

The Heathwick Echo

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THE FIRST FUNERAL HEATHWICK’S OWN UNDERTAKER IS BURIED DEAD MAN’S FAMILY MINISTER TO HIS LAST NEEDS

A GRATEFUL TOWN PAYS ITS RESPECTS



By Stuart Penton, Special Correspondant Dollar, were both killed in the tragedy.

The people of Heathwick turned out in force yesterday for the first of many Christmas funerals. With 65 dead, it is going to be a mournful time for a community still in shock after a catastrophe whose cause seems more mysterious by the day.

The body of Mr Whyman, whose own funeral was so cruelly disrupted, has already been cremated at a private ceremony in which the remains of those of his friends who died on the way to St Michael’s were also committed to the flames.

Dignified

That first ceremony was in honour of Frank Pilbury, a wellrespected local figure, who died doing his duty as an undertaker. Less than a week ago, he was attending to the final needs of Donald Whyman and his family when disaster struck. Frank was killed when the newsagent’s shop in the High Street collapsed, just as he was trying to ensure that Mr Whyman’s body could make a dignified journey to church in a beautiful horse drawn hearse. Those two fine horses, Dime and



THE HEARSE DESTROYED IN THE DISASTER. THE TWO HORSES, DIME AND DOLLAR, BOTH DIED



DONALD WHYMAN, WHOSE OWN FUNERAL WAS CRUELLY DISRUPTED BY THE BLASTS

Family

Mr Pilbury’s last journey was supervised by his brave wife, Dora, and his two sons, Keiron

and Dean. The family have sworn to serve any victims of the disaster who seek their help, but they wanted to say farewell to a dear husband and father first.

The forensic teams suspended their activities for a while, so that Frank’s body could take the route along which he had conducted so many of Heathwick’s residents over the years: along the High Street and up to St Michael’s church. There, survivors wept as Rev Jonathan Davis, who lost his own daughter Belinda (37) last week, courageously addressed them about finding some meaning in the tragic events.

Children

Prayers were said for the deceased and the bereaved, and for the injured, including Francine Palmer, who has now been told that her little daughter Kayleigh, aged 12, was one of the victims on the school coach. Kayleigh’s funeral, and that of all ten Heathwick School pupil who died, will take place next Wednesday, one day after Christopher Noble will say goodbye to his wife Lucy, their unborn son, and their daughter Chloe, who perished just before her second birthday. Max Sorely, who will never see his fourth Christmas, is to be interred in the arms of his mother, Suzanne (38) on Monday. His little friends Lily, Polly, and her twin sister Nell (all just two years old) also died.

They lost their lives in the coffee shop, where

Anger



18yearold Sam Riley was so badly hurt that he has not yet regained consciousness. His parents, who are at his bedside, had no idea that he had a job there. When they heard the news of the disaster, they thought he was safe in the library at Markby, revising for exams which would make it possible for him to realise his dream of becoming a lawyer.

Another victim with a dream was Jeffrey Quinn (13). His passion was judo, and his coach had described him as one of Britain's brightest hopes for the Olympics in 2016 or 2020. He might have



JEFFREY QUINN (13) HOLDING HIS TROPHY AFTER WINNING HIS LAST JUDO MATCH

done for judo what young Tom Daly has done for diving in this country. Jeffrey died on the school coach. On the very day of the disaster her was due to compete in, and was expected to win, a major judo competition.

Marjorie Skidmore (40) flew in from New Zealand that morning expecting to be met by her father, Matthew Larkin (72). Matthew, a popular Heathwick figure, died outside his beloved St. Michael's church.

The mood of the town is still one of pain and grief, but there are signs that New Year may bring an upsurge of anger. Too much is unexplained. There are calls for an official Inquiry. This newspaper will do everything in its power to make sure that one takes place. Funeral photographs, and more reports: p 3, 4, 6, 9.

ALSO AMONG THE DEAD



KATE DAINTREE (17). Now confirmed dead. Survivors say she was distributing extremist animal rights literature just before the blasts. Her father, Donny, the Radio Heathwick DJ, angrily dismissed allegations that she set off one of the explosions.



MARGARET SHARP (78). Her daughter, Janine Nailor is fighting for life, unaware that her son, Calum (12) lost his life on board the school coach. Close friends Chenelle Knight (12) and Charmaine Young (13) died with him



SOME GOOD NEWS Ritzi the dog reported missing after the blast, has been found and reunited with her owner, Bernie Blackstock, manager of the Rose and Crown.