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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

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CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS
OF KNIGHTHOODSt. James's Palace, London S.W.1.
3rd October 1972.

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the award of the George Medal to the under-mentioned:

Ordnance Electrical Artificer First Class David Arthur GUEST, P/MX 888978

C.P.O. GUEST was Duty Petty Officer in H.M.S. ARTEMIS on 1st July 1971. Standing on the forward casing of the submarine at about 1905, he noticed something wrong, and going on to the brow to get a better view immediately saw the stern sinking. Water was pouring down the after torpedo loading hatch, and the after escape hatch—later found to be unclipped—was under water. The submarine was in a very dangerous condition, almost certain to sink, with grave danger to all personnel trapped on board. GUEST knew this included three young Sea Cadets.

Without hesitation, and apparently without regard to the fact that he was putting his own life in danger, GUEST immediately went back on board and down into the submarine via the nearest hatch, in order to evacuate the submarine, and to minimise the disaster. First he ordered M.E.M. RALPHS, who was showing the three Sea Cadets around the submarine, to get them out and see them safely ashore, which RALPHS did. GUEST's prompt and decisive order almost certainly saved the lives of these three youngsters. They got out by the forward hatch just before water flooded into it and finally sank the submarine.

Having initiated this directive, GUEST immediately went aft warning three ratings whom he found in the accommodation space to get out. Two of these escaped forward while another M.E.M. BECKETT, went aft with GUEST to attempt in preventing further flooding. They were joined by L.M.E.M. CROXON who had entered the submarine via the Engine room Hatch. Together the three of them, led by GUEST, now attempted to restrict the flooding by trying to shut successive bulkhead doors. Eventually, after an exhausting struggle they contrived to pull the after door of the accommodation space "up hill" due to the severe bow up angle of the submarine, and to secure it.

GUEST, realising there would not be time to secure other openings in the accommodation space after bulkhead, ordered the two junior ratings forward, at the same time making sure that no one else was trapped in the accommodation space. As they reached the forward torpedo compartment M.E.M. RALPHS, with great presence of mind, shut the hatch above them. They almost certainly could not have got out through the hatch against the flow of water. GUEST then ordered the other two to shut the last bulkhead door behind them, thus preserving an air-filled compartment forward in which they could wait for escape.

Their courageous efforts to save the ship by restricting the flooding were carried out in semi-darkness in the face of heavy flooding, from aft and from above through open hatches, and amidst loose gear being flung about inside the submarine. GUEST led them in their attempts to shut down the doors, knowing clearly that any delay in leaving the accommodation space, once he was sure there was no one else there, and his ordering the immediate shutting of the last bulkhead door, coupled with RALPHS's shutting the hatch above them, ensured the safety of the three ratings for long enough to allow rescue operations to be brought to a successful conclusion.

GUEST now deliberately and quietly directed the other two in sealing off the compartment and in preparing it correctly for their escape through the forward escape hatch.

Some ten hours elapsed between the submarine sinking and the three ratings eventually making their escape. This was a trying time for each of them, made worse as time wore on by increasing air pressure, a thickening atmosphere, exhaustion, some faintness and nausea. They knew that the submarine had a list which was likely to make their escape hazardous, and though they were kept in touch by underwater telephone—GUEST had immediately established contact with the submarine alongside—none of them could have felt sure that they would in fact escape.

That his two junior ratings, one of a nervous temperament who had also received a bad cut over one eye, remained calm throughout their long wait, and were sensible and steady during the seconds leading up to their escape, was due to their courage and to GUEST's personal example, firm demeanour and resolute leadership. At the end he supervised their escape and then with some difficulty and delay, escaped himself.

At considerable risk to his own life, GUEST displayed throughout a selfless concern for the safety