



“Public Service Award”



NYC Corrections Department Emergency Service Unit

On September 11, 2001 at 0900 hours, Deputy Warden Patrick Walsh issued instructions to the Emergency Service Unit to prepare for mobilization to the World Trade Center. Commissioner William Fraser then authorized a full mobilization of the unit and deployment of the nation's worst disaster. E.S.U. Then transcended beyond the basic correctional role and into rescue role for which they had prepared through rigorous training regimens

Though the Twin Towers had already collapsed upon their arrival; the dangers were inherent. 7 World Trade Center was on the verge of collapse. 1 Liberty plaza was reported to be unstable and mountains of rubble were constantly shifting. Mountains of rubble belled smoke; a blanket of pulverized building debris covered the streets, cars and structures. We entered the site and commenced a search and rescue operation with N.Y.P.D.'s Emergency Service Unit.

Although Correction's response consisted of members from various races and ethnicity's, the Irish were well represented. Tom Hayes was assigned to the initial response where he was a key factor in coordination of the operation. This was a monumental task in that E.S.U. would remain at the sight for five months working 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Tim Reilly the ESU Executive Officer experienced a "Baptism by Fire" and was tasked with monumental missions, from coordination search, rescue and recovery at "Ground Zero", evidence recovery teams at the Fresh Kills land fill to heightened security at various Department Facilities. Brian Sullivan was hospitalized twice for injuries sustained and immediately returned to duty. Mike O'Connell was on the scene when a Port Authority Police Officer was recovered and survived. David Wilson found the body of a firefighter, which commenced a search in which 12 firemen were recovered. These are just a few examples of the accomplishments. Their primary objective was patriotism. They were dedicated to the mission, which was to help the victims, their families and the country.

On October 24, 2001 a scaffold collapsed on 19th Street and Park Ave. The Ground Zero Recovery Team responded from Ground Zero and was at the forefront in the rescue of several workers trapped in the debris.

On November 12, 2001 the city was struck with yet another tragedy, the crash of Flight 587. E.S.U. Was again part of the initial response working hand in hand with N.Y.P.D.'s E.S.U. They extricated victims from the crash sight. Victims who were then respectfully placed into body bags where they would be transported to a temporary morgue. The morgue was located at Floyd Bennett Field where E.S.U. And morgue personnel catalogued, photographed and replaced clean body bags for transport to the Medical Examiners office.

In January (Super Bowl Sunday) a good thing took place during all this tragedy. We recovered an Irish Flag from the World Trade Center in what was now known as the hole. This flag was torn, dirty and stained but it represented our heritage. Arrangements were made and on March 14, 2002 the flag was presented to Mary McAllise, the President of Ireland at the Police Memorial at North Cove Marina. Presently, the flag is on display at the Irish Presidents' Residence in Dublin.

The members of E.S.U. Do not profess to be any more heroic than any other member of the department. We just happened to be in a position to be chosen to represent the department, the city and the country. We accepted this assignment with great pride and patriotism. This was not exclusively an E.S.U. Operation.



This page is dedicated
in loving memory of the
victims and the brave members
of the New York City Fire Department,
The New York City Police Department,
The New York State Courts,
Emergency Medical Services
and the
Port Authority Police Department
who made the supreme sacrifice
on September 11th, 2001



God Bless America