

# In the face of danger

Police officers carry out acts of bravery everyday across the country. The Federation's Police Bravery Awards in association with the *Sun* newspaper has been set up to recognise their dedication. The following article is the first in a series of three over the next few months to pay tribute to those nominated for acts of courage. Winners will be announced at the Awards on July 14th at the Dorchester Hotel in London.

## CAMBRIDGESHIRE

### PC DOMINIC D'ALTILIA

#### Dogged officer tackled burglar despite being beaten by crowbar

He was beaten repeatedly over the head with a crowbar and sustained bruising and lacerations, but this still did not deter PC Dominic D'Altilia from catching a burglar trying to flee the scene of his crime.

The officer was on patrol when he was alerted to the scene after a burglar alarm went off at a snooker club in Peterborough.

As he approached the exit for the club, looking at how someone may have gained entry to the building, a man suddenly appeared in front of him trying to escape through a fire door.

PC D'Altilia challenged the man, who reined blows on the officer several times over his head and body with the crow bar.

Despite suffering injuries to



his back, neck and head, PC D'Altilia gave chase across a nearby park and managed to overpower the burglar.

The offender was sentenced to two years in prison for the assault and nine months for burglary.

## CHESHIRE

### PC MALCOLM BAKER

#### Climbed into the cab of a burning lorry to rescue driver in pile-up

PC Malcolm Baker crawled into the cab of a burning HGV to rescue the lorry driver trapped inside following a multiple pile-up.

The 46-year-old officer had been out on patrol in his car when he came across the horrendous accident involving the HGV and five other vehicles on the A55 Chester Bypass.

PC Baker concentrated on treating those who were injured and some who were trapped inside the burning wreckage.

While helping the seriously injured, he was called to where the driver of the HGV, tipped on its side and blocking the southbound carriageway, was trapped inside his cab.

While the flames licked at the



cab, tension grew over the likelihood of it spreading to the paper load in the back of the lorry, and PC Baker had to think quickly.

The officer grabbed a fire extinguisher from his car and climbed into the cab to put out the fire, saving the man's life.

Despite inhaling smoke and fumes, the officer continued to help the injured and assist the emergency services.

## ESSEX

### PC GEOFFREY POYSER - PC LORRAINE LAMBERT

#### Daring officers went to death-defying lengths to foil high-speed escape attempt

PC Geoffrey Poyser and PC Lorraine Lambert went to great lengths to catch a couple making a perilous escape attempt after they were caught speeding down the M1 - with one officer clinging to the vehicle at speeds of 70mph.

The officers had been attacked by the couple after they had pulled them over for speeding. As PC Poyser arrested a man for failing a breath test, the man punched him and ran back to his car. PC Lambert tried to help her colleague and pull the ignition keys from the car,



but was punched and kicked by the female passenger.

The driver then drove the




car back onto the M1 carriageway with PC Poyser still clinging to the car's door, although PC

Lambert had managed to handcuff one of the passengers before being thrown clear of the vehicle. PC Poyser hung onto the open door as it sped down the M1 and the driver tried to dislodge him. Finally the car was forced to slow down by other traffic and PC Poyser let go and rolled across the carriageway into the hard shoulder. Both officers were treated for minor injuries. They were awarded a chief constable's commendation. A man was sentenced for ten years for attempted GBH.

**CLEVELAND**

**PC LEE BUSBY - PC PAUL WILLIAMS**

**Police pair prevented knife-wielding self-harmer from killing himself**

 Confronted with a confused man covered in blood, severely self-harming with two kitchen knives, PC Lee Busby and PC Paul Williams, stepped in to save the man's life.

The officers were called out to the house in Hartlepool where the mother of the man was hysterical, screaming that her son was stabbing himself.

The officers tried to communicate with the man, who was in a distressed state, but he failed to respond and stabbed himself in the head and throat in a frenzied attack, slicing through his own windpipe.



At this point the two officers risked their lives and decided to



try and disarm the man, causing him to become violent towards


them. Finally they managed to overpower him briefly and disarm him, he struggled his arm free and used a broken porcelain cup to cut his wrists, one down to the bone.

The officers then wrapped a duvet around him in an attempt to restrain him and prevent him from injuring himself further, although he continued to violently lash out at the officers.

The man later underwent six hours of surgery and during his recovery sent a thank you card to the officers for saving his life. PC Busby and PC Williams received a chief constable's commendation.

**DERBYSHIRE PC FRANCESCO DE FAZIO - PC DAVID PORTAS**

**Scramble through brambles and freezing waters to rescue unconscious woman**

 PC Francesco De Fazio and PC David Portas scrambled through barbed wire and brambles, through freezing chest-height water in the night, to rescue a woman who lay unconscious on a riverbank near Chesterfield.

The officers were on the night shift when they were called to reports of the woman in the River Rother near Chesterfield in Derbyshire. Her body was submerged in the water and she

appeared to be unconscious.


The woman was tangled in the barbed wire and brambles and the two officers struggled to free her and with the help of members of the public, they managed to drag her to the bank.

She was taken to a nearby hospital where she was kept overnight, suffering from hypothermia. She later thanked the officers for saving her life. The officers received awards from the Royal Humane Society.



**DEVON AND CORNWALL SGT DAVID JENKINS - PC NEIL HELLENS**

**Petrol-soaked officers put their lives on the line to stop man setting himself alight**

 When a suicidal man was intent on turning himself into a human fireball, Sgt David Jenkins and PC Neil Hellens prevented him from taking his own life.

The man asked for the officers' help before taking a five litre can of petrol and pouring it all over his body and taking a lighter from his pocket. Sgt Jenkins, without hesitation, and without thought for his own safety, grabbed the man by the wrist holding the lighter and tried to grab the hand holding the petrol can.

The man was still covering himself in petrol and Sgt Jenkins was also covered from head to toe in the flammable liquid.

PC Hellens came to the scene and joined the attempt to restrain the man, all three were now saturated in petrol and the officers feared they would be set alight.

But the pair managed to restrain the man and escorted him into custody, removing his soaked clothes. The man told them: "Thank you, you've saved my life".

The man was later held under



the Mental Health Act and the officers were treated for chemical burns, but made a full recovery.

CUMBRIA

PC THOMAS KIRKPATRICK

Stood between crazed burglar and pensioner who had ear bitten off

PC Thomas Kirkpatrick, fearing for the life of a 78-year-old man, put himself between the pensioner and a crazed attacker, who had already bitten off the elderly man's ear and stabbed him with a screw-

driver, leaving him fighting for life. The couple were still inside. The elderly man, who suffered from cancer, challenged the burglar and attempted to stop him from stealing his property.

The man responded by strangling the pensioner with a telephone cable, punching and kicking him, before subjecting him to excruciating pain by biting off his ear and stabbing him in the chest with a screwdriver.

When the officer arrived he used his CS spray and when that failed to stop the attack, he struck the assailant with his baton. This also failed to subdue the

offender and, fearing for what might happen to the pensioner, PC Kirkpatrick stood between him and his attacker. The man then smashed the first floor window and jumped out. He was later arrested and was jailed for nine years.



A young man had broken into the flat while the elderly

DYFED POWYS

PC JUSTIN EVANS - PC CERI PAGE

Officers braved burning building to pull elderly to safety

Elderly people were trapped inside a burning housing complex when PC Justin Evans and PC Ceri Page battled their way through the building, engulfed in smoke. The two officers were on routine patrol when they noticed smoke billowing out of a downstairs window.

PC Evans immediately banged on the front door and after a resident opened it, he spotted smoke coming from a downstairs flat.

The officer managed to open the door to the flat and thick grey smoke billowed through the doorway, a neighbour had told him an elderly lady was trapped in the room.

Crawling under the smoke, the officer found the lady in the kitchen area coughing and in distress. He took a deep breath to get through to her in the dense smoke and managed to lead her to safety. PC Page then joined the officer and returned to the burning building, making his way to an upstairs flat. There he managed to rescue two elderly people. PC Page said: 'Going up wasn't so bad, but when we made our way down you couldn't see because the smoke was so thick.'

Both officers were nominated for the Royal Humane Society award and a chief constable's commendation.



DURHAM

PC DAVID MORGAN

Former polo player fights strong current and freezing water to save drowning man



Traffic officer PC David Morgan from Durham police had to call upon his skills as a former international water polo player to rescue a drunken man who had fallen 30 feet from Framwellgate Bridge into the River Wear after a night out.

The officer, who normally works for the Armed Response Unit, was called to the scene and quickly volunteered to rescue the man, who looked like he was likely to drown, after he kept disappearing under the water's surface.

He was the only officer on the scene whose skills matched up to the difficult swim to rescue the man, who was losing his ability to keep his head above water through tiredness and alcohol.

PC Morgan took off his boots, belt and tie and swam the 30 yards into the swollen river. He grabbed the man, who had disappeared several times under the water and was struggling to keep his head up, and dragged him to safety. The man made a full recovery.

DORSET

PC RAYMOND COOKE

Talked suicidal woman from throwing herself from a cliff top on Christmas Day

In the early hours on Christmas Day 2003, a 27-year-old woman was found perching on a cliff top over a 500ft drop into the rocks and sea below. She had gone to a hotel in Dorset and was missing from the London area suffering from manic depression, with a history of suicide attempts. A force helicopter was sent out in poor weather conditions and she was spotted on the cliff top.

PC Cooke and an auxiliary coast guard made their way down a treacherous slope in gale force winds to get near to the woman and try to talk to her.

The officers spoke to her for 45 minutes and they tried to coax her back up the slope and eventually convinced her to clamber to safety.



PC Cooke, who has now retired and is a civilian enquiry office clerk, received a chief constable's commendation and the Royal Humane Society Award for his role in the rescue.

'We were just doing our jobs,' he said.