Memory of tragic Pc Phillip lives on
Tributes to officer killed on duty 19 years ago
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What started out as a normal day on the beat for a young constable became a day that tragically changed the lives of his friends, colleagues and loved ones forever.

Pc Phillip Walters was called to a disturbance at a house in Empress Avenue, Ilford, on the evening of April 18, 1995. He attended with Pcs Derek Shepherd, Chris Jocey, Adrian Harris and Mark Rowan.

They believed it to be a routine call, but the reality was far more sinister and they discovered three men beating the male occupant after being paid to do so by his ex-lover.

‘Grateful’
As they tried to arrest Ray Lee, he tried to shoot his way out and Pc Walters was hit in the chest. He was taken to hospital but died. He was just 28.

Mr Shepherd, now a sergeant, was also injured – he is posted to Ilford. He was just 20.

His dad Colin Walters said to terms with the loss of a man who was not just a colleague, but a close friend.

On Thursday, 19 years after that fateful day, Pc Walters’ family, friends and colleagues gathered to commemorate him at the memorial stone in Empress Avenue.

His mother, Jean Miller, said she remembered thinking after her son’s death: “I just don’t want him put in a drawer and forgotten.”

Praising the actions of Redbridge police and everyone who has helped commemorate her son over the years, she said: “They promised he wouldn’t be. I couldn’t ask for more.”

His dad Colin Walters said the family would also be visiting the memorial in Valentines Park, paid for by readers raising more than £1,000 in a short period of time.

The memorial was unveiled in September 1997 by the mayor Clr Reg Golding, and was set in a flowerbed in the Cranbrook Road entrance near the lake.

“Policing is a difficult job, there’s no doubt about that. There are dangers and, unfortunately, my colleagues put themselves in front of that danger to keep London safe.”

She read a poignant extract from Pc Walters explaining why he joined the police force, which all officers used to write.

He had written: “I would like to feel that my family can walk the streets of London safely. If I can play a small part to help achieve that, then I would be more than happy.”

Pc Walters’ dad, Colin, thanked the Recorder for its support over the years.

“Grateful’ Pc Phillip Walters was 28

READERS’ MEMORIAL

Besides the memorial in Empress Avenue, a granite memorial stone in Valentines Park, was paid for by readers of the Ilford Recorder after the paper organised an appeal. The appeal was supported by the Metropolitan Police and the London Borough of Redbridge, with Recorder readers raising more than £1,000 in a short period of time.

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