

Features

Pioneering police captain looks back

Women officers assuming equal role

United Press International
LOS ANGELES — Connie Speck, the police department's first female captain, remembers wearing skirts to work in 1957 because women officers were not issued uniforms.

They didn't handle liquor store pickups, homicides and hostage takers, either.

Today, in a more liberated police department, she still wears dresses on the job. She also commands about 225 officers in the San Fernando Valley as head of the uniform and traffic divisions of the police department's West Valley station.

Speck, 49, climbed the ranks from rookie to captain in 23 years. On the way she had four children and raised six, made it through law school, and overcame a bout with alcoholism.

She was a rookie in the '50s when Los Angeles policewomen

worked as matrons in the jail or on patrol in the juvenile division, handling child beatings, molestations and other sex offenses.

Her first assignment was juvenile patrol — in street clothes.

"We'd roll on all the hot shot calls," she said. Women were not dispatched to handle rough calls in those days.

"Everybody thought, including me, that women can't do the job of a police officer, being in a uniform in a black and white car, answering all these robbery calls," she said. "Now I see women doing it."

Speck said her upbringing and culture required women to do feminine things. Being a cop did not fit the image.

But attitudes, even at the police department, have changed with the times. In 1975 the City Council decreed that women there would be treated equally.

Speck was no bra-burner. Being

a woman in a man's world of guns, suspects and crime meant doing her job and going along with the system.

"I lived within the system," she said of her steady climb to a \$50,000 per year police job. "I didn't make any waves."

While some other female officers stayed in traditionally woman-oriented jobs, Speck set her sights on advancement.

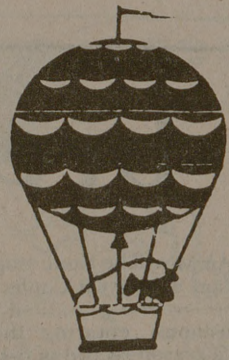
She was promoted to captain Oct. 5, 1980. Earlier this year, a second female LAPD officer made captain.

"Women are attracted to police work," Speck said. "Those who are generally have aggressive tendencies. But if they are not strong enough, they don't get past the (police) academy."

There are about six women in her command and about 300 female officers in the entire LAPD, said Speck, whose hus-

band, Dale, retired from the police department as an assistant chief and is currently an attorney with the California Attorney General's office.

"I am watching the women going out there and doing it and talking to the officers who work with them," she said. "To see their attitudes change is interesting because most of the women, like most of the men, can do it. Some women can't; some men can't."



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Astronaut Truly has Canadian bionic arm

United Press International
CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — For about 36 hours during the upcoming second flight of the space shuttle Columbia, astronaut Richard Truly will become a man with a bionic arm.

The arm is a remote manipulator built in a Canadian \$100 million development effort and donated by that country's National Research Council as its contribution to America's new orbital transportation system.

But in space it is capable of picking up objects that are up to 60 feet long, 15 feet wide and weigh as much as 65,000 pounds.

During Columbia's launch, the remote manipulator folds and is carried in a cradle mounted inside the left side of Columbia's cargo bay. The shoulder joint of the arm is linked to a bracket mounted at the top of the left side of the cargo hold at the forward end, near Columbia's cockpit.

The arm was built by Canada's SPAR Aerospace Ltd. of Weston, Ontario. Although it donated the first arm to NASA, the agency has ordered three more at a cost of \$65 million. And the company hopes to sell more.

Astronauts have three means of controlling the arm. An automatic system allows it to be manipulated through preprogrammed maneuvers by a computer. With a manual system, Truly will move the arm through its sequence, using his hand and arm to maneuver the manipulator.

The third system is a backup and includes a separate electronics system in case the primary wiring fails.

The likeness to the human arm ends at the wrist. In place of a hand, there is a grapple. This was designed to meet NASA specifications for loading and unloading satellites in orbit. It will function only on satellites equipped for pickup by the grapple.

Aikenhead said if the shuttle is to be used by the U.S. Air Force to attempt to retrieve hostile military satellites or old satellites not equipped for pickup, a different grapple system will have to be developed.

The machine will unload future satellites in orbit and eventually will reach out and grab some for return to Earth. In the flight starting Nov. 4, the manipulator will not have a satellite to launch but will be exercised in virtually every position.

Bruce Aikenhead of the National Research Council said it likes to call the device an "arm" and the description is apt in many respects.

Like a human arm, the 50-foot-long manipulator has a rotating shoulder socket, an elbow joint that moves in only one direction, and a wrist that has two joints and moves both ways.

The arm is powered by six built-in electric motors. It is equipped with a closed circuit television system with cameras at the elbow and wrist and a light atop each camera.

The arm, made largely of graphite and honeycomb metal, is only 15 inches in diameter and weighs less than 1,000 pounds.



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