



# Denver Police Widows' Association

*Angel Force*

## *How It All Started*

In the Spring of 1972, the President of the Denver Police Pension Association, (D.P.P.A.), Gene Covello, along with the Secretary of that organization, Jerry Mangan, contacted the following Denver Police Widows and asked them to form an organization for the widows of Denver Police Officers: Nellye Carver, Lena Crews, Ann Heath, Jeanne McCoy, and Kathryn Woodard.

They met and composed a letter to be sent to every Denver Police Widow living in the metropolitan area, notifying them of the proposed organization and of the first meeting to be held at Lena Crews' home in June. There were 25 women who attended the meeting. It was explained to those present that the D.P.P.A. Board had suggested that the widows form their own group, while still being a part of the D.P.P.A.

Even though nothing much developed from that first meeting, the above ladies decided to try again and held a second meeting in August; this time with an added volunteer, Dorothy Drumeller. Jerry Mangan was also in attendance and assisted with the discussion. It was decided to conduct a survey by telephone, and all 164 widows in the metro area were called.

The survey revealed that there was enough interest in forming such an association, so the first social function was organized. In October, 25 widows enjoyed a Sunday matinee at the Colorado Music Hall. Due to the winter weather, however, the group did not meet again until March 25, 1973. This was the Association's first meeting, with 36 widows present. An election of officers was conducted, and Jeanne McCoy was elected as President; Lena Crews, Vice President; LaVerne O'Brien, Secretary; and Ann Potts, Treasurer. Maxene LeGrand volunteered to arrange rides for those who needed them, so she was given the title of Transportation Chairman.

At subsequent meetings, other issues such as the name of the organization, eligibility for membership, dues, and By-Laws were discussed and voted upon. Pursuant to those discussions, it was decided that the organization would be known as the Denver Police Widows' Association (D.P.W.A.); eligibility would be reserved for any woman who was a widow of a Denver Police Officer, still bearing his name and receiving a widow's pension from the City and County of Denver; dues would be \$2.50 per year; and Lena Crews was appointed to draft a set of By-Laws from the Robert's Rules of Order. In addition, it was later determined that a Chaplain was needed, and Agnes O'Donnell was elected to fill that position.

During the first year of operation, the D.P.P.A. contributed the amount of \$100.00 to assist the new organization. Jeanne McCoy and LaVerne O'Brien wrote and published the initial monthly newsletters, which were sent to all dues paying members. The newsletters were also mailed to widows who had not yet joined the Association, which generated a considerable amount of new memberships. The newsletters were friendly and humorous, and helped to solidify the close feelings that were developing within the group. By the start of the second year, there were 97 dues paying members, with an average attendance of 33 members at the monthly luncheons.

In retrospect, The Denver Police Widows' Association has provided its members with the opportunity to make many wonderful friends. We all feel close, because we have lived our lives with a common thread; experiencing the fears and worries of a policeman's life, and the dangers that beset him and his family. For all of this, Denver Police Widows share a rapport that is unique only to them.