Investiture of Lifesaving Honours
SOCIETY BRAVERY AWARD
NOVEMBER 8, 2017 | GOVERNMENT HOUSE | EDMONTON, AB

Andrew Pearson

MISMALOYA BEACH, MISMALOYA, JALISCO, MEXICO – JANUARY, 30, 2016

THE MOUNTBATTEN MEDAL *recognizes the most courageous rescue in the Commonwealth by a person who is a Lifesaving Society award holder.*

Andrew Pearson, an Alberta firefighter, member of the Canadian Armed Forces and a private of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment, a primary reserve unit of the Canadian Forces based in Edmonton, Alberta, and two other good Samaritans, also Canadian, rescued a father and son from drowning off the coast of Mexico.

Andrew was on a family vacation in Mismaloya, a small coastal village near Puerto Vallarta. He was sitting with his sister, 10-year-old niece and 3-year-old daughter, building sandcastles in the beach, when he met fellow Canadians Liz Haley-Armstrong and her son, Bob Haley, both from Carrot River, Saskatchewan.

Moments later Andrew looked up and saw there was a young boy in the water, six to eight years old, who was displaying classic drowning signs and was in visible distress. The child was caught in a powerful rip tide on the far side of the surf break. Andrew started running as fast as he could, as he knew from prior training and experience that people can drown in a matter of seconds. He swam into the surf and into the powerful currents to reach the boy and started dragging him back toward the shore. As Andrew was working towards the shore with the boy the father had entered the surf and was also caught in the rip tide. The father, who was a weak or non-swimmer, was showing signs of distress and displayed signs of drowning himself.

Liz Haley-Armstrong was swimming in an area adjacent to the riptide swam up to Andrew and offered to take the boy to shore. Andrew then proceeded back into the rip tide to rescue the boy's father. The boy's mother had swam out attempting to rescue the father but as she was a weak swimmer and of small stature she was barely able to hold his head above water. The father, who was almost unconscious, and mother both grabbed onto Andrew and started pushing him under. Andrew grabbed the father and told the mother to swim to shore. Once Andrew reached the surf break with the father he was completely exhausted. He yelled for help and Liz's son, Bob Haley, ran into the surf and carried the father and Andrew to safety.

At the time of the rescue the beach resort was displaying a red flag indicating that the surf was dangerous.

For his quick response and outstanding effort, **Andrew Pearson** is awarded the Mountbatten Medal.