

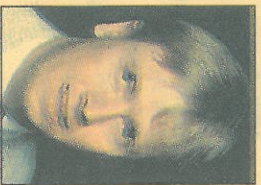


FROM THE HISTORY OF THE OTTAWA POLICE BY GILLES LAROCHELLE

Police officer Edna Harry, conducting traffic at Sussex and Rideau streets, was still an unusual sight on the streets of Ottawa in the mid-'50s. Today, Ottawa boasts a female deputy police chief.

# A badge of honour for the women in blue

Pioneering courage and perseverance paved way for Deputy Chief Sue O'Sullivan



DON CAMPBELL

The first policewoman in Ottawa never wore the uniform. Regulations even prevented her from displaying a badge or carrying a gun.

Flora A. Campbell had the authority to arrest people, but seldom, or possibly never; did, in fact, she preferred preventing crime over reacting to it.

Within weeks of her appointment on New Year's Eve

in 1913, a newspaper, the *Ottawa Free Press*, even ridiculed the hiring by reporting that she had yet to make a single arrest. The news report suggested that "it is expected the men will be falling over one another to have the honour of being arrested by the first policewoman." By 1914, she had been "elevated" to running the new switchboard system at 2 Queen St.

It was clearly not an easy career choice, given the attitudes of the day, and the obstacles remained right through policewoman Campbell's forced retirement 21 years later, when she chose to marry another officer.

Eighty-nine years after policewoman Campbell's pioneering courage and perseverance opened the door to fe-

male police officers in Ottawa, Sue O'Sullivan sits near the top of a police service that has come a very long way indeed.

Ms. O'Sullivan, 41, is six months into her new job as deputy chief — making her the highest-ranking female officer in the history of the force and one of the top-ranking women in Canada (the other deputy to Ottawa Chief Vince Bevan is Larry Hill).

The only policewoman at a major police service in Canada who ranks higher than Deputy Chief O'Sullivan is Ontario Provincial Police Commissioner Gwen Boniface.

Policewoman Campbell would no doubt proudly approve of Deputy Chief O'Sullivan's promotion. And she would be impressed that of the 1,029 officers on the force today, nearly one in five, or 193, are female.