

NEWS SPECIAL Anniversary of Pc killing

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Sept 1993

Phillip Walters joins the Metropolitan Police Service

Feb 1994

He is posted to Ilford

April 1995

During a late shift Pc Walters is shot in the chest

June 1996

Ray Lee is jailed for 10 years for manslaughter and an additional eight years for firearms offences, robbery and grievous bodily harm

April 1997

A memorial stone marking Pc Walters' sacrifice is unveiled by Labour Party leader Tony Blair in Empress Avenue

Sept 1997

A lasting memorial, paid for by the *Ilford Recorder* and its readers, is unveiled in Valentines Park

2007

Ray Lee is released after serving 12 years of his 18-year sentence, a decision widely condemned by many

Memory of tragic Pc Phillip lives on

Tributes to officer killed on duty 19 years ago

by Molly Kersey

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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 Joicey, 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 – shot in the hand – as he held on to the suspect until help arrived.

He was off work for 10 months as he tried to come



■ Pc Phillip Walters was 28

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 Valen-

tines Park, paid for by *Ilford Recorder* readers.

"All the way through, the *Ilford Recorder* has been at our side and we are really grateful," he said.

Redbridge Police borough commander Det Ch Supt Sue Williams joined family members in laying floral tributes at the stone, before a minute's silence.

"Those that have been posted here to Redbridge will know about Phil Walters because we keep his memory alive," she said.

"We have a conference room dedicated to him and we have a memorial in that conference room.

"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 were 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."



■ Jean Miller lays flowers at the Empress Avenue memorial to her son Pictures: Ellie Hoskins



■ Pc Walters' dad, Colin, thanked the *Recorder* for its support over the years



■ Ch Supt Sue Williams laid flowers and vowed to keep Pc Walters' memory alive

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.

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

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