

# Marshall Wayne Magill

By: Ofc. Matthew Painter

Look around on a Friday night in Georgetown and you will likely see a large crowd at the football stadium or couples milling around the square enjoying the time to relax. Sights like these are common in our city and are often taken for granted. Unfortunately, the reason that this relaxed atmosphere can exist is sometimes taken for granted as well. All over the city at any given time, be it a Friday night or a Tuesday morning or any time in between, men and women dressed in blue and wearing a badge and a gun patrol our streets. These brave individuals give up their Friday nights, Sunday mornings at church and many other occasions in order to protect the citizens from all the things that might threaten the quality of life that is so easily taken for granted.

While Sunday mornings and baseball games are just some of the things that Georgetown Police Officers give up to do their job, there is another very real and very sobering possibility. Every single time these men and women put on their uniform and equipment, they know that they may be faced with giving up something more important than a relaxing evening on the town; they may have to lay down their life to protect those that they serve.

March 23, 1945 was a Friday that Georgetown City Marshall Wayne Magill was not spending with his wife and two daughters. At approximately 9:15 p.m., Marshall Magill was called at the Sheriff's Office and notified of a traffic accident in the 300 block of E. 7th Street. A car driven by Keith Perrera and Charles Burson had struck a parked car in that location, injuring Mr. Burson and causing a roadway obstruction that posed a danger to others in the area.

Marshall Magill responded from the Sheriff's Office and began directing traffic around the scene with his flashlight. At approximately 9:30 p.m., a car approached Magill from the east. The driver of the 1932 Ford apparently didn't see Marshall Magill and continued to approach the scene at a moderate rate of speed. In an attempt to get the driver's attention, Magill waved his flashlight at the approaching car. The driver, apparently confused, continued through the accident scene, striking Marshall Magill and dragging him a distance of 82 feet.

The Davis Ambulance Service, Williamson County Constables and Sheriff's Deputies rushed to the scene to aid the injured Marshall. Magill was rushed to Georgetown Hospital and then immediately to Brackenridge Hospital in Austin. He passed away there five days later on March 28, 1945, suffering from multiple broken bones and massive internal injuries. Magill left his wife and two young daughters. In a letter to Magill's widow, then City Manager B.H. Cruce wrote, "In your hour of sorrow, you have my deepest sympathy."

To this day, Marshall Wayne Magill is the only Georgetown Police Officer ever to be killed in the line of duty. I pray that in fifty-five years we might repeat that last sentence. Magill is survived by his two daughters, Lillian Gholson of Greers Ferry, Arkansas and Mary Jo Hickman of San Antonio, and also by Mr. Joe Magill of Georgetown. The Georgetown Police Department has submitted Marshall Magill's name for inclusion on both the Texas Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial in Austin and the National Law Enforcement Officer's Memorial in Washington, D.C. On Saturday, May 15th at the 12th Annual Candlelight Vigil which begins Peace Officers Memorial Week, the dedication of this inscription will take place at the Memorial grounds, located on Judiciary Square in Washington. While this pales in comparison to Magill's commitment to our community, it will pay tribute to his sacrifice.

It is a very true that Georgetown does not have to endure the daily atrocities and crime of large cities like Los Angeles or New York. This fact, however, did not spare the life of Marshall Magill, nor does it lessen the chance of death or injury to current officers. So, as you pass an officer directing traffic at an accident scene or patrolling the streets of our city, remember the sacrifice that Marshall Magill made for the citizens of Georgetown in 1945, and remember that the officer you see in that uniform would willingly make that sacrifice for you.

**"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."**

**- John 15:13**

