



After years of lobbying by the Police Federation of Australia the National Police Memorial in Canberra was dedicated on National Police Remembrance Day in September.

Situated on the banks of Lake Burley Griffin opposite the Carillion, the National Police Memorial commemorates more than 700 police men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice in protecting their communities. The first death recorded was that of Constable Joseph Luker who died in Sydney Town on August 26, 1803.

Each death is recorded on a

bronze plaque, placed at random. Walking along the memorial names that remind us of events in Victoria take our eye – Kennedy, Scanlan and Lonigan who were murdered by the Kelly Gang; Stephen Tynan and Damien Eyre, gunned down in Walsh Street; Angela Taylor, killed by the bomb blast at Russell Street; Gary Silk and Rodney Miller, murdered in Moorabbin; Mark Bateman and Fiona Robertson, killed in a divi van crash in Northcote... all these people were loved by friends and family and are still mourned by the police family. These were just ordinary men and women doing an extraordinary job.

Looking at the names listed on the memorial there is one thing that is impossible to ignore – the blank plaques, there for those who will join their colleagues in the years to come. One name was set to

be added even before the official dedication – Sergeant Colin McKenzie from New South Wales died during rehearsals for the dedication ceremony, the day before the official dedication.

Recorded in the concrete paths surrounding the memorial are the words of loved ones, reflecting on their loss.

“He was 36 years old when he was murdered.”

“A good street copper and a decent man.”

“Join hands to cover two gaping holes in the thin blue line.”

“Their only desire was to do their duty.”

These poignant comments from those left behind are etched in stone and once read they are etched on your heart.

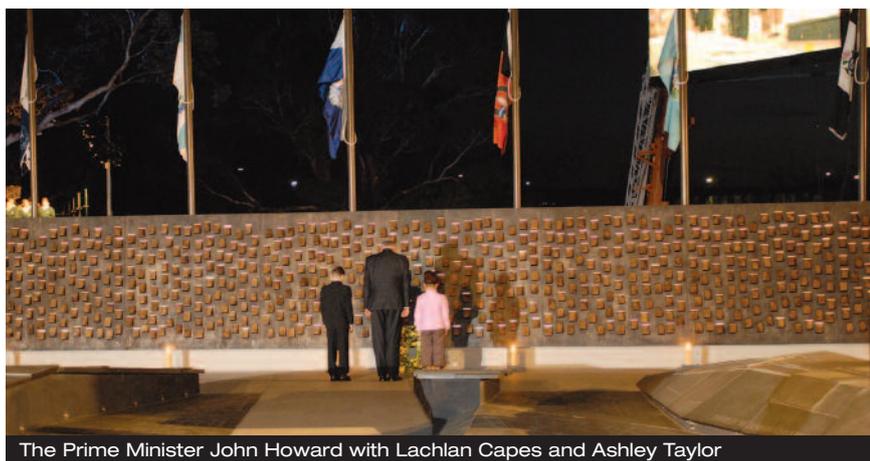
The dedication of the National Police Memorial brought together police from around the country – the biggest gathering of police in living memory. Hundreds of police marched to the memorial from the Old Parliament House, a moving sight as they made their way across the bridge to Kings Park. These members formed a guard of honour for Prime Minister John Howard who arrived by boat.

MC for the night was Ita Buttrose who is intrinsically linked to police – her great great grandfather was a trooper in South Australia in the 1850s and her brother, Charles is a senior sergeant in New South Wales.

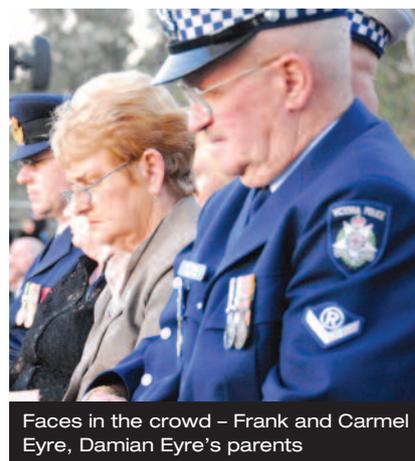
Speaking on behalf of all the Australian police forces, AFP Chief Mick Keelty acknowledged that the



After the ceremony



The Prime Minister John Howard with Lachlan Capes and Ashley Taylor



Faces in the crowd – Frank and Carmel Eyre, Damian Eyre's parents

day was for the families of the police who have lost a husband, wife, partner, father, brother, son or daughter.

"Today's ceremony acknowledges the great Australians who have chosen policing as a career and have given everything, including their own lives, so that we may prosper. We cannot change the course of history nor can we bring back the loved ones but we can ensure that history records and we dedicate a permanent reminder that these police have made to protect the quality of our Australian life."

Prime Minister John Howard said that the night was a moment "not only of reflection for many of us but it is a moment of great sorrow and anguish for many families whose loss of loved ones in the line of police duty is still a sad and traumatic memory.

"We do take their service for granted and on an occasion such as this, the entire community should recognise and give thanks to the dedication and integrity and commitment of Australia's police in protecting and helping us to enjoy the life we are entitled to have in a free society such as Australia. They are a great national asset. They are important to the society that we enjoy. They are an indispensable part of the free open and democratic society that Australians take for granted. I pay tribute to the police of Australia and I thank them for all the wonderful work they do to help all of us."

The Prime Minister then laid a

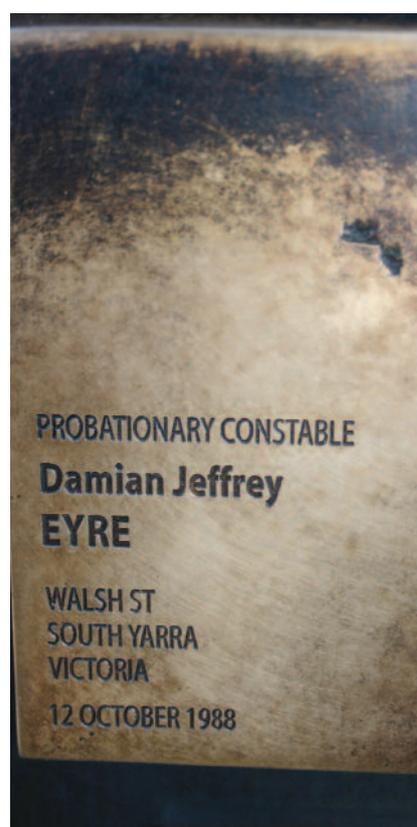
wreath on behalf of the people of Australia. He was ably assisted by Ashley Taylor, niece of Constable Angela Taylor. It was a proud moment for Angela's parents, Marilyn and Arthur and her brothers who are all still much loved members of the police family.

Senior Police Chaplain Jim Pilmer lit candles of remembrance for the Victorian members commemorated on the memorial. With him were Jack Bateman, son of Senior Constable Mark Batemen and Ash de Winne, nephew of Senior Constable Simon de Winne.

Following the moving ceremony the crowd moved through the darkness, along the memorial taking in the enormity of the price police pay when serving their communities.

It was an uplifting ceremony – a time for reflection and thanks.

The Police Honour Roll is found at <http://www.npm.org.au/honour.php>



The National Police Memorial