

Thousands gather for National Police Memorial dedication

The Dedication of the National Police Memorial on the evening of 29 September saw thousands of relatives, friends and colleagues of police officers killed on duty gather on the northern shore of Canberra's Lake Burley Griffin to mark the event.

The need for a National Police Memorial was identified in 2001 by the Australian Police Ministers' Council and was achieved with the cooperation of all police jurisdictions, police associations and the National Capital Planning Authority. The Memorial was officially dedicated by Prime Minister John Howard in the presence of all Australian Police Commissioners following a parade of 700 police representing each State and Territory.

Located in Kings Park and adjacent to the Carillon bell tower, the Memorial was designed by Brisbane architects Fairweather Proberts with assistance from Urban Art Projects and carries the names of Australian police from all jurisdictions who have given their lives in service to the community since Australia's colonial days.

The column of marchers stretched almost a kilometre along Kings Avenue from Old Parliament House to the Memorial. As the parade dispersed, Prime Minister Howard arrived at the Memorial site by police boat and inspected the waiting colour party.





As head of the host jurisdiction, AFP Commissioner Mick Keelty, welcomed the officials and guests and acknowledged the extreme importance of such a Memorial. During his speech, Commissioner Keelty offered his condolences to the family of NSW Sergeant Colin McKenzie who collapsed and died during the rehearsal on the previous evening.

As a mark of respect, Sergeant McKenzie's police cap had been carried at the head of the NSW Police contingent during the march. On behalf of all the commissioners, Commissioner Keelty reserved a special thanks for media personality Ita Buttrose for her role of Master of Ceremonies—a task she undertook in memory of a forebear who served with the South Australian Police.

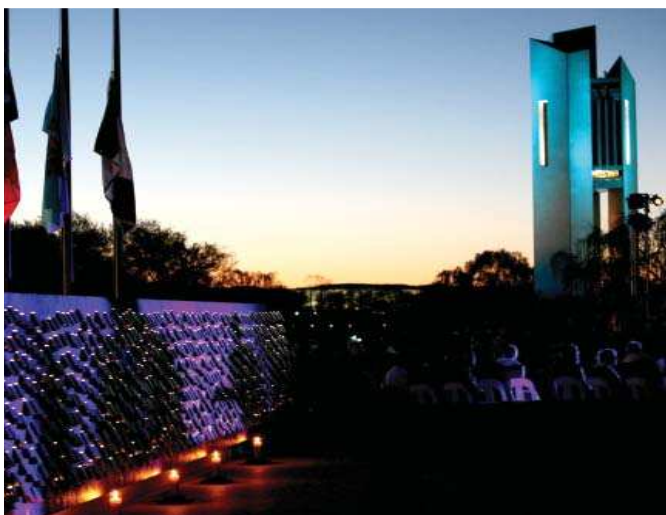
Delivering the dedication address, Prime Minister Howard said that the ceremony honoured the more than 700 police officers who had made the ultimate sacrifice. He later laid a wreath escorted by two of the children of Legacy: Lachlan Capes, whose father, Western Australia Police Constable Gavin Capes, died in an air crash in 2001 and Alysha Taylor niece of Constable Angela Taylor who died in the Victoria Police Headquarters bombing in 1986.

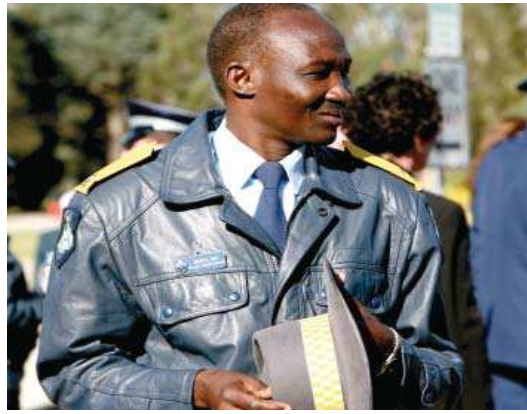
One conversation recounted on the night of the dedication personifies the significance of the Memorial. One sergeant, who more usually was a pillar of strength in situations of high emotion, said how he had been moved to tears after talking with a family whose members had travelled from interstate to attend the ceremony. They told him of their lost loved one and how, after 35 years, they felt they now had closure.

More information and images of the National Police Memorial can be found on the AFP's website < www.afp.go.au > and the National Police Memorial website < www.npm.org.au >.

In the line of duty: policing in Australia 1788—2006

In conjunction with the dedication of the National Police Memorial in King's Park, a police exhibition titled *In the Line of Duty* was opened at Old Parliament House—for details of the exhibition see the back cover of this edition.





Recreated photograph pays homage to police of the past

The Dedication Ceremony for the National Police Memorial saw the largest assembly of Australian State, Territory and federal police in the nation's capital since the opening of Parliament House on 9 May 1927 (see black and white photo opposite).

At that time, 70 State police from all jurisdictions were present to keep order and were assembled on the steps of the newly-built Parliament House for a photograph to mark the solidarity of purpose between jurisdictions.

On 29 September 2006, 700 police officers from all jurisdictions gathered on the steps of Parliament House for a sense of purpose and recognition.



The past

In September 2006, more than 1,000 officers gathered with a similar purpose, proudly marching from the Tasmanian Parliament House to the Police Memorial with the same sense of common purpose in honour of their fallen comrades.

