors Detail.

### **1 September 1984 – Reserve Captain Lloyd Beauford Brooks, Struck by Vehicle**

Reserve Captain Lloyd Brooks was struck and killed by a vehicle while directing traffic at the scene of a serious motor vehicle accident. The driver of the car that struck him was distracted while watching a sheriff's department medevac helicopter land at the scene. The driver suddenly swerved around the stopped cars and struck Reserve Captain Brooks.

Reserve Captain Brooks had served with the agency for 19 years and was assigned to the East Los Angeles Sheriff Station.

### **5 September 1984 – Deputy David Lance Holguin, Gunfire**

Deputy David Holguin was shot and killed while assisting a young child who was alone at a bus stop. Deputy Holguin had just finished his shift and was heading home when he saw the boy by himself at the intersection of Florence and Vinevale Avenues in Bell City. He stopped and called the Bell Police Department, identified himself as an officer, and waited with the boy until local police arrived. While he waited the boy's father, a heroin addict, arrived and shot Deputy Holguin in the face with a .45 caliber handgun. The suspect was apprehended, convicted of second degree murder, and sentenced to 15 years.

### **17 September 1955 – Deputy Edwin M. Falkowski, Heart Attack**

Deputy Falkowski suffered a fatal heart attack while he and other deputies attempted to disperse a crowd of unruly juveniles in West Whittier.

Deputy Falkowski had been with the agency for five and a half years.

### **18 September 1962 – Officer David Louis Felger (Lynwood PD), Motorcycle Accident**

Officer David Felger was killed in a motorcycle accident while in pursuit of a suspect.

He was survived by his wife and child.

### **20 September 1958 – Lieutenant Donald J. Gillis, Gunfire**

Lieutenant Gillis was shot and killed while off duty while attempting to disarm a drunk and disorderly man while camping in the Laguna Mountain Recreation Area with his wife. The man had come into his campground after becoming separated from his hunting party. Lieutenant Gillis tried to help the man find his party but was unsuccessful. He then told the man to get into his car and sleep it off and that they would try to find the party again in the morning. The suspect then grabbed a rifle and fired into the air twice. Lieutenant Gillis grabbed the rifle and headed towards his station wagon. When he turned around to the face the man again the suspect grabbed a second rifle and shot him in the chest. The man was apprehended and sentenced to life.

Lieutenant Gillis had been with the agency for 20 years and was assigned to the Firestone Substation.

### **23 September 1958 – Deputy Harold A. Reis Jr., Automobile Accident**

Deputy Reis was killed in an automobile accident when his patrol car was broadsided while he was responding to a call.

Deputy Reis had been with the agency for two years.

### **24 September 1924 – Deputy Constable John “Ed” Brown, Gunfire**

“Bad man” Gus Le Brun should have known that he was way out of his league. But self-delusion sometimes overcomes the lovelorn. Add to that a liquor induced temper that often spilled over into violence, coupled with a penchant for using firearms to solve his disagreements, and Gus Le Brun was a power keg just waiting for the match to be lit. The lovesick Le Brun believed that the attention of the lovely Miss Nellie Bayles, who was better known by her stage name Bonita Darling, amounted to love rather than kindness and self-interested flirtation. Le Brun performed various tasks including fixing the water works on Darling’s ranch in Tunnel Canyon outside of Newhall for the better part of a year and the former actress appeared to take advantage of his infatuation. Le Brun believed that Darling agreed to marry him in exchange for loaning her \$200. This seemed an odd motivation for an engagement, but this was lost on Le Brun. Not only did Darling disavow any such engagement, but she told him that she did not want to see him any longer. Thus the match was struck. Sadly, Le Brun’s resulting explosion resulted in a gun battle that took the life of popular Deputy Constable John “Ed” Brown, as well as his own.

Matters between Miss Darling and Mr. Le Brun came to a head a couple days before the fatal shooting on Sunday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, 1924. Darling went to Justice of the Peace P. C Miller to seek relief when Le Brun became violent. On Friday, the day before the tragic events began to unfold, Le Brun appeared before Justice Miller on a charge of disturbing the peace. He told the judge that Darling owed him money. To assuage Le Brun’s claim Darling wrote out a note for \$150. Justice Miller then issued an order that Le Brun stay away from Darling’s property. This order and his former supposed fiancée’s attempt to buy him off with a promissory note only enraged him further.

The next evening Le Brun arrived at Darling's ranch in an agitated state and told her that he was there to kill her. Miss Darling, no doubt using some of the talents she formerly employed in the starring role in the 1915 silent movie *The Yankee Girl*, informed him that she had not eaten in twelve hours and needed to get food. She tried to send Le Brun away to get bread. This failed. She then managed to persuade the man to permit her to go for the bread promising to return. Despite his agitated state Le Brun consented to let her go, but warned that if she returned with any peace officers he would kill them. Darling did not return at all that night but came back on Sunday morning hoping that Le Brun was gone. Instead, she found the man seated on her porch with a rifle slung over his knees. When he caught sight of her he hoisted the rifle to his shoulder and pointed it at her. Darling ran off and located Justice Miller.

The justice summoned Newhall Constable Jack Pilcher. Pilcher was told of Le Brun's actions and informed that he was drunk and tearing Darling's property to pieces. Pilcher went to Saugus and picked up Deputy Constable Ed Brown before driving out to Tunnel Canyon. As the lawmen approached the ranch, Le Brun was no longer on the porch. Instead, true to his word to Darling, he was lying in wait for the constables. As Pilcher's Ford lumbered slowly up the dirt road toward the ranch house, Le Brun stepped out behind it and yelled out, "Stick 'em up." According to Pilcher in his official report, "Before we had time to turn, there was a shot fired and we looked around and saw Gus Le Brun coming out of the brush, shooting at us."

The first shot hit the dash between Pilcher and Brown. Pilcher stopped the car and he and Brown got out of the passenger door and took a position in front of the vehicle. Le Brun continued to approach them firing as he came on. The lawmen ordered him to stop shooting then hastily began to return fire. Soon their bullets began to find their target. According to Pilcher, "We evidently hit him because he fell several times but he did not give up but would say [he] would give up and then when we stepped out he began shooting again. Finally, he threw his rifle down and said 'I am dying.'"

But this was another ruse to draw the lawmen in. As Brown and Pilcher approached Le Brun, he was in a "half-sitting" position. When they were twelve to fifteen feet from the man he withdrew a .45 revolver from under him and fired it twice. One bullet went wild but the other passed through Brown's stomach. Pilcher then fired again striking Le Brun in the head and bringing the gunfight to an end. Despite his injury, Brown was able to put Le Brun's rifle in the car as Pilcher secured the .45 next to it. Brown then told Pilcher, "Jack, he has got me. You had better take me to the Doctor first." Brown died at the Metropolitan Hospital in Los Angeles later that night.

A suicide note was found on Le Brun's body. In it he blamed Darling for spurning him even though, "I loved her with all my heart and I hated to part from her. She pretended to comply with my love, but was false. I decided my life wasn't worth living... Bonita has kissed me, loved me. My life is a wreck, so good-bye to all my dearest friends. I will now end my middle-aged life and all on account of Bonita Darling, but she will not stay on earth to give me the horse laugh again." Le Brun was unable or unwilling to fulfill this veiled threat against Darling either on Saturday night or Sunday morning. Unfortunately, Ed Brown did pay the price for Le Brun's desire for suicide.

Despite Le Brun's wish to die he was struck with eight rounds from Brown and Pilcher's weapons before the final head shot by the constable put him down. Le Brun also prepared

himself for a prolonged gun battle with lawmen as approximately one hundred rounds of ammunition were found in his clothing. He may have wanted to die, but it was clear that he did not want to do so alone.

Ed Brown was 43 at the time of his death and was stationed at Saugus. He was survived by his wife who was a nurse. Jack Pilcher was the ranking officer but both he and Brown were fast friends who were widely known across the San Fernando Valley. Ironically, it was reported that both men “frequently engage[ed] in heated friendly arguments over the probable risk the other was to take.” On September 14<sup>th</sup>, 1924, the risk they took was shared, but Brown was the one unfortunate enough to answer eternity’s call.

A fitting tribute was written for Brown in a local paper a few days after his death. It reads in part, “He died in the work he loved. He died as the rare officer of his type desire to go – to meet their maker in harness. Los Angeles County has lost an officer in every sense of the word. His remarkable success has been felt over the entire valley and those who know him can only say: Ed Brown was HONEST, CONGENIAL, JUST and COURAGEOUS; a lovable character.”

In a cruel twist of fate Jack Pilcher would survive his friend by less than a year. On June 4<sup>th</sup>, 1925, Pilcher and his new deputy constable, John Seltzer, were spending the night on a ranch in Bouquet Canyon during the course of conducting a burglary investigation in the area. Seltzer was startled awake in the middle of the night by a lizard and tried to shoot the creature. Instead, he dropped his gun and the weapon went off and the round killed Constable Pilcher. After surviving numerous gunfights with bootleggers and bandits, not to mention the shootout with Le Brun, it was a cruel and ironic way for the veteran lawman to die.

### **26 September 1989 – Deputy Rosemary Iris May, Automobile Accident**

Deputy May was killed in an automobile accident in Lancaster when another driver ran a stop sign at a high rate of speed and struck her unmarked department vehicle. The driver of the other vehicle pled guilty to one count of manslaughter and sentenced to one year in jail.

Deputy May had been with the agency for 21 years.

### **30 September 1968 - Deputy Robert K. Schnur & Deputy Gary E. McCullah, Helicopter Accident**

Deputy Schnur and Deputy Gary McCullah were killed in a helicopter accident. The Deputies were flying low in a helicopter in the Whittier Hills when they struck abandoned telephone wires in a canyon. The helicopter and its crew were not reported missing until the next morning when Deputy Schnur’s wife called. A search was started and the helicopter’s crash site was located at 7:30 AM. Autopsies determined both Deputies were killed on impact.

Deputy Schnur had been with the agency for 14 years and was survived by his wife and three children.

Deputy McCullah had been with the agency for six years and was survived by his fiancée.

**30 September 1979 - Patrolman Harold L. Edgington (Los Angeles County Harbor Patrol), Stabbed**

Patrolman Edgington was stabbed to death by a deranged man while issuing a parking citation. Although mortally wounded by the stab wound, Patrolman Edgington was able to shoot the suspect in the hip as the man fled.

A bystander who witnessed the incident used Patrolman Edgington's motorcycle radio to call for assistance. Responding officers shot and killed the suspect as he advanced on them with the knife used to kill Patrolman Edgington.