

calls. It was subsequently established that the offender, who was known to Constable Umbers, on alighting from the vehicle was requested to place his hands on the bonnet of the Police car. Constable Umbers then proceeded to search the offender's car and it was while he was doing this that the offender started to argue and then attacked Constable Umbers, kicking him in the head. During the ensuing struggle the Constable's baton was wrestled off him and then used to violently beat him about the head, causing injuries that proved fatal. Constable Umbers acted in the highest traditions of the New Zealand Police.

### THE GEORGE MEDAL

#### Royd Philip KENNEDY

*Senior Fire Fighter, No 1A01 District (Auckland), New Zealand Fire Service*

On the evening of Thursday 9 August 1990 a petrol tanker towing a trailer unit collided with a motor vehicle adjacent to a shopping centre at Wiri Station Road, Manukau City. On impact, the trailer unit overturned and a rapidly increasing and intense fire occurred from the large amount of blazing petrol that was escaping. There was a risk of a major conflagration and explosion.

Senior Fire Fighter Kennedy was with the first fire appliance crew to arrive at the scene and while carrying out initial duties he heard a scream and saw a hand moving from under the overturned trailer. He realised that a person was trapped under the trailer. He immediately went to the assistance of the trapped person, a young girl, and crawled under the trailer to be next to her. Although there was little he personally could do on his own to extricate the girl, he remained with her while other personnel provided protective water sprays onto him and the girl and positioned the necessary equipment to raise the overturned trailer to free the seriously injured girl.

Throughout the ordeal, Senior Fire Fighter Kennedy was himself in an extremely dangerous position, and the risking of his own life to preserve other life reflects the highest ideals and traditions of the New Zealand Fire Service. His presence played a large part in maintaining the confidence of the seriously injured girl, and in her being rescued alive, which from the outset was not a foregone conclusion.

### THE QUEEN'S GALLANTRY MEDAL

#### Peter Wallace SUTTON

On the afternoon of 23 August 1988, Mr Sutton and his family were travelling south on State Highway 4. At Owhango they came upon a Traffic Officer who was lying on the ground near his patrol vehicle, being severely assaulted by a man.

Mr Sutton stopped his vehicle and went to the Traffic Officer's assistance only to be confronted by a second man pointing a pistol at him and the Traffic Officer. The gunman fired two shots at them, the second striking Mr Sutton in the leg. A third shot lodged in the side of Mr Sutton's vehicle containing his family. The gunman and his companion then promptly left the scene in their vehicle.

Mr Sutton, without thought for himself, displayed exemplary courage in going to the assistance of the Traffic Officer and almost certainly helped save his life.

#### Warrant Officer Class Two Kevin Charles FRIIS (Y43814)

*Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment (Regular Force), (Retired)*

On 13 February 1987, Warrant Officer Friis was conducting a live grenade throwing exercise for Territorial Force soldiers at Waiouru.

A Territorial Force soldier with Warrant Officer Friis, his instructor, were side by side when an armed M67 high explosive fragmentation grenade thrown by the soldier accidentally landed inside the safe throwing bay within three

metres of their position. The grenade, which has a lethal radius of eight metres and remains extremely dangerous out to 15 metres, was set to explode four seconds after leaving the soldier's hand.

Warrant Officer Friis without hesitation lifted the soldier from the ground and attempted to drag him to safety. The soldier, now incoherent, slipped from Warrant Officer Friis' grasp after three metres and did not act further to save himself. Warrant Officer Friis again picked up the soldier and carried him to partial cover nine metres from the grenade where, throwing the soldier to the ground, he covered him with his own still partly exposed body as the grenade exploded.

Warrant Officer Friis' professional sense of responsibility and brave actions undoubtedly saved the life of the soldier.

#### Sergeant John AKURANGI (K548053)

*Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment*

On 2 August 1988 Sergeant Akurangi was supervising a live grenade throwing practice for Territorial Force Recruits at Waiouru.

A recruit and Sergeant Akurangi were standing side by side in a grenade throwing bay preparing to throw the first of two M67 high explosive fragmentation grenades. The recruit, in the process of removing the safety bail from the grenade, accidentally loosened his grip which allowed the safety lever to be released thereby arming the grenade. This type of grenade has a lethal radius of eight metres and remains extremely dangerous out to 15 metres. Once armed it explodes in approximately four seconds.

The recruit froze, holding the armed grenade. Sergeant Akurangi, immediately realizing the danger, calmly asked for the grenade. When the recruit failed to respond, Sergeant Akurangi forcibly removed the grenade from the recruit's hand and threw it out of the bay. He pushed the recruit to the ground and by calling "grenade" ensured that personnel in the adjoining bay were able to react appropriately.

The grenade exploded in the air at very close range to Sergeant Akurangi's throwing bay and within a second of being thrown. His alertness, speed of reaction and presence of mind certainly saved both the recruit's and his own life. His professional sense of responsibility to the recruit testifies to his selfless bravery.

#### James Lindsay THOMAS

*Traffic Officer, Traffic Safety Service, Ministry of Transport*

On the evening of 7 January 1990 Traffic Officer Thomas, accompanied by a Senior Traffic Sergeant, was on duty in a patrol vehicle at Kimbell, South Canterbury. Traffic Officer Thomas had reason to stop the driver of a motor vehicle, which unknown to both officers had recently been stolen and the driver armed. It was only after Traffic Officer Thomas had left the patrol vehicle that he became aware of the other driver aiming a .303 rifle at him. From where he was standing Traffic Officer Thomas could see that the rifle bolt was not quite pushed home and he took the opportunity to try and reason with the driver and perhaps disarm him. The armed man however, became agitated and moved out of range of the headlights into the darkness making further approaches to him difficult.

At this point Traffic Officer Thomas and the Senior Traffic Sergeant decided to get away from the area. As the patrol car was moving away a shot was fired by the offender, which narrowly missed Traffic Officer Thomas and hit the other officer. A second shot through the rear window again hit the Senior Sergeant in the head. Traffic Officer Thomas travelled a short distance whereupon he stopped to assess his colleague's needs, and radio for medical assistance. He then proceeded to Fairlie where an ambulance and medical help was waiting to assist the Senior Sergeant who suffered horrific