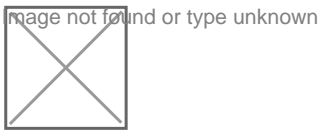


Pioneering Women: The Legacy of Maureen Wild, a Trailblazing Officer in the Port of Bristol Authority Police

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In the mid-20th century, it was a different world for women in law enforcement. Discriminatory regulations often kept them from pursuing their careers while being married. However, amidst these challenges, there were trailblazers like Maureen Wild.



On November 22nd, 1954, history was made when Maureen Wild became Constable 61 in the Port of Bristol Authority Police. She shattered the gender barrier by becoming the second female police officer in the force, following Patricia Stockham, who was appointed earlier the same year.

In those days, female police officers were not allowed to be married, a restrictive policy that seems archaic by today's standards. Despite these limitations, Maureen and her fellow female officers persevered, determined to serve their community.

Maureen's role within the Port of Bristol Authority Police was multifaceted. She was responsible for covering the police station, performing switchboard duties, and issuing various keys. Additionally, she handled administrative tasks that were crucial for the efficient functioning of the force.

While her primary duties were administrative, Maureen and her colleagues were occasionally called upon to perform police work, including searches of female individuals. This responsibility became especially significant during a wave of thefts from the Avonmouth Dock canteen,

highlighting the flexibility and adaptability required of female officers during that era.

Maureen Wild worked out of the former Gloucester Road Police Station, which served as the central hub for the Port of Bristol Authority Police at the time. Gloucester Road Gate was the main entrance and exit point to Avonmouth Docks, making it a strategic location for law enforcement activities.

Last month, Maureen was presented with a framed photograph, taken alongside Patricia Stockham, by Bristol Port's, Chief Inspector Zoe Chegwyn, the first female Chief Police Officer of any Port in the UK and Bristol Port Chairman, Sir David Ord. She was also presented with a Certificate of Service and a Port of Bristol Police medal. These honors symbolise the recognition of her exceptional contributions to the force and her role in paving the way for future generations of female police officers.

Maureen's journey extended beyond the presentation of awards. She took a nostalgic tour of Avonmouth Docks, revisiting locations of interest that held memories of her time in service. Her journey also led her to the Port Police Station at Royal Portbury Dock, where she met with current staff.

Maureen's contribution to the police force, as well as the recognition she received, showcases the progress made toward gender inclusivity in law enforcement and serves as a symbol of the ongoing journey towards gender equality in all fields.

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