

Dedication of National Police Memorial



Preparations for the dedication of the National Police Memorial are nearing completion, with the bronze wall feature lifted into place and last minute details for the event being arranged.

The memorial will honour Australian police officers who have lost their lives as a result of their duties, and will be dedicated in Commonwealth Park, Canberra on Friday 29 September, 2006, National Police Remembrance Day. The dedication will be officiated by Prime Minister John Howard.

Significantly, the event will see a gathering of representatives of all Australian police jurisdictions in Canberra for the first time since Parliament House was opened in 1927.

Team Leader of the AFP's Recognition and Ceremonial Team, Federal Agent Vince Pannell, said coordinating the event involved multi-agency planning, support and participation. "The dedication and associated events has required the input and contribution of all Australian police services and is to

be the culmination of years of planning and preparation," he said.

On the day, more than 5000 people from around Australia are expected to attend the event, including 750 uniformed police. They will represent all jurisdictions and all facets of policing, and will lead the parade from Old Parliament House to the memorial site.

It is anticipated up to four hundred retired and former police will also march in the parade.

Constable Joseph Luker, a member of the Colonial Police Force in the Colony of New South Wales, was the first recorded police officer killed on duty in Australia.

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Given the geographical location of the memorial, primary responsibility for the planning phase rests with the AFP and in particular, the Recognition and Ceremonial Team.

Federal Agent Pannell said the dedication of the memorial had required comprehensive planning and coordination on all levels. "It has seen the invitation of a multitude of stakeholders, including dignitaries such as vice-regal, diplomatic, federal, state and territory government officials, as well as families and colleagues of officers who are commemorated within the memorial".

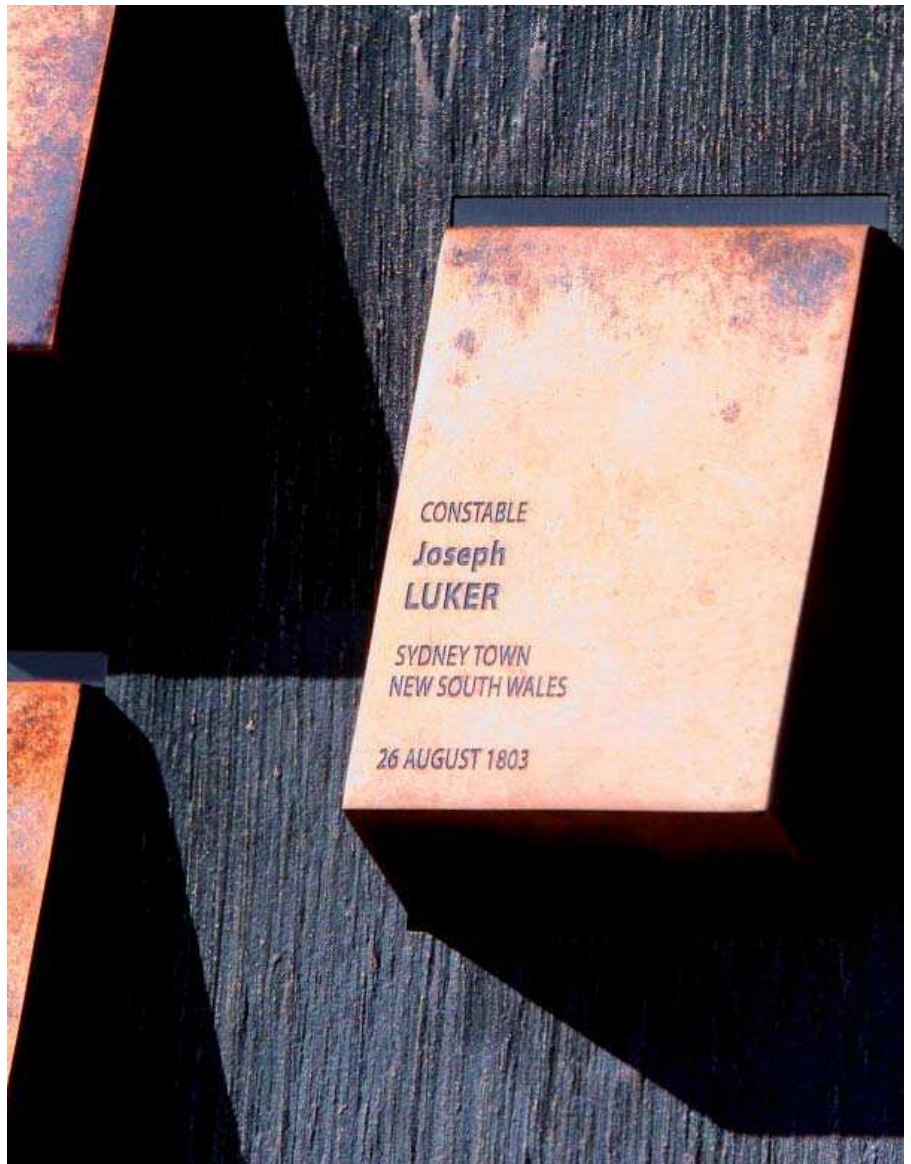
As host of the event, AFP Commissioner Mick Keelty will present the AFP flag to be blessed by the police chaplain. He will also deliver an occasional address.

Importance to Australian policing

More than 730 police officers have died on duty or as a result of their duties since the first recorded death of a police officer in 1803 when Constable Joseph Luker was killed in NSW.

In 2001, Minister for Justice and Customs Senator Chris Ellison announced a National Police Memorial would be established to commemorate and pay tribute to those officers killed in the line of duty.

The \$2.4 million construction has been jointly funded by the Australian



Government, through the AFP, state and territory police services and the Police Federation of Australia.

The memorial provides an important opportunity for the nation's state, territory and federal law enforcement agencies to come together and provide a focus for colleagues who have lost their lives in the execution of their duties.

The National Police Memorial and the ceremony associated with the dedication will also provide a continuing support base for families and friends, helping them to understand that the sacrifice made by their loved ones is always remembered by police nationwide.

Design and construction

In March 2005, the National Capital Authority conducted a design competition for the National Police Memorial. A record 77 entries were submitted from around Australia and overseas, and Brisbane-based Fairweather Proberts Architects with Urban Art Projects were selected to design the memorial.

The design features a 27-metre wall clad in bronze panels that feature the names of fallen police officers, as well as a granite floor with inlaid text.

Construction began on 10 February 2006, with a ground breaking by the Governor-General of Australia, Michael Jeffery.



Since the design launch in March 2005, preparations for the dedication have moved steadily at the site.

Family day

The day after the dedication, September 30, is to be set aside as a dedicated family day at the memorial, allowing families of deceased police officers to spend private time at the site.

Federal Agent Pannell said the day would be free of official functions at the

memorial site, and at least one member from each jurisdiction will be present to act as a guide for family members.

“It is of great importance to allow appropriate access to the memorial for family members,” he said. “Additional support will also be provided by attending police chaplains”.

Dan Kelly’s helmet arrived in Canberra on 23 August to form part of the In the line of duty exhibition at Old Parliament House.



In the line of duty

In support of the dedication of the memorial, a major national policing exhibition is being held at Old Parliament House.

In the line of duty showcases policing events from 1788 to 2006, illustrating the role, endeavours and achievements of police throughout Australia’s history.

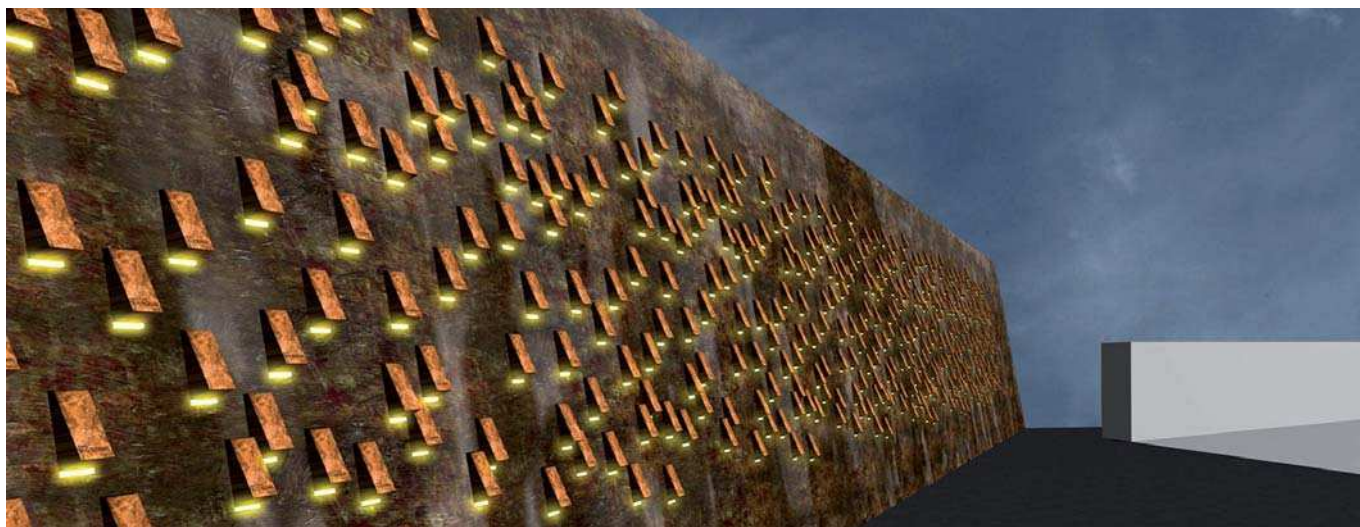
The exhibition is to include items of historical significance to Australian policing, such as the original helmet worn by Kelly Gang member Dan Kelly.

The helmet formed part of Dan Kelly’s 45kg bullet proof armour, and was worn in an infamous shootout in historic Glenrowan in 1880. The helmet and armour were used to protect the gang while shooting passengers aboard the special police train which they planned to derail.

Secretly made from plough mould boards by blacksmiths in the north east of Victoria, it is said the helmet and armour were responsible for the undoing of the Kelly Gang because they restricted Kelly’s mobility and vision.

The exhibition is to run until February 2007. Old Parliament House is open daily from 9am–5pm.





< The police hymn: Uphold the right

Sand Williams/Doug Loft/Senior Constable David Skelton

Who'll take this battered badge from me, That's worn in danger's name? Who'll keep this rule book open, If the players all leave the game?	May I stand firm let truth be the captor, May I stand tall and uphold the right. It's a fine blue line let me tell you, Between sanity, caution and crime, For the premise of truth as we seek it, Is beyond man's reach, path or time.	With my hat off I watch the procession, I salute whilst the widow cries, As a friend and colleague is buried, Under turbulent darkening skies.
Friends ask me why I wear it, I swear I'll never know, What makes a man a lawman, What makes an acorn grow?	You can never change me, Take this outfit, the badge and the gun, And the man that remains is a lawman, A sentinel of right can't run.	Some have fallen for the cause, They've lost in danger's name, Tried to keep the challenge, But bound to lose the game.
May the will to survive never leave me, In the chase or the alley or fight		

