



Father's joy as daughter follows his heroic steps

Allison
Bray

IT WAS more than 40 years ago when Edward Hernon proudly accepted a National Certificate of Bravery for saving a six-year-old boy from drowning in the River Liffey.

And yesterday the 72-year-old Dubliner returned to Leinster House beaming with pride as his daughter Cherie Eustace accepted her own silver medal and Certificate of Bravery for risking her life to save her grandparents from a fire in their flat.

"She takes after her father, she's a good girl," he joked.

Ms Eustace (29) was among 23 heroes and heroines - including three who have passed away - who were officially honoured by the State yesterday for their selfless feats of bravery.

Ms Eustace not only put her life on the line when she saved her elderly grandparents Eileen and William in July 2005, her courageous act has had lifelong implications for her own health.

She remained in hospital suffering from smoke inhalation for a month and continues to undergo medical treatment for a variety of lung and speech impairments, including emphysema and asthma.

Doctors told her she would never speak again as a result of the fire. She proved them wrong, but will never be able to speak normally or work again.

However, she has never given her own predicament a second thought.

"I never thought I'd be capable of saving someone else but at the time you just do what you do," she said.

Leaving Certificate students Conor Doherty (18) and Ryan Hamill (17) from Bundoran, Co Donegal, were also among the recipients of gold, silver, bronze medals and certificates of bravery for saving three children from drowning.

The awards have been given by the State since 1947.

Above: Cherie Eustace, right, received a silver medal at the National Bravery Awards with her father Eddie Hernon, who received a certificate in the national bravery awards in 1963. Right: Conor Doherty and Ryan Hamill, from Bundoran, Co Donegal, who both received a silver medal and certificate citation. DAMIEN EAGERS

