

## THE NEW ZEALAND BRAVERY MEDAL (N.Z.B.M.)

### **Roger William BRIGHT** **Constable, New Zealand Police**

Date of action: 4 January 2006

Date of award: 3 May 2008

#### *Citation*

At 7.40am on 4 January 2006, a male resident of Great Barrier Island arrived at the residence of Senior Constable Roger Bright (one of two police members on Great Barrier Island), seeking help. The resident had found a will, suicide note, wallet, and two chequebooks belonging to his friend on his front porch and asked if Senior Constable Bright would accompany him to his friend's house, because he feared what might have happened to him.

When Senior Constable Bright and the resident arrived at the house there was a strong smell of gas emanating from the rear of the property. All the doors and windows of the house were secured and after a further search, a male body was seen lying on the floor of the bathroom along with two 60lb gas bottles, which were venting gas into the room.

Senior Constable Bright, looking through the window, could not see any signs of life from the man. In an attempt to gain entry into the house without igniting the gas inside, he used a nearby machete he had found to try and lever open the bathroom window. Whilst doing so, however, he heard the man cough, and immediately ran back to the porch to retrieve a splitting axe, which he used to smash the window.

When Senior Constable Bright entered the house, he was hit with a wall of gas fumes, which also filled the bathroom. He physically dragged the man, who was unconscious, solidly built, and 6 feet 4 inches in height, from the bathroom whilst almost being overcome by the gas himself. He continued to drag the man away from the bathroom and through the house, stopping half way to battle the effects of the gas. Eventually he managed to drag the man out of the house to a safer area of the property. With the help of the victim's friend, he then moved the victim to the friend's house. Senior Constable Bright then went to wake the doctor who lived up the road; however, he was unsuccessful and had to get the local radio operator to contact the on-call doctor before returning to the victim.

Senior Constable Bright displayed quick thinking and bravery in order to save a life, when he entered, without hesitation, a life threatening situation knowing that further police and medical assistance were not immediately available.