

01-31-2005 Wamberal Australia - Jonny Speakman – Off Duty LEO Successful Surf Rescue

Policeman drowns saving children

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/merseyside/4224283.stm

31 January, 2005

A police officer has drowned on holiday in Australia while rescuing three children swept out to sea.

Pc Jonny Speakman, 33, was bodyboarding - a type of surfing - near Sydney on Saturday when he was overcome by a strong current.

Eyewitnesses say Mr Speakman, from Hoole, Cheshire, was seen rescuing a child whom he had lifted on to a board.

"It does not surprise his family that Jonny gave his life to save a child," said his father Don.

The accident happened as Mr Speakman was with five Australian friends and their children on Spoon Bay beach, north of Sydney.

Three children, aged in their early teens, and an adult friend were also caught in the tide.

Mr Speakman gave up his bodyboard and lifted one of the children on to it before launching him back to shore on a wave.

The children and the other man were rescued by emergency services. They were said to be unharmed but shocked.

Mr Speakman was five weeks into a trip to Australia. Married to Jenny, he had recently joined Warrington CID.

Cheshire's Chief Constable, Peter Fahy, said the force was mourning a fine officer. Mr Fahy said: "His colleagues today at Warrington when hearing of his death were stunned and silent, not understanding how such a vibrant life could have been cut short.

'Keen sportsman'

"The Constabulary as a whole is feeling the loss of such a promising officer and a popular person.



Mr Speakman was five weeks into a holiday in Australia

“ The Constabulary as a whole is feeling the loss of such a promising officer and a popular person ”

Chief Constable Peter Fahy

"Our thoughts go out to Jonny's family whose grief is hard to imagine at this time." His father, a retired police officer, added: "Jonny was a keen sportsman. A qualified football coach, he also played for Chester Boughton Hall Nomads, and was the second team captain.

"He will be missed not just by his family, but by everyone who knew him.

Police officer drowned rescuing teenagers

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/National/Police-officer-drowned-rescuing-teenagers/2005/02/01/1107020358462.html>

February 1, 2005

The father of a British police officer who drowned after rescuing three teenagers at a NSW beach says he is not surprised his son gave his life to save others.

British constable Jonny Speakman was swimming at Spoon Bay Beach, north of Wamberal, on the central coast, on Saturday afternoon, when he and three young teenagers were caught in a rip.

The 33-year-old, who was holidaying in Australia, gave up his bodyboard and lifted one of the teenagers on to it before pushing him towards the shore.

The teenagers and another man were soon rescued by emergency services but Mr Speakman went missing.

Rescue helicopters later found his body several hundred metres down the beach, a NSW police spokesman said.

Mr Speakman, who leaves behind his wife Jenny, was one of five people to drown in heavy surf and huge swells along the NSW coast at the weekend.

His father, retired police officer Don Speakman, said today it was in his son's nature to make every effort to save others.

"It does not surprise his family that Jonny gave his life to save a child," Mr Speakman Sr said.

"He will be missed not just by his family, but by everyone who knew him."

Mr Speakman, a qualified football coach, joined the Cheshire Constabulary in 1998. Chief Constable Peter Fahy said colleagues were mourning the loss of a fine officer.

"His colleagues ... were stunned and silent, not understanding how such a vibrant life could have been cut short," Chief Const Fahy said.

"The constabulary as a whole is feeling the loss of such a promising officer and a popular person.

"Our thoughts go out to Jonny's family, whose grief is hard to imagine at this time."
- Agencies

Officer drowns saving Giants star's children

<http://www.examiner.co.uk/news/west-yorkshire-news/officer-drowns-saving-giants-stars-5082228>

2 FEB 2005 **BY** HUDDERSFIELD EXAMINER **UPDATED** 13 JUL 2013

A BRITISH policeman has drowned - saving the lives of a former Huddersfield rugby player's sons.

Pc Jonny Speakman, 33, was swept away in treacherous seas off the coast of Australia.

But the hero officer had managed to save Cody and Jordie Hanger, the young sons of former Huddersfield Giants star Dean Hanger.

The boys, aged eight and 12, had got into difficulties in Spoon Bay, New South Wales.

Pc Speakman was on the beach with Australian friends, including Mr Hanger, who played for Huddersfield in the 1990s.

Hanger waded into the rough sea to try and save his sons and was joined by Pc Speakman.

Both men reached the boys but found themselves in trouble.

Rescue boats from a surf club were launched and managed to reach the boys and Mr Hanger, but the police officer was swept away. His body was discovered an hour later.

Pc Speakman served with the Cheshire force for six years. He was in Australia on holiday.

Hanger returned to his native Australia after leaving Huddersfield for a spell with Warrington Wolves.

He signed for Huddersfield from Leigh in 1994 and spent four years with the club. Centre player Hanger was a Fartown favourite, and was in the side beating Hull 18-0 to win the Giants promotion to the Super League in 1997.

Pc drowned saving partner's child

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/merseyside/4078662.stm

9 June, 2005

A police officer sacrificed his life saving his partner's eight-year-old son, an inquest heard on Thursday.

Coroner Nicholas Rheinberg recorded a verdict of accidental death on Cheshire Pc Jonny Speakman, 33, who died at sea on holiday in Australia in January.

Pc Speakman, from Much Hoole, managed to get his partner's son Jordi to safety after he got into difficulties.



Mr Speakman was five weeks into a holiday in Australia

The off-duty officer had been body boarding at Spoon Beach near Sydney, with a friend and her three children.

The court heard Pc Speakman had gone to the beach with his partner Bonna Bamford, her three children and another couple, Joanne and Dean Hanger, and their two sons.

The five children, aged five to 13, began playing in a small bay with Pc Speakman and Mr Hanger.

But when the calm sea turned violent, all seven bathers were caught in a swirling mass of waves, currents and rip tides - described by one lifeguard witness as a "mashing machine".

Both men battled to save the children, with Pc Speakman grabbing Jordi and telling him, "Whatever you do, keep hold of the board," as he struggled to drag the boy to safety.



Jordi is Bonna Bamford's youngest child

A police officer sacrificed his life saving his partner's eight-year-old son, an inquest heard on Thursday.

Coroner Nicholas Rheinberg recorded a verdict of accidental death on Cheshire Pc Jonny Speakman, 33, who died at sea on holiday in Australia in January.

A police officer sacrificed his life saving his partner's eight-year-old son, an inquest heard on Thursday.

Coroner Nicholas Rheinberg recorded a verdict of accidental death on Cheshire Pc Jonny Speakman, 33, who died at sea on holiday in Australia in January. Pc Speakman, from Much Hoole, managed to get his partner's son Jordi to safety after he got into difficulties.

The off-duty officer had been body boarding at Spoon Beach near Sydney, with a friend and her three children.

The court heard Pc Speakman had gone to the beach with his partner Bonna Bamford, her three children and another couple, Joanne and Dean Hanger, and their two sons.

The five children, aged five to 13, began playing in a small bay with Pc Speakman and Mr Hanger.

But when the calm sea turned violent, all seven bathers were caught in a swirling mass of waves, currents and rip tides - described by one lifeguard witness as a "mashing machine".

Both men battled to save the children, with Pc Speakman grabbing Jordi and telling him, "Whatever you do, keep hold of the board," as he struggled to drag the boy to safety.

Passers-by managed to pull all of the children to safety as Pc Speakman and Mr Hanger were trapped by a rip tide.

The men, who were strong swimmers, managed to tread water for over an hour before they were overcome with exhaustion.

In a statement read out in court, Mr Hanger said: "Jon and I were absolutely stuffed. I could feel the lactose going all over my body."

Mr Hanger was saved by off duty lifeguard Stuart Harvey, who heard the emergency on the radio. He borrowed a child's surfboard and swam to both men. When he realised he could only save himself and one other he took Mr Hanger to shore as he was still conscious.

“ I have been in surf clubs for years but that was one of the only times I thought I was going to drown ”

Stuart Harvey, lifeguard

"I have been in surf clubs for years but that was one of the only times I thought I was going to drown," he said.

Mr Rheinberg said both men could have made their way to safety on the beach but added: "They ensured that all the children in their charge got to safety but that left them in utter peril."

After the inquest Ms Bamford said: "Jordi was my baby and Jon knew that. He gave me back my little boy, and I'm very proud of him for that."

Pc Speakman was married to wife Jenny, who attended the inquest, but the pair had separated.

Hero Jonny gave his life to save my child

<http://www.chesterchronicle.co.uk/news/chester-cheshire-news/hero-jonny-gave-life-save-5283583>



THE partner of a Chester policeman has told

Bonna Bamford told reporters outside Chester Coroner's Court yesterday that she and PC Jonny Speakman had intended to start a new life together in Australia before tragedy struck in January.

Miss Bamford, who had been with Mr Speakman for 'a few months', said she would never forget the courageous act which saved her son Jordi, eight, from drowning in New South Wales.

She said after yesterday's inquest: 'He kept hold of Jordi for as long as he possibly could until he was washed from his arms. Jordi said Jonny was breathing heavily and kept telling him to keep hold of his board!'

'Jonny knew Jordi was special to me. You don't have favourites with children, but he was my baby. He has given me back my little boy. Without Jonny I would have lost Jordi.'

Other beaches in the Sydney area had been closed that day because of tidal conditions but Miss Bamford said the message had not got through to Spoon Bay, where they were enjoying a 'beautiful day'.

Miss Bamford, of Stockton Heath, near Warrington, added that Jonny, 33, from Hoole had been interviewed for a job with Adelaide Police and had already passed a fitness test.

Mr Speakman had split from his wife Jenny, of Park Drive, Hoole. The inquest heard he was at the beach with Bonna and her three children as well as another couple and their two children.

Jonny and Dean Hanger were standing waist deep in the sea. Conditions were 'perfectly reasonable' although there were indications of larger breakers further out.

The children were taking it in turns to swim or go out to the adults on boogie boards. The two men would turn them around and then send them back on a wave towards the beach.

Coroner Nicholas Rheinberg described it as a 'safe exercise' until conditions suddenly changed. One of the children, Cody, 12, screamed and the group was buffeted by waves.

Mr Rheinberg said the adults could have made their way to the beach. Instead they saved the children, but this put them in 'utter peril'.

The two men kept together but were carried further out to sea on a rip current and, despite both being strong swimmers, were unable to get out of what lifeguard Stuart Harvey later called 'a mashing machine'.

Mr Harvey tried to rescue the men using a child's surf board.

Mr Rheinberg said: 'He initially managed to grab hold of Jonny Speakman and got him on the board but as chance would have it a wave washed him clear of the board at which stage he had an awful agonising decision to make, that he would only be in a position to save one of the individuals. One of them, Dean Hanger was clearly alive. Jonny Speakman appeared unconscious.'

Mr Speakman, a serving officer with Cheshire Constabulary, disappeared and his body was later recovered.

Mr Rheinberg said: 'Saving Dean Hanger was an agonising decision but I think clearly the right one. '

He determined the cause of death as drowning and recorded a verdict of accidental death.

Hero partner died to save my baby, says mum

<http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/hero-partner-died-to-save-my-baby-1072870>

1 JUL 2005 **BY**MANCHESTER EVENING NEWS **UPDATED**17:12, 12 JAN 2013

A POLICE officer sacrificed his life to save his partner's child from drowning in Australia, an inquest has heard.

A POLICE officer sacrificed his life to save his partner's child from drowning in Australia, an inquest has heard.

Pc Jonny Speakman, of Chester, was on holiday with Bonna Bamford and her three children when the tragedy took place in January.

The pair had gone to Spoon Beach, north of Sydney, with another couple, Joanne and Dean Hanger, and their two sons.

Cheshire Coroner's Court heard that the five children, aged five to 13, began playing in a small bay with Pc Speakman, who was 33, and Mr Hanger.

Within minutes the calm sea turned violent, and all seven bathers were caught in a swirling mass of waves, currents and rip tides.

The inquest heard that the two men battled to save whichever children they could reach as they were tossed around by the sea. Pc Speakman, who served in the Cheshire Police Force, managed to grab Ms Bamford's youngest child, eight-year-old Jordi.

"Whatever you do, keep hold of the board," he told the youngster as he struggled to drag the boy to safety. They were eventually separated by a wave.

Passers-by managed to pull Jordi and the other children to safety but Pc Speakman and Mr Hanger were trapped.

Bedlam

Ms Bamford, 43, told the inquest: "The kids wanted to run in to the sea to rescue daddy and Jonny, and we were trying to stop them and shouting for help, it was bedlam."

The men, both strong swimmers, managed to tread water for almost an hour before becoming exhausted.

Both men would have drowned but off-duty lifeguard Stuart Harvey, who was sunbathing nearby, heard an emergency call on his radio.

He borrowed a child's surfboard and paddled out to the men. He lifted Pc Speakman on to the board, but a wave washed him off. As all three men were battered by waves, Mr Harvey realised he could only save himself and one other.

He chose to save Mr Hanger because he was conscious, while Pc Speakman was slumped head down in the water. He said in a statement: "They were stuck in what I would call a mashing machine."

Pc Speakman was eventually dragged away by the tide and his body washed up further down the beach.

Cheshire Coroner Nicholas Rheinberg recorded a verdict of accidental death.

Pc Speakman was married, but was separated from his wife, Jenny, who attended the inquest.

He had been in a relationship with Ms Bamford for around one year when the accident took place on January 29.

Ms Bamford said after the inquest: "Jordi was my baby and Jon knew that. He gave me back my little boy, and I'm very proud of him for that."