

## THE NEW ZEALAND BRAVERY DECORATION (N.Z.B.D.)

### Christopher Mark FOOT

Date of action: 15 January 2014

Date of award: 1 August 2016

#### *Citation*

In Dunedin on the evening of 15 January 2014, Mr Chris Foot and his wife had gone to bed and were watching television when they both heard a loud commotion coming from outside their house. Mr Foot stepped out onto their balcony to investigate the disturbance and saw his neighbour running to their house in a hysterical state, screaming for help. The neighbour indicated that her estranged husband, who had a protection order in force against him, had forcibly entered their house and had attempted to kill her with a gun. She had been able to escape, but her two children, a boy aged nine years and a daughter aged six years still remained in the house.

Mr Foot immediately ran, barefoot, to the house next door with the intent of confronting the man. Mr Foot approached the house and knocked on the glass front door, yelling to get the man's attention. The armed man then walked down the hallway to the front door, pointing a shotgun directly at Mr Foot. Mr Foot attempted to reason with the man, demanding that he stop pointing the gun at him and allow the children to safely leave the house. Without warning the man fired his shotgun at Mr Foot, but stumbled causing the blast to hit the top of the front door. Mr Foot retreated to his house to get footwear, believing he would have to kick the front door down to enter the house and get the children out. As he was returning to his home he heard another shotgun blast.

After getting his boots, Mr Foot returned to the house and entered via a side entrance. He called out to the man, but heard no response. He crept through the house looking for the man, and found him lying on the bed in the main bedroom with a shotgun wound to his chest and the weapon at his side. Mr Foot then discovered the bodies of the children, who had been killed in their bedrooms.

Mr Foot, without hesitation and with an awareness of the danger posed by his neighbour's estranged husband, placed himself at risk in an attempt to defuse a hostile situation and prevent the armed and agitated man from harming his neighbour's children.