


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 5, 2011
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 
SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED SHERIFF'S MEMORIAL AT THE WILLIAM G. TRUESDALE ADULT DETENTION CENTER

ISSUE: Consideration of proposed Sheriff's Memorial at the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Approve the proposed Sheriff's Memorial as described below; and
- (2) Request the Sheriff to proceed with fundraising for the Sheriff's Memorial.

DISCUSSION: On January 27, 1981, Alexandria Sheriff Deputy William G. Truesdale, 47, was killed by inmate Wilbert Lee Evans while transporting three inmates from the courthouse to the old jail, located at 519 Princess Street (Attachment 1). Deputy Truesdale is the first and only member of the Sheriff's Office to be killed in the line of duty.

In the spring of 2008, Sheriff Dana Lawhorne proposed naming the Adult Detention Center in honor of the late Deputy Truesdale. As plans for renaming progressed, Sheriff Lawhorne proposed placing a granite memorial (Attachment 2) outside the Center in honor of Deputy Truesdale and any future Alexandria Sheriff's Deputies who are killed in the line of duty.

The memorial would recognize the danger Deputy Sheriffs face on a daily basis in the course of their work in the detention center, the courthouse, and in the community. The current recommendation is that the memorial be located in the main lobby of the Public Safety Center, an area used by staff and individuals entering the building to conduct business (Attachment 3). It also would provide a venue for activities of the Sheriff's Office such as wreath layings, awards and recognition ceremonies, and media events.

Chief Deputy Lenny George and Sgt. Chris O'Dell discussed the initial proposal to locate a memorial outside the center with staff in the Office of the Arts and representatives of the Public Art Committee of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts to confirm that this memorial would fall under the City's Policy on Acquired Art (amended September of 2008). Sgt. O'Dell met with the Public Art Committee on November 10, 2010 to discuss a memorial to be placed outside the building. The members voted to endorse the memorial. In a related matter, on November 13, 2010, City Council approved the proposal by the Sheriff's Office to name the Alexandria Detention Center the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center.

On November 17, 2010, the Alexandria Commission for the Arts voted to endorse the memorial as recommended by the Public Art Committee. Subsequently, at the suggestion of the Sheriff, the proposed location of the memorial was changed from outside the building to inside the lobby. The memorial will be sited in a secure area "not visually or physically accessible to the general public," as defined in the City's Policy on Acquired Art, not "where public life occurs," as defined in the proposed Public Art Funding Policy. Therefore the co-chairs of the Public Art Committee, the chair of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts, and Office of the Arts staff determined that the Policy on Acquired Art does not apply to the memorial if located inside the building by virtue of it not meeting the definition of public art as stated in the Policy on Acquired Art and the proposed Public Art Funding Policy. Since there has been a public process underway, we are bringing the current proposal to Council for confirmation and to ensure the final decision on the memorial location is made public.

A sketch of the original memorial proposed, a letter from Sheriff Lawhorne, and a book inviting public comment were displayed from 11/23/2010 – 12/13/2010 on a table in the Vola Lawson Lobby of City Hall. Though the display would have been viewed by hundreds of residents during that period, no public comments were recorded.

FISCAL IMPACT: The cost of this project, estimated at \$16,000-\$18,000, will be funded through private donations to be raised by the staff of the Sheriff's Office. This includes acquisition of the black granite stone, delivery, and installation. So far, \$5,000 has been raised. Ongoing maintenance of the memorial will be the responsibility of the Sheriff's Office. Maintenance costs are estimated to be minimal due to the proposed indoor location.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: News Clips

Attachment 2: Vendor Sketch of Original Memorial Proposed

Attachment 3: Revised Indoor Memorial Proposed

STAFF:

Sheriff Dana Lawhorne

Michele Evans, Deputy City Manager

Alisa Carrel, Deputy Director- Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities/Office of the Arts

Lenny George, Chief Deputy, Sheriff's Office

Chris O'Dell, Sergeant and Chair of the Memorial Committee, Sheriff's Office

Alexandria Gazette Packet

Honoring the Fallen

New plaque at City Hall honors sheriff's deputies who have died in the line of duty.

By Michael Lee Pope
Wednesday, August 26, 2010

SHARE

Nobody involved in the deadly jailbreak will forget what happened that chilly January day in 1981, when a 40-year-old inmate from North Carolina grabbed a deputy sheriff's service revolver and began shooting. Two hours later, 47-year-old Sheriff's Deputy William Truesdale was dead after being shot once in the chest with his own Model 64 Smith and Wesson .38-caliber revolver. Truesdale was the first and only Alexandria Sheriff's Deputy to die in the line of duty.

"His death is a sharp reminder that on every level, we the citizens employ a group of people who daily take chances in order to protect us," the *Alexandria Port Packet* editorialized at the time.

Flash forward a generation later. Alexandria Sheriff's Association Vice President Monique Edwards was walking through a vestibule at the south entrance of City Hall when she noticed something missing. There was an elaborate plaque on the west side of the door marking the names of firefighters who died in the line of duty. And then she noticed another plaque honoring police officers who died in the line of duty on the east side of the vestibule. But nothing honoring sheriff's deputies who have given the last full measure of devotion — Truesdale and future deputies.

"Of course, we don't want anyone to be killed in the line of duty," said Edwards, who's worked in the Sheriff's Office since 1993. "But if that happens, we should be ready to honor them in the same way that firefighters and police officers are honored."

So she and the Alexandria Sheriff's Association went to work, starting a yearlong process of adding a new plaque to the south entrance of City Hall. She worked with the city manager's office and General Services, moving the process from concept to design and finally installation. This week, city officials gathered at City Hall for an official unveiling.

"It reminds us that there's a thin line between order and chaos," said Sheriff Dana Lawhorne, glancing at the names of police officers who died in the line of duty. "These are people who have made the ultimate sacrifice so that we could live in a free society, so it's appropriate that they are honored here at City Hall."



Michael Lee Pope/Gazette Packet
Deputy Sheriff Monique Edwards, right, spearheaded the yearlong effort to install the plaque at City Hall.



Michael Lee Pope/Gazette Packet
Sheriff Dana Lawhorne and Alexandria Sheriff's Association Vice President Monique Edwards unveil a new plaque at City Hall dedicated to deputy sheriffs who have lost their lives in the line of duty.

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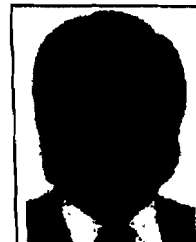


Deputy Sheriff William G. Truesdale

**Alexandria Sheriff's Office
Virginia**

End of Watch: Tuesday, January 27, 1981

Cause: Gunfire



Biographical Info

Age: 47

Tour of Duty: Not available

Badge Number: Not available



Deputy Truesdale was shot and killed with his own weapon while transporting prisoners from court back to the jail. One of the prisoners overpowered Deputy Truesdale and shot him with his own weapon. The suspect then shot his handcuffs off and attempted to flee but was immediately apprehended.

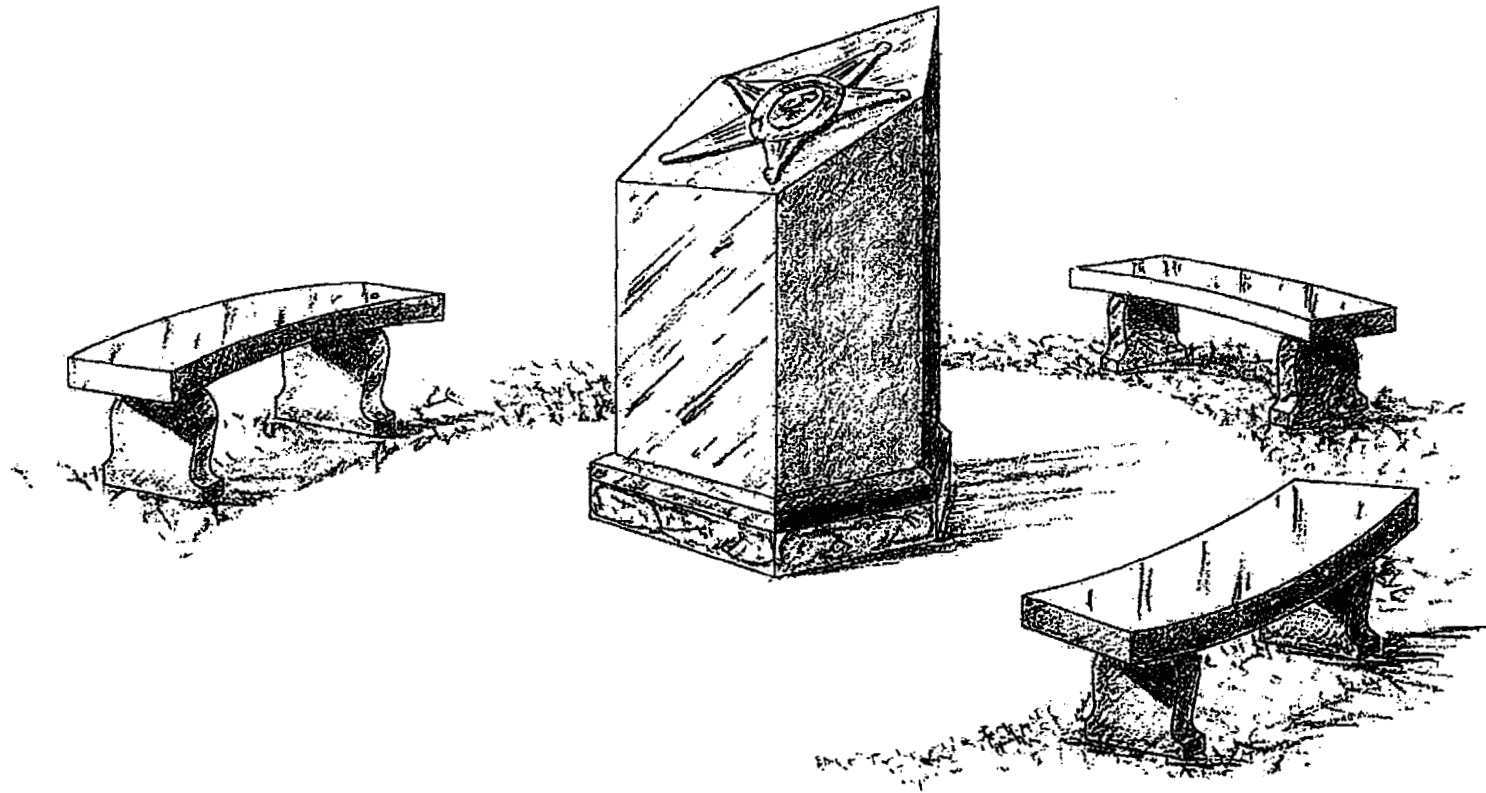
The suspect was sentenced to death in April 1981 and executed on October 17, 1990.

Deputy Truesdale was survived by his wife and three children.

Visit Deputy Sheriff Truesdale's memorial at www.ODMP.org

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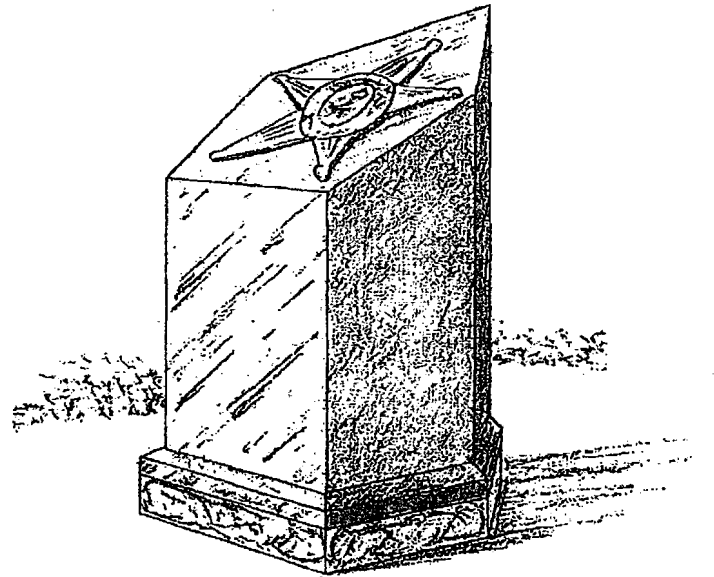
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