

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

Anthony James MILLER Senior Sergeant, New Zealand Police

Date of action: 7 May 2009

Date of award: 2 April 2011

Citation

On 7 May 2009 Senior Sergeant Anthony Miller was one of the first Police Officers to arrive at the scene of the fatal shooting of Senior Constable Len Snee, and the wounding of Mr Len Holmwood, and Senior Constables Grant Diver and Bruce Miller, by Jan Molenaar in Chaucer Road South, Napier.

Though he was unarmed, Senior Sergeant Miller advanced into the immediate scene of the incident with several colleagues and, while under fire from Molenaar, located the position where Senior Constable Miller was lying, wounded. When Detective Sergeant Smith drove the car to where Constable Miller lay, Senior Sergeant Miller moved forward and, while preparations were being made to move Senior Constable Miller from the scene, covered part of Senior Constable Miller's body with his own in order to shield him from further injury. He then assisted in placing Senior Constable Miller into the car before returning to the other members of his group who had been covering their activities from a position nearby. Senior Sergeant Miller then supervised the withdrawal of Sergeant Heath Jones, Constable Kevin Rooney and himself from the scene to positions at the inner cordon.

A short time afterwards, a group of officers including Detective Sergeant Smith, Detective Sergeant Nicholas Clere and a paramedic, Mr Stephen Smith, made their way down Chaucer Road with a stretcher to recover Senior Constable Diver from his hiding place at No. 45. Plans had been made for a "hot extraction" using an ambulance, should the group be fired upon at any stage. A few minutes later, they began their return journey up the hill, but it was apparent that they were having considerable difficulty carrying Senior Constable Diver. While Constable Rooney provided cover with a rifle from his cordon position, Senior Sergeant Miller and Sergeant Jones ran down the hill to meet the stretcher party and assisted them in bringing Senior Constable Diver to a position of safety.

Senior Sergeant Miller played a leading role in the events that took place on the morning of 7 May. He displayed exceptional bravery and put his own life in danger during the successful evacuation of Senior Constable Miller from his exposed position near the gunman's house, while under fire, by initially protecting Senior Constable Miller's body with his own and then placing the wounded officer in the car. He followed this with a display of coolness and professionalism when conducting the tactical withdrawal of the group to the cordon, and performed a second act of bravery that morning by going to the assistance of the group evacuating Senior Constable Diver.