The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial was dedicated on October 15, 1991. Designed by Washington, DC, architect Davis Buckley, the Memorial sits on three acres of federal parkland—plush grass with nearly 60,000 plants and 128 trees. Every April, 10,000 yellow daffodils make the Memorial one of DC’s most spectacular attractions. The Memorial was built with private donations. It is maintained by the National Park Service, in partnership with the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund.

The Names

Name scoffed® cars who have been killed in the line of duty are engraved into the Memorial’s walls, in no set order for the most part. Each of the marble walls is 304 feet long. When the Memorial was dedicated in 1991, there were 12,561 names on it. Today, there are more than 23,000 names, a grim reminder of the danger officers face every day. New names are added each spring, prior to National Police Week in May.

First Known Female Officer Killed

Panel 47-W, line 21: Anna Hart of the Hamilton County (OH) Sheriff’s Office was working as a jail matron when she was killed in the line of duty on July 24, 1916. Matron Hart was walking through a section of the county jail when inmate Reuben Ellis, hiding behind a curtain, emerged and struck her on the head with an iron bedpost in an attempt to escape. Matron Hart was the first of more than 250 female officers whose names are on the Memorial.

First Known Female Officer Killed

Panel 18-E, line 31: Sheriff Benjamin Branch of Chesterfield County, Virginia died when he was thrown from his horse becoming the first known law enforcement officer to be killed in the line of duty.

Youngest Officer Killed

Panel 40-W, line 25: Jailer Charles A. Batts was on guard duty at the Batson County (SC) Jail when he was struck by lightning. Jailer Batts died on April 22, 1879, and was just 17 years old the time of his death. The average age of officers on the Memorial is 39.

First Known Officer Killed


Sep 10, 2001

Panel 9-W, line 5: On September 19, 1971, inmates took over the Attica State Prison in upstate New York. Thirty-nine hostages were taken. A battle lasted for 4 days with Governor Nelson Rockefeller ordering New York State Troopers to move in and quell the riot. In the ensuing battle, 32 inmates and 11 hostages died, including seven correctional officers: John O’Charley, Edward D. Cunningham, Richard E. Lewis, William E. Quinn, Carl W. Valonis, Ronald Werner and Harrison Whalen. More than 700 African-American officers to die in the line of duty.

First Known African-American Officer Killed

Panel 24-E, line 23: On April 10, 1870, Officer William Johnson of the Jacksonville (FL) Sheriff’s Office was responding to a disturbance call when he became involved in a struggle with an extremely intoxicated male. The suspect picked up Officer Johnson and slammed him to the ground. Officer Johnson died two days later as a result of internal injuries and became the first of more than 700 African-American officers to die in the line of duty.

Oldest Officer Killed

Panel 44-E, line 25: Correctional Officer Supa C. Woodroof of the Virginia Department of Corrections was keeping watch on the wall of the Virginia State Penitentiary in Richmond when he stumbled and fell 40 feet to a pile of lumber below. Correctional Officer Woodroof was 65 years old at the time of his death on February 25, 1998, making him the oldest law enforcement officer to die in the line of duty.

J. D. Tippit, Killed by Lee Harvey Oswald

Panel 63-E, line 9: Less than an hour after President John F. Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas on November 22, 1963, Dallas (TX) Police Officer J. D. Tippit noticed Lee Harvey Oswald walking in a Dallas suburb. When he stopped to question him, Oswald pulled out a revolver and shot Officer Tippit four times. Oswald was arrested a short time later for the murder of Officer Tippit, and upon further investigation, officers uncovered that he was also responsible for assassinating President Kennedy. Officer Tippit’s name appears next to that of a fallen officer from John F. Kennedy to recall his special place in history.

Central Plaza

The Memorial’s beautiful central plaza features an intricate paving pattern, the American and Memorial flags, and at the very center, a bronze medallion that bears the names of the Memorial, its logo and the Memorial logo, a blue shield with a red rose draped across it, is a symbol of law enforcement and everlasting remembrance of the hero and respect our nation feels toward its law officers—the Thin Blue Line of protection.

LawMemorial.org
info@nleomf.org