

BRAVERY MEDAL

Mr Tony Paul AUBECK, PO Box 19, Quirindi NSW 2343

On the night of 18 November 2006, Mr Aubeck intervened during an armed hold up at Murrurundi, New South Wales.

Mr Aubeck was on duty as an unarmed security guard at the Murrurundi Bowling Club overseeing the routine business for end-of-day closing. While a female staff member was locking away cash boxes in the office safe she was confronted by an armed intruder. The offender's face was almost entirely covered; she was wearing surgical gloves, and was armed with a shortened shotgun. Mr Aubeck appeared as the staff member was ordered into the bar area. His presence distracted the offender, enabling his co-worker to move out of harm's way and call police. Mr Aubeck raised his hands and began walking backwards away from the offender. As he did so he saw an opportunity to lunge for the shotgun. Mr Aubeck quickly grabbed the barrel, pushing it towards the ceiling. A struggle for possession of the shotgun continued for some time, however Mr Aubeck was able to subdue and disarm the offender. He secured the weapon and detained the offender until police arrived at the scene.

By his actions, Mr Aubeck displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Victor Douglas BATSON, Hastings Vic 3915

On the night of 7 April 2007, Mr Batson helped rescue a driver from a burning vehicle at Hastings, Victoria.

Late in the evening Mr Batson was at home when he heard a loud bang nearby which sounded like the impact of a motor vehicle accident. He left the house with his daughter to investigate and found a car upside down against a tree and on fire. The driver's head was slumped through an open door with his body upside down and still strapped into the seat. Mr Batson could see flames from the engine bay beginning to penetrate through the broken firewall as bystanders warned him that the vehicle would explode. Hearing the man moan, he tried desperately to free him but broken debris and the awkward angle of the seat belt complicated the rescue effort. Mr Batson called continually for bystanders to find a knife and, concerned about flames licking at the man's legs, asked his daughter to find water which he used repeatedly to limit the spread of the fire. With the help of another man, the driver was eventually freed and dragged to safety. Mr Batson checked the vehicle for injured passengers and, moments after moving away from the scene, several explosions engulfed the car in fire.

By his actions, Mr Batson displayed considerable bravery.

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Mr Richard Anthony COOPER, Ashbury NSW 2193

During the night of 23 October 2003, Mr Cooper rescued passengers from a burning vehicle at Mascot, New South Wales.

Mr Cooper was driving with a passenger when the side of his car was hit by another vehicle running against a red light across an intersection. The offending vehicle continued on its way at speed, became airborne after hitting a gutter and slammed into a tree. Mr Cooper and his companion ran to the scene where sections of the car were on fire. Two men were trapped in the front of the car which was filling with flames and thick black smoke. Mr Cooper helped prise open the rear passenger door and saw a baby capsule in the back seat. He quickly checked for an injured child but was unable to find one. He turned his attention to the conscious passenger in the front seat, and with help from his companion, lifted the man from the burning cabin and dragged him to safety. Mr Cooper went back into the car to search for the other occupant. He grabbed hold of the man and, with the help of others at the scene, dragged him onto the back seat and away from the burning wreckage. It then became apparent that the victim had died on impact as a result of his extensive injuries.

By his actions, Mr Cooper displayed considerable bravery.

Constable David James CRAWFORD, New South Wales Police

During the afternoon of 2 October 2006, Constable Crawford rescued a man from a burning vehicle at Padstow Heights, New South Wales.

Returning from an off-duty outing with family members, Constable Crawford came upon the scene of a two-car, head-on collision at Padstow Heights. On his initial check he noticed the driver of one of the cars was in a serious state, with the steering wheel compressing his chest, and his legs pushed towards the upper part of his body. Constable Crawford detected some movement in the man's head and noted fire in the car's engine bay. He called for bystanders to contact emergency services. Running to the second vehicle Constable Crawford saw that the driver was already deceased. He returned to the first vehicle which was now alight and struggled in vain to open the driver's side door. He grabbed a fire extinguisher from a bystander to try to contain the fire which was now burning the driver, but the equipment was inoperative. Constable Crawford quickly jumped into the back seat of the car and was able to unbuckle the driver's seat belt. Bystanders had managed to prise open the door and, together with other police who had arrived at the scene, Constable Crawford helped drag the man to safety.

By his actions, Constable Crawford displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Mr Samir EL HAOULI, 11/90 Edgards Road, Thomastown Vic 3074

On the late afternoon of 10 December 2006, Mr El Haouli attempted the rescue of young victims from rough seas at Sandridge Beach, Port Melbourne, Victoria.

Mr El Haouli and his family were visiting Sandridge Beach on a hot December day. Late in the afternoon an unexpected cool change came in and the seas roughened. Mr El Haouli took the precaution of telling his family to leave the water and, as he did so, became aware that other children were in the water in distress. Mr El Haouli raced into the sea and swam through the cold, choppy conditions to a young boy and a girl, both of whom were exhausted, struggling to help each other stay afloat. The boy was semi-conscious, his face blue and his eyes partially closed. Mr El Haouli was joined by another man who took hold of the boy. Mr El Haouli managed to hold the girl afloat and place her on her back, paddling towards the shore where he was assisted by a volunteer lifesaver who swam the girl back to the beach. Mr El Haouli then headed back to assist with the young boy. The other man had hold of the boy and was joined at the scene by a lifesaver who lifted him onto her board and immediately administered resuscitation. Mr El Haouli was now totally exhausted but managed to swim back to the beach.

By his actions, Mr Elhaouli displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Terry Barry GOODMAN, South Ockendon, Essex, United Kingdom

On 25 June 2007, Mr Goodman pulled an injured Australian citizen from a vehicle after a bomb attack outside Basra, Iraq.

Mr Goodman and several colleagues were conducting a protective security operation out of Basra Air Station in southern Iraq. Travelling in a team of three armoured land cruisers, one of the vehicles was immobilised by an Improvised Explosive Device. The driver died and a second victim, an Australian, was badly injured with multiple shrapnel wounds to both legs. As the convoy came under sustained roadside attack from heavy small arms fire and rocket propelled grenades, Mr Goodman requested that his driver manoeuvre the land cruiser alongside the disabled vehicle with the intention to recover his colleague. As he did so a second device was detonated under his transport, killing the driver and another Iraqi operator. Despite being severely injured, Mr Goodman continued his rescue. Although exposed to sustained heavy fire from both sides of the road, Mr Goodman returned covering fire and, using a crow bar to lever open the stricken cruiser, helped retrieve his severely injured colleague.

By his actions, Mr Goodman displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Ian Peter GUNN, 8 Noorooma Crescent, Narooma NSW 2546

On the afternoon of 23 November 2006, Mr Gunn attempted the rescue of a man caught in a rip at Kianga Beach, Kianga, New South Wales.

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Mr Gunn was at Kianga beach with family and friends when he noticed that a member of his group, an overseas visitor, had entered the surf. Mr Gunn decided to swim out to his friend to ensure he wasn't endangered by a 'rip'. As he was preparing to do so, Mr Gunn saw that his friend had been dragged some 300 metres out to sea. Mr Gunn swam out to the man who was exhausted and barely able to tread water. Mr Gunn tried to rally him but he began to sink, dragging Mr Gunn down. Mr Gunn reluctantly let go of him so he could return to the surface to catch his breath. He then continued to dive down in an attempt to bring his friend to the surface. Once he had hold of his friend he encouraged him to stay with him, but lapsing in and out of consciousness, the man could no longer be held and slipped below the surface. Mr Gunn was exhausted because of the ordeal, and could paddle to just 15 metres from shore where his wife ran to his assistance. Mr Gunn's friend was later recovered 300 metres from shore, but sadly he was unable to be resuscitated.

By his actions, Mr Gunn displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Henry HILL, Lorikeet Home Resort, Old Pacific Highway, Arrawarra NSW 2456

During the morning of 19 February 2007, Mr Hill intervened during an armed robbery at Woolgoolga, New South Wales.

Mr Hill was visiting his local shopping centre and had a chance meeting with a local supermarket employee who was carrying a considerable sum of money to the bank. After a brief conversation, Mr Hill's acquaintance headed towards the bank with the secured money bag. As he did so, an armed offender wearing a balaclava raced at him pointing a gun and attempted to wrestle away the bag. The victim raced inside the bank pursued by the offender. Seeing the events unfold Mr Hill followed the men into the bank. As the offender and the victim were struggling, Mr Hill intervened, and jumped onto the back of the armed offender, placing both hands around his neck. The offender broke free and punched Mr Hill in the mouth with his fist still clutching the weapon. While Mr Hill was recovering from the blow, the offender escaped the scene but was quickly detained by off-duty police.

By his actions, Mr Hill displayed considerable bravery.

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Mr Fergus Butler JACKSON, Belmont Vic 3216

On the morning of 3 April 2007, Mr Jackson assisted in the rescue of victims at the scene of a two-vehicle collision near Geelong, Victoria.

Mr Jackson was travelling on the Bacchus Marsh/Geelong Road when a VW transporter travelling on the opposite side of the road lost control on the gravel shoulder, veered across the highway and collided with a white panel van just ahead of him. The panel van rolled over onto its side and became embedded into the transporter which in turn had rolled over onto its roof. Mr Jackson quickly phoned for emergency services and raced to the transporter which was well alight. Without any protective clothing he reached in through the cramped, burning cabin and, with the help of another man, freed the immobilised driver from his seat and dragged him to safety. Mr Jackson then checked on the condition of the panel van driver who was firmly trapped in the wreckage. Fire threatened to spread to the panel van which contained cans of paint and thinners. Mr Jackson and another person secured a chain to the panel van and a truck at the scene, directing the driver to drag the wedged panel van from the side of the transporter. Mr Jackson stayed with the trapped driver to reassure and comfort him, using materials at hand to cushion and support him until ambulance and rescue services arrived.

By his actions, Mr Jackson displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Martin James LANGHAM, Ashbury NSW 2193

During the night of 23 October 2003, Mr Langham rescued passengers from a burning vehicle at Mascot, New South Wales.

Mr Langham was the passenger in a vehicle which was hit by another vehicle running against a red light across an intersection. The offending vehicle continued on its way at speed, became airborne after hitting a gutter and slammed into a tree. Mr Langham and his companion ran to the scene where sections of the car were on fire. Two men were trapped in the front of the car; flames were spreading and the space was filled with thick black smoke. In an attempt to reach one of the men, Mr Langham helped prise open the rear passenger door and saw a baby capsule in the back seat. He quickly checked for an injured child but was unable to find one. He reached forward to undo the passenger's seat belt, and despite the choking effects of the smoke and poor visibility, Mr Langham and his companion lifted the man from the burning cabin and dragged him to safety. One of the man's legs was on fire which Mr Langham smothered with his body. He then returned to the car and helped pull the driver over to the back seat and out of the burning wreckage and, with his hands, smothered sections of the body that were on fire. Moments later parts of the car exploded.

By his actions, Mr Langham displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Mr Benjamin John LEE, Macorna Vic 3579

On the night of 4 March 2007, Mr Lee rescued two victims and attempted the rescue of two others from a burning vehicle at Kerang, Victoria.

Mr Lee was flagged down at the scene of an accident where a vehicle had crashed into a tree and was on fire. He saw that the driver was deceased, and next to him a woman lying with her feet on the dashboard. The woman was barely conscious as Mr Lee and another bystander removed her from the vehicle and carried her to safety. Fire was spreading through the cabin as Mr Lee tried to open a rear passenger door to reach a young girl whose legs were trapped by the driver's seat. Mr Lee reached into the vehicle and moved the seat out of the way while another person removed the seatbelt from the girl. They were then able to pull the girl from the vehicle and carry her to her mother by the roadside. Mr Lee returned to the vehicle and found a boy trapped underneath a seat but, because of the fierce blaze and the condition of the mangled interior, he was unable to reach the child and free him. Mr Lee and his companions returned to the two rescued victims and moved them further away from the fire as it spread through the surrounding grass. Sadly two people died in the car as a result of their injuries.

By his actions, Mr Lee displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Tu-Vinh LY, deceased, Late of Canley Vale NSW 2166

On the afternoon of 7 October 2006, Mr Ly attempted to rescue a man swept off rocks at Malabar, New South Wales.

Mr Ly and his nephew, his niece and her boyfriend, were fishing from the rocks at Boora Point, Malabar. As the seas roughened, a wave suddenly crashed across the rocks and washed one of the young men into the ocean. Mr Ly's nephew jumped into the sea to help his friend but was tangled in fishing line and was in difficulty himself. Mr Ly's niece wanted to enter the water to help her boyfriend and her brother, but her uncle told her to phone for help instead. Placing his own life in danger, Mr Ly plunged into the sea to help the two young men. Because of his earlier instructions, a rescue helicopter arrived at the scene and plucked the first victim from the sea. Mr Ly and his nephew were retrieved from the sea by lifeguards and brought back to the beach.

By his actions, Mr Ly displayed considerable bravery, thereby losing his life.

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Mr Patrick Ray MORGAN, Woronora NSW 2232

On the morning of 27 December 2006, Mr Morgan assisted an elderly woman who had fallen under a train at Central Station, Sydney, New South Wales.

Mr Morgan had stepped from a train at Central Station, Sydney, noticing the unusually wide gap between the carriages and the platform. Walking away with his friends, Mr Morgan saw in his peripheral vision an elderly woman steadying herself to step from the carriage. She was holding on to a door with one hand, but as she moved forward the door slid sideways and she lost her balance. The woman tumbled sideways through the gap between the carriage and the platform, and fell on to the tracks. Mr Morgan immediately jumped down under the carriage. He did so before the pantographs were lowered from the train and the track deemed safe, and before rail staff could be notified of the incident. Mr Morgan reassured the elderly woman and made her comfortable although at times she was both dazed and agitated. Despite hearing worrying noises from the under-carriage, and concerned that the train might move, Mr Morgan focussed on the woman's well-being, chatting to her constantly to help reduce her anxiety in the confined, dark space. Mr Morgan remained with the lady until ambulance and rescue teams arrived.

By his actions, Mr Morgan displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Andrew John MORTIMER, 18-20 Conapaira Street, Whitton NSW 2705

On the afternoon of 5 October 2004, Mr Mortimer helped rescue a man from a burning vehicle at Port Macquarie, New South Wales.

Mr Mortimer was visiting a shopping centre at Port Macquarie with his family when he heard a loud explosion nearby, and seconds later spotted a car on fire. He raced to the vehicle where he and two other men found fire spreading through the cabin with the driver strapped into his seat, pleading for help. A jet of flame was flaring between the top and bottom of the rear seats, and the driver was unable to move, sustaining serious burns to his head and upper body. As one of the men opened the passenger side door, Mr Mortimer with the assistance of the other man grabbed the driver's buckled door and prised it open, with the man reaching in through the fire to detach the driver's seatbelt. Mr Mortimer and the men then took hold of the well-built driver and with some difficulty, freed him from the vehicle and removed him to safety. Several minutes later the car was entirely engulfed in flames and was totally destroyed. Mr Mortimer raced back to the shopping centre and asked staff to contact emergency services, then returned to the driver and doused him with water to ease his severe burns.

By his actions, Mr Mortimer displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Mr Trevor Richard OLIVER, 21 Powlett Street, Bacchus Marsh Vic 3340

On the morning of 3 April 2007, Mr Oliver assisted in the rescue of victims at the scene of a two-vehicle collision near Geelong, Victoria.

Mr Oliver was travelling on the Bacchus Marsh/Geelong Road when a VW transporter on the opposite side of the road lost control on the gravel shoulder, veered across the highway and collided with a white panel van. The panel van rolled over onto its side and was embedded nose-first into the transporter which had rolled over onto its roof. The transporter immediately caught fire and was well alight. Mr Oliver ran to check the condition of the driver in the panel van and could see that he was trapped firmly in the wreckage. He quickly moved to the blazing transporter and reached into the burning cabin. He cut the driver out of his seatbelt and, with the help of another man, freed him and dragged him to safety. Fire was threatening to spread to the panel van which contained cans of paint and thinners. Mr Oliver and his co-rescuer secured a chain to the panel van and a truck at the scene, directing the driver to drag the wedged panel van from the side of the transporter. Mr Oliver stayed at the scene to reassure and comfort the trapped driver, helping cushion and support him until ambulance and rescue personnel arrived.

By his actions, Mr Oliver displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Billel OUAIDA, 5 Tarcoola Avenue, Meadow Heights Vic 3048

On the afternoon of 10 December 2006, Mr Ouaida assisted in the attempted rescue of his young brother and sister from rough seas at Sandridge Beach, Port Melbourne, Victoria.

Mr Ouaida, his parents and brothers and sisters were visiting Sandridge Beach on a hot December day. In the afternoon the seas roughened as an unexpected cool change came in. Mr Ouaida and three of his siblings, Sarah, Fouaid and Ibrahim were playing in the water. Two of the children, Sarah and Fouaid found themselves in trouble and were being carried away from the shore by the choppy seas and the tide. Mr Ouaida immediately swam to his brother, Fouaid, and rescued him. Sarah had been caught in a strong rip and her eight year old brother, Ibrahim swam out to help her. Mr Ouaida, quickly turning his attention to his other young siblings, swam out and found Sarah, holding her until a man arrived to assist. Mr Ouaida searched desperately for his young brother in the choppy seas and was joined in his efforts by a volunteer lifesaver. Ibrahim, who was being held by another man, was located in a semi conscious state and was quickly pulled onto a rescue board where resuscitation was administered. Ibrahim was brought back to the beach until ambulance personnel arrived. Sadly, Mr Ouaida's young brother, Ibrahim was unable to be resuscitated.

By his actions, Mr Ouaida displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Master Ibrahim OUAIDA, deceased, Late of Meadow Heights Vic 3048

On the late afternoon of 10 December 2006, Ibrahim Ouaida attempted to rescue his older sister from rough seas at Sandridge Beach, Port Melbourne, Victoria.

Ibrahim Ouaida, his parents and brothers and sisters were visiting Sandridge Beach on a hot December day. Later in the afternoon the seas roughened as an unexpected cool change came in. Ibrahim was swimming with his brothers Bilal and Fouaid, and their sister Sarah. Because of the rising sea and strengthening tide, Sarah and Fouaid were in trouble, being carried away from the shore. Fouaid was rescued by one his brothers but Sarah had been caught in a strong rip and was struggling to remain afloat. Ibrahim, just eight years of age, swam out to help her. Once there he attempted to keep her afloat in the rough seas. The alarm had been raised and several rescuers swam out to bring in the two children. Ibrahim was in a serious condition and barely conscious as he was pulled onto a rescue board. Sadly he was unable to be resuscitated.

By his actions, Master Ibrahim Ouaida displayed considerable bravery, thereby losing his life.

Mr John Percival PARTRIDGE, 3/229 Gipps Road, Keiraville NSW 2500

On the afternoon of 5 October 2004, Mr Partridge helped rescue a man from a burning vehicle at Port Macquarie, New South Wales.

Mr Partridge was visiting a shopping centre at Port Macquarie when he heard a loud explosion nearby, and moments later saw a car billowing with smoke. Mr Partridge raced over to the vehicle where he and two other men found its cabin on fire with the driver strapped into his seat pleading for help. Fire was spreading quickly throughout the car's interior, whilst a jet of flame was flaring between the top and bottom of the rear seats. The driver was unable to move and had already sustained serious burns to his head and upper body. As one of the men opened the passenger side door, Mr Partridge and the other man grabbed the driver's buckled door and succeeded in prising it open. Mr Partridge leant through the flames and released the driver's seatbelt. He and the two men then took hold of the well-built driver, and with some difficulty, freed him from the scene and removed him to safety. Several minutes later the car was entirely engulfed in flames and as parts of the vehicle exploded, the car was totally destroyed. As a result of the rescue, Mr Partridge received burns to one of his arms.

By his actions, Mr Partridge displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Mr Glenn Richard PICKFORD, 13 Yarramundi Road, Port Macquarie NSW 2444

On the afternoon of 5 October 2004, Mr Pickford helped rescue a man from a burning vehicle at Port Macquarie, New South Wales.

Mr Pickford was visiting a shopping centre at Port Macquarie when he heard a loud explosion. Moments later he saw a huge ball of flame rise from a nearby vehicle. Mr Pickford heard a man screaming out for help and ran to the car where two men were making repeated attempts to wrench open the driver's door. Mr Pickford could see flames and hot gasses swirling within the vehicle's interior. Fire was spreading quickly throughout the cabin and a jet of flame was flaring between the top and bottom of the rear seats. The driver was unable to move and had already sustained serious burns to his head and upper body. Mr Pickford quickly opened the passenger's side door to vent the gas then returned to the driver's side of the vehicle and helped two other men remove the driver from the scene. Mr Pickford raced off to find a fire extinguisher and called emergency services. Minutes later the car was entirely engulfed in flames and was totally destroyed.

By his actions, Mr Pickford displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Brian David SMITH, 9047 Murray Valley Highway, Kerang Vic 3579

On the night of 4 March 2007, Mr Smith rescued two victims and attempted the rescue of two others from a burning vehicle at Kerang, Victoria.

Mr Smith was the first to arrive at the scene of a single motor vehicle accident where a car had veered off the road and crashed into a tree. The front end of the vehicle was extensively damaged and flames were spreading from the engine bay. Mr Smith checked the condition of the driver and found he was deceased. He saw a young girl pinned in the rear passenger seat and attempted to open her door but it was locked. Opening the front passenger door he found a woman, barely conscious, strapped into her damaged seat. Mr Smith, with the assistance of another man, dragged the woman to safety. They then went back to the car and by moving the driver's seat out of the way, Mr Smith was then able to remove the seatbelt from the girl and together they removed her from the vehicle and carried her to her mother by the roadside. A young boy was also jammed in the rear seat of the wreckage. The rescuers tried to lift the deceased driver and his seat forward to retrieve the boy but the awkward angle and the intensity of the flames made the task impossible. The surrounding grass and trees were on fire and as there were no means of containing its spread, Mr Smith and the others were forced to retreat from the blazing vehicle. Sadly two people died in the car as a result of their injuries.

By his actions, Mr Smith displayed considerable bravery.

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Senior Constable Paul SMITH, New South Wales Police

During the afternoon of 2 October 2006, Constable Smith rescued a man from a burning vehicle at Padstow Heights, New South Wales.

Constable Smith was on highway patrol duty with a colleague when they came upon the scene of a two-car, head-on collision. Assessing the emergency, Constable Smith radioed for urgent assistance and ran to one of the vehicles, moving bystanders away from the scene. He saw the driver was seriously injured, with the steering wheel and parts of the dashboard compressing his chest, and his legs pushed towards the upper part of his body. With fire moving into the cabin, Constable Smith grabbed an extinguisher and attempted to contain it as it spread to the dashboard and was burning the driver. The fire was momentarily quelled but erupted again, igniting the dashboard and the roof lining. Constable Smith squeezed into the cabin and, with the help of his colleague, made several attempts to retrieve the driver from the burning cabin. As fire began to engulf the car, the officers were able to remove the man from the vehicle and drag him to safety.

By his actions, Constable Smith displayed considerable bravery.

Senior Constable Paul THOMPSON, New South Wales Police

During the afternoon of 2 October 2006, Constable Thompson rescued a man from a burning vehicle at Padstow Heights, New South Wales.

Constable Thompson was on highway patrol duty with a colleague when they came upon the scene of a two-car, head-on collision. Racing to one of the vehicles Constable Thompson saw the driver was seriously injured with the steering wheel and parts of the dashboard compressing his chest and his legs pushed towards the upper part of his body. Constable Thompson was assisted by another person in his attempts to prise open the driver's door to retrieve the unconscious man. Fire was spreading through the cabin, igniting the dashboard and roof lining and burning the driver. Constable Thompson called for assistance from other units and then reached through the cabin to grab the driver who was now on fire. He and his colleague made repeated attempts to dislodge the driver from his seat, and eventually were able to remove him from the burning vehicle. Constable Thompson stayed with the driver to comfort and reassure him until ambulance officers arrived at the scene.

By his actions, Constable Thompson displayed considerable bravery.