



Commonwealth Lifesaving The Royal Life Saving Society

2009 MOUNTBATTEN MEDAL

ANDREW HUNT

In August 2009 a group of Kent Scouts were on an expedition in South Africa and were staying on a campsite close to the beach at Cape Vidal. Andrew Hunt of RLSS UK, one of the Explorer Scouts and a fully qualified lifeguard, inspected the beach and assessed the currents before anyone was allowed in the ocean. He assessed that it was safe to go out approximately 10 metres from the beach and that the rip tides were moving people to the right. Two leaders were put on safety watch and the Scouts swam and body boarded in safety.

Suddenly a group of Italians rushed over shouting and one asked if he could use one of the body boards. Their friend who had been fishing off some rocks jutting out into the sea had just been washed off by rough waves and was in trouble about 50 metres out to sea.

Andrew assessed that it was not safe for this man to go out to rescue his friend as he had no lifesaving experience but made the decision to do so himself. Everyone was removed from the water, one of the Scout leaders was sent back to the campsite to find help and Andrew took one of the body boards with him as he swam out to the man.

Although a strong swimmer, Andrew found it hard swimming out to the man due the difficult wave conditions and rip tides. At one point he lost sight of the man and thought he had gone under and as the waves were so high he relied on the guidance of the onlookers to direct him to the man. When Andrew finally got to the man he was still holding firmly onto his fishing rod. After forcing the rod out of his hand he placed him on the body board and pushed him in the direction of the beach on the next big wave. Andrew continued to swim after the board, continuing to use the waves to get himself and the man back to the beach.

Back at the beach both Andrew and the man were checked over by a first aider on the expedition and although both exhausted neither had any injuries.

For his calm assessment and reaction to the situation

Andrew Hunt is awarded the 2009 Mountbatten Medal

HRH Prince Michael of Kent GCVO
Commonwealth President

Francene Leaversuch
Chief Executive Officer