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Honours and Awards

CENTRAL CHANCERY OF THE ORDERS OF KNIGHTHOOD

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23 March 2012

The QUEEN has been graciously pleased to approve the following award of The George Medal and The Queen's Gallantry Medal and for publication in *The London Gazette* of the names of those shown below as having received an expression of Commendation for Bravery:

George Medal

Alistair Klaas NEILL, Civilian
Royston Matthew SMITH, Civilian

For tackling and subduing a gunman armed with a semi automatic weapon

On 8 April 2011 Alistair Neill and Royston Smith were both visitors on board HMS Astute, which was in Southampton for a liaison visit. Many civilians were on board. They were with other guests in the Control Room when they became aware of some loud bangs and saw one of the Naval Officers move towards the corridor. They then heard another bang and saw the same officer collapse to the floor. The gunman (who was an armed sentry on board) then entered the Control Room and shot another officer.

Both men believed the submarine was under terrorist attack and that the sentry would continue to fire until he ran out of ammunition. Alistair Neill was stood in front of the sentry when Royston Smith grabbed the firearm and began to grapple with the sentry. Alistair Neill also wrestled with the sentry and attempted to restrain him against a wall during which the sentry fired his weapon

again. They eventually succeeded in wrestling the gun away from the sentry and it dropped to the floor. They managed to pin the sentry to the floor and fought to restrain him. Both men were concerned that the sentry may have further weapons and even explosives. Alistair Neill was injured in the struggle but still managed to hold on to the sentry until Military Police officers arrived at the scene.

Both men placed themselves at great risk by choosing to tackle someone who had shot at least two Naval Officers. By their actions they prevented further shootings and possible death or injury to others on board the submarine.

Queen's Gallantry Medal

Adan ABOBAKER, Civilian

For rescuing a person in danger of drowning

On 16 November 2010, at about 22.30 hours, Adan Abobaker was walking by the River Thames when he was alerted by the screams of a passer-by to a female in the water who appeared to be in difficulty. He immediately grabbed a life ring and threw it towards the female but she was too far away for it to reach her. Without hesitation, he removed his outer clothing and plunged into the river and began swimming towards her. The female in distress was some 20–30 metres away from the shore. That evening, the outside temperature was 6C so the water temperature would have been near freezing. It was high tide and the tide had extremely strong undercurrents. Visibility was also poor. He had to dive beneath the water several times before reaching the female. He held her head to his chest and then started to swim back to shore. Eventually, they were rescued by the crew of a safety

vessel. He was subsequently treated for hypothermia and had to be warmed with special piped air equipment. The female rescued made a full recovery.

Fire-fighter Andrew ALEXANDER
 Fire-fighter Sanjeev MOHLA
 Fire-fighter Daniel WAREHAM
 Fire-fighter Matthew WILLIS

For rescuing two injured people from an unstable building

On 20 June 2010 an explosion destroyed a property in Nottingham. Despite the risk of further collapse or possible explosion, four fire-fighters entered the building to search for survivors. Fire-fighters Alexander and Mohla entered first and searched upstairs. They found no-one but from a gaping hole in the floor were able to see an adult trapped below in the rubble. They went downstairs immediately and then found a second casualty. Both had sustained extensive, traumatic injuries. With two badly injured casualties to deal with, Fire-fighter Mohla went outside to request assistance while Fire-fighter Alexander remained inside the building. Fire-fighter Mohla returned with Fire-fighters Willis and Wareham. They carried out one of the casualties and Fire-fighter Mohla then accompanied Fire-fighter Alexander as they moved deeper into the unstable building to rescue the second casualty. Having reached the injured person, they were then assisted by Fire-fighters Willis and Wareham (who had re-entered the building) in rescuing the second casualty. This was achieved by evacuating the casualty out of a damaged window. Both casualties survived the explosion despite their injuries.

Kenneth MCGONIGLE (deceased), Civilian

For preventing an attack by insurgents in Afghanistan

Ken McGonigle was working as a mentor to the Afghan Police at a base in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. On 7 August 2010, while in his quarters, he was alerted by his UK national Afghan interpreter to an imminent threat. He ran outside and saw an insurgent armed with an RPG rocket launcher. The insurgent was looking to destroy and murder all occupants of a helicopter that was about to lift off. Ken McGonigle knew that a number of service personnel were on board the helicopter. Without hesitation, he drew his pistol and engaged the gunman at close quarters. As another gunman emerged he continued to engage until they disappeared out of sight. Once the terrorists retreated he alerted colleagues to the imminent danger. He then led a party of marines to where the gunmen were located. The group discovered that the attack was in fact much larger and more deadly than first thought. Four gunmen were involved, armed with automatic weapons, RPGs and AK 47 automatic weapons. They attacked the group and in the ensuing fire fight Ken McGonigle was killed. Without his intervention it is likely that a number of British lives would have been lost.

Matthew ROBINSON, Civilian

On 3 January 2010, Matthew Robinson was at home when he heard calls for help from outside. On investigation, he discovered the house next door was on

fire and a 16 year old female was leaning out of a first floor window in some distress. He knew that five children lived in the house. Realising that all the children may be trapped inside, he immediately forced entry into the property, only to be forced back by six feet high flames and heavy smoke. Meanwhile, his mother had placed a ladder against the burning building and this allowed three children to escape to safety. He then climbed the ladder to rescue the two remaining children. He had to search in a bedroom filled with thick smoke but eventually managed to locate the two children, one of whom was unconscious. He passed both children to safety and then evacuated the building himself. He and the family rescued were later taken to hospital and treated for the effects of smoke inhalation.

Anton Charles TURNER (deceased), Civilian

For facing a charging elephant in order to protect others

Anton Turner was working as Chief Guide during the filming of a BBC children's television series in Tanzania. On 30 October 2009 he was part of a forward party which included two trackers armed with spears. He was armed with a rifle. The rest of the party (expedition team, production crew, children and others, some of whom were British including the children) followed behind. They were all walking along ancient elephant trails with dense foliage on either side of the trail. About mid-morning two bull elephants were spotted ahead on the track. The elephants took a trail to the right so the party moved along the left hand trail. About 20 minutes later, a young bull elephant unexpectedly charged the group at very close proximity out of the foliage. The charging elephant was spotted by the two trackers in the advance party who shouted a warning. This alerted the rest of the group who ran or dived off the side of the path behind bushes and trees. The elephant was in full charge. Anton Turner stood his ground and shouted at the elephant in an attempt to scare it off. He did not move out of the path of the charging elephant and was thrown to the ground. The elephant was shot twice by another guide before fleeing along the path. But Anton Turner was fatally injured. The action he took was to protect those in his care.

Neil WALKER, Prison Officer

For tackling and restraining an armed and dangerous prisoner

Officer Walker was on duty at HMP Frankland, a high security prison, on 13 March 2010 when a prisoner was unlocked by other officers from his cell to receive prescribed medication. As the cell door was opened the prisoner lunged forward with a broken bottle, causing a serious injury to one officer by severing an artery and nerve-endings in his upper left arm. The officer managed to retreat from the scene, suffering a heavy loss of blood. The prisoner then proceeded to chase another officer along the prison landing, stabbing her with great force in the back, inflicting serious injuries. Officer Walker was on duty nearby and was the first member of staff to reach the scene of the ongoing incident. Two colleagues had been victims to life threatening attacks and the second remained at risk to further attack from the prisoner, who continued to pursue her. Officer Walker demonstrated

enormous courage by proceeding towards the advancing prisoner, and protecting his colleague from further injury by placing himself between her and the prisoner. Officer Walker then confronted and ultimately restrained the prisoner. In doing so, he received three serious stabbing injuries to his face, abdomen and the back of his head. Despite this, he singlehandedly restrained the prisoner who was disarmed when colleagues came to his aid.

Queen's Commendation for Bravery

William Arthur Alistair BARKER (deceased), Police Constable, Cumbria Constabulary

For sacrificing his own life while trying to save others

During 19 and 20 November 2009, Cumbria suffered unprecedented levels of rainfall, resulting in severe flooding. On 20 November, the police received reports that a bridge over the River Derwent in Workington had begun to collapse. Police patrols, which included PC Barker and a colleague, were sent to the location to assess the situation. As PC Barker arrived at the bridge, he was informed that it might have collapsed and a vehicle may have fallen into the water. The area was in darkness due to power failures, but the police managed to secure the scene. To ascertain whether there was any evidence that a vehicle had fallen into the water, PC Barker and a colleague ventured on to the bridge. The camber of the bridge meant that the two police officers were unable to establish the extent of the damage until they reached a point within a few feet of the lip of the bridge. It was only then they were able to confirm that the central section of

the bridge had fully collapsed. Having ascertained that there were no visible casualties in the water, both officers decided to leave the bridge. As they started to leave, PC Barker went to the side of the bridge, looking over the parapet, to check again if any vehicle or its occupants were visible. At this moment, the area of the bridge where PC Barker was standing broke away and he was swept away in the water. His body was recovered later the same day.

While recognising the obvious risks to himself, PC Barker took steps to check for casualties in need of assistance, and paid the ultimate price for his selfless actions.

Judith Ann TIMSON, Civilian

For preventing a raid on a jewellery store

On 7 February 2011 Mrs Timson, 71 years of age, was shopping in Northampton when she noticed a commotion coming from the direction of a nearby jewellery store. Three mopeds were parked with riders on board, and three other people wearing crash helmets and armed with lump hammers, were smashing a jewellery store's windows. She immediately ran towards the group of robbers (a distance of 150 metres) and began swinging her handbag at one of the riders, who then departed the scene. She then swung her handbag at those smashing the window in an attempt to stop them continuing their attack on the shop. The robbers decided to leave the scene but one robber was so distracted by Mrs Timson that he fell off his moped. She continued to hit him with her handbag until other members of the public also intervened. The robber was detained until the police arrived and took him into custody.

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