



# OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**SEPTEMBER 28, 2012**

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY FALLEN HERO PLAQUE DEDICATION HONORING  
LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP POLICE OFFICER FRANCIS X. "BUCK" ROY**



On September 27, 2012 Montgomery County District Attorney Risa Vetri Ferman held a plaque dedication remembering fallen hero Officer Francis "Buck" Roy of the Lower

Merion Township Police. Roy was killed in the line of duty as a result of injuries endured on July 3, 1924. As part of the Fallen Hero Program, a plaque was dedicated to Officer Roy at the Lower Merion Township Police Department in recognition of his sacrifice.

On July 3, 1924, Officer Francis "Buck" Roy and Officer Albert Miller responded to a call about a Ku Klux Klan rally. They arrived to a cross burning on the grounds of Haverford College and to about 200 Klan members beginning to depart. When Roy and Miller attempted to question two men who were leaving the site, one of the men shot and struck Officer Roy in the leg and abdomen. Officer Miller, who was off duty at the time, was shot in the leg. Miller managed to crawl over 200 hundred yards through the woods to a local residence and call for assistance. He refused to be taken to the hospital "until you get Buck and bring him here."

Roy was transported from the scene to Bryn Mawr Hospital, where he lay in and out of consciousness for 2 months until he finally succumbed to his injuries on September 15, 1924. Roy, who was considered the "pride of the Lower Merion Force" and "popular with the residence of the township" was the first Lower Merion Police officer to die in the line of duty.

According to the July 5, 1924 edition of the Philadelphia inquirer, Chief James Donaghy issued the following order at Roll Call on July 4th: "The next time the Ku Klux Klan holds a demonstration in the confines of this township, you are to rush to the scene and shoot to kill. Shoot to kill first and ask questions afterward. I shall face the responsibility of your acts. That is all." A \$1,000.00 award was offered for information leading to the arrest of the perpetrators.

Five men were tried and acquitted for Officer Roy's murder. However, 28 months later, Moses V. Rodgers, a janitor at Haverford College, confessed to the killing. Rodgers was convicted of voluntary manslaughter and sentenced to 3 to 6 years in the County Prison.

The Fallen Hero Program was founded in 2001 by attorney James Binns, with the purpose of honoring the men and women in Philadelphia law enforcement who have been killed or died in the line of duty. In 2007, this program was extended to Montgomery County, and honors the 27 Montgomery County Police Officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice in giving their life to protect others. Officer Francis "Buck" Roy will receive the 18th plaque dedicated in Montgomery County. The order of the Montgomery County Plaque dedications to date is as follows:

1. Sergeant James R. Miller, Upper Dublin Township Police. KIA: 04/20/2004.  
Dedication: 09/06/2007.
2. FBI Special Agent Charles L. Reed. KIA: 03/22/1996.  
Dedication: 09/24/2007.
3. Officer Edward Setzer, Lower Merion Township. KIA: 9/30/1988.  
Dedication: 10/01/2007.
4. Trooper Stanley E. Wesoloski, Pennsylvania State Police. KIA: 05/26/1986.  
Dedication: 10/25/2007
5. Chief Robert E. Reilly, Norristown Borough Police. KIA: 09/09/1959.

- Dedication: 06/17/2008
6. Edgar L. Peterson, Cheltenham Township Police Officer. KIA: 03/03/1946.  
Dedication: 04/13/2009.
  7. Officer Richard Lawn, Jr., Lower Gwynedd Police. EOW: 07/28/2003.  
Dedication: 06/01/2009.
  8. Sergeant John M. Thomas, Pennsylvania State Police. KIA: 05/08/1927.  
Dedication: 10/13/2009.
  9. Patrolman Andrew W. Miller, Pennsylvania State Police Highway Patrol.  
KIA: 04/01/1928. Dedication: 10/13/2009.
  10. Trooper Francis M. Tessitore, Pennsylvania State Police. KIA: 10/02/1960.  
Dedication: 10/13/2009.
  11. Corporal Leo M. Koscelnick, Pennsylvania State Police. KIA: 08/15/1977.  
Dedication: 10/13/2009.
  12. Officer David Hancock, Montgomery Township Police. KIA: 12/11/1976.  
Dedication: 09/21/2010.
  13. Patrolman Michael J. Saulin, Upper Merion Police. KIA: 03/04/1975.  
Dedication: 10/26/2010.
  14. Sergeant George F. Opelski, West Norriton Township. KIA: 09/13/1986.  
Dedication: 06/23/2011.
  15. Officer Thomas Mathews, Abington Township Police. KIA: 06/29/1949.  
Dedication: 09/27/2011.
  16. Police Officer Thomas W. Corum, Pottstown Borough. KIA: 01/20/1964.  
Dedication: 10/25/2011.
  17. Officer Eugene "Chic" Lucas, Conshohocken Borough. KIA: 10/30/1922.  
Dedication: 06/26/2012.

For more information please visit the "Awards/Honors" section of the District Attorney's website: [www.montcopa.org/da](http://www.montcopa.org/da).