

Name lives on for first female police fatality

By Simon Kelly, Media and Public Affairs Branch



Photo courtesy News Limited

Sandy Lena (left) and Paula Shean remember their loved ones. Constable Sondra Lena (inset).

“For a parent you always hope no one’s going to forget your child,” she said.

“I think for other people to come up and say they worked with her and knew her as a beautiful person with a beautiful smile, loved working with her and that she was loved by all – as a parent I don’t think you could ask for anything more than that.”

Those are the sort of comments many of Constable Lena’s former colleagues made when they met Mrs Lena and her husband Graham following the dedication of the National Police Memorial.

“We’ve always been immensely proud of her,” Mrs Lena said. “It made us doubly proud.

“Even after all this time the ache is still there, the black hole is still there, but it’s tempered by the people around us who have helped us through it,” Mrs Lena said of her daughter’s death.

Constable Lena was just months short of her 21st birthday when she chose to do overtime at the end of her shift to help fellow officers search for an escapee from the Rockhampton Correctional Centre.

She was struck by a passing car as she finished searching the cabin of a truck for the escapee at a roadblock on the Bruce Highway.

Constable Lena suffered a severe head injury and died in hospital.

Rockhampton now has a Sondra Lena Drive and Sondra Lena

Memorial Park in tribute to her dedication and community spirit.

In Yeppoon there is a Community Supporting Police facility, the Sondra Lena Lodge, and in 1992 a Queensland Police Service aircraft was named in her honour.

Also paying tribute to Constable Lena is the Sondra Lena Memorial Award, which recognises excellence in physical skills education for recruits at the Queensland Police Academy.

Mrs Lena said the dedication ceremony in Canberra had been a beautiful and emotional “yet calming experience”.

“We were so pleased we went – we’d have been very sorry if we didn’t.”



Constable Sondra Lena’s beautiful smile has not been forgotten 14 years on from her tragic death.

She had been helping fellow officers on April 10, 1992 when she was struck by a car that was passing through a roadblock near Rockhampton.

Constable Lena was the first female police officer to be killed on duty in Queensland.

Any fears her mother Sandy Lena had about people forgetting her eldest daughter have been dispelled with the establishment of the National Police Memorial.