

Emma Bannister 2012

Lockerbie

At 7pm on the 21st December 1988 the biggest ever British air disaster happened over the small Scottish town of Lockerbie. The destruction of Pan Am flight 103 brought this town of 4000 people to worldwide notice. All 259 Passengers and crew on board died and 11 people were killed on the ground. I was born in Lockerbie 3 years after the crash but the legacy of the disaster informed my childhood and still affects the town 23 years later. The recent death of Abdelbaset al-Megrahi has returned Lockerbie to the headlines. My photographs are of people who were affected by the place crash directly and indirectly and the crash sites themselves.

Quotes to Accompany the images.

Image 1: Brian Bannister

Police Officer on duty on 21st December 1988

"At 19.03 hrs on 22nd December 1988, I was on duty with two other officers at Lockerbie Police Station. All of a sudden the earth shook followed by an almighty explosion, I ran out of the station and saw a huge fireball shooting up into the night sky. This was what I later found to be the fuel tanks exploding as they hit the ground in Sherwood Crescent. What I subsequently saw that night can only be described as horrific – bodies; destroyed houses and more bodies in various stages of decapitation. The rest is history. The experience will stay with me for the rest of my life."

Image 2: David and Margaret Edwards

9 Sherwood Crescent

Their house was destroyed and has been re-built since. David was in the house when the plane came down.

"I had a visit from Steven Flannigan (Young boy from 16 Sherwood Crescent) during the day asking me if I could help fix his sister Joanne's bike. I said come back at 7pm and we'd look at it. Bang on 7pm we went out to the garage to fix the puncture. We had been in the garage a matter of minutes when we heard a noise, like a lorry with a loose sheet on the back in the wind. Then a hellish thud and silence. I thought what the hell was that. The roof of the garage had blown off, debris fell like a thunder storm. I got a sniff of aviation fuel, walked out and looked at the road and my car was on fire. After that everything was happening so fast. Me and Steven went to get a neighbour as her house was on fire. We couldn't get in, the windows had blown out. Anybody who went, went like that." – David Edwards

Image 3: Stuart Coassar

Detective Inspector at Dumfries Police Station
Deputy and Senior Investigator Officer into the Lockerbie Enquiry

"The investigation into the Lockerbie bombing will continue, to bring to justice the others involved in this act of state-sponsored terrorism. I am determined to get the answers these families deserve." - Frank Mulholland QC, The Lord Advocate
Crown Office Scotland

Image 4: Robin Brydon

Photographer at The Standard Newspaper

"I remember being told to be at Sherwood Crescent one day after the crash. I didn't know what was to happen then a bus pulled up and 10 schoolgirls got out and laid a wreath and paid their respect to their lost classmate. That's the moment that stays with me, seeing such young teenagers becoming victims through this tragedy."

Image 5: Claire Dorrance and Rachel Nicholson

Lockerbie Academy final year students chose to be Syracuse Scholars 2012/13

"It is comforting to see that out of such devastation can come good and the memory of those who lost their lives, still lives on, in this instance, through us." – Claire Dorrance

"It seems fitting that something so valued should emerge out of the atrocity 23 years ago. Good will always triumph over evil." – Graham Herbert, Rector of Lockerbie Academy

Image 6: Hayley Inglis

Lockerbie resident

"I was 11 years old on the 21st December 1988 and the memory I hold of that night is still as vivid today, the fire balls, the sirens, the rumble in the sky. It will never leave."

Image 7: Armand Brescia

Filmmaking Student at Syracuse University

Visited Lockerbie with Syracuse Rugby team to learn more about the plane crash and remember the students who were lost on that tragic night

"It was truly an amazing experience to feel so close and connected to your school and the history that has brought us all together. It was an honour to meet you all and enrich the very poignant and important relationship our schools share. Although the tragedy that took place on that fateful night in Lockerbie was before our time, the Hammerheads left with an incredibly emotional, surreal, and deeply meaningful experience that I will undoubtedly remember, cherish, and honour for the rest of my life."

Image 8: Kate Anderson

Lives next to Tundergrath Church, the nose of the Maid of Seas fell in the field opposite

"Standing at the kitchen window icing the Christmas cake then the lights went out, the electricity lines had been hit by bodies and debris of the falling plane. Then bang. I looked out the window and saw huge flames in the field"

Image 9: Father Patrick Keegans

Priest at Holy Trinity, Lockerbie

Lived at 1 Sherwood Crescent and was in house on the evening of 21st December 1988 along with his mother Mary Keegans

"I took my mother to safety then helped police in getting everyone out of the area. In the aftermath I listened to people's stories and told them mine. It was a two way street where I helped them and they helped me overcome it. I spoke with American's, locals and visiting family's of the victims"

"And I will lead the blind, in a way that they know not, in paths that they have not known, I will guide them.

I will turn darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground."

(Isaiah 42, 16)

Image 10: George Stobbs

Police inspector in charge of Lockerbie sub division 1983-1991

“Border TV had a newsflash that a plane had crashed in Lockerbie, I didn’t expect it to be in town, I thought it would be over field. My other reaction was that it was a military plane. We set up a control room at the Academy throughout the night, at 8am I returned to the police station and went round all the crash sites, got home at 3pm the next day. Worked nightshift for another 2 nights at control room then went back to working at the station dealing with local issues. Visitors and relatives were coming in for weeks and weeks trying to find out what had actually happened, where and what we had found of their loved ones.”

Image 11: Charles Fraser Walker MBE

Sub Officer in charge of Lockerbie fire station.

On a training course in Edinburgh when the plane came down

“Saw a news flash on TV and was on the first train to Carlisle which they stopped for me, was back in Lockerbie in an hour and straight to work to control the situation. There were 10 personnel involved from the station that night. Over the years I had seen death hundreds of times, but life went on, I thought life would go back to normal after a while. I was wrong.”

Image 12: Brian Bannister

Police Officer on duty on 21st December 1988

“Your granny always used to say you’re dad went grey after 1988, the things he saw couldn’t be erased” – Kenna Bannister

Image 13: Sherwood Crescent, Lockerbie

Image 14: Tundergarth Church Road, Tundergarth

Image 15: Sydney Place, Lockerbie

Image 16: Field opposite Tundergarth Church, Tundergarth

Image 17: Lockerbie