



Deputy Brandan Hinkle

“The meaning of Valentine’s Day has greatly changed for all of us who knew Brandan. This was the day we lost a friend, brother, son and a husband. The hearts of many have been broken and we have shed endless tears of sorrow. We may never hear his laugh or see his smile again, but we will have these precious memories tucked away in a special place just for him in our hearts. Knowing Brandan’s wishes – he would want us to take this tragedy as a gift and cherish each day we have with each other. Only from the support each other will we all start the healing process.” - Michelle Hinkle-Johnston, wife

On the afternoon of Wednesday, February 14, 2001, we tragically lost one of our own. Our partner, Deputy Sheriff Brandan Garrett Hinkle, was assigned to Lomita Sheriff Station and had been employed by the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department for eleven years. Deputy Hinkle’s memory is honored and revered today.

Deputy Hinkle was killed after his sheriff motorcycle was struck head-on by a Lexus sedan as he rode on Brea Canyon Cutoff near Diamond Bar. Deputy Hinkle was traveling southbound and the sedan northbound, when they collided at a bend in the road. Deputy Hinkle was training to be a motor deputy and was riding behind his training officer when the collision occurred. He was transported to Brea Community hospital where he succumbed to his injuries about 35 minutes after the accident.

Deputy Hinkle needed to complete 160 hours riding alongside a Training Officer to qualify to be a motor deputy. Deputy Hinkle’s father, Leon, said, “He was very, very proud to be an L.A. County Deputy, and he was very proud that he had made it through motor school. It’s so devastating.”

Motorcycle officers formed a procession outside Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa Thursday, February 22, 2001 to mourn their loss. Hundreds of family members and law enforcement officers attended the memorial service for Deputy Hinkle. Department members shared eulogies, including Sheriff Lee Baca, Captain Edward B. Hitchcock, and Deputy Luis Goni. Afterwards, Deputy Hinkle was laid to rest at Pacific View Memorial Park in Newport Beach.

Deputy Hinkle was born in Fullerton and raised in Missouri. He was assigned to Lomita Station in 1995 and remained until his passing. He is survived by his mother, father, and his wife, Michelle, who proclaimed to her husband, “Always in my heart....” on his Officer Down Memorial Page. Deputy Hinkle’s wife also said, “He was a big kid at heart...He loved working with his fellow deputies. He was a caring man with a big heart, who doted on his pet pug, Pugsley.” Deputy Hinkle was a husband, a friend, and a reliable partner. He will forever be in our thoughts as he gave the ultimate sacrifice.