



Granville disaster

One son died, but another survived

Bruce Watts had two sons on Tuesday's 6.09 train from Mount Victoria. Michael, 11, was lucky — he survived. David, 25, was found dead in the fated third carriage.

For three hours Mr Watts stood outside the tent morgue at Granville yesterday, waiting for news of David. At 3 pm his fears were confirmed.

For him and his family, like many others, it was the end of an all-day and all-night vigil.

Mr Watts went to work early yesterday morning without hearing about the crash. His wife rang him there.

"She told me my youngest son was on the train," he said.

Michael Watts, like David, had caught the train at Penrith but was in a different carriage.

Michael never made it to the beach but "he rang from Granville soon afterwards and said he was not hurt," Mr Watts said.

He then heard from his wife. Their daughter-in-law, Clare, told them her husband David was on the train.

The family, joined by their eldest son and his wife, sat at home in Penrith all night.

"We kept watching TV and ringing the police station," Mr Watts said.

On Tuesday night, no hospitals had identified David.

Mr Watts went to Granville at noon yesterday. "My wife stayed at home," he said. "I tried to keep her away from it." David's bride of nine-months was sitting in a car outside the police barriers.

Mr Watts was quiet and visibly shaken as he stood waiting with a senior police constable and Salvation Army chaplain.

When the last bodies from the third carriage were removed, the police were able to identify David Watts by the watch he was wearing.

On the back of it were the words: "To David, love, Clare."



Mr PAUL RHEINBERGER — one girl alive but "looking like a piece of putty"; Sgt JOE BEECROFT — his distress welled to the surface; Mr DICK WUBBEL — on duty since 8.30 on Tuesday morning; Supt GEORGE MARSHALL — in charge of the operation.

After 31 hours the last body: the rescue is over

By Our Police Reporter

At 3.10 pm yesterday, almost 31 hours to the minute after the 6.09 from Mount Victoria ploughed into the Bold Street overpass, the last body was removed from the wreckage.

The last bodies were taken from the middle of the third carriage which had been crushed to less than a metre in height by the falling bridge.

When the last of the injured was removed on Tuesday, workers began breaking up the concrete with jackhammers to reach the bodies.

The debris was removed, to reveal a scene sickening to even the hardest and most experienced rescue workers.

Sergeant Joe Beecroft, head of the Police Rescue Squad, emerged from the rubble almost on the point of collapse after working non-stop throughout the drama.

When asked how he felt, the distress that had been growing during the 31 hours welled to the surface.

"I am pretty upset. I have never seen anything like this and I hope never to see it again," he said.

"The sights down there were absolutely ghastly. It was much worse than yesterday. Today it was head injuries. The head injuries were very, very bad."

Mr Paul Rheinberger, vice-captain of the Nepean Rescue Squad, said one girl had been taken from the wreckage on Tuesday alive but "looking like a piece of putty."

"You would think it was beyond endurance of a person to remain

alive under those circumstances," he said.

A band of soiled, tired workers emerged from the remnants of the tragedy, thinking for the first time of trying to get some sleep.

Mr Dick Wubbel, of Revesby, had arrived at 8.30 am on Tuesday to operate cranes and remained on duty throughout the night and yesterday.

Superintendent George Marshall, who was in charge of the entire operation, said: "I have had only 11 hours' sleep but, unlike some fellows, I have not been at the end of a jackhammer for 22 hours."

The bodies, held briefly in a tent mortuary beside the track for police examination and identification, were quickly whisked away to the City Morgue.

The tracks were still a scene of chaos, but already gangs of work-

men were laying new sections of track and huge jackhammers were breaking up the slabs of concrete.

Officials said the tracks could be cleared by 8 pm today.

Police paraded briefly outside their mobile headquarters to receive a message of congratulation from the Police Commissioner, Mr M. Wood.

The police had been very restrained. They had to hold back thousands of people who had swarmed around barricades, doing everything possible to get a closer look.

Salvation Army workers cleaned up their food and drink stalls.

Captain Ivan Lang of Salvation Army headquarters, said it was the worst tragedy he had seen but like so many tragedies it had brought out the best in people.

Teamwork paid off for victim

By SHAUN McILRAITH, Medical Correspondent

An ambulance man, a young doctor and a nurse who spent many hours beside a trapped passenger at Granville typify the spirit and teamwork behind the rescue operation.

The surgeon groped his way between the smashed carriages and a wall of the bridge to offer his help to other teams aiding trapped passengers.

His team took over caring for Bryan Gordon. That was about midday.

For the next 64 hours the registrar — training in orthopaedic surgery — stared from the patient's side only briefly when the carriage had to be cleared because of the risk from falling debris.

The surgeon decided to change from plasma to whole blood, but the first bottle blocked.

A nurse member of the team quickly supplied a new bottle of blood and the transfusion was re-established within three minutes.

A surgeon from a team working further under the bridge pointed out the patient's condition to free Bryan Gordon might cause wreckage to collapse on his own two seriously injured patients.

Finally, at about 6 pm, a giant crane lifted the remnants of the girder. Bryan Gordon was carried carefully from the wreckage on a light stretcher, and he was transferred outside to a regular stretcher.

Dr Christopher joins the surgeon in praising the efforts of the various types of rescue worker on the scene.

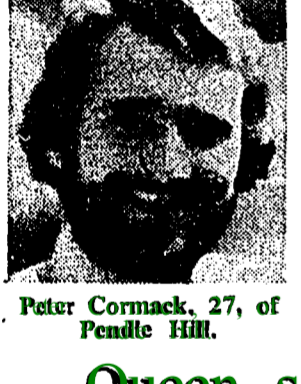
"I think the engineers, the police and doctors and nurses were very courageous to work under the concrete slab not knowing whether it was safe."



Bruce Pedersen, 26, of Bankham Hills.



Arlette Naggar, 23, of Northmead.



Peter Cormack, 27, of Pendle Hill.

Names of 32 crash dead

By late last night police had released the names of 32 people killed in the Granville disaster. They were:

Vivienne Estelle Radcliffe, 35-0, Mt Druitt Road, Wilton.

Leslie Wade Mitchell, 46, Mount. Renssel. Mount Renssel.

Hil Elizabeth Power, typist, Colson Crescent Westmead.

Christopher Rex Ellem, manager, Barnett Street, Penrith.

Christopher William Lopez, chef, Chesterfield Road, Penrith.

Bruce Pedersen, 26, bank clerk, Dobson Crescent, Bankham Hills.

John Malcolm Jones, 30, Debra Anne Metcalfe, 20-30, secretary, Campbell Street, Parramatta.

Rosemary Leech, 25, typist, Pitt Street, Parramatta.

Alan King Fulton, North Rocks Road, Parramatta.

William Gemmill, 54, Christiehill Street, Lawson.

Margaret Dunn, Glencock Avenue, Werrington.

Peter Michael Cormack, 27, bank officer, Magogwar Road, Pendle Hill.

Rodney Cotter Henderson, 36, manager, Bridge Road, Blaxland.

Michael John Dwyer, 42, claims manager, Grey Street, Glenbrook.

Dianne Grinstead, 27, Wilson Way, Blaxland.

Stephen Leslie Jones, 19, Ross Street, Parramatta.

Beryl Ann Halverson, 19, Brown Street, Penrith.

Graham Johnston, 21, Bryson Avenue, Toongabbie.

Theresa Ann Minarelli, 23, Great Western Highway, Parramatta.

Arlette Naggar, 23, secretary, Christie Street, Northmead.

Marie Veronica Ricketts, 24, Cambridge Street, Cambridge Park.

Suzanne Walker, 28, Birdwood Avenue, Springwood.

Robert George Sulter, 37, clerk, Burns Road, Springwood.

Carolyn Maria Maroney, 24, computer operator, Hay Street, Lawson.

Esther Smith, 44, Blackheath.

Aida Leona Brown, 55, manager, Valley Road, Hazelbrook.

Henry Arthur Bent, 55, accountant, Woodford Avenue, Woodford.

Kenneth Norman Maes, 27, clerk, Grant Western Highway, Pagonbridge.

Angela Mary Linkin, 25, typist, Ashfield.

Ljndy Styles, 19, Doonside.

James Arthur Fisher, 34, chemist, Downen Crescent, Mount Renssel.

Injured

Police also released yesterday the names of two more injured.

They were:

Rozlyn Fener, 15, of Hercules St, Fairfield, admitted to hospital.

Ms Holman, Falls Road, Wentworth Falls, admitted to hospital.



The horror started here: Seats untouched by the disaster end abruptly with the rest of the carriage.

Inquiry judge visits crash

Judge J. H. Staunton, who will head the judicial inquiry visited the crash scene yesterday.

He went to the wreck after accepting the appointment from the Premier, Mr Wran, in the morning.

"It was terrible, shocking," Judge Staunton said later from his Pymble home.

He spent 45 minutes watching rescue work and talking to police.

He had not known anyone travelling on the train.

Judge Staunton, Chief Justice of the NSW District Court since 1973, said it would be the first time he had presided over such an inquiry.

He said he had always had a general interest in trains, but did not travel on them regularly.

Like most boys, he had had a model train set and even now visited model train exhibitions.

He expected there would be plenty of engineers and technicians to advise on technical information presented to the inquiry.



Judge Staunton

Holiday offered

People of Toowoomba have offered to throw open their homes to widows and children of people killed at Granville.

The offer was made at a public meeting last night. It has been relayed to the Mayor of the Blue Mountains, Alderman W. Lloyd.

Queen sends her sympathy

CANBERRA, Wednesday. — The Queen has sent a telegram to the Governor-General, Sir John Kerr, expressing her sympathy for the victims of the crash.

The telegram reads: "I am much distressed to learn of the tragic train disaster at Granville. The Duke of Edinburgh joins me in sending our heartfelt sympathy to the relatives of those who have lost their lives and to the injured. Elizabeth R."

Sir John said the Queen was being kept informed of the rescue operations.

Driver still under heavy sedation

By GRAHAM WILLIAMS

Edward Olenczewicz, 52, the highly experienced driver of the train which crashed at Granville, is still under heavy sedation.

In 18 years of driving trains he has an unblemished record. He knows by heart the 50,000 speed, traffic and signal points on the entire NSW country rail network.

As a class five engine-driver — only a few make it to class six — he has learnt to drive 40 types of engines in a tough school — from steam, diesel-electric and electric locomotives to small rail-motors.

"I don't know how it happened. I can't understand it. It all happened so quickly," he sobbed as rescuers freed him from his overturned cab on Tuesday.

Until 8.12 am on Tuesday Mr and Mrs Olenczewicz, who migrated from Poland about 1948, lived a happy, peaceful life in their neat home with its peacocks garden at Greenacre.

"We're jumbo jet pilots on swagman's wages," was the bitter comment yesterday of Joe Booth, State president of the Australian Federated Union of Locomotive Enginemen and a highly skilled driver like Mr Olenczewicz.

"The deep tragedy is that when things completely beyond our control occur, as obviously happened in the case of Mr Olenczewicz, so many people blame the driver."

That is the ordeal that Mrs Olenczewicz is now enduring. So many abusive callers have rung her that friends say she is almost distraught.

Mrs Buntly Mare, of Springwood, who was hurt in the crash, runs Mrs Olenczewicz yesterday to offer her condolences.

After hearing allegations about the train's speed, she wanted to reassure her wife that Mr Olenczewicz had, in her opinion, driven the train well.

"Mrs Olenczewicz was deeply upset by the huge number of abusive and foolish calls — and she said mine was the first kind one she'd had," Mrs Mare said.

That life has now been shattered for both of them. Mrs Olenczewicz has been driven nearly distraught by abusive telephone calls.

Mr Olenczewicz, a burly man of 187 cm (6ft 2in) whose gentleness impressed his driver mates at Eveleigh rail depot, left home about 9 o'clock on Monday night.

He drove the 11.36 pm train from Central up the mountains, arriving at Mt Victoria at 1.35 am.

The death train was cleared at the deserted station while Mr Olenczewicz and the fireman, Bill McCrossan, 26, had a few hours' break and a sandwich and a cup of tea in the icy cold of the mountain town.

Then Mr Olenczewicz began to shunt the train, ready for its departure — with no passengers boarding at Mt Victoria — at 6.09 am.

Mr Olenczewicz had driven over the mountain run hundreds of times. He loved trains.

The man on whose shoulders rested the safety of 600 passengers every morning earned \$440 a week. That's \$176 a week.

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