



The National Police Memorial including the uneven terrain leading up to the wall.

Golden glow to unique bronze memorial

Honour, protection and bravery – these are some of the policing qualities that inspired the design of the National Police Memorial.

“We wanted to get across the fact that police officers are normal men and women putting themselves in incredible situations, and they can sometimes pay the ultimate price,” architect Liam Proberts said.

In 2005, Mr Proberts and his team at Fairweather Proberts Architects in Brisbane won an international competition to design the memorial.

Submitted in collaboration with Urban Art Projects, their design was chosen over more than 70 other entries from around Australia and overseas.

Mr Proberts, whose late father was a detective in Fortitude Valley in the 1950s and whose brother-in-law is currently an officer at Indooroopilly Police Station, was honoured to win.

“I was very proud when hearing I had won the competition and feel it is a very important project,” he said.

A 27-metre bronze textured wall forms the design centrepiece. It is adorned with 1,200 touchstone plaques inscribed with the names of fallen police officers, as well as the date and place of death.

“We wanted to use bronze, instead of something like stone, to portray a sense of warmth, but also a material that is strong and robust like armour,” Mr Proberts said.

The touchstones are randomly placed across the wall to reflect the random and unpredictable nature of loss. The blank plaques acknowledge the fact that tragedy in the future is inevitable.

Visitors to the memorial are invited to touch the plaques and feel a physical connection to those who have died. Over time, the finish on the stones will change, acquiring a golden red glow the more they are touched.

The site for the memorial was carefully chosen so that in daylight the touchstones consistently cast a shadow to highlight the texture and pattern of the wall, while at night, each touchstone is backlit,



Architect Liam Proberts with designs for the National Police Memorial.

reminiscent of a candlelight vigil to those who have given their lives.

The memorial features a large undulating stone paved area, depicting the uncertain path police tread in the performance of their daily duties, and is inscribed with personal messages from family and the colleagues of police who have died.

Tributes from the family, friends and colleagues of deceased police officers are inscribed on the memorial.

A bronze image of St Michael – the Patron Saint of Police – overlooks the memorial.

Construction of the National Police Memorial began in February 2006 with a ground-breaking ceremony led by the Governor-General of Australia, Michael Jeffery.

The \$2.4 million project was managed by the National Capital Authority on behalf of the Australasian Police Ministers’ Council.