

BRAVERY MEDAL

Mr David Paul ANDREN, Sawtell NSW 2452

On the night of 24 September 2009, Mr Andren saved a number of people following the capsizing of a three-storey cruising vessel at Halong Bay, North Vietnam.

Mr Andren was one of a group of twenty-five passengers and crew onboard a large cruising vessel as it returned to Halong Bay. During wild night-time weather, the vessel tipped to one side and capsized. The two lower levels of the boat filled with water, trapping a number of people. Others were thrown clear into the ocean but were able to swim back to the vessel and cling to it. Mr Andren reassured victims as he pulled them from the sinking vessel, however, in the confusion and darkness, he heard a woman desperately calling for help. She had been trapped in her cabin for at least half an hour as the small room filled with water. Using her voice to guide his path, Mr Andren found the cabin, smashed in the door and freed the young woman, pulling her to safety. He then calmly returned to check the condition of others while waiting for rescue craft to arrive. Sadly, several people drowned in the incident.

By his actions, Mr Andren displayed considerable bravery.

Mrs Sherle-Lee Gordeen BAKER, deceased, Late of Dubbo NSW 2830

On the early evening of 14 January 2009, Mrs Baker attempted the rescue of a teenage girl at Butlers Falls, Dubbo, New South Wales.

Mrs Baker, her disabled son and a family friend visited a local waterhole for an early summer's evening paddle. The three had kickboards, and as they entered deeper water, Mrs Baker's teenage friend lost her footing. The girl was pulled under the surface and swept downstream for some distance before grabbing hold of a branch. Mrs Baker waded out to help her friend while holding on to her son. However they also got into trouble, lost their footing and were carried downstream past their friend. The boy held tight to his mother for support, yelling for help. Mrs Baker's friend was eventually able to safely swim to her friends but saw that Mrs Baker had been submerged for some time while attempting to keep her son afloat. Passing a kickboard to the boy, the girl helped drag the pair onto some driftwood while she left the waterhole for help. Sadly, in her attempt to keep her son safe, Mrs Baker was unable to be revived back on shore.

By her actions, Mrs Baker displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Mr Lachlan John EDWARDS, 42A Riverview Terrace, Belmont Vic 3216

On the evening of 7 November 2009, Mr Edwards rescued two people caught in a rip at Point Impossible Surf Beach, Victoria.

A young man entered the water for a swim and was caught in a rip some 50 metres from shore. He signalled for help, attracting the attention of a woman and then a man who swam out to him in blustery conditions. As the woman tried to grab the swimmer she was pushed under the water and was also caught in the rip. The second rescuer was able to begin bringing the swimmer towards the shore. Seeing the struggle in the water, Mr Edwards also swam out to assist the rescue. He helped bring the young man back to the beach but seeing the woman in considerable distress by herself, swam out to her through one metre waves. The woman had inhaled considerable water and was fatigued, struggling to keep her head above the surface. Mr Edwards grabbed her and tried to swim her towards shore but found it impossible to resist the strength of the rip. In difficult circumstances and despite his own exhaustion in deep water, Mr Edwards worked for five minutes keeping the woman's head above water and reassuring her. With the assistance of a police officer, he helped swim the woman out of the rip and to safety.

By his actions, Mr Edwards displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Murray John HAYTON, Goldsborough Qld 4865

Details not released at the request of Mr Hayton.

Mr Anthony JASINOWICZ, Wodonga Vic 3690

In the early hours of the morning of 7 January 2010, Mr Jasinowicz rescued a man from a burning truck at Albury, New South Wales.

Mr Jasinowicz and a friend were in a taxi at traffic lights when they saw a large cloud of dust and a fireball erupt nearby. A heavily-laden 'B double' truck had careered off the Hume Freeway and ploughed into an embankment between overpasses. As the taxi driver began to drive away, the men instructed him to stop. While his friend called emergency services, Mr Jasinowicz looked for a way into the truck's cabin as the driver screamed for help. Removing his thongs to scale the embankment, Mr Jasinowicz clambered through broken glass and debris. He tried to pull the driver from the burning cabin through a shattered window but the man was trapped. Despite the fire and escaping fuel, Mr Jasinowicz reached into the confined space and released the driver's leg, pulling him through the cabin. With the help of his friend, he carried the man to safety. Moments later the vehicle exploded and was incinerated.

By his actions, Mr Jasinowicz displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Mr Jeffrey Alan RICHMOND, deceased, Late of New South Wales

On the afternoon of 11 December 2008, Mr Richmond attempted the rescue of two of his sons caught in a rip at Mollymook Beach, New South Wales.

Mr Richmond and his family were at the beach where two of his sons found themselves in distress. The young men were caught in a rip after one of them tried to help his brother who had lost his body board. Removing some of his clothes, Mr Richmond swam out some 40 metres to help his sons. All of the men were soon exhausted and unable to reach the shore as they treaded water to keep their heads above the surface. Eventually, both boys were able to make their way back to the safety of the beach. Mr Richmond however was in serious trouble and, completely fatigued by his efforts to rescue his sons, was unable to stay afloat. A surfer paddled out to him and pulled Mr Richmond onto her board. With the assistance of another surfer, she helped paddle Mr Richmond back to the beach where CPR was immediately administered. Sadly, as a result of the incident, Mr Richmond was not able to be revived.

By his actions, Mr Richmond displayed considerable bravery.

Mr Cameron SCHULTE, Oaky Creek Lane, Vittoria NSW 2799

On the afternoon of 8 December 2009, Mr Schulte rescued his father during a bushfire at their farm near Bathurst, New South Wales.

Fanned by strong winds and high summer temperatures, a large bushfire threatened the Schulte family farm. Mr Schulte grabbed a motorbike and headed towards the large scale fire front to help his father who was using a tractor to rescue some livestock. He attempted to guide his father away from the path of the approaching fire but they became separated. Without thought for his own safety, Mr Schulte raced through the fire to reach his now critically injured father who was trapped against a fence. Although sustaining extensive burns of his own, Mr Schulte maintained his calm and moved his father to a water trough where he removed some of his own clothing, soaking it to apply to his father's injuries. As there was insufficient water to soothe his father's horrific burns, Mr Schulte assisted him to another trough where he was able to fully immerse his father and keep him stable. Both men were transported to hospital where they received extensive, long-term treatment.

By his actions, Mr Schulte displayed considerable bravery.

BRAVERY MEDAL

Mr Charles Temanihi TETAABI, 1/13-15 Illawong Street, Chevron Island Qld 4217

On the evening of 28 May 2010, Mr Tetaabi rescued a boy from drowning in the Nerang River, Surfers Paradise, Queensland.

A three-year old boy was walking across the Chevron Island Bridge with this mother and uncle when he slipped into a gap between the bridge and a safety fence. The child fell into the Nerang River and was quickly swept away in the fast running current. Hearing the child's mother scream, Mr Tetaabi peered into the river where he saw the boy calling for help. Without thought for his own safety, Mr Tetaabi jumped from the guard rail into the chilly water. He located the boy and was able to grab hold of him as they were both swept some 50 metres downstream. Mr Tetaabi was fully clothed and struggled against the tide whilst holding the child's head above water. Another person jumped into the river and swam out to help him drag the child to safety. As a result of Mr Tetaabi's quick thinking and action, the young boy was unharmed and survived the incident.

By his actions, Mr Tetaabi displayed considerable bravery.

Leading Senior Constable Harry William VERBAKEN, Victoria Police

In the early hours of the morning of 15 March 2009, Leading Senior Constable Verbaken rescued a man from a burning house at Benalla, Victoria.

While on regular nightshift duty, Leading Senior Constable Verbaken was informed of a house fire. On his arrival, bystanders confirmed that one of the occupants was still inside the house as fire moved rapidly through it. Leading Senior Constable Verbaken tried to use a household hose but the fitting was incompatible with the tap. At the front of the house he heard the victim responding to another police officer's yells and saw the man crawl towards the front door. The doorway was well alight as Leading Senior Constable Verbaken stepped through the fire into the burning house without any protective clothing or breathing apparatus. He dragged the man onto the front porch where a colleague helped him carry the victim away from the fire. Leading Senior Constable Verbaken radioed for emergency services and assisted ambulance officers move the victim, before performing traffic duties to ensure the safety of the scene. Sadly, the man died several days later in hospital from his injuries.

By his actions, Leading Senior Constable Verbaken displayed considerable bravery.