



# *Reflections:* A DECADE LATER

THE PAN AM 103 BOMBING FOREVER CHANGED US.

TODAY, THE EXPERIENCE OF THAT TRAGIC LOSS  
REMINDS US OF THE SACREDNESS OF LIFE AND BRINGS US  
TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY TO REMEMBER THE VICTIMS  
AND CARRY ON THEIR IDEALS.

# THE PATHWAY OF *Healing*

By Richard L. Phillips

When a terrorist bomb exploded aboard Pan Am Flight 103 on December 21, 1988, it scattered wreckage and remains over the hillsides around and in the village of Lockerbie, Scotland. Two hundred seventy lives were lost, lives hailing from 21 different countries and including 11 citizens on the ground in Lockerbie. Since that time 10 years ago, the event widely known as the "Lockerbie Air Disaster" has literally had a life of its own. People have often asked us here at Syracuse University why Flight 103 does not fade away like so many other major disasters that occur on a far-too-regular basis around the world. Answers are not hard to come by.

Filled as they are with intrigue and mystery, the events and motives inherent in the bombing, the international entanglements and personalities of those responsible, as well as the diplomatic implications, are still far from being resolved. On top of this, formal judicial procedures have yet to begin in the widespread attempts at a legal resolution. With such mystery and so much unfinished business, it is understandable that the Lockerbie Air Disaster has a life of its own and is still a regular news item.

As a result of this tragedy, many rewarding and beneficial things have become manifest. While no one would wish tragedy upon us for its so-called spin-off benefits, these benefits cannot and should not be ignored.

On January 18, 1989, between 13,000 and 14,000 people came to the Carrier Dome at Syracuse University for a memorial service. That somber event symbolized the mood and sensitivity of the University and Syracuse communities in a way that may never be duplicated. We were, as a campus, more keenly attuned to one another as human beings in the semesters following the loss of our 35 students; we were more aware of the depth and the sacredness of life; and we were more attuned to what it means to relate to one another in our studies and in our daily lives. Annually, 35 memorial scholarships are awarded in a convocation ceremony at

Syracuse University. Competition for the Remembrance Scholarships brings students who were very young at the time of the tragedy to an awareness of its dimensions and a sensitivity to the losses we experienced. This, in turn, keenly reminds us of the lessons learned through our loss in 1988.

The deepening awareness of the value of life and such things as scholarships only begin to touch the surface of the positive spin-offs from the tragedy. Visiting Lockerbie and the surrounding area was a pilgrimage for many of us. The care, sensitivity, and beauty of the memorials are breathtaking. The relationships that developed among the educational system and the citizens of Lockerbie and those of us here at Syracuse University are productive and enjoyable. Each year, two students from Lockerbie attend Syracuse University, hundreds of visitors travel from Syracuse to Lockerbie, and dozens from Lockerbie visit Syracuse. All this has resulted in many lifelong friendships. While no one wants a Lockerbie Air Disaster to create friendships, there is no denying the beauty and value of these new ties.

Many other communities besides Lockerbie and Syracuse are implicated in the events surrounding and stemming from the terrorist bombing of Pan Am Flight 103. Each community and individual touched has a story of tragedy and a story of benefits derived from tragedy.

I was acquainted with several of the student victims, two of them particularly closely. I never walk by the Place of Remembrance (at the entrance to campus at the south end of University Avenue) without glancing at their names, remembering their vitality, and sensing the tragic loss we experienced on that December day. At the same time, I am much more sensitive to the beauty, depth, and magnificent potential of the next student I meet on the pathways of this campus.

*Richard L. Phillips is dean of Hendricks Chapel.*



Steven Russell Berrell



Kenneth J. Bissett



Stephen J. Boland



Nicole Elise Boulanger



Timothy M. Cardwell



Theodora Cohen



Eric M. Coker

# Unfinished BUSINESS

A decade after the bombing, families persevere in their efforts to improve air safety, bring the terrorists to justice, and ensure the memory of their lost loved ones

By Joan L. Dater

It was April 1989 and I waited anxiously, wondering if any of our daughter's artwork could be salvaged from the Pan Am 103 wreckage in Lockerbie. Gretchen, a fine arts major who was spending the fall semester of her junior year abroad, had called home when she secured a ride to Heathrow Airport on December 18, 1988. She was excited at the prospect of coming home after an eventful semester in London offered by Syracuse University's Division of International Programs Abroad.

"I'll bring all of my artwork home with me," she said. One of her pieces was selected to be hung in a students' art exhibit at the London School of Art. "I'll tell you all about it when I see you." Sadly, her wish never materialized, for she died along with 269 others in the mid-air terrorist bombing over Lockerbie on December 21, 1988.

In our hometown of Ramsey, New Jersey, her father, Tom, and I were preparing for a spring 1989 opening and display of her works in mixed media at the local library. We had about 32 pieces from 2 1/2 years of study at the Maryland Institute, College of Art in Baltimore. Hanging them for display was a painful process.

And then came the call from the American consulate in Edinburgh—a an acrylic painting of a London rooftop scene was discovered among the wreckage. Located on the ground, it was in poor shape. Lockerbie constabulary identified it by Gretchen's signature on the back.

The painting arrived within 10 days. It was quarter-folded and smeared with diesel fuel and mud. Her signature was barely visible.

Luckily, the library exhibit was extended for four months and we were able to display it along with the rest of her work. An art restorer and SU parent in nearby Franklin Lakes, New Jersey, was kind enough to restore it for us. The event made the front page of our local newspaper.

I named the piece "Unfinished Business," since Gretchen had completed the design and filled in some color, but left the sky and a few other details unfinished—a symbol and, at the same time, a manifestation of a young talent's life cut short.

It is the 10th anniversary of the heinous, cowardly act that took the lives of 35 Syracuse students. The terrorist bombing sent repercussions throughout the SU campus, the nation, and the world. Shocked and bereft, but determined to learn what had happened, many family members of the victims traveled to the Carrier Dome for a January 1989 memorial service. There we sought each other out, hoping to find understanding and comfort. We also embarked upon an effort to organize and become an advocacy group for political change.

Terrorist acts of isolated but scattered groups, regardless of whether these groups receive protection and financing from states that sponsor terrorism, are criminal acts and must be dealt with under international law. It was not until June 1991 that the Department of Justice, under the Bush administration, indicted two Libyan intelligence officers—Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi and Lamen Khalifa Fhimah—suspected of placing an explosive device in a Samsonite bag aboard the feeder flight in Malta. The flight was destined for Frankfurt and then London. We must keep in mind that there are others unnamed in the indictment, and, most likely, such an act of mass murder would not have been executed without the approval of Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi.

Since organizing, the families of the 35 SU students killed in the bombing have lent emotional support to one another and succeeded in advocating for improvements in these areas:

- Tighter security measures for airlines and airports.
- The pursuit of legal means to bring justice to those responsible.



"Unfinished Business" by Gretchen Dater

- Bringing pressure to bear on the United States government to enact stronger counter-terrorism measures.

How have we victim families survived this ordeal? I often ask myself that very question. Certainly such unresolved issues as legal justice for the Libyan suspects, tighter security measures, and the desire for a safer, secure world underscore our children's sense of idealism. We successfully sued Pan American World Airways for lax security and for "willful misconduct" in allowing the mid-air explosion to happen. This one event—the bombing—has directed me personally to reprioritize my energies for the remainder of my life. In spirit, I join hands with Gretchen in working to make the world a safer place. Yet, in the midst of such lofty goals, there is a deep, ever-present pain in suffering the loss of a child.

## IMPROVING SECURITY, SEEKING JUSTICE

With the 10th anniversary, it is time to pause and take stock of developments. They have occurred in two significant areas: airline and airport security, and movement toward a criminal trial.

"Pam Am 103 was the galvanizing event for the United States' approach to civil aviation security," says Cathal Flynn, associate administrator for Civil Aviation Security of

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the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). “Since that tragic day, we’ve been working steadily with industry to improve all aspects of security, and have dramatically increased our ability to protect the flying public. As a result, all of the FAA’s mandates from the Aviation Security Improvement Act of 1990 have been addressed.”

Initiatives in three areas—personnel, procedures, and research and development—have led to a security regime that reduces vulnerabilities and meets today’s evolving threat, Flynn says. Among the improvements are the deployment of security personnel overseas and at the nation’s major airports; the hiring of hundreds of aviation security specialists; and the creation of a robust research and development program to bring new security equipment online along with better-trained equipment operators, as well as an automated passenger-screening program, an expansion of domestic passenger bag-matching, and an aircraft hardening program to reduce aircraft vulnerability to explosive devices.

“Perhaps most importantly, the FAA is working with airlines on the world’s largest deployment of aviation security equipment, including nearly 500 trace-detection devices and 62 CTX-5000s, the FAA’s only certified explosives detection system,” Flynn says. “The agency’s most significant challenge is follow-through on plans to purchase and deploy \$100 million worth of this equipment annually over the next four years and to make sure that all who operate the new systems are properly trained.”

The other area of significant development is progress toward a criminal trial. In August, the American and British govern-

ments shifted their positions and agreed to put the Libyan suspects on trial in the Netherlands before a panel of Scottish judges. At press time, plans were still unfolding.

Prior to that, on July 21, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright had a telephone conference with board members of the advocacy group Victims of Pan American Flight 103. Nine of our 15 board members participated. All nine voted to formally support our government in its efforts to bring the two suspects to trial under a Scottish or American system of justice, with a few reservations.

We have, in addition, insisted on the following:

- Gadhafi must fully comply with the United Nations’ resolutions.
- All sanctions are to remain in force.
- Libya must renounce terrorism and cease all support to terrorist organizations.
- Under no circumstance will the United States government permit the trial to be conducted under the auspices of the World Court or an international tribunal; it must be conducted under Scottish or American systems of justice, with Scottish or American judges.

### REMEMBERING THOSE LOST

In the meantime, as December 21 approached, several events commemorating the 10th anniversary were already under way. Observances began with the University College Summer Lecture Series at the Maxwell School on campus. Residents of Ramsey, New Jersey, where Gretchen grew up, gathered for an ecumenical, community-wide memorial service at the local Roman Catholic church on November 8. It was accompanied by community-wide church bell ringing and a Silent Walk for Justice on the way to the Ramsey Public Library, where Gretchen’s artwork was again on display.

A Service of Commemoration was held simultaneously on December 21 in Hendricks Chapel, at Dryfesdale Cemetery in Lockerbie, at Westminster Abbey in London, and at Arlington National Cemetery in



Jason M. Coker



Gary L. Colasanti



Scot Marsh Cory



Gretchen Joyce Dater



Shannon Davis



Turhan Michael Ergin



John P. Flynn

courtesy of joan dater



Joan Dater, left, and Tom Dater are joined by New Jersey Congresswoman Marge Roukema at an art exhibition of Gretchen’s work in their hometown of Ramsey, New Jersey.

Virginia, site of the Memorial Cairn. The cairn was financed and erected by family members of the victims and their friends. Its stones, quarried and cut near Lockerbie, were a gift from the people of Scotland to the people of the United States in memory of our lost loved ones.

President Clinton, in stating his wish to be with us in Arlington for the 10th memorial observance, wrote: "Throughout the years since that awful day, the American people have held fast to the memory of these innocents and shared your grief. Our nation has also maintained a steadfast resolve that justice be brought to bear against those who perpetrated this terrible deed. Today, I know that determination remains unshakable, and I reaffirm to you that we will not rest from our efforts until those responsible pay for their crimes.... The world must not be allowed to let the memory of this crime fade from sight."

Only time will advance the varied and multi-layered issues surrounding the bombing. Ten years later, and 10 years older, I wonder if I will live to see permanent and just rewards for our efforts. If not, my deepest fear will be realized—that Gretchen, her fellow passengers, and 11 residents of Lockerbie died in vain. We Americans must not let that happen.

*Joan L. Dater of Ramsey, New Jersey, is a member of the advocacy group Victims of Pan American Flight 103.*

## BRINGING THE *Suspects to Trial*

### An SU international law expert shares her views on the pending case against the alleged terrorists

By Gary Pallassino

The bomb that exploded aboard Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, in 1988 ignited an international legal controversy that smolders even today.

The bombing killed the plane's 259 passengers and crew and 11 people on the ground in Lockerbie. Among the dead were 189 Americans, including 35 students from Syracuse University's Division of International Programs Abroad. In November 1991, the United States and Scotland each charged Libyan nationals Abdel Basset Ali al-Megrahi and Lamem Khalifa Fhimah with murder and conspiracy to murder—crimes that carry maximum sentences of 30 years' imprisonment under Scottish law and the death penalty under U.S. federal law. Since then, Libya has refused to surrender the men, and the three countries have wrangled over how and where to try them. At press time, plans were under way to conduct a trial at The Hague in the Netherlands.

*Syracuse University Magazine* asked College of Law professor Donna Arzt to discuss the case and its possible outcomes. A

specialist in international law and the Middle East, Arzt directs the law school's Center for Global Law and Practice. This spring she will teach a new course on international criminal law.

**HOW** did the trial come to be held in the Netherlands?

Originally Libya argued that the suspects should only be tried in a Muslim court under Islamic law. Over the years, a number of third parties, including the Arab League, the Organization of African Unity, and a Scottish professor of international law, proposed that the trial be held in a neutral third country. This past summer, Libya announced publicly that it would accept such a compromise and secret negotiations took place involving all of these parties, the Netherlands, and the U.N. Secretariat. For a while, negotiations were stalled over the issue of who would serve on the court: Libya wanted a panel of "international judges," while Scotland and the United States insisted on a Scottish jury just like the one that would be impan-

## COMMEMORATIVE GLOBE HONORS VICTIMS

In honor of the 270 victims who died in the December 1988 Pan Am 103 bombing, the Victims of Pan Am 103 advocacy group has commissioned the Lockerbie Remembrance Globe. "With the 10th anniversary, we decided it was very important to have a commemorative piece," says Victims of Pan Am 103 member Jane Schultz, who lost her son, Thomas, in the bombing.

The glass water globe combines representations from three memorials—the Cairn at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, the Garden of Remembrance at the Dryfesdale Cemetery and the Remembrance Room in Tundergarth Churchyard, both in Lockerbie.

The globe, mounted on a wooden base, contains a music box that plays *Amazing Grace*. Schultz, who helped organize the

December 21 service in Arlington, was scheduled to present commemorative globes to President Clinton and other top government officials, as well as Chancellor Kenneth A. Shaw. "We appreciate how people have kept in touch and how friendships have stayed strong and grown stronger," Schultz says. "The globe is a nice way for all of us to remember the friends and family we lost."

To order a globe, send a \$30 check (made out to 10th Commemorative Globe) to: Victims of Pan Am 103, P.O. Box 1106, Ridgefield, CT 06877. Include your name, address, and phone number. The price, which includes shipping and handling, covers the group's cost, plus expenses, for creating the globe.



eled in a courtroom in Scotland. (Libya's version would have been highly impractical, given that few judges outside Scotland are familiar with Scottish law!)

Finally, in late August, the United States and United Kingdom announced they would agree to convening in the Netherlands a Scottish court, operating under Scottish criminal procedure and penal law, and presided over by a panel of three Scottish judges. The U.N. Security Council then issued a new, unanimous resolution calling on Libya to transfer the suspects to the Netherlands, make evidence and witnesses available to the court, and also cooperate with French authorities investigating the 1989 bombing of a French airplane over Niger, which killed 171 people. In return, the Security Council would suspend economic sanctions that have been in effect since 1992. Additional sanctions would be imposed on Libya if the two are not promptly turned over for trial.

**WHAT** are the advantages and disadvantages for Libya in having the trial in a third country?

Libya undoubtedly wants an end to the U.N. sanctions that banned air travel to and from Libya, barred the sale of weapons and some oil equipment, and froze its foreign assets. Many African states have already agreed to ignore the sanctions, and Libya is probably banking on this momentum to seek their ultimate elimination. But we can clearly see from its equivocation that it doesn't want to appear to be capitulating to Western ultimatums. I would suspect that national dignity is more important to Moammar Gadhafi than concern for the rights of the two individual nationals. But he may also be worried that under the pressure of prosecution, they may implicate other Libyan officials in the Pan Am 103 plot, if not also in the entire Middle East terrorist infrastructure.

**WHAT** are the advantages and disadvantages for the United States and United Kingdom?

Clearly, the United States and United Kingdom would prefer the trial be held in either of their own countries, at the very least, and not appear to be undermining the prestige and integrity of their own criminal justice systems. But as the British representative to the Security Council explained, this proposal has been made in the interest of justice and to bring an end to the years of waiting by the victims' families.

Some of the families are critical of the

Netherlands plan, arguing that it sets a dangerous precedent for terrorists to dictate terms of their own trials. But this is clearly an exceptional case, since suspected terrorists, when they are identified, are usually either beyond reach or caught by the state that wants to prosecute them. Both Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook insist the plan is designed not as a concession to terrorists, but to call Libya's bluff. If they succeed in calling Libya's bluff, they may get further sanctions imposed, such as a complete oil embargo.

**ARE** there precedents for such a trial?

The closest precedents, such as the Nuremberg Trials, were international courts trying international law. Of course, changes of venue from one jurisdiction to another are common within the U.S. legal system: Witness the movement of the Timothy McVeigh trial from Oklahoma City to Denver. While that took place within the common jurisdiction of U.S. law, the principle behind a move to the Netherlands is similar—to ensure that the trial is not prejudiced by the hostility of the local population.

**WILL** justice be served?

It all depends on your definition of justice, and I'm sure that Moammar Gadhafi has a different one from Attorney General Janet Reno or the Scottish Crown Office. But if you consider that a trial is always a compromise between fairness and expediency in the search for truth, then I think that justice is possible. Scottish criminal law, no matter where it is applied, is presumably fair to defendants. After 10 years of waiting, it is pragmatic to hold the trial outside Scotland rather than to never hold it at all.

However, there are many potential traps for the unwary. If the defendants are convicted, Libya and possibly its allies may retort that the trial was unfair from the start. If they are acquitted, many of the victims' families will be crushed. From what I've read, the evidence against these two suspects is rather flimsy, based on an unreliable eyewitness identification. It is equally if not more plausible that the true culprits had Iranian or Syrian rather than Libyan connections, or at the very least, that these Libyans were not acting alone. Therefore, a truly fair trial may result in their acquittal. In other words, while the trial may serve justice, it might not produce satisfaction.



Pamela Elaine Herbert



Karen Lee Hunt



Christopher Andrew Jones



Julianne F. Kelly



Wendy A. Lincoln



Alexander Lowenstein



Suzanne Marie Miazga

# Remembering LOST CLASSMATES

## TOGETHER in my heart

By Mike Toole

There are dates that will always stick in your mind. For some it's personal, like the day you were married. For others it's historical, like the day President Kennedy was assassinated. December 21, 1988, is both for me—the day three of my friends were murdered on Pan Am Flight 103.

Eric Coker. Jason Coker. Gary Colasanti.

All three names appear together—on the passenger list, on memorials in Syracuse and Lockerbie, and in my heart.

Gary was a pledge brother of mine in fall 1987 at Sigma Alpha Epsilon. I admit I didn't know Gary that well. Other friends of mine were much closer to him. Pan Am 103 robbed me, and many others, of the opportunity to know him better.

Eric was Jason's twin brother. He was a junior at the University of Rochester, studying in London as part of SU's program. He was intelligent, extremely funny, and Jason's best friend. They came into this world together and they left it together. I met Eric through Jason, who was my roommate at Syracuse.

Jason's loss hit me the hardest. He was the first person I met at Syracuse. He was also the first person to dare me to think about the world around me. He was incredibly quick, like a comedian. He could take a person with a huge ego and cut him down to size in an instant. He enjoyed beer, women, and sports like any other 20-year-old guy. But, unlike most 20-year-olds, he was very aware of national and international events. He was well-read. He had traveled to the Soviet Union in high school. It was this passion for learning and exploring that led him to London, and eventually led me there as well.

While they were seeing the world in the fall of 1988, my friends and I were waiting for them to come home, to hear their stories and ask them questions. "How was it?" "What did you see?" "Where did you go?" "Should I do it?"

Shortly after noon on December 21, 1988, I left my apartment at Grover Cleveland and drove six hours home to Massachusetts. My semester was over. When I got home that evening, my mother showed me a card

Jason had sent days earlier, wishing me and my family a Merry Christmas from London. She asked me when he was coming home. I didn't know the exact day, but I knew it would be sometime that week, and that he would call when he got settled in.

As I talked to my mother, my father was in the other room watching the news, and called us in. He said a plane had just crashed in Scotland, and there were people from Syracuse on board. All of a sudden, something felt terribly wrong.

I knew Gary was coming home that night. Earlier that day, my friend Laura told me she was going to Kennedy Airport to meet him in the evening. Could it be the same plane? I called my roommates back at school. They said they had been trying to call me, but the line was busy (my brother had been on the phone). Not only was Gary on the plane, but so were Jason and Eric. My heart sank, my face froze, and my body went numb. The only thing that snapped me out of it was that another friend of ours, Tim Houlihan, Gary's roommate, took another flight and made it home safely.

I felt totally lost. I hung up the phone and told my parents. They were speechless. I was speechless. I left the house and drove to church—I didn't know what else to do. When I got there, I sat alone in the dark and talked to myself, to God, and to Jason, Eric, and Gary. This was the only way I could talk to them now. There would be no phone calls, no letters, no stories at Chuck's about London.

I was sad and angry. How could this happen? They were good people. Good things happen to good people—right? Well, what the hell was this? No answers—from Jason, Eric, Gary, or from God. It was time to grow up. My life and many other lives were never going to be the same.

I drove home, calmer, but still confused. I watched *Headline News* all night, staring at the flames in Lockerbie and at the grief at Kennedy Airport. I also stared at the Christmas card, from a friend who was no longer with us, a friend I could never write back to.

Several days passed. I talked with other friends from the London program, trying to find out what their semester was like and what it was like for Jason, Eric, and Gary.

I went to their funerals, met their families, and shared what I could about my



Mike Toole, left, with Jason Coker in November 1987.

experiences with their wonderful sons. To this day, I wish there was something I could do for them, because my loss and sense of pain is nothing compared to theirs.

When we returned to school in January, there was an emotional memorial service at the Carrier Dome and Hendricks Chapel. I will never forget that day. It was the first step in a long healing process. I may not have been able to see them and talk to them anymore, but I could write to them. The University provided books to write in, one for each student killed, that would be turned over to that student's family afterward.

I wrote to Gary and Eric, wishing we had been given more time to get to know each other. Then I wrote to Jason, remembering the good times, and wishing he was still here. I broke down in tears. My friend Matt Allen, someone I met through Jason, consoled me. Matt was just one of many people I became closer to because of this tragedy.

The spring semester was a somber one. We all managed to get through it by being there for one another. I became tighter with my roommates and many of my other friends. We all grew up very fast in the spring of 1989.

Matt went to London in the fall of 1989. He went to Lockerbie, and told me I should go sometime. Jason never understood why I didn't want to spend a semester abroad. But I was too wrapped up in my major, my internships, my fraternity, sports, and college life in general to leave. "I'll go to Europe when I graduate," I said.

As fate would have it, I became ill in the fall of 1989, and missed the semester. I would have to graduate a semester late. I decided I would finish in London.

I had the time of my life in the fall of 1990. I saw what Jason, Eric, and Gary saw. I took classes in the same rooms they did. I lived in the same neighborhood they did. I drank in the same pubs they did.

I also went to Lockerbie. I saw where each of them landed. It is one of the most peaceful places on all the earth. The people of Lockerbie are the kindest you will ever meet.

There is no explaining this tragedy. It should not have happened. I wish it never did. Ten years later, I still miss them, especially Jason. I keep saying to myself—I wish he could see me now, he would be proud. Then I realize he can see me, because a part of him still lives on to this day—as a part of me.

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## THE HILL'S *darkest day* By Kevin O'Neill

When I used to visit the park growing up, my father occasionally scolded me for playing too close to a memorial for war veterans. I respected his wishes, but didn't quite understand the importance of a wall with a bunch of names on it.

Ten years later I wonder if the students who pass the Place of Remembrance outside the Hall of Languages see it as anything more than just a wall with a bunch of names on it.

To the Syracuse University classes of 1989 to 1992, that Pan Am 103 victims memorial is much more than names. It honors classmates lost on a dreadful day, December 21, 1988. Memories from that afternoon, and the days that follow, will remain with us forever.

Some details of those days are fuzzy. I don't remember what the weather was like. If I had to guess, I'd go with cold and dank. But I have dozens of recollections of late December 1988 that are as vivid as any in my memory. Looking back I see that those days changed me. But it's a growth process I wish I'd never experienced.

It happened just as the semester was wrapping up, toward the end of final exams. Per the plan of the terrorists, it happened to people heading home to their loved ones, people looking forward to the holidays.

Like many others, I remember where I was the moment I heard. I had just arrived home

at the Sigma Alpha Epsilon house after taking a final exam and found out as I stepped through the door. It was known that a group of Syracuse University students studying in London was on board. Two of our fraternity brothers were studying in London.

I headed up to my room when the special telephone number set up by Pan Am flashed on the screen. Five minutes later I was confirming the fears of the growing group in the living room. Gary Colasanti had boarded Flight 103.

The SAE house was just a couple of doors down from the Catholic Center. A daily late afternoon Mass was held in a small chapel that I tried to get to once a week. Struggling with what to do next, a couple of us headed there followed by a group of 8 or 10 more, few of them Catholic, a few who weren't Christians. The differences of theology and religious politics that we sometimes discussed didn't seem very important.

Father Charles Borgognoni had heard the news only minutes before Mass. He was the most emotional I had seen him in four years. If you have attended a Catholic wedding, you will be surprised to learn that the daily Mass usually lasts only 15 minutes. On that day it was longer. Students continued to arrive after it was completed, young people searching for answers to the unanswerable.

That afternoon we lost friends and colleagues. Acquaintances and classmates. Boyfriends, girlfriends, brothers, and sisters. The pain of those around us magnified our grief. Almost everyone I knew lost someone important. A girl I was dating lost a sorority sister. A classmate lost a girl he loved. As bad as we felt, we all knew someone who felt worse. Anyone who was on campus will never forget that day.

That evening we went to an emotional Hendricks Chapel prayer service led by clergy of various denominations who ministered on campus. In our grief, we went back to our dorms, houses, and apartments to discover we were part of the news. The service was on the network news specials, sandwiched between live reports from a shattered Scottish village and grim-faced anchormen asking questions of the aviation and terrorism experts kept handy for such occasions.

Gary Colasanti was from the North Shore of Boston, and I lived about an hour south. I liked Gary and had looked forward to his return. He had a zest for life that was contagious and was the kind of person everyone liked to be around. We were friends, but he was younger and we weren't best friends. Although it clearly was the thing to do in ret-



Richard Paul Monetti



Anne Lindsey Otenasek



Peter R. Peirce



Sarah S.B. Philipps



Frederick "Sandy" Phillipps



Louise "Luann" Rogers



Thomas Britton Schultz

respect, I struggled over whether to contact his family after returning home from Syracuse. I wondered if it would be presumptuous or inconsiderate for me to call.

Fortunately, I did call and visit them, and will never forget how warmly they greeted me in their grief. The house full of family and friends should have been celebrating Christmas Eve, but instead was mourning the loss of a son, one with so much talent and promise. I quietly told them of a memorial service SAE was planning for Gary in Syracuse in January and was pleased that they would plan to attend. Shortly before I left, I cautiously told them one of a dozen or so funny stories about Gary that I had thought of in the days following the bombing. Their reaction told me my caution was unnecessary. I should have provided them with upbeat memories of Gary and the people he touched from the moment I walked in the door.

The Colasantis' grief was shared that day by the families of 270 victims, 35 of them with ties to Syracuse University. I think about the disaster that punished these families and our campus quite often.

I think about it every time victims' friends and family members are made part of the story. I remember the poor mother writhing in agony on the floor at JFK Airport, which TV news people callously beamed around the world. I sometimes wonder if the Syracuse alumni who permeate the news business have that same memory before they show hysterical parents arriving at the scene of a schoolyard shooting.

I think about it every time I see a group of young people traveling together on some adventure. I think about it every time I travel internationally and have patience at security checkpoints that I seldom exhibit anywhere else.

I thought about it when Chancellor Eggers died, recalling the grace he showed representing us all. I think about it during graduation season, remembering my own commencement and the presence of the mayor of Lockerbie.

I think about it every time terrorists strike, wondering whose god could possibly be served by the death of innocents.

I think about it every December, and wonder why I have gone another year without writing to Gary's family to tell them that I think of him and of them.

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*Kevin O'Neill '89 is  
a marketing consultant in Atlanta.*

# Remembrance SCHOLARS

## Keep the Memory Alive

By David Rubin

Picture, if you will, 35 Syracuse University students walking softly, single file, down the center aisle of Hendricks Chapel, each carrying a small lighted candle. The students gently place the candles along the front of the stage so they form a glowing ring. Then they take their seats.

So begins the most poignant campus gathering of the year: the ceremony recognizing the 35 new Remembrance Scholars. While it is a celebration of their achievements in the classroom and community, memories of the 35 victims of the bombing of Pan Am 103 are constantly with those in attendance. Thoughts of what might have been for those victims are ever present. Grief often overwhelms pride in the achievements of the living, and tears flow freely.

Parents of many of the victims return to campus for this ceremony. These parents, who have suffered so much, find comfort in the achievements of the Remembrance Scholars. The parents give strength to the rest of us, who can hardly bear to meet their gaze.

The ceremony lasts an hour or so. Chancellor Shaw speaks. A member of the selection committee—representing the faculty and staff—speaks. And one of the 35 Remembrance Scholars speaks on behalf of the group. The chapel choir sings. Each scholar is then called to the stage to be recognized by name. The ceremony is followed by a reception, where the sadness is swept away by the scholars' optimism as they look forward to finishing their senior year and getting on with the business of life.

For the many high-achievers in the SU student body, winning a Remembrance Scholarship—which is worth \$5,000 toward senior-year expenses—is the capstone to an academic career. The grapevine wisdom on what it takes to win a Remembrance Scholarship is quite accurate, so considerable self-selection occurs. Students know strong classroom performance is mandatory—a grade point average of at least 3.2, and often much higher. But grades alone don't admit one into this circle. Remembrance Scholars should embody the qualities of exploration, volunteerism, and achievement that marked the lives of the 35 victims.

Typically some 200 students apply for the 35 scholarships. They fill out lengthy applications that ask them to describe their aca-

ademic achievements, their work experiences, and their volunteerism.

The heart of the application is three essay questions. The first asks what lessons can be drawn from the bombing for today's world. This tests their awareness of current events and their grasp of political and terrorist developments. The second essay asks why the applicant believes she or he is Remembrance material; specifically, how the life the applicant has lived matches the spirit of the victims. The third essay permits applicants to profile themselves and discuss the cultural, intellectual, and familial influences that have shaped their lives.

The 200 written applications are given to a team of 24 selection committee members. Twelve are SU faculty or staff members, and 12 are current scholars. They are divided into six teams of four persons each. In round one, each team reviews between 30 and 35 applications. The teams select the top 10 or 11 for advancement into round two.

Each finalist is then interviewed by a team (one that didn't review the paper record). These interviews can be stressful affairs—and are meant to be. The judges want to explore each candidate's sincerity, sophistication, breadth of knowledge, and grace under pressure. We look for that fire in the eyes that identifies a person sure to make a significant contribution to society. The entire group of judges then discusses the candidates and makes the final 35 choices.

Shortly after the bombing, the University received some significant donations to launch this scholarship program. But the majority of the 35 are still funded from the general scholarship pool. This year—to mark the 10th anniversary of the bombing as well as the Commitment to Learning campaign—SU is seeking to attract additional gifts to support the scholarships.

Donors can be confident that their gifts support seniors who exemplify the best this University has to offer—students with a sense of history who will build communities, students who have taken up the important work that the victims of Pan Am 103 were not permitted to finish.

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*David Rubin is dean of the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications and serves as chair of the Remembrance Scholars Selection Committee.*

# Lockerbie SCHOLARS

## Maintain Ties with SU

By Tammy Conklin

iona Drysdale was only 8 years old in 1988, but she vividly remembers the Pan Am Flight 103 air disaster and the impact that single event had on her hometown of Lockerbie, Scotland. "The crash had a devastating effect on everyone," Drysdale recalls. "It is still so much a part of life there."

Drysdale also noticed how deep and emotional the bond between Lockerbie and Syracuse became over the past 10 years. It is a bond that has shifted from one of sorrow to one of friendship and healing, she says. "I think, somehow, Lockerbie will always be connected to Syracuse."

This year Drysdale and Alison Younger attend classes at Syracuse University as Lockerbie Scholars. The two are friends and former classmates at Lockerbie Academy.

Each year since the tragedy occurred, two students from the academy have spent their first year of college at SU. Tuition and fees are paid by the Lockerbie Trust and SU. The trust was established by SU and Lockerbie to ensure a year's study at SU for two of the village's students. According to Judith O'Rourke, a local coordinator of the Lockerbie Scholars program and executive assistant to the vice president for Undergraduate Studies, selection is based in part on a written essay. The essays are reviewed by three members of the Lockerbie Trust and two SU faculty members in London. The finalists are interviewed by trust members. "This program was started as an ongoing tribute," O'Rourke says. "It has worked out very well for us, and for the students."

O'Rourke stays in frequent contact with the scholars once they arrive on campus. Being thousands of miles from home, the scholars quickly learn the value of their friendships with O'Rourke. "It is great to have someone like her on campus," Drysdale says. "She is kind of like a surrogate mom."

Drysdale and Younger also benefit from having each other. "If I had been the only scholar, I'm not sure I could have done it," Younger says. "It's been a lot easier being here with Fiona."

Although none of the 18 previous Lockerbie Scholars chose to complete undergraduate degrees at SU, the experience provides some much-appreciated cultural awareness, O'Rourke says. "For the most part, the students' experiences here at SU have been very positive."

Drysdale, a special education major, wanted to attend SU because the University has such a high profile in her community. A display on the University is updated all year, and former Lockerbie Scholars return to Lockerbie Academy each year to share their SU experiences. "I realized that it was the chance of a lifetime," Drysdale says.

Younger, a School of Management student, wasn't as familiar with SU, but was excited by the prospect of beginning her college career in the United States. "For me, it was just the right time," Younger explains. "Even though I had already been accepted to university back home, it was the right thing to do."

Drysdale was surprised by how deeply the tragedy seems etched into the collective consciousness of the University. "I think the memorial has a lot to do with that," she says. "It is a very appropriate tribute."

Younger agrees. "The memorial is very subtle. You walk up from Marshall Street and there it is."

Of the tragedy that will forever join Lockerbie and Syracuse, Drysdale says the healing is ongoing. "I will never forget what happened, I don't think anyone in Lockerbie ever will, but everything moves on. To do so is a testimony to the lives that were lost."



Amy Elizabeth Shapiro



Cynthia J. Smith



Mark Lawrence Tobin



Alexia Kathryn Tsairis



Nicholas Andreas Vrenios



Keshia Weedon



Miriam Luby Wolfe



The Remembrance Room was added to a chapel at Tundergarth Mains, a cemetery in Lockerbie. Inside is the *Book of Remembrance*, where a page is dedicated to each bombing victim. The cemetery was where much of the plane wreckage was recovered.