

Norristown Borough Officer Thomas M. Barone E.O.W. 10/11/1992

On October 11, 1992, Norristown Police Officers Thomas Barone and Louis Zbyszinski responded to a domestic disturbance. Once inside the home, as Officer Barone reached the top of a flight of stairs, Walter H.G. Baker ambushed him, firing two shots from a .38 caliber revolver which struck Officer Barone in the head and chest area. Officer Zbyszinski tried to rescue his partner by pulling him away from the danger. Baker then fired more shots, one striking Officer Barone and another striking a female in the home.

According to the April 15, 1993 edition of The Inquirer, on the third day of his trial, William H.G. Baker cut off his defense and pleaded guilty to murder saying, "I want to get it over with." He was convicted of first-degree murder in April, 1993 and sentenced to death. Baker died in prison at 54-years-old of natural causes.

Thomas M. Barone was born and raised by his parents, Charles and Antonia, on Whitehall Road in West Norriton Township, with his brother Michael and sister Rosemary. As a child he had a love for life and an infectious personality that endeared him to many. He graduated from Norristown High School and West Chester University, excelling in both academic and extracurricular activities. An extremely well-rounded individual, his varied interests included music, sports, reading and weightlifting, and his love of automobiles was widely known. His many cars, like the man himself, were always clean, sharp, and finely tuned. He was a caring person and had great pride in himself and his family. He possessed a tremendous work ethic and was diligent in striving to achieve his many goals. Barone served as a Police Officer in Limerick Township and Tredyffrin Township just before joining the Norristown Police Department in 1990. His professional manner and sense of fairness earned the respect of both his fellow Officers and the citizens he served. Barone was thirty-two when he was killed.