



1967 Mountbatten Medal – Manasa Koroi Vatuloka

On 2 September 1967 an Indian woman and two girls were washing clothes in the Waimanu River, Naitasiri, Fiji, when one girl fell into deep water, pulling the other girl with her. The Indian woman tried to help them but also fell in.

The alarm was given by people some distance away, where Manasa Vatuloka was standing on the opposite bank. He immediately swam across and ran down the bank to where one girl could be seen floating about 10 yards out. He jumped in and brought her to the bank. Then by searching with his hands in the very muddy water he found the other girl on the bottom in ten feet of water and towed her to the bank. He then swam round on the bottom until he found the woman, who had floated into shallow water and could be towed out by walking on the bottom. Bystanders applied artificial respiration and all three revived.

The river at this point was very muddy due to earthworks upstream. Weeds are thick and there are variable currents. Sharks have recently been seen in the river.