

Know Your LBA STAFF

Ret. Lt. James R. Higgins, Jr.

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Ret. Lt. James “Jimmy” Higgins was appointed to the Department on September 21, 1946. Jim was born and raised in Brooklyn, being one of eight children; two of his brothers would eventually follow him into the Department. In 1943, he entered the U.S. Army Air Corp. where he was assigned as a Flight Engineer on B-25 Bombers. He served in the South Pacific from 1944-1945, island hopping from Honolulu to Australia to New Guinea and then to the Philippines. On his 50th and final mission, considered to be a soft target or “Milk Run”, his low flying Bomber was hit by flack that caused the plane to crash land in the South China Sea off of Borneo. Jim, the pilot and the co-pilot survived, but three other crew members perished in the crash. After floating in the South China Sea for a day-and-a-half, Jim and his fellow crew members were picked up by a Navy PBY aircraft. Jim was back in the United States recuperating from injuries he sustained in the crash when the War ended.

Jim was in the first class of Academy recruits to enter the Department in more than five years due to World War II; the class consisted of 3,000 men. The recruits reported to the Van Cortland Street Armory in different variation of dress; some in business attire and many in their military uniforms. The Academy uniform consisted of an arm band that read “Air Raid Warden” on one side and “Police” on the other side. They received training for two months, concentrating on physical fitness, and received their 38 Special Service revolver after being in the Academy for about a month and a half; no extensive training was offered in firing the weapon.

His first Command was the 60 Precinct where he was assigned to Patrol, the Juvenile Aid Bureau (Youth Squad) and then as the Precinct PAL Man. When he was on Patrol, his straight eight hour tours consisted of a set of 8x4s, a set of 4x12s and a set of 12x8s; you would work six days on and then have 32 hours off. In 1957, Jim was promoted to Sergeant and was assigned to the 17th, 100th, 101, and 102 Precincts. The tours rotated the same, but now he worked six days on and then had 56 hours off. Sergeants covered Patrol and worked the Telephone Switchboard to receive the Rings from the guys on Patrol and assign jobs. In 1968, Jim was promoted to Lieutenant and assigned to the 10th Division out of the 78 Precinct covering the 72, 76, 78 and 84 Precincts. In 1969, he was assigned as Desk Officer in the 84 Precinct on Poplar Street, and in 1972 he became the Administrative Lieutenant in the recently built 84 Precinct on Gold Street.

It was in 1975 that Jim was elected as an LBA Delegate in Brooklyn North. He would continue serving the members of the LBA as Brooklyn North Director, LBA Marshal, and then as the Recording Secretary. Jim retired from the Department on July 2, 1987, after almost 41 years on the job, and 12 years with the LBA. Jim still works with the LBA as a Consultant and is in the Office every Wednesday. He continues to share his knowledge, life experiences, and history of the job with all the Lieutenants lucky enough to speak with him. In total, Jimmy has been helping Active and Retired LBA members for the past 35 years.