

STAR OF COURAGE

Brett John POLLARD, 35 Savige Street, Campbell A.C.T.

On 19 May 1977 Brett Pollard, then aged 14 years, while at Malua Bay, New South Wales, observed that Peter Alex Mahl, aged 17 years, was in serious difficulties in the heavy surf. Mahl had entered the water with a surf board and was seen to be in difficulties when he was knocked from his surf board by a series of large waves, estimated to be 6 metres in height.

Brett Pollard entered the heavy and dangerous sea on a surf board in an attempt to reach Mahl but was forced back to shore. He re-entered the water at another point and eventually reached Mahl and dragged him on to his surf board. After about 5 minutes both were washed from the board and it was swept from their reach. Pollard continued to support Mahl while people on shore attempted to get a line to them. When these attempts proved unsuccessful Pollard left Mahl for a short period, retrieved one of the surf boards, returned to Mahl and assisted him on to the board. Pollard continued to support Mahl until a boat which had been launched some 10 kilometres away was able to reach them. His efforts lasted about 1½ hours.

By his conspicuous courage, in which he placed himself in great peril, Brett Pollard undoubtedly saved the life of Peter Alex Mahl.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Craftsman Phillip John EDWARDS, 10 Scholey Street, Mayfield, N.S.W.

On 29 July 1977, Craftsman Edwards, a member of No 2 Field Survey Squadron, Australian Army, stationed in Indonesia, was a passenger aboard an Iroquois helicopter conveying members of a survey team from Wamena to Apalapsili. Shortly after take-off the helicopter crashed among dense rain forest. The captain was killed instantly and the passengers severely injured. Craftsman Edwards sustained a multiple fracture of the left ankle, a serious laceration to the left knee and extensive lacerations, abrasions and bruising to most of his body.

Despite his injuries Craftsman Edwards dragged the other personnel clear of the wreckage, which at one time caught fire. Craftsman Edwards extinguished the fire, tended to the injuries of the others and, because of the nearness of a 10 metre sheer drop to the forest floor, took necessary precautions for their safety during the night. In the 24 hours until rescued, Craftsman Edwards continually tended to the wellbeing of the other personnel and maintained their morale.

Craftsman Edwards by his courageous actions and despite his own severe injuries prevented further tragedy and injury to his fellow passengers.

Danny John MORRISON, 1 Wiltshire Place, Ravenswood, Tas

On 3 December 1977, at about 4.30 p.m., Mr Morrison was at home when he was told that a house across the road was on fire. As he ran to the house, Mr Morrison could see smoke coming from underneath it and could hear a young child screaming. Mr Morrison crawled under the house, through the fire until he could reach the three year old girl, who had moved further under the house and away from the fire. Mr Morrison took the girl and carried her back past the fire until he could pass her out through the opening under the house.

Mr Morrison, by his courageous action, undoubtedly saved the young girl's life.

Nikola NIKOLIC, Andamooka, South Australia.

On 20 January 1978, Mr Nikolic entered a mine shaft about 10 metres in depth and less than a metre wide to rescue two persons who were trapped in the shaft. One person was unconscious at the foot of the shaft and the other was trapped on top of the first, having himself lost consciousness, due to lack of air, in attempting a rescue.

Mr Nikolic entered the shaft and arranged a sling around the would-be rescuer so that he could be winched to the top. He then tied the first person, who now appeared dead, in such a way so that he too could be winched to the top. Both rescued persons eventually regained consciousness.

Mr Nikolic's courageous actions in entering the mine shaft undoubtedly saved the lives of both men.

Keith RICHARDSON,
Cheynes Beach Whaling Company, Albany W.A.

On 14 March 1978, Mr Richardson, mate of the Whaling ship "Cheynes Two", was on board when the Captain of the vessel was asked to assist in the rescue of a young man who had been swept into the sea on the Southern Ocean side of Albany Harbour.

By the time the ship arrived in the area where the man was last seen darkness had fallen. There was a heavy swell, of about 5 to 6 metres, running toward the vertical cliff face about 300 metres away. When the young man was sighted Mr Richardson dived into the turbulent shark-infested seas, taking a rope and lifebuoy with him. He swam out to the young man and brought him close to the vessel where both were taken on board.

Mr Richardson's courageous action in entering the sea in hazardous circumstances undoubtedly saved the young man's life.

Corporal Keith Trevor THOMAS, Royal Military College,
Duntroon, A.C.T.

On 16 April 1976, Corporal Thomas was a member of a group of 4 persons fishing from rocks at Murray's Beach, New South Wales, when a large wave swept them all into the sea.

At the time of the incident there was a 3 metre swell running and, although he was in danger of being swept on to nearby rocks, Corporal Thomas struggled through the surf to help and support a young woman member of the party until both were rescued by a boat about 40 minutes later.

Corporal Thomas showed great courage and without doubt saved the young woman from drowning.

Mr Glen Neil THURGATE, 49 Catherine Street, St Ives, N.S.W.

On 18 January 1977, at about 10.15 p.m. Mr Thurgate ran to a burning house, a few doors from his home, to find the house well ablaze and a man trapped inside.

With the help of some other persons Mr Thurgate broke a large window leading to the room where the man was located. He then entered the house and brought the man, who was badly burned, through the room to the broken window area where others were waiting to assist him.

By his courageous actions Mr Thurgate undoubtedly saved the man's life.

Leading Seaman Ian John CARROLL, 301 Main Road, Abermain, N.S.W.

On 4 December 1976, Leading Seaman Carroll was off-duty when a fire started in one of the hangars at the Naval Air Station, Nowra. Although not under orders at the time, nor directed to assist in any way, Leading Seaman Carroll forced the doors of the hangar to remove some of the aircraft. Upon entering the hangar he found he could not breathe because of the intense heat and billowing thick black smoke. However, although unsuccessful in locating breathing apparatus he returned to the hangar which had now lost part of its roof, and went to the first line of aircraft and assisted in their removal. Later, after finding breathing equipment, Leading Seaman Carroll went further into the hangar and assisted in the removal of other aircraft. He continued to assist in this way for about 3½ hours.

Despite the obvious dangers of fuel igniting and exploding, Leading Seaman Carroll's courageous action resulted in many valuable aircraft being saved.

Lieutenant Commander William John NEWTON, United States Navy

On 4 December 1976, Lieutenant Commander Newton, a member of the United States Navy stationed at the Naval Air Station, Nowra was off-duty and attending a Wardroom social function.

When he became aware of a serious fire in the aircraft hangar, Lieutenant Commander Newton drove immediately to the scene and, after attempting to extinguish a fire in an

aircraft outside the hangar, assisted in opening the hangar doors. Although inappropriately clothed for fighting a fire, and against advice, he assisted in the removal of a number of the aircraft, although some of them were fully fuelled and burning. He continued to assist in the fighting of the fire and the movement and securing of the aircraft for a number of hours, despite the risk of explosions.

Lieutenant Commander Newton's courageous action resulted in many valuable aircraft being saved from destruction.

COMMENDATION FOR BRAVE CONDUCT

Kelvin Gordon BROWN, Trent Court, Burwood East, Victoria

On 4 December 1977, Master Brown aged 15 years, his father and another person were fishing on Port Phillip Bay when the weather started to turn against them and they decided to return to the shore. They attempted to pull in the anchor but it was snagged on the bottom. Attempts were made to cut the anchor rope, but the boat was swamped and overturned. After clinging to the upturned boat for approximately half an hour Master Brown decided to swim for shore, a distance of approximately three kilometres. Upon reaching the shore he raised the alarm and then returned to the area aboard the rescue craft. Master Brown's father drowned before the rescue boat arrived at the scene; however, Master Brown's actions resulted in the other person being saved.

Peter Leo BUTLER, 3 Achilpa Street, Alice Springs,
Northern Territory.

Mr Butler, an employee of the airline Connair Ltd at Alice Springs Airport, was on duty on 5 January 1977 when an aircraft crashed into the office and hangar setting the building ablaze. Mr Butler left the building but returned to aid a fellow employee who was trapped in a burning office. Mr Butler pulled her to safety and then attempted to extinguish her burning clothing with his bare hands. In re-entering the building to assist a fellow employee, Mr Butler exposed himself to considerable danger.

Keith Edward GAMBLE, 150 Paton Road, South Hedland, W.A.

On 6 August 1977, Mr Gamble received a call for assistance at a fire in a neighbour's house. The house was fitted with cyclone proof windows and having realised that a small child was caught in the house and that entry was not possible through the doors he obtained a hammer from his nearby home. He broke the window of the child's room and entered the house. The heat was intense and thick black smoke restricted Mr Gamble's visibility but he made his way to the child, guided by the sounds of its crying and coughing. Having reached the child he was guided back to the window by the calling of other helpers. In smashing his way into the house and rescuing the child, Mr Gamble put his own life at risk.

Norman Francis GIBBONS, Park Street, St Kilda, Victoria

On 8 December 1977, Mr Gibbons, a fifty-five year old Service Station attendant was attacked by two assailants who were attempting to rob the Service Station of the money on hand. He was forced to the office where he picked up a wooden stool and attempted to fight with his assailants. He was then struck several times with a machette before his attackers fled the scene. In fighting off the two assailants Mr Gibbons showed a great sense of responsibility to his employer and placed his own life at risk.

Senior Constable Graham Anthony Alfred JONES, Tasmania Police

On 18 September 1977 at about 6 p.m. Senior Constable Jones was sent to a house where a man armed with a shotgun was threatening to shoot any person who approached him. On arrival at the house, Constable Jones went to the rear entrance and called out to the man, and entered the house. The gunman pointed his shotgun at Senior Constable Jones and threatened him but the Constable stood his ground and moved towards the man until he was close enough to take the weapon from the man.

In the face of personal danger, Senior Constable Jones steadfastly carried out his duty to protect the community.

Miss Wavenie KAVANAGH, 25 Melinga Crescent, Mornington, Vic.

On 7 January 1978, five children were playing at the water's edge of the Big River, near the Eildon-Jamieson Road, when one of them slipped into deep water and called out for help. Wavenie Kavanagh, aged ten years, went into the water and grabbed the child. She then supported her as they drifted about 100 metres down stream until help arrived. In going to her friend's assistance Wavenie Kavanagh showed little regard for her own safety.

Jason Alexander RICHARDSON, Bay 85, Wesnova Caravan Park, Port Hedland, Western Australia.

On 27 December 1977, a man aged 50 and a boy aged 8, slipped from rocks into the water in Port Hedland Harbour and were in danger of being swept out to sea by a swiftly running tide. Master Richardson, aged 11, with the assistance of a friend, aged 14, went to their aid. The friend brought the 8 year old to safety and Master Richardson commenced resuscitation until the boy was revived. Master Richardson then re-entered the water and unsuccessfully attempted to rescue the man who was unconscious and caught on an underwater cable.

In entering the sea twice and attempting to rescue two people who were in difficulty, Master Richardson showed a commendable disregard for his own safety.

Phillip ROGERS, Nana Glen, New South Wales

On 7 January 1978, Mr Rogers noticed a man in difficulty in the rough surf about 100 metres from the shore at Mullaway Beach, New South Wales. He immediately took a light five foot foam board, went into the surf to the man's assistance, and helped him onto the board. By this stage both men were exhausted, so they held on to the board to await help. Just as help arrived a wave washed the board away from both men and Mr Rogers had to be assisted to the shore.

Further attempts to rescue the victim were unsuccessful but Mr Rogers showed commendable courage in placing his own life in danger in attempting a rescue.

Constable Peter D. ROOKE, Tasmania Police

On 4 October 1977, Constable Rooke was called to help a youth trapped 25 metres up a tower carrying high voltage power lines. The youth's clothes were on fire and he was screaming with pain. Constable Rooke and a doctor who was passing climbed the tower to the boy, removed the burning clothing and secured him to the tower until other help arrived. In climbing the tower to help the youth Constable Rooke exposed himself to considerable danger.

Charles Maxwell TOOLE, The Basin, Victoria.

At about 12.50 p.m. on 8 December 1977, Mr Toole, aged 54, Post Master at The Basin, Victoria, was confronted by a masked person holding a sawn off rifle.

The gunman demanded money and said that he would use the gun if he had to. Mr Toole grabbed the gun and wrenched it from his hand. In the ensuing struggle, Mr Toole struck the offender twice on the head with the gun butt. The offender ran from the building pursued by Mr Toole, who was menaced by the offender's accomplice in a waiting car before they both drove off.

Mr Toole showed commendable courage in attempting to thwart the commission of a crime and to protect public monies.

Shane David WILSON, 27 Somerset Crescent, Port Hedland, W.A.

On 27 December 1977, a man aged 50 and a boy aged 8, slipped from rocks into the water in Port Hedland Harbour and were in danger of being swept out to sea by a swiftly running tide. Master Wilson, aged 14, with the assistance of a friend, aged 11, went to their aid. Master Wilson brought the 8 year old to safety and the friend commenced resuscitation until the boy was revived. Master Wilson then re-entered the water and unsuccessfully attempted to rescue the man who was unconscious and caught on an underwater cable.

In entering the sea twice and attempting to rescue two people who were in difficulty, Master Wilson showed a commendable disregard for his own safety.

Able Seaman Conrad Moran BOLTON, 52 Tranmere Road, Howrah, Tasmania.

On 4 December 1976, Able Seaman Bolton was part of the duty watch at the Naval Air Station, Nowra, when a fire broke out in one of the hangars.

Although not under orders to assist in any way to fight the fire he did so by helping to open the hangar doors and removing fully fuelled aircraft. He also assisted in containing the fire in the burning aircraft.

Able Seaman Bolton showed commendable courage in fighting the fire and salvaging aircraft, despite the ever present danger of explosion.

Lieutenant Peter William GREENFIELD, RAN, 1 Magpie Lane, Warrandyte, Vic.

Lieutenant Greenfield was Duty Air Officer on the night of 4 December 1976 at the Naval Air Station, Nowra when a fire broke out in one of the hangars.

Lieutenant Greenfield was not under orders to fight the fire. Nevertheless he organised as many sailors as he could to assist in removing aircraft from the burning building. He entered the hangar and with the assistance of others opened the doors of the hangar. He assisted in the removal of aircraft for about 2 hours until called to other duties.

Lieutenant Greenfield showed commendable courage in salvaging aircraft despite the ever present danger of explosion.

Lieutenant Commander Robert George RAY, MBE, RAN, Astron Park, R.M.B. 285, Berry, N.S.W.

Lieutenant Commander Ray was attending a Wardroom function at the Naval Air Station, Nowra, on 4 December 1976, when a fire started in one of the hangars.

Upon becoming aware of the fire Lieutenant Commander Ray drove to the scene and took charge of fire fighting activities. With others he manned hoses in an attempt to contain the fire and gain entry to the hangar. However, a severe explosion occurred and despite the fact that the fire was now blazing uncontrollably he broke down a door at the side of the building to lead a hose party to where the fire was fiercest. Because of the intense blaze the party withdrew from this section. Lieutenant Commander Ray then assisted in the removal of aircraft at the other end of the hangar and did so for about 2 hours. He showed commendable courage despite the ever present danger of explosion.

Commander Walter Ernest ROTHWELL, RAN, 20 Mitchell Crescent, Turramurra, N.S.W.

On the night of 4 December 1976 when a fire started in one of the hangars at the Naval Air Station, Nowra, Commander Rothwell was attending a Wardroom function at the Station.

When he became aware of the fire Commander Rothwell proceeded immediately to the scene and began directing fire fighting efforts. He then organised further help and proceeded to the other end of the hangar where, in addition to directing fire fighting, he assisted in the removal of aircraft.

Throughout the whole time Commander Rothwell gave constant direction and assistance to firefighters and by his leadership did much to maintain their morale. He displayed

commendable courage despite the ever present danger of explosion.

Seaman Michael James SCHMIDT, Oxenford Street, Oxenford, Qld.

On the night of 4 December 1976, Seaman Schmidt was at the guardhouse at the Naval Air Station Nowra, when a fire started in one of the hangars.

Seaman Schmidt immediately went to the accommodation area to alert the occupants and then proceeded to the scene of the fire. He manned a hose on one side of the hangar and then helped clear the inflammable store. He then proceeded to another section of the hangar and assisted in the removal of two aircraft, both of which were burning fiercely. He then assisted in fighting the fires in these aircraft. Seaman Schmidt was under no orders to fight the fire but continued to assist in every way possible and displayed commendable courage despite the ever present danger of explosion.

Seaman Martin Russell WYNESS, 205 Marmion Street, Palmyra, W.A.

Seaman Wyness, was off duty on the night of 4 December 1976 when a fire started in one of the hangars at the Naval Air Station, Nowra.

Although not under orders to fight the fire, Seaman Wyness went to the scene and joined a hose party. After this party was forced to withdraw because of a severe explosion, Seaman Wyness proceeded to the other end of the building and assisted in the removal of burning aircraft. He then assisted in extinguishing these fires and later accompanied civilian firemen into the hangar to assist in the control of small out-breaks of fire.

Seaman Wyness displayed commendable courage despite the ever present danger of further explosion.

Lieutenant James Frederick ROWE, United States Navy.

On 4 December 1976, Lieutenant Rowe, a member of the United States Navy stationed at the Naval Air Station, Nowra, was off-duty and attending a Wardroom social function when a fire started in one of the hangars.

In the company of 2 others Lieutenant Rowe immediately went to the scene and assisted in the movement of 2 aircraft to a safer area. He then led a hose party which extinguished several fires in the eastern part of the hangar. Next, he led his hose party through a burnt out door into the part of the hangar that was burning most fiercely with the intention of preventing the fire from spreading to aircraft parked at the other end. He continued to do this until ordered to withdraw.

Lieutenant Rowe displayed a high degree of leadership and courage in his firefighting efforts in a particularly dangerous area of the hangar, despite the ever present danger of explosion.
