

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

John VAUGHAN (Deceased)

Date of action: 15 May 2002

Date of award: 23 October 2005

Citation

On 15 May 2002, a man entered the Mangere Bridge branch of the ASB Bank, wearing a disguise and carrying a loaded firearm in a bag. As he entered the bank he removed the firearm and approached the customer services representative, pointing the firearm at her and demanding entry into the teller area security alcove. Teller John Vaughan observed these actions from the secure alcove area and realising what was happening, allowed the offender entry as he was instructed to do during bank staff training, thus diverting the robber's attention from the other customer services representative. The offender entered the area and confronted Mr Vaughan and another teller, pointing the firearm at both of them and demanding that they fill his bag with money. As the tellers filled the bag, the offender told Mr Vaughan that he was going to shoot him in the head and then racked his firearm while pointing it at the tellers. The tellers continued loading the bag, then Mr Vaughan handed it to the offender. During this time, Mr Vaughan had attempted to take the lead and keep the other teller away from danger as much as possible. The two tellers then stood passively behind the counter with their arms raised in the surrender position. On his way out of the bank, the offender leaned forward over the counter and shot Mr Vaughan in the head. Mr Vaughan died within hours from the gun shot wound. The offender was subsequently convicted of the murder of Mr Vaughan.