



65 YEARS OF WOMEN IN POLICING 1949-2014

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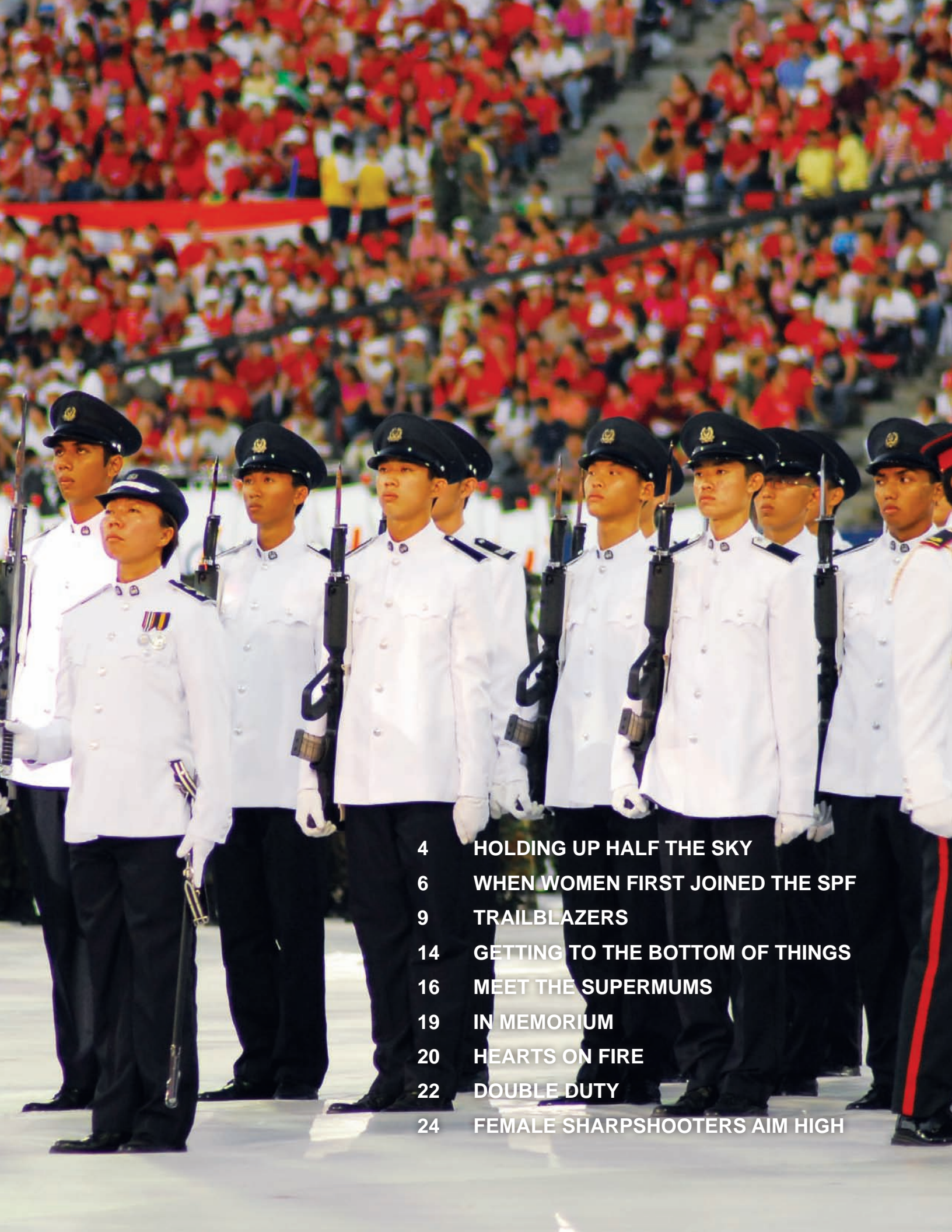
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In August 2006, DSP Samantha Lee became the first female Guard-of-Honour Contingent Commander in NDP history.



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EDITOR'S NOTE



This issue of *Police Life* is specially published in celebration of the 65 years of women in policing. As the magazine's Editorial Advisor, I would like to take this opportunity to share with you some moments and thoughts about my career with the Force. I hope it will encourage you and inspire many more young Singaporean women to join us.

Introduction

I joined the Police Force by chance. As political science graduates, most of us who wanted to join the Civil Service aimed for the Foreign Affairs Ministry. At the Public Service Commission interview, the Singapore Police Force was offered to me instead. The interview panelists told me that the Police Force was a place that would allow me to leave legacies, be empowered to take charge, contribute and see meaningful growth at the individual and organisational levels.

Now, 29 years later, I am glad that I have stayed in the Force, and stayed true and tall to our mission. I have served in 12 departments, carrying different levels of responsibilities, enjoying and treasuring every good deed done together with my fellow officers. Of course, we also wept and grew stronger when things did not go right for us.

It Took Me a Decade and a Half

In 1984, I was amongst the first batch of graduate females to be appointed into the Force. I knew it would be a tough journey, but I did not expect that there would not be a career plan for female senior officers. Those of us who stayed on went with the flow. We chartered our own careers.

I was neither altruistic nor feminist when I was charting my career. I merely wanted meaningful growth in myself and in the place I would be contributing most of my waking hours. The latter has always been important to me because of the high trade-off. In 1998, after 14 years in the Force, I was still hovering around Head-level positions. Propelled by the frightening realisation that if I was not given a chance to lead the ground, there would not be any career development for me, I asked to be a Commander of a Land Division. It was a turning point in my career when I was appointed as Commander of Clementi Police Division on 10 Aug 1999. Incidentally, it was also the turning point for women officers in the Force.

We have come a long way since then. Today, the paths for women officers are no less different than those of our male counterparts. As women officers today, you face a different set of challenges but the requirements are the same whether you are a male or female officer. Be bold, hone your skills and ability, grab the opportunities that come your way, and chart your own career.

Be Yourself. Be Proud To Be a Woman. Be Prouder To Be a Policewoman

I recall that as Commander of Clementi Police Division, I was confronted with a detective who was depressed and extremely disengaged from work and family. I was advised to "CFF" (police acronym for 'closed for filing') him so that he would not burden the Division, but I did not want to give up on him. I decided to trust him and give him the autonomy to run a project he was assessed capable of managing, so that he could regain his self-respect. He paid it back with true loyalty and unreserved

gratitude, spending his time (both office and after-office hours) helping the Division's Investigation Branch clean up the Crime Clerk Office's database. He also, unexpectedly, developed a system to track the movement of Investigation Papers and crime files! The progress of investigations was one of over 30 key performance indicators for Land Divisions. Without his system, we would have had great difficulties clinching the Division's first Best Land Division title in 2001. I was even happier seeing him transform into a smart and confident gentleman. I have since lost touch with him but if I do meet him again, I want to let him know that my episode with him has injected a lot of confidence into my own style of management as a woman.

Fellow female colleagues, embrace your woman's instinct. Turn it into your strength. As women officers, we can be more facilitating, more patient and trust the ability of our people to shine in their jobs.

No Gender Distinction. We Are All Officers In Blue.

Next, I want to share my strong belief that gender should never be made an issue for officers in blue. In 2004, as Deputy Director of the Operations Department and concurrent Head of Secretariat for the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) crisis, I saw the strong team work and selflessness in everyone, putting in their best to ensure that every officer was safe while carrying out his or her duties. No one had experience dealing with such a crisis – managing victims, tracking patients and contacts, or adapting contagious diseases safety protocols. But we survived the epidemic, with zero casualties amongst our officers. All because we had a common objective to ensure that our officers do not fall – male and female officers alike.

Enjoy Your Work. Try The Different Aspects Of Policing.

S2006, which coincided with the visit by then US President George W. Bush on 16 Nov – 17 Nov 2006, was one of the most enjoyable and fulfilling major operations I went through. As the Commander of the Traffic Police Department then, I was very fortunate to be supported by a command of committed officers who possessed a very strong sense of belonging to the department. Together, we put in months of hard work preparing for the

two major operations. There is a strong, unexplainable, marvelous feeling in me each time I recollect the 11-day intensive deployment. We were filled with pressure and sleep-deprived but were strongly driven by the satisfaction of working with a great team and seeing our security and traffic movement plans being seamlessly executed. Though many have left and retired, I want to say a big thank you to all of you, my friends in the Traffic Police. The experience I got from my posting at the Traffic Police is very different from that of a Land Division. In traffic policing, I truly comprehended the meaning and experienced the need to execute the law with compassion. I also fully felt the true meaning when we say "every death on the road is tragic."

Conclusion

When the going gets tough and it often does in a policing career, I often draw inspiration from Burmese democracy fighter Aung San Suu Kyi. Whatever reasons she may have had, the fact that she left her family and a cozy life in America, and returned to fight for democracy for her country, greatly touched me. Such were the sacrifices that people made to fight for their beliefs and for meaningful causes. And it is the same with a career in policing. Every woman and man who has joined the Police has sacrificed something in his or her life – family time, personal time, dinners, weekends, public holidays, special occasions and more.

And as Asian women, it's even tougher, as the expectations on women to get married and raise a family are still there. If your child gets into trouble, the mother is responsible; never mind if she has a job too. It's tough to balance it all and the trade-offs are huge. However, I believe a lot of us do it for pure satisfaction from the job. So, to my fellow officers, I salute you and am proud to be one amongst you!

To all of you, my colleagues and my friends, the difficulties of life are intended to make us better, not bitter. And as Confucius said,

"Our greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising every time we fall."

NG GUAT TING
DIRECTOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT
11 MARCH 2014



HOLDING UP HALF THE SKY

About 650 serving and retired female police officers celebrated 65 years of women in policing on 8 March 2014 at Neverland II. The following speech was given by Commissioner of Police, Mr Ng Joo Hee, at the event.

Women of the Singapore Police Force, both past and present, a very good afternoon to every one of you.

Thank you for inviting me and my wife to this very special gathering, and for the opportunity to address you today.

Today is International Women's Day, and what an appropriate occasion it is for us to gather to celebrate 65 years of women in policing in Singapore. The colour of a 65th anniversary is the blue sapphire, which is also most

suitable for us who are the Police.

Today, we celebrate a milestone in the history of our police force. Exactly 65 years ago, in March 1949, 10 women created history by deciding to join the Singapore Police Force.

Their decision was certainly a ground-breaking and pioneering one. Their sense of adventure was to blaze a trail for generations of policewomen to come.

We have to remember that in those days, soon after World War Two, the prevailing attitude towards women and what they could or could not do were quite different from what they are today.

In the Police then, women officers were confined to administrative duties and to dealing with cases connected to women and children. Many policewomen were deployed as message operators in Radio Division and became affectionately known as the "Triple Niner Girls".

Today, it is quite different.

Unlike 65 years ago, today's young women do not have to overcome any prejudice, or break any barriers, to want to become a police officer.

Today, as long as she possesses the right attitude, can think straight, speak properly, read and write, and satisfy the requisite physical and medical standards, any young lady can be trained and equipped to become an outstanding police officer.

Today, except for the Gurkha Contingent, we have women in every police unit. And our policewomen do exactly what the men do. Today's policewomen stand side by side with the men on our frontlines, protecting Singapore from crime and disorder. Women officers are in our cars, on our boats, in our task force. They are investigators, trainers and peacekeepers. Today, our women are trained to the same standards and enjoy the same opportunities as their male counterparts.

Today, there is no glass ceiling in the Police. Women officers are judged on exactly the same merits as the men. And every command and leadership position in the Force is also open to our women officers.

This is as it should be.

Women hold up half the sky, and I see no reason why you cannot play an equal role in the business of keeping Singapore safe and secure. Certainly, the next milestone for the Force would be to have a woman as the police commissioner.

And that day will come. I am sure of it.

Unfortunately, there continues to be too few women in the Police. As I speak, there are only 1,500 policewomen in active service, making up barely 17% of our force.

My hope is that we can reach 20% women soon and, ultimately, have at least a third of all police officers be of the fairer sex. I hesitate to say that half of our force should eventually become female, simply because the vast majority of our adversary is male, and I do not think that that will ever change.

As we look for more women to join us, I am also keenly aware that our policewomen are also mothers and daughters. These roles also demand a great deal of their time and energy. The Police try our best to be supportive of our women officers outside of work. Today, we offer various flexible work arrangements, such as work-from-home and flexi-hour schemes, specifically for the benefit of our policewomen.

To provide even more support to our women officers, I am pleased to announce that we will soon establish a SPF Women's Committee.

This Committee, to be chaired by Senior Assistant Commissioner Zuraidah Abdullah, who is our highest ranking policewoman, will also comprise members from all ranks. This Committee will become the official voice for every policewoman and help the Force become an even more female-friendly organisation.

I want to conclude my remarks with a favour from you.

I need every one of you, whether retired or still in active service, to tell every young lady that you know to consider a career in the Police. I need you to get the message out that our police force offers an outstanding career to any young female Singaporean who is looking for a job that has a high purpose, that is challenging, that will let her fulfil her potential, and that will bring deep personal satisfaction.

Thank you again for inviting me to this event, and have a wonderful afternoon.

Thank you very much.

WHEN WOMEN FIRST JOINED THE SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE

By Ms Sitti Maryam, Mr Herman Lau & Ms Josephine Lee,
Heritage Development Unit of the Ministry of Home Affairs

Since their entry into the male-dominated Force in 1949, female police officers have consistently pushed boundaries, proving that the sky is the limit. Read on to find out more about our wonder women in blue.

The Female Pioneers in Khaki

The year was 1949. The Singapore Police Force (SPF) donned khaki. And for the first time in history, the SPF opened its doors to welcome female police officers into the force. This trail-blazing batch of officers consisted of 31 English-educated women who joined the Special Constabulary (Active Unit).

On 1 January 1950, 10 female police trainees became the first women police officers when they signed on as regulars. They were also the first females in the Civil Service to receive equal wages as their male counterparts.

One of the pioneers in this groundbreaking batch, Mary Voon (also affectionately known as Mary Quintal) went on to become the first female Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) in 1961, before she

retired in 1974. Succeeding her as the Officer-in-charge of the then 600-strong women police was ASP Mandy Goh who joined the force in 1952 at the young age of 17.

As an aspiring policewoman, Goh's parents strongly objected to her joining the force and refused to speak to her for months. "Seeing me in a khaki uniform made matters worse," recounted ASP Goh in a 1973 interview when she succeeded ASP Voon. "Now they are happy that I made it." This is in no small part due to her hard work and dedication. "I remained a bachelor girl because I got married to my work and was too involved."

Making Inroads

In the early days, female officers often found themselves restricted to the roles of message operators attached to the Radio Division, earning them the nickname 'Triple Niner Girls'. Subsequently, they

made their way into 'soft postings' such as Crime Prevention Officers, lock-up Women Police Constables, and traffic control officers, as well as specialised roles where a female presence was required such as handling female suspects in anti-vice operations. Since then, female officers have slowly but surely made bigger inroads, displaying strong leadership qualities as they forayed into positions previously helmed by men.

In October 1980, 44 women officers selected from various divisions, including the Traffic Police and Airport Police departments, completed a one-month intensive training course on riot and crowd control tactics and a Women Task Force was thereafter established. It was the first time policewomen in Singapore were trained as a troop for riot and crowd control duties. At a riot drill demonstration on 11 October 1980 to display their newly acquired skills and to mark the end



of their one-month training, one overseas police officer commented that these "Singapore girls are very fierce and fit."

A year later, five female officers – Inspector (Insp) Salmah Shariff, Insp Irene Lim, Insp Patricia Giaw, Insp Wong Lan Yang, and Insp Shariffa Alsagoff – earned a spot in history when they became Singapore's first female Investigation Officers (IOs) in the Land Divisions. They tackled new challenges such as interviewing witnesses, interrogating accused persons, investigating scenes of crimes, preparing crime reports and investigation papers, and making arrests. According to then 'C' Division's OC Crime, ASP Chan Kok Guan, the female Inspector in his division "did what the male officers did – there was no favouritism or

special treatment."

February 2007 saw the formation of SPF's first women-only task force team. The Special Women's Task Team (SWTT) was established to enhance the operational capability of the Special Operations Command (SOC) in handling civil disobedience and incidents of disorder involving women and children. This elite team of female officers is made up of members who have survived the intense five-day selection course, which includes carrying 55 kilograms of weights over a six-kilometre walk. Today, one thing is certain; females are no longer confined to "softer" postings.

Modern Policewomen

Looking back on the past 65 years, our

female officers have certainly come a long way to attain the prestige and reputation they enjoy today. Officers like Madam Wong Ee Eu and Madam Ng Guat Ting, the first females to join the Force as Senior Officers in 1984 with the latter becoming the first female to head a Land Division in 1999, and Madam Zuraidah Abdullah, Singapore's first female Senior Assistant Commissioner of Police in 2013, have shattered the proverbial glass ceiling. History has also witnessed ASP Mandy Goh as the first female to head the Anti-Vice Enforcement Unit (AVEU) of the Criminal Investigation Division (CID) in 1982, ASP Geraldine Tan as the first woman Commanding Officer of the Coastal Patrol Craft in 1996, and Supt Sng May Yen becoming the first woman commander to lead a United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-



Leste (UNMIT) contingent from SPF in 2007, doing our nation proud in the international arena.


One constant amongst these wonder women was their dedication to their jobs, or rather vocation as police officers. Madam Zuraidah epitomises such discipline, a trait she inherited from her granduncle who was also a police officer. I'm a stickler for discipline... Discipline is important so that we can live our values. More so in Training Command, where I have to inculcate this in our trainee officers and recruits, walk the talk and be the role model," shared Madam Zuraidah in a recent interview with Home Team News. Her dedication to her work also shone through when asked if she has any children of her own. "I don't have any. I already have 1,500 here," she said, smiling like a proud parent as she gestured to the parade square outside the window of her office in the Home Team Academy.

What's next?

The achievements of female officers reflect the gradual shift in attitude

towards gender in the SPF over the last six decades. Female officers today can speak proudly of the stellar achievements they have accomplished, putting them on par with their male counterparts. Summarising her findings for a special feature in the 1994 *Police Life Annual*, then DSP Ng Guat Ting said, "As far as performance expectations go, almost all male and female officers alike feel that there is no discrimination. Most male officers felt that women could perform as well as men."

"Things have changed now. I still believe and hold the principles that you can be deployed anywhere, based on your capabilities. You can be a woman and able to perform duties, then the question is 'Why not?' I've never put gender as an issue," said Madam Zuraidah.

Indeed, with the unique perspective, admirable traits, and dedication that female officers have brought to the force in the past 65 years, there are probably no posts that they cannot aspire to. 



TRAILBLAZERS

*By ASP (NS) Mohamed Sayadi Bin Mohamed Nor & SC (NS) Mohamed Noh Iskandar
Photos By Supt Geraldine Tan, SSgt Edwin Lim Jia Zhong, SC Muhammad Idaffi Bin Othman,
Home Team News*

*Police Life pays special homage to ten women
who were pioneers in their own field.*



Mary Quintal

Mary Voon, also affectionately known as Mary Quintal, was one of the first female police officers to join the Force in March 1949. The pioneer women police officers were also the first females in the Civil Service to receive equal wages as the male officers. Mary Quintal went on to become the first female Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) in 1961.

During her career, she was the Officer-in-Charge of the Women Police, looking after their welfare and work rosters for duties which specifically needed women police officers. She was also appointed as prosecutor in the Juvenile Court in the early 1950s.

Ms Quintal went to England in August 1950 to learn more about the role of women officers in the police force in London. She then came back to Singapore and imparted the knowledge to the women police officers in Singapore Police Force (SPF).

She was also hugely responsible for the transformation of the police uniform from khaki to dark blue. This also included the change in uniform for the women police mobile squad in the early 1960s. She retired in 1974, leaving behind a beaten path

for other female officers to follow.

Mandy Goh

Mandy Goh joined the force in 1952 at the young age of 17. Her parents strongly objected the move and refused to speak to her for months, as she recounted during a 1973 interview. "Now they are happy that I made it."

Ms Goh was the first female to head the Anti-Vice Enforcement Unit of the Criminal Investigation



Department in 1982. She also went on to succeed the Officer-In-Charge of the then 600-strong women police. Ms Goh, who held the rank of ASP back then, won the Public Service Medal (bronze) in 1963 and a long service medal in 1970. She also scored two other firsts: when her Anti-Vice Enforcement Unit won a commendation award from the then-Commissioner of Police Goh Yong Hong in 1983 and when she became the first woman to be promoted to Senior ASP in October 1984.

Tan Chiew Lim, Sonia

Ms Tan Chiew Lim, Sonia, is one of the first seven ladies in the Traffic Police Department's (TP) Mobile Squad. Formed in 1970, the first all-female TP Mobile Squad consisted of a Staff Sergeant and six Constables (including Ms Tan). Riding their Vespa scooters, the officers performed patrol duties and booked motorists who violated traffic regulations. According to Ms Tan, the female officers were "very much feared by motorists, who used to say that we 'bo bang chance', implying that we would not hesitate to issue summons, no matter how much the motorists tried to explain why they flouted traffic rules and pleaded for leniency."

TP officers used to perform the Gymkhana (motorcycle stunts) at events such as the Police Week Parade. Ms Tan is seen in the photo



performing the Gymkhana at the 1971 parade at the Jalan Besar Stadium. "The stunts we performed were very dangerous stunts which required superb balancing skills, strong coordination skills, great teamwork and great endurance as we had to maintain our stance and positions as we steered our motorcycle and completed one round around the stadium. It was really exhilarating and fulfilling!"

Ms Tan retired as a Staff Sergeant in 2001.

Lois Lim Lai Hua

Ms Lois Lim was the first female to hold a Head of Department position in the Singapore Police Force in 2002 when she was appointed Director of the Administration & Finance Department. Ms Lim, who held the rank of Superintendent of Police before she retired in 2005, was also the first female Head of Personnel in the SPF's Manpower Department from 1991 till 1996.

"As Head Personnel, I was able to reframe my staff's perspective by emphasising that they too have an equally important role in helping SPF in achieving its mission in keeping Singapore safe and secure when they do their best in ensuring that the career development needs of our officers are well taken care of," said Ms Lim.



When asked if she has any advice for future ladies who are looking to pursue a career in the SPF, Ms Lim said, "If you are looking for an adventure, SPF is the place for you. It's one career that is "very happening" with no lack of opportunities to enrich your life experiences."

Ms Lim has retired from the Force and is currently working in the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Senior Assistant Commissioner of Police (SAC) Zuraidah Binte Abdullah

SAC Zuraidah made history when she became the first female police officer to hold the rank of SAC when she was promoted in 2013.

Having held various leadership positions in different departments within SPF, SAC Zuraidah has a wealth of experience to tap on and looking back at her years in the force, she said, "SPF is an organisation that treats its people as its most valued



asset and deploys its officers based on their strength and potential. Gender is not an issue and does not pose a problem."

"The job as a police officer is tough. You must be prepared to work long hours. You must also have strong support from your family especially when you are married so that you can concentrate on your job," added SAC Zuraidah when asked to impart words of wisdom to ladies who are considering a career in the police force.

Assistant Commissioner of Police (AC) Ng Guat Ting

Besides being amongst the first batch of graduate females to be appointed into the Force in 1984, AC Ng is also the first woman to hold these distinguished positions: Deployment Officer (now known as Head Operations & Training) in 1991, female SPF honorary Aide-De-Camp (ADC) to the President in 1992,

Head Personnel at the Manpower Department in 1996, Land Division Commander in 1999, Deputy Director

of the Operations Department in 2001, Traffic Police Department's Chief in 2005 and Director of the Public Affairs Department in 2008.

When she was appointed ADC, AC Ng looked forward to taking on the new role. "The duties of an honorary ADC are very refreshing. As ADC, I can meet more people and dignitaries." Now, as Director of the Public Affairs Department, her network of people goes beyond dignitaries to valuable stakeholders like grassroots, media partners and the community at large.

AC Florence Chua Siew Lian

AC Florence Chua, currently the Deputy Director of the SPF's Criminal Investigation Department (CID), was the first female to be appointed as





Department were merged to form the Police Licensing and Regulatory Department (PLRD) in 2012, AC Kwok became PLRD's first female Director, a position she continues to hold today.

Superintendent of Police (Supt) Tan Sock Koon, Geraldine

Assistant Director of the Bomb & Explosive Investigation Division of the CID, Supt Tan joined the SPF in 1990 and was posted to the Jurong Police Division as an Investigation Officer for her first posting.

She holds the privilege of being the first woman Commanding Officer of the Coastal Patrol Craft in the Police Coast Guard in 1996. During her stint patrolling the seas of Singapore, she encountered her fair share of adventure. "Looking back at the days onboard PH 54 Tigershark, there is always a human side of the story. I remember PH 54 intercepted a wooden sampan as it made its way into Singapore territorial waters. The 11 illegal immigrants onboard the sampan had no belongings with them except for the clothes they

Head Investigator in 1997, at the Central Police Division.

AC Chua joined the SPF in 1989, starting off at the rank of Inspector of Police. Since then, she has held numerous positions such as Deputy Head of the Secret Societies Branch and Anti-Vice in the CID. AC Chua was also the Commander of Jurong Police Division for two years where she was put in charge of about 1100 staff which included regulars, national service and civilian officers before she assumed her current post in 2012.

AC Jessica Kwok

AC Jessica Kwok is among the first few female police officers to lead a Land Division, when she became Commander of Ang Mo Kio Police Division in 2004.

She then became the first female commander of Certis CISCO Auxiliary Police officers from 2007 to 2008. In 2010, AC Kwok headed the Security Industry Regulatory Department (SIRD). When SIRD and the Licensing Division of the Operations





wore and one \$2 Singapore note on one of them. We had to arrest them no doubt but that incident left me thinking that at times, empathy and homeland security do not work well together, but as a law enforcer, I have a mission to accomplish and that is to do my part in keeping Singapore safe and secure."

Supt Tan had these words for all female officers in SPF: "Know


yourself, set your goals, and chart your course. You might encounter bad weather that pushes you off course at times but stay focused and persevere. It's the journey that makes the voyage fulfilling."

Supt Sng May Yen

Leading a team of officers is no easy feat. It gets more challenging

when leading them on unfamiliar territory. Supt Sng May Yen was the first female Commander to lead an overseas contingent under the United Nations Peace Keeping Force in October 2007. She led a team of 21 officers to the United Nations Integrated Mission in East Timor (UNMIT).

"In our interactions and engagement with the local police, we gave them confidence that female officers can also perform as well as assume positions that were traditionally held by male counterparts," said Supt Sng during an interview with Home Team News.

She was also the first female officer to be appointed the Commanding Officer of Patrol under the Traffic Police between 2008 and 2010, leading a team of more than 150 officers. She was also the first of two woman police officers to ride the large and heavier patrol bikes on duty. 



GETTING TO THE BOTTOM OF THINGS

*By PIINSP Goh Yi Xin Adeline, Senior Officer Trainee, Training Command
Photos by PIINSP Seah Jin Peng, Lucas, Senior Officer Trainee, Training Command*

*Two women. Two different fields of specialisation.
One purpose. Bringing criminals to justice.*

Piecing evidence together

In the Force for 19 years, Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Cindy New, Deputy Head of the Serious Sexual Crimes Branch (SSCB), brings with her a great wealth of experience to the SSCB. She has been with the investigation fraternity since her posting as an Investigation Officer (IO) in the Clementi Police Division, followed by the Special

Investigation Section of the Criminal Investigation Department and as Chief Investigation Officer at the Bedok Police Division.

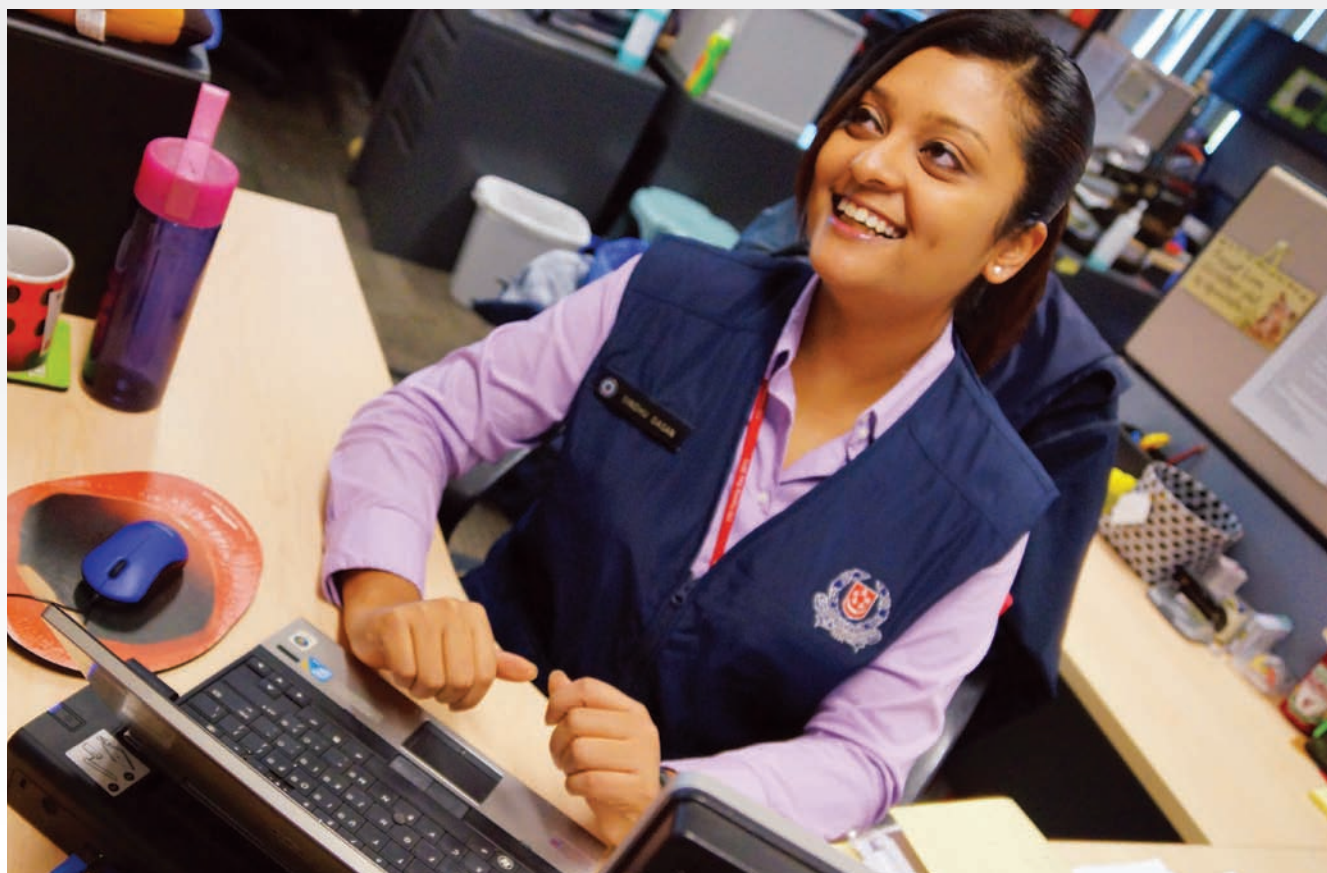
The most challenging cases for the SSCB investigators are those where the victims have been raped by unknown subject(s). In such cases, when the victim was unable to provide details of the perpetrator, it leaves the investigators to piece

together whatever fragments and pieces of evidence they can gather to apprehend the perpetrator. "Providing victim care is important as the victims are often in shock after going through such a traumatic experience. When this happens, it is always good for a female investigator to be there with the victim and to conduct the interview in order to gather as much information on the case," DSP New explains.



While different cases come with different complexities, what remains the same is the amount of hard work and effort each IO pours into the case. "Every IO has only one goal in mind which is to deliver justice by quickly apprehending the accused so that the victim has closure and to prevent the accused from claiming another victim," DSP New elaborates.

Although the life of an IO is never easy, DSP New is immensely grateful to be in this



line of work. "I entered the Police Force to help people in need and I feel lucky that I am able to put into action what I aspired to do from the start."

Planning her way to success

The long hours that an IO spends on the job does not deter Inspector (Insp) Sindhu Dasan of the Trafficking in Persons Team, Specialised Crimes Branch, judging from the fact that she decided to jump straight back into investigation right after her Team Leader posting. "I think the fact that I decided to skip my staff posting to do investigation certainly shocked many. Even my own family members had some difficulties understanding my decision," she recalls with a laugh.

Being in the Trafficking in Persons team under the SCB, her work revolves around tracking down and dissolving human trafficking syndicates which operates in Singapore. Most of the trafficked persons are women and girls who are usually tricked into coming to Singapore with promises of comfortable jobs only to realise that it was all a façade. With their passports confiscated and faced with the daunting task of repaying their debts to the 'agents', they are often coerced into sexual servitude.

Before conducting raids or ambushes, the IOs would monitor the external environment for possible signs of illicit activities. "It is immensely important that we know the terrain well before we move in on the victims and suspects as this would allow us to apprehend the suspects by

surprise while ensuring our personal safety as well," she adds.

Although INSP Sindhu is currently in her fourth year in the Force, she is still considered a rookie. "There are still so many new things that pop up on a daily basis that never fails to remind me that the learning cycle never stops." 📖

MEET THE SUPERMOMS

By Ms Chew Si Lei Jinnie

By day, they protect life and property. By night, they read their little ones a bedtime story and tuck them in bed.

M eet these supermoms - Senior Staff Sergeant Rohana Binte Ramlan, (Senior Investigations Officer, Commercial Crime Squad, Central Police Division), Superintendent of Police Tay Wee Li (Commanding Officer, Checkpoints), and Assistant Superintendent of Police Irene Ang (Officer-in-Charge Compliance Management Unit, Security Regulatory Branch, Airport Police Division).

Q: Please share a little about yourself and your child/children.

Rohana (R): Work aside, I am happily married to a fellow Police officer and blessed with a pair of twins. They are three year old boys - Rayhan Aryan and Rayyan Adryan.

Wee Li (WL): I have two lovely daughters, Claire and Chrystal and both are about two and a half years old.

Irene (I): I have three children – Nicole, Nigel, and Nichelle, between ages 12-18 years old.

Q: As a working mother, how do you balance your work commitment while ensuring that your children get the best care?

R: Being an Investigation Officer, our working hours are irregular. I send my boys to school but my mother fetches them home. I have to leave my office by 7pm to pick up my boys from my mother's house.

WL: I am very blessed to have a very supportive family – my mother, mother-in-law and of course my husband. Especially during this stint when there are at least a few meetings at night with the Advisors and Grassroots every month, weekend community outreach events and sometimes, ad-hoc activations, my family is more than willing to assist to babysit my girls. I am also grateful for my husband who can single-handedly look after the girls at night when I am out for work. On nights when I am not working, I make it a point to spend quality time with my girls and husband before bedtime.



I: Working mums are amazing jugglers who fulfil many roles and finding that work-life balance is no easy task. It's difficult to succeed without family support. I will arrange for family members or the domestic helper's assistance to ensure the kids are being ferried to and from CCA and extra classes if I am engaged.

Q: What were the biggest adjustments you had to make to your work life and lifestyle after having children?

WL: I am very fortunate to have very understanding supervisors and supportive colleagues and subordinates. The biggest adjustment that I needed to make was that I need to leave on time or sometimes earlier to fetch my girls from the childcare centre. My life now is quite routine – leave office, pick up kids, feed and bathe kids, some playtime and tuck them in bed. I start clearing my outstanding work after the girls sleep.

I: I had to give up things I enjoy doing like Dragonboat and other sports in order to have time for my children. Sacrifices need to be made to strike a balance between work and family.

Q: What are your biggest takeaways after having children?

I: They showed me how simple happiness can be. Also, they give me the reason to push on during tough times because tough times don't last; only tough people do.

Q: Is there anything you would like to share with fellow female officers who are planning to have children?

R: Time management and patience and sacrifices are essential towards being a good officer at work and; a wife and a mother while at home.

WL: SPF's culture is very supportive when female officers are pregnant or become new mothers; unlike some other organisations or in the private sector.

Q: Does your child/children know that you are a Police Officer? If so, what aspect of the SPF or being a PO do you discuss with them about the most?

WL: Despite their young age, my girls know that I am a police officer as they have seen me in uniform many times. I have also brought them to several Police events. My elder twin, Claire, is particularly fascinated by Police cars and motorcycles. She would even tell me that she wants to drive a police car or scooter to her childcare!





Q: Have you ever done any policing in the presence of your children?

WL: The first time when they saw me in uniform was at one of the CSSP events. They were actually hesitant yet curious about my attire and after recognising that it's their mother, they quickly came towards me. It was quite an amusing sight to see their reactions.

We ask the little ones about how they feel about their mother being a Police officer and secondly, if they would like to be a police officer in the future.

R answers on behalf of little Rayhan and Rayyan:

Rayhan said he would love to be a policeman so that he can catch bad people. Rayyan said he would love to be a fireman as firemen save people.

WL answers on behalf of Claire and Chrystal:

Currently they are at the stage where they want to be everything – pilot, teacher, dancer, and tractor driver and of course (in their own words), a police baby.

Nicole answers:

I feel proud. Not many people have parents who are serving the nation and ensuring national security. I salute my mom for sacrificing so much for her job and putting in so much effort to maintain peace in the country.

I aspire to be a teacher. My mom has taught me values that the Force has taught her over the years and I believe by being an educator, I can pass down the knowledge to the future generation and inspire them like how my mom inspired me and how the Force inspires her. 🇵🇭



IN MEMORIUM

*By ASP Brenda Ong Bi Hui, Investigation Officer,
Central Police Division*

Sergeant (SGT) Sri Norashikin binte Ishak died in the line of duty.

SGT Norashikin was a Neighbourhood Police Centre (NPC) officer from the Woodlands NPC. Her good friend and colleague, Staff Sergeant (SSGT) Juliehana Mohd Nizar, remembers the late SGT Norashikin as a helpful and bubbly person, who had taken it upon herself to raise the kittens that their NPC's resident pet cat had given birth to.


During the 2003 June holidays, the Woodlands NPC had organised a Community Safety & Security Programme (CSSP) project involving eight secondary schools in the Woodlands district. The CSSP project targeted students identified by the schools, and a two day one night camp was part of this initiative to steer at-risk students away from offending behaviour. SGT Norashikin was one of the officers-in-charge of logistics for the camp.

On the morning of 24 June 2003, SGT Norashikin, SSGT Juliehana and several other officers involved in the CSSP project were preparing to convey the equipment and food from Woodlands Ring Secondary School to Sungei Buloh Nature Reserve. SGT Norashikin and SSGT Juliehana were in the same police van that was heading to the Nature Reserve.

At about 11.20 am, while travelling along Kranji Road, near Kranji Beach, the police van suddenly collided head-on with a prime mover lorry and caught fire. Officers who arrived at the scene found two police officers in the front of the police van trapped in their seats, while SSGT Juliehana lay at the rear portion of the van.

After five days in critical care at the National University Hospital, SGT Norashikin passed away on 29 June 2003. SSGT Juliehana attended her funeral on 30 June 2003 at Choa Chu Kang Muslim Cemetery. "Until today, I still remember the times we

had during the school camp, the very last night we spent at the Woodlands NPC before the tragic accident and the jokes we shared... I would have never expected to lose a friend and colleague so suddenly," recalls SSGT Juliehana.

It was only in 1984 that women were deployed to work in Neighbourhood Police Posts (NPPs) as frontline officers, and since then, women have gone on to assume all sorts of responsibilities in the police force. SGT Norashikin lived in a time where women were no longer restricted in their deployment duties. In some way, the obituary of SGT Norashikin is not just the story of a woman who died doing her job, but the story of how every death of a police officer, regardless of age, race, gender or belief system, affects their family, colleagues and SPF equally and severely. 



HEARTS ON FIRE

*By Corporal (V) Sim Ying Hui,
Police Coast Guard
Photos by SSgt Lim Jia Zhong, Edwin*

From the moment they joined the Volunteer Special Constabulary (VSC), these ladies have never looked back.

Acting Inspector (A/Insp) (V) Kelly Goh, a Team Leader at Rochor Neighbourhood Police Centre (NPC), and Corporal (Cpl) (V) Sadatinah, the welfare and logistics officer at the Public Transport Security Command (Transcom), have served for 14 and nine years respectively as VSCs. In their years of service, A/Insp (V) Goh vividly remembers the circumstance behind receiving an award for rejecting bribes while Cpl (V) Sadatinah finds her first arrest during her term in Transcom as being most memorable.

They are two of many outstanding women in the Singapore Police Force (SPF) who dedicate their time to serve as a VSC whilst holding full-time jobs. A/Insp (V) Goh is a secretary and Cpl (V) Sadatinah is a civil servant. Despite their busy schedules, they still manage to commit about 80 to 100 hours a month.

"My job requires me to do shift work, so I plan my VSC hours at least one month ahead. Sometimes, after my night shift, I'd rest for a while before going for duty. For me, I feel that I have always managed well," said Cpl (V) Sadatinah, who developed her passion for the blue uniform during her secondary school days, when she joined the National Police Cadet Corps (NPCC) as her Co-Curricular Activity.

As for A/Insp (V) Goh, her passion for policing was inspired by her husband, who is also a VSC officer. "Being a VSC means a lot to me and I would sacrifice a bit of sleep just to join the raids. After the raids end in the early hours of the morning, I'd go home to prepare for work at 8am. I try not to work during the weekends so as to spend time with my family."

She conducted raids during her last posting as a compliance management unit (CMU) officer at the Central Police Division. The team would raid karaoke bars and massage parlours in the area. "Usually, we would check [the] licencing conditions and bring back female subjects working without valid work permits. Once, a female subject escaped and I had to chase after her. Eventually, I caught her about one bus stop length away and brought her back for investigations."

Cpl (V) Sadatinah's memorable experience was also a dramatic episode. "When I was in the Jurong Police Division, I attended to a case of shop theft. Upon arrival, the situation had escalated into a gang fight. My partner and I assessed the situation and requested for backup. Amidst the chaos, my partner drew out his taser to warn the parties involved. The atmosphere was very tense."

Female police officers are in demand especially when handling female subjects during a case. Among the VSCs at Transcom, Cpl (V) Sadatinah is the first female trooper there to patrol the MRT stations with the regulars. "The bond between officers is strong. I enjoy doing groundwork with them. It is what keeps me going," she said.

To anyone who is interested in joining the VSC, both officers agree that having the passion and heart to serve are extremely crucial. "I try to share my experience with my friends to interest them to join," said A/Insp (V) Goh.

"After 14 years of service, I am still enjoying my duty. I would never quit!" 🇸🇬



DOUBLE DUTY

By Ms Jolene Kua,
Singapore Government Scholarship (Police) Recipient,
Undergraduate, National University of Singapore

There are among us those who have served the nation in more than one uniform – the police blue and the national jersey.

It is perhaps not unreasonable to compare the pride of wearing our uniform with that of donning national colours: both are hard-earned badges of honour and high standards are continually asked of its bearers. That is why only stringently-selected individuals are chosen to undertake such duties, and among them, few have the honour of experiencing both.

One such individual is Senior Staff Sergeant (SSS) Nurool'Ain Hussin, who fondly remembers her first year in policing, when she had the delicate task of balancing shift work with Silat national team training. It was a tiring but rewarding time that SSS Nurool persevered through. Till today, she reminisces gratefully, "my supervisors granted me time-off and allowed me to attend my training. I was given early release during my morning shift and was allowed to report late during my night shift. My seniors were very understanding."

"Juggling sports and work was a real challenge back then," recounts Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Chang Tze Ai, a SEA Games double Bronze Medalist in Hockey (1999, and 2001). "I'm grateful to have understanding colleagues and supervisors who provided me with

the necessary support at work to facilitate my sports commitments. Sports taught me a lot about resilience, grit and teamwork, which are all important traits to have as a police officer."

With the increasing professionalisation of sports, few can pull off that same master-class balancing act today. That said, the Singapore Police Force (SPF) is one organisation which remains committed to sports; it zealously promotes active living and participates in inter-police competitions worldwide.

And while some sports are clearly relevant to policing – it must surely be reassuring to know that your partner has represented the nation in firearms or martial arts – the value of that training is not one restrained to specific sports. When asked, those interviewed all agreed that sport, at any level, provides a platform for the expression of the same values expected of our officers: values such as determination, fairness, teamwork and discipline.

Corporal (Cpl) Zulaikha Binte Mohamed Nasir, a former national soccer player, represented Singapore at the Asian Federations



Confederation Women's Asian Cup twice (2003, and 2006). Drawing parallels between the two vocations, she puts it succinctly. "Both athletes and officers must treat others without biasness, and at the same time, conduct oneself in a fair and professional manner." Seconding her views, SSS Nurool adds, "my courage in facing up to challenges



works both ways, in competitions and everyday work duties.”

Above and beyond the medals earned, it is this life experience that these officers bring to the Force. In fact, many of our most decorated sportswomen continue to represent SPF in competitions long after their retirement from the national stage.

Why? According to shotgun expert Station Inspector (SI) Michelle Ng Swee Theng, sporting excellence stands for more than just honour and glory – it is as much about the experience of pursuing a common dream, and of teammates encouraging each other through tedious training. But as with all good things, the road is never an easy one.

“A lot of sacrifice is inevitable once you have been selected to represent Singapore. Never give up; the journey to success will be nearer with each step you take.” Now that’s some resounding advice for both policing and sports. 🇸🇬

FEMALE SHARPSHOOTERS AIM HIGH

*By SUPT Anna Lee, Head Planning, Police Coast Guard and
SSGT Cheng Hsiao Yean, Assistant Planning Officer, Police Coast Guard
Photo by Sgt (NS) Zhuo Zehai, Public Affairs Department*

Some of them stumbled on it by accident, while others had some interest in it from their school days. *Police Life* met up with four of Singapore Police Force's (SPF) female sharpshooters – Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Toh Pei Lian, Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Lam Li Min from Tanglin Police Division, Station Inspector (SI) Suzanna Bte Said from Central Police Division and Staff Sergeant (SSGT) Shereen Lau from Bedok Police Division. All avid shooters, you will see these women at the Singapore Open Shooting Championships, the most prestigious shooting event in Singapore, and the Johore Shield Shooting Competition.


All agree that being in SPF played a part in fuelling their interest in shooting. "My interest for shooting started when a colleague asked me to participate in the Johore Shield for my Division," said SSGT Lau, with SI Suzanna, one of the top three female shooters in the Johore Shield Shooting Competition 2014, echoing similar sentiments. The interest for shooting began during their days in the National Police Cadet Corp (NPCC) for DSP Toh and ASP Lam. ASP Lam joined an Airsoft Gun shooting club after graduating from university, while DSP Toh is currently a member of the Singapore Rifle Association and owns her very own Sphinx pistol!



The women do not see gender as an issue when it comes to shooting and participating in competitions. ASP Lam, a finalist in the Johore Shield Shooting Competition 2013, said, "When I shoot during competitions, I don't think of myself as a female shooter, but as a fellow shooter with my team or the other competitors." According to the ladies, the fundamentals of executing a good shot are the same regardless of gender, size, strength or age. It is more about mental preparation and strategising how one's shots will go, rather than physical attributes.

When asked the secret to their success, our modest ladies feel that anyone can shoot, and there is no such thing as a 'bobo shooter'," shared SSGT Lau, the Champion of the Johore Shield Shooting Competition in 2011 and 2013. "With practice, determination and self-confidence, any officer can be a good shooter," said DSP Toh. The Best Female Pistol Shooter at the Singapore Open Shooting Championships 2013 (International Practical Shooting Competition and International Defensive Pistol Association formats) continued,

"Winning the competitions is like icing on the cake and it gives me a sense of personal satisfaction."

The ladies feel that in Singapore, where there are strict gun controls, being able to handle a gun at work and be given opportunities to participate in shooting competitions is a privilege. When asked if they have any future aspirations, ASP Lam says, "We hope to represent the SPF in the World Police & Fire Games one day". 





A FORCE FOR THE NATION

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