

A London Ambulance Service paramedic, Mel Armstrong, 34, has won a London Ambulance Service VIP award for bringing a man back to life while on a family holiday.

She was on Brighton Pier with her family on New Year's Eve when she saw a man collapse at the slot machines.

Mel said: *"I heard a loud bang and I turned around and there was a man slumped against a machine. As I looked down, I could tell instantly he was about to stop breathing. I did CPR and after a few minutes managed to get a pulse back."*

The man Mel saved was grandfather-of-five, Brian Smith, 72. *"We normally go down to Brighton pier on New Year's Eve as a family. We got to the slot machines and someone turned the lights out on me and I went down like a sack of potatoes. If it hadn't been for Mel, I wouldn't be sitting here. She's my guardian angel. It was my lucky day that she was there. She didn't have to do what she did – she could have walked on, but she stepped up to the plate."* – he said after the accident.

Mel, who has worked for the Service for 12 years and lives in Essex, added: *"There were hundreds of people watching what was going on and as I left quite a few said 'well done' and shook my hand. I believe I was meant to be there that day and since meeting Brian, we just clicked and have formed a strong bond."*

**This amazing life-saving story shows that everyday heroes live among us. Here are some more stories proving that miracles do happen all over the world...**

Paramedic and firefighter from Roanoke County, Virginia, USA, Brooks Barnett has been honoured with the Red Cross Emergency Responder Hero award for saving Drew Sizemore's life.

In December, while spending an off-duty night out with family, Brooks noticed a man choking. Even though during his 8-year career he never had to do Heimlich manoeuvre, Brooks didn't waste any time to doubt and did what was needed to save Drew life.

*"Honestly, if Brooks wasn't there I don't know where I would be,"* Sizemore said thanking the Roanoke County paramedic for saving his life.

*"As a fireman, as medics, we see it every day. That's one of the reasons that I love this job, because when you go home you feel like you've made a difference,"* Barnett recalled.

While people with no medical background might say that it is easy to save lives and be called hero when you work as a paramedic and have been trained to do so, this last story proves that ordinary people perform miracles as well.

Last summer 24-year-old Tomas Saparnis from Lithuania saved the life of a drowning 10-year-old boy.



*Tomas Saparnis, 24, saved a 10-year-old boy from drowning*

While having afternoon nap Tomas heard somebody screaming that a boy drowned and ran to see what happened. When he reached the river the boy was already far under water.

***“While underwater, I could see just about 20 inches around me. I couldn’t find him on the first try, so I kept on trying.”*** Tomas commented later.

After being dragged to the surface, the kid showed no signs of life. Despite the stressful situation, Tomas managed to keep calm and provide necessary first aid. Paramedics arrived only 10 minutes later and, as they said, if not for the courage shown by Tomas and his first aid skills, the child probably would have been dead by that time.

Tomas said: ***“Making someone breathe again in movies seems much easier, quicker than it actually is in real life. But I thought that I cannot just stop doing CPR – it won’t hurt the child, but maybe, if I continue, it will help. After seeing him breathing again I was really excited, but I didn’t stop even then – I was afraid that he might die if I do so”***

This story shows that you never know when somebody near you might need help and when first aid skills might save somebody’s life.

In the link below you can find some useful tips and online courses provided by British Red Cross. So, if you don't have any prior knowledge of how to help somebody in need, why not spare some time to learn about it and maybe it will help you be someone's hero.