



LIFESAVING SOCIETY

The Lifeguarding Experts

Canadian Examples of Heroism

THE MOUNTBATTEN MEDAL

The Mountbatten Medal was instituted in 1951 by the Royal Life Saving Society Commonwealth and named after the Society's then Grand President, The Earl Mountbatten of Burma. The Mountbatten Medal is given annually for the most gallant rescue or rescue attempt undertaken throughout the Commonwealth by the holder of a Royal Life Saving Society Award.

KELLY HAWKEN
of Red Deer, Alberta, Canada
2004

On January 26, 2004, Terry and Kelly Hawken were on holidays at an ocean view resort near the town of Varadero in Cuba. While Terry and Kelly were preparing to leave the beach to return to their hotel they were halted by a cry for "help" from the water. Kelly immediately scanned the water and saw a small boy and his mother floating on an inflatable tube. The mother and her son were approximately 100 feet from the ocean shore and were in obvious distress.

Kelly immediately dropped her belongings and raced towards the water and started swimming towards the mother and her son. At the same time an unknown female also entered the water and swam towards the distressed mother and son. Despite the waves, both ladies were able to reach them at the same time. Using the skills she learned in her Bronze Medallion course from her teenage years, Kelly quickly assessed that the mother was unresponsive, and the son was nearing a panicked state.

The current was strong pushing them all out to sea, Kelly knew that they she had to act quickly. The unknown female, who did not speak English, took the young boy and began to swim back to shore. Kelly removed the mother from the floating device and she immediately began to sink. It was evident that the mother would not have lasted much longer and would probably have drowned if not for the quick response of Kelly, and the unknown rescuer.

Kelly recovered the submerged mother and began to tow her towards shore. Eventually, Cuban lifeguards arrived on scene and took over. The mother regained consciousness and they assisted her to shore. The mother regained her composure and comforted her son who was understandably upset and distraught.

Kelly is credited for saving the life of the mother and her son by virtue of her quick brave response and lifesaving skills. She demonstrated exceptional skill, personal risk and a high degree of bravery and courage in performing this rescue. We are pleased to have honoured Kelly Hawken of Red Deer with the Commonwealth Mountbatten Medal - Letter of Commendation and Canadian M.G. Griffiths Plaque.

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The M.G. Griffiths Plaque is the highest Bravery Award presented by the Royal Life Saving Society Canada. Recipients must have demonstrated exceptional skill, personal risk, and a high degree of bravery and courage. Recipients of the M.G. Griffiths Plaque must be an Award Holder of the Society. Rescue Personnel who perform a rescue in the course of their duty may not be eligible.

“Whomsoever you see in distress, recognize in him a fellow man.” Lifesaving Society Motto