

04-01-1978 Palliser Bay New Zealand – Greg Rowe – LEO – Boat Accident - Update



On April 1, 1978, Constable Gregory Rowe, 20, was caught in a tow rope and dragged overboard from the Lady Elizabeth II police launch during a yacht rescue in rough weather off the Wellington coast. His body was never found.

Tears for constable 30 years on

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/352393>

07/04/2008 The Dominion Post



NOT FORGOTTEN: Robyn Ashley, engaged to Greg Rowe at the time of his death, remains in touch with his family and helped organise the memorial weekend
KENT BLECHYNDEN/THE DOMINION POST

Elizabeth II began to tow the stricken vessel. Greg's leg became entangled in a rope and he went overboard.

The final resting place of Constable Greg Rowe continues to be the wild sea that lashes Wellington's south coast - so 30 years after his death, his family and police colleagues reunited on those same rough seas.

Carrying wreaths, six of Greg's siblings, his elderly father and close friend and former launch master Wayne Wilkie boarded maritime police boat Lady Elizabeth III last Friday for Karaka Bay. There, the police chaplain gave a service similar to the one 30 years earlier after the search for Greg's body was called off.

On April 1, 1978, Greg, 23, was just days away from transferring back to his native Canterbury so he could spend more time with his large farming family and fiancée, whom he was to wed in two months.

On the last shift before his move, the close-knit team responded to a yacht in trouble near Palliser Bay. Winds were gusting up to 25 knots as the Lady

"After 30 years, [the details are] not important," said Robyn Ashley, Greg's fiancée. "You think about what's happened to you in the past 30 years, rather than those details. It was just an accident."

Ms Ashley, also a police employee, has kept in touch with the Rowe family and helped arrange a memorial weekend at Pounui Homestead in the Wairarapa, attended by more than 50 police cadets from the 70s and their families.

"We looked at photos, talked, laughed and remembered," Ms Ashley said. "There were a few tears, but not too many. Tears were 30 years ago."

Messages of remembrance from around the globe were read out, including one from the assistant commissioner of police, who was in Afghanistan.

Last Sunday, Rowe family members trekked to a remote point near where Greg went missing. There they placed a stylised angel plaque on a boulder, where it "is not the closing of a chapter, just an acknowledgement".

MEMORIES

<https://web.archive.org/web/20081014052614/http://policeassn.org.nz/communications/newspdf/PoliceNewsMay08.pdf>

MEMORIES: Family members, his former fiancée and police colleagues were amongst those who laid a wreath at a memorial service held on Wellington's south coast recently to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the death of Constable Greg Rowe, who drowned on 1 April 1978. Mr Rowe's leg became entangled in a rope on the Police launch, the Lady Elizabeth 11 and he was dragged overboard. The launch had been responding to a distress call from a yacht which was in trouble at Palliser Bay. Members of the Rowe family also laid a stylised angel plaque on a boulder in a remote location near where Greg drowned. Pictured are Ian Rowe, Nicola Barrett (nee Rowe), Stuart Rowe, Kevin Rowe, Denise Rowe and Kay Rowe.

Photo courtesy of The Dominion Post



New Zealand Police Museum

https://www.facebook.com/NewZealandPoliceMuseum/posts/1156660787697486?comment_id=1156684357695129&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D

March 31, 2016 ·

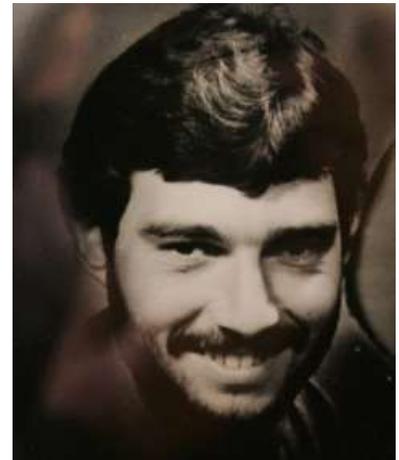
Today we mourn the loss of Constable Gregory Donald Rowe, 38 years after his tragic death. Our thoughts are with his family, friends and colleagues.

Name & rank: Constable Gregory Donald ROWE Police number: 4284

Born: 11 February 1955

Years in New Zealand Police: 5 Died: 1 April 1978

Age: 23 Engaged



Gregory's story:

Gregory Rowe was born in North Canterbury and joined the Police in August 1973. The newly attested Constable Rowe was posted to Wellington, where he spent some time working with the Criminal Investigation Branch. He was assigned to the wharf Police unit at the beginning of 1978.

Having applied for a transfer to Christchurch to be closer to his fiancée and family, he was about two weeks away from moving at the time of his early death. His wedding was only two months away.

At 3pm on 1 April 1978, Constable Rowe and two other officers went out in the Police launch Lady Elizabeth II to help tow a disabled yacht into Wellington Harbour. The sea was rough that day, with strong winds gusting up to 25 knots. In the early stages of the tow, just off Windy Point, Constable Rowe's leg was caught in a tow rope and he was dragged overboard. The crew of the Lady Elizabeth II searched for him for a long time before finally heading back in to port. Despite an extensive sea, ground and air search, Constable Rowe's body has never been found.

Police remembrance day to recognise fallen as well as slain officers

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/72140352/Police-remembrance-day-to-recognise-fallen-as-well-as-slain-officers>

September 17 2015 TALIA SHADWELL

Police will for the first time honour fallen comrades who died in accidents in the line of duty.

Photographs of three officers who died in two separate tragedies still hang in the Wellington Police maritime unit's barracks.



Pilot Peter Button hovers his helicopter just 3 metres above 10m waves to pluck two men from Wellington Harbour after their police launch capsized. Two further officers perished in the seas

Photo Supplied

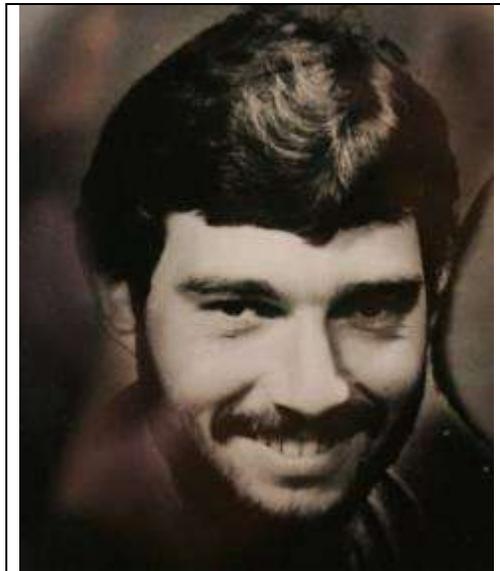
Yet their names are not read aloud in the annual police remembrance day roll-call.

On September 29, Constable Greg Rowe's family, including younger brother Wellington Senior Constable Stu Rowe will finally hear his name called at the capital's remembrance day ceremony.

Rowe died when he fell off the Lady Elizabeth II into the sea and the police launch reversed over him in a 1978 accident on Wellington Harbour.

In 1986, another tragedy aboard the "Lady Liz" claimed the lives of Sergeant Phillip Ward and Constable Glenn Hughes when it capsized amid a southerly storm during a training exercise.

A dramatic photograph captured Wellington's rescue helicopter service pioneer Peter Button flying his chopper daringly close to the giant swells in a successful effort to rescue two other crewman, but Ward and Hughes drowned.



**Constable Greg Rowe, who lost his life while serving with the police maritime unit in Wellington in April 1, 1978.
ANDREW GORRIE/FAIRFAX NZ**

Now their names are listed next to 35 other officers on *Ten One's* website, with Commissioner Mike Bush telling the police magazine it had been his wish for some time to see them honoured.

The research was led by Police Museum director Rowan Carroll, former police Inspector Mike Hill, Sergeant Braydon Lenihan and historian Dr Elizabeth Plumridge.

Finally recognising the officers seemed right for their memories and their families, Hill said.

"It was the realisation that there are a number of staff that have died in the course of their duties but were not recognised because they weren't slain in a sort of criminal act. It was about trying to commemorate these people that died while on duty."

Carroll said the project was close to her heart and she expected to continue expanding the list.

Some families of those who had died had wanted the remembrance project a long time, and it had taken a couple of years to carry out.

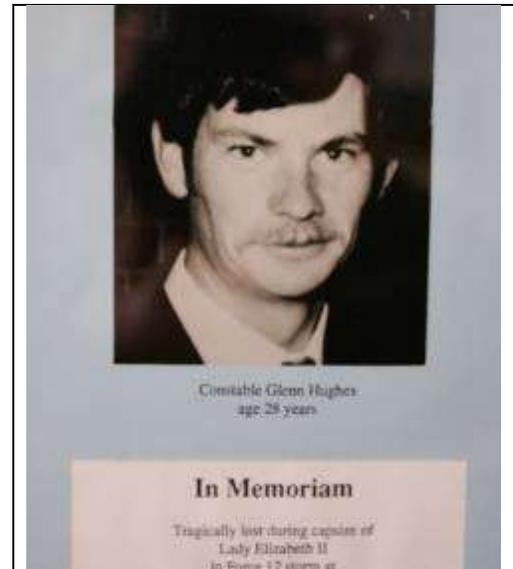
Among the 38 remembered are those who drowned saving others, were struck by cars, and those who perished rescuing others from fires.

Other officers' hearts failed chasing criminals, and one fell from a helicopter.

Yet another died from typhus, caused by the unsanitary conditions in New Zealand's police stations in the late-19th century, another from an infection picked up while clearing hundreds of bodies from the SS Wairarapa shipwreck in 1894.

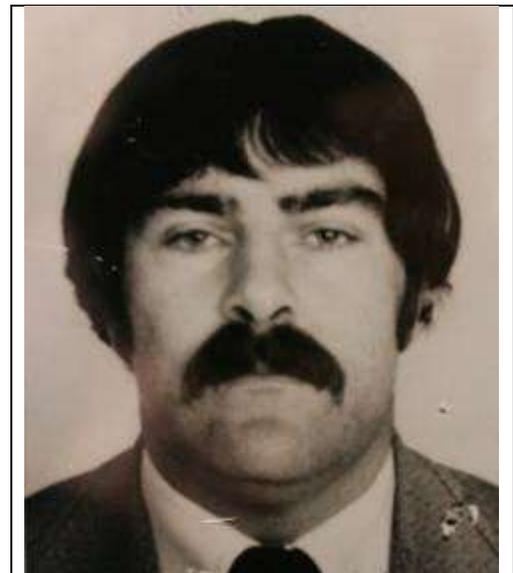
The researchers sleuthed through about 130 years of police gazettes and researched 700 officers, to determine who was killed while carrying out their duties, Carroll said.

It also appeared likely there were more officers killed than previously thought – some in the mid-20th century killed by drink drivers, and others who were assaulted and died a long time afterwards who may have been "overlooked," she added.



Constable Glenn Hughes, who lost his life after the capsizing of the Lady Elizabeth II on 2 July 1986.

ANDREW GORRIE/FAIRFAX NZ



Senior Sergeant Phil Ward, who lost his life after the capsizing of the Lady Elizabeth II on 2 July 1986.

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