

BRAVERY MEDAL

Mr Timothy Gordon BAIGRIE, Queensland

On the morning of 1 June 2006, Mr Baigrie rescued his partner and two children from a house fire at Woodridge, Queensland.

Mr Baigrie awakened to find a bar heater in his bedroom had caught fire. Despite his best attempts he was unable to switch off the heater and instinctively, he raced outside to shut down the electricity supply. Running back into the house he dragged his partner and his one year old son to safety on the footpath, and then returned inside to save his three year old child. The property was now engulfed in flames, the situation becoming more desperate in the minutes before emergency services could arrive. Although restricted by a pre-existing medical condition and limited vision in one eye, Mr Baigrie began crawling on his hands and knees through the house, aided only by a wet towel for protection. He continued to scour the house, and although unable to see because of the thick smoke, used his hands to feel in front of him, managing to find his terrified son wedged against a toy box in the bedroom. Mr Baigrie grabbed hold of his son, pushing him across the floor and through the house to safety. Mr Baigrie was treated for critical smoke inhalation and suffered burns to the upper part of his body.

By his actions, Mr Baigrie displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Russell Norman CROW, 26 Nimmo Street, Middle Park Vic 3206

On the evening of 15 September 2006, Mr Crow assisted in the rescue of two children from a burning tent at Killarney, Victoria.

Mr Crow was camping in a recreation reserve when he noticed flames in the distance. With another person, he went to the scene to discover a large tent quickly becoming engulfed in flames. Moments later they saw a teenage girl scrambling away from the fire. She was alight and screamed that there were other children trapped in the tent. Despite the intensity of the heat and flames, Mr Crow made his way into the tent, finding one of the children, also on fire, trying to escape from a bunk bed. He pulled her from the tent and placed his body over hers to smother the flames. Learning that another child was unaccounted for, Mr Crow went back into the tent and found what looked like a bundle of blankets, partially alight, on a lower bunk bed. Realising it was a young child Mr Crow grabbed the bundle from the fire, getting the child to safety. He returned to the scene to check for other victims and then helped comfort the children until emergency medical aid arrived.

By his actions, Mr Crow displayed considerable bravery.

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Senior Constable Roland CURLL, New South Wales Police

On the morning of 16 January 2005, Senior Constable Curll rescued a man who was trapped in a house fire at Koonawarra, New South Wales.

Senior Constable Curll and a colleague responded to a call to a unit fire and, on arrival, were informed that a person was still inside the burning home. The fire was well advanced, and thick, black smoke was billowing from the building. With only wet towels for protection, Senior Constable Curll and his colleague entered the unit although visibility was almost zero. Senior Constable Curll crawled through the unit feeling the way with his hands and eventually established voice contact with the trapped man and located him lying on a bed. Almost losing consciousness himself because of the toxic smoke, Senior Constable Curll grabbed the man by the wrist, dragging him from the bed. In his attempt to retreat with the victim, he became disoriented by smoke and could not locate an exit. Guided by his colleague's voice, Senior Constable Curll was able to crawl back through the unit to the front door where he was helped to drag the victim to safety.

By his actions, Senior Constable Curll displayed considerable bravery.

Miss Laura Megan DALEY, Brisbane Qld 4000

On 29 January 2004, Miss Daley prevented a sexual assault on an intellectually and physically impaired young woman at Wynnum, Queensland.

Miss Daley, a disability support worker, was accompanying a profoundly intellectually and physically impaired young woman on a regular outing. She had chosen a walking path along a well known suburban mangrove boardwalk. During their walk, Miss Daley noticed a man following them. There were no other people in the vicinity, and Miss Daley, feeling anxious, drew the young woman closer to her. The offender approached the women and, barring their way, threatened actions against the disabled woman if Miss Daley did not do as he ordered. Fearing there was no escape and that the offender was determined to follow through with his threats, Miss Daley protected her companion by submitting herself to repeated assaults. Throughout the ordeal, Miss Daley courageously held on to the woman to protect her from harm or injury. When the offender finally retreated from the scene, Miss Daley had the presence of mind, despite her own emotional and physical distress, to guide the young woman back to the safety of her vehicle where they awaited the arrival of police and family members.

By her actions, Miss Daley displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Inspector Paul James DEVANEY, New South Wales Police

In the early hours of the morning of 6 March 2003, Inspector Devaney attempted the rescue of two people from a burning vehicle at Beacon Hill, New South Wales.

Inspector Devaney attended a single vehicle crash scene and assessing that the situation was desperate, radioed for emergency service assistance. The driver's side cabin was engulfed in flames and the two occupants of the car were on fire. Inspector Devaney used a fire extinguisher to try to douse the flames on the passenger but was unsuccessful. Regardless of warnings from others at the scene that the vehicle might explode, Inspector Devaney stayed with the passenger whose upper body was leaning through the side of the car. The victim's legs were trapped by the crushed console, and despite the intense flames and toxic smoke, Inspector Devaney again attempted to extinguish the fire. Together with a police colleague he tried again to wrest open the passenger's door. Inspector Devaney tried to comfort the man but was continually driven back by the heat. Taking a larger fire extinguisher he again leant into the vehicle to try to contain the fire and spray the victim, encouraging the passenger to continue breathing. With the arrival of the fire brigade, the fire was brought under control enabling the rescue service officers to free the passenger. Sadly the two occupants of the car died as a result of the accident.

By his actions, Inspector Devaney displayed considerable bravery.

Senior Constable Nicholas James DONALD, Victoria Police

In the early hours of the morning of 13 October 2005, Senior Constable Donald rescued a woman trapped inside a burning car at Carrum Downs, Victoria.

In the very early hours of the morning, Senior Constable Donald and a colleague attended the scene of a single vehicle accident. The vehicle's engine bay was already on fire and the officers found a passenger trapped in the back seat of the two-door vehicle. Senior Constable Donald's colleague detected a slight movement in the woman and attempted to pull her from the back of the vehicle but her legs were wedged under a collapsed front seat. Fire had now spread into the cabin and there was danger that the whole car would be quickly engulfed by fire. Despite the potential of an explosion, the officers made another attempt to remove the unconscious driver from the vehicle. Senior Constable Donald climbed through the back of the burning vehicle and worked to release the woman's trapped legs. His colleague was then able to drag the woman over the front seat and out of the vehicle through a side door to safety. Senior Constable Donald lifted the woman and carried her away from further danger and administered first aid until paramedics arrived.

By his actions, Senior Constable Donald displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Senior Constable Michael James FOLVIG, Victoria Police

In the early hours of the morning of 13 October 2005, Senior Constable Folvig rescued a woman trapped inside a burning car at Carrum Downs, Victoria.

In the very early hours of the morning, Senior Constable Folvig and a colleague attended the scene of a single vehicle accident. The vehicle's engine bay was already on fire and the officers found a passenger trapped in the back seat of the two-door vehicle. Senior Constable Folvig detected a slight movement in the woman and attempted a rescue, trying to pull the passenger from the back of the vehicle but her legs were wedged under a collapsed front seat. Fire had now spread into the vehicle cabin, the radiant heat was extreme, and there was danger that the rest of the car would be quickly engulfed by fire. Fearing an explosion, the two officers worked together in the vehicle to free the woman. With the assistance of his colleague who was able to free the passenger's legs, Senior Constable Folvig pulled the driver over the front seat of the car and dragged her to safety. Whilst his colleague administered first aid to the victim, Senior Constable Folvig returned to the vehicle to check the scene but could not locate any other passengers. Eventually he had to retreat because of the intense heat of the fire.

By his actions, Senior Constable Folvig displayed considerable bravery.

Detective Sergeant Andrew John FORSTER, New South Wales Police

On the evening of 20 July 2004, Detective Sergeant Forster helped disarm an offender threatening staff and patrons at licenced premises at Windsor, New South Wales.

Detective Sergeant Forster and a colleague were off-duty at licenced premises when three men entered the building, two of them carrying guns. Staff and patrons, including the two detectives, were threatened and forced to lie on the floor. With a gun pointed at his back, the hotel manager was ordered to accompany one of the offenders to the hotel safe. Detective Sergeant Forster and his colleague were able to discuss a strategy, making an assessment of the events and how the situation might unfold. Following a verbal exchange between one of the officers and a gunman, the other accomplice was drawn back to the scene, holding the manager in a head lock and pointing a gun at his temple. The two detectives were getting to their feet when the offender discharged a shot in close proximity to the officers. Both detectives charged the gunman tackling him into the bar. In the moments that followed, the gunman continued to resist the officers as well as the hotel manager and during the struggle the gun was again discharged by the offender. Detective Sergeant Forster grabbed for the revolver, and with great presence of mind, jammed his finger within the trigger mechanism to prevent further shots being fired. He was then able to grab the gun from the offender and empty the rounds of ammunition from the gun. Both detectives continue to subdue the gunman until other police officers arrived on the scene. During the struggle the other two offenders escaped.

By his actions, Detective Sergeant Forster displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Constable Adam Colin HARTLEY, Queensland Police

In the early hours of the morning of 23 January 2007, Constable Hartley rescued a woman from floodwaters in the Bohle River, near Townsville, Queensland.

Constable Hartley responded to a report that a car had been washed off a flooded causeway across the Bohle River. On arrival he discovered that a woman was missing in the swollen river. Distressed calls for help could be heard, and in the dark, Constable Hartley managed to see the woman holding onto a tree some 30 metres from shore and 100 metres downstream from the crossing, struggling to keep her head above water. Constable Hartley entered the water and swam out through the strong current to the woman. Although the victim was struggling to stay afloat Constable Hartley managed to manoeuvre the woman and himself to a tree to help support their weight against the fast flowing water. The victim was beginning to lose consciousness, making it difficult for Constable Hartley to hold her against the force of the water. Despite the pitch black conditions and hazardous debris, Constable Hartley supported and rallied the woman for 30 minutes until both were able to be winched to safety by members of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service.

By his actions, Constable Hartley displayed considerable bravery.

Mr John Carlos HENRY, Jamisontown NSW 2750

On the morning of 26 July 2006, Mr Henry rescued a boy trapped in a house fire at Kingswood, New South Wales.

Mr Henry, an off duty Fire Station Officer, drove to the scene of a fire after noticing smoke coming from a two storey townhouse. On arrival he was told that a three-year old child was trapped in a second floor bedroom. Accompanied by police officers, Mr Henry attempted to make his way through the front of the house, but was eventually forced back by thick smoke, intense heat and flames. Mr Henry then climbed onto the roof to access the child's bedroom from the exterior of the house. As the fire spread, sections of the roof began to collapse. Not knowing whether the bedroom floor was still intact, Mr Henry climbed through a window into the bedroom and searched for the child. By now flames had engulfed one wall and thick black smoke had penetrated the entire room making visibility almost zero. Mr Henry was unable to locate the boy on the first attempt. Although constrained by difficulty in breathing, Mr Henry made a further attempt at rescue, crawling across the bedroom. He located the child who was unconscious and not breathing. Mr Henry retrieved the young boy and, with the assistance of police, was able to lower the child to safety and medical assistance.

By his actions, Mr Henry displayed considerable bravery.

Mr James Michael O'BRIEN, Victoria

Details not available at the request of Mr O'Brien.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Mr Keith Walter SEWELL, 51 Arnhem Road, Allambie Heights NSW 2100

In the early hours of the morning of 6 March 2003, Mr Sewell attempted the rescue of two people from a burning vehicle at Beacon Hill, New South Wales.

Mr Sewell and a friend arrived at the scene of a single vehicle crash to find that flames had taken hold of the car and had started to engulf the cabin. Seeing two people on fire in the car and both screaming for help, Mr Sewell tried to kick in the windows of the vehicle. Mr Sewell leant into the vehicle and tried, unsuccessfully, to remove the driver's seat belt. He attempted to pull the driver free but the man was pinned by his legs. With the help of his friend, Mr Sewell moved to the passenger side of the car to free the second occupant, but found his foot was wedged under the dashboard. Mr Sewell tried to prise open the passenger door however it had buckled during the crash and wouldn't budge. Using a fire extinguisher from a motorist who had stopped to assist, Mr Sewell attempted to extinguish the flames but it had little effect. He desperately searched for a water outlet so he could spray the vehicle but none was available. The fire could not be contained until the Fire Brigade arrived. The passenger, still conscious, was removed from the vehicle by rescue officers and transported to hospital by ambulance. Sadly both occupants of the car died as a result of the accident.

By his actions, Mr Sewell displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Robert Arthur SMITH, 5 Pacific Place, Harrington NSW 2427

In the early hours of the morning of 6 March 2003, Mr Smith attempted the rescue of two people from a burning vehicle at Beacon Hill, New South Wales.

Travelling by road with a friend, Mr Smith arrived on the scene of a single vehicle crash. Flames had taken hold of the front of the car and fire was beginning to engulf the passenger cabin. Mr Smith immediately called emergency services then used a hammer to smash the windows of the vehicle. Although constrained by injuries from an unrelated accident, Mr Smith worked frantically with his friend to prise open the passenger door with a tree branch. They continued their efforts to free the passenger but could only partially move him as his foot was pinned and their actions were seriously hampered by the growing fire in the confined space. Mr Smith and his friend continued desperately to try to free the passenger, working with police and civilians to douse the flames, however the fire could not be contained until the arrival of the Fire Brigade. The rescue service officers were able to free the passenger who was transported to hospital by ambulance. Sadly both occupants of the car died as a result of the accident.

By his actions, Mr Smith displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Detective Senior Constable David Paul STUART, New South Wales Police

On the evening of 20 July 2004, Detective Senior Constable Stuart helped disarm an offender threatening staff and patrons at licenced premises, Windsor, New South Wales.

Detective Senior Constable Stuart and a colleague were off-duty at licenced premises when three men entered the building, two of them carrying guns. Staff and patrons, including the two detectives, were menaced by one of the gunmen and ordered to lie on the floor. With a gun pointed at his back, the hotel manager was led to the hotel safe. Detective Senior Constable Stuart and his colleague were able to discuss a strategy, trying to assess how the situation might unfold. Following a verbal exchange between Detective Senior Constable Stuart and one of the gunmen, the other accomplice was drawn back to the scene holding the manager in a head lock and pointing a gun at his temple. Sensing an opportunity, Detective Senior Constable Stuart got to his feet and was confronted by the armed man who aimed the gun level at his waist, eventually firing off a shot. Detective Senior Constable Stuart and his colleague ran at the gunman, tackling him into the bar. In the struggle a further shot was fired, narrowly missing the officers. Detective Senior Constable Stuart's colleague jammed his finger within the trigger mechanism to prevent further shots being fired and was able to retrieve the gun from the offender. Both officers, with the assistance of the hotel manager who was caught up in the struggle, subdued the gunman until additional police arrived on the scene. During the incident, the other two offenders escaped.

By his actions, Detective Senior Constable Stuart displayed considerable bravery.