

# Light at the end of the tunnel

**Inspector Glen McMunn, who has just been awarded the MBE for his services to the community in London, gives a moving account of his experiences as he pulled passengers from the wreckage of a train carriage on July 7.**

by Syreeta Lund

As a woman in her twenties was carried from a bombed-out Underground carriage during the horrors of July 7 last year, Insp Glen McMunn saw the light of life in her eyes flicker out.

'Almost one of the last people to be taken out of the carriage was this young woman. I was helping to move her out, I had hold of her legs and the other officers were holding her by her torso.

'As we were moving her I just saw her eyes; one minute they were open and she had been talking; then her eyes closed and she dropped her head to one side,' says Insp McMunn.

They had to leave her where she was on that train and try to find passengers who were still left alive. Her body could also possibly provide vital evidence for the crime scene; Insp McMunn still had to do his job amid the chaos and the shock.

Following the terrorist attacks in London that day it would emerge that 52 people had been killed and 700 injured.

The inspector, who has spent his 25-year career as a British Transport Police officer, was just one of the many from the emergency services who made a difference to the death toll; he was one of the people responsible for pulling survivors from the carriage.

The officer was two hours into his early morning shift at Tottenham Court Road in central London, when he took a call to say there had been a power surge at Liverpool Street station.

When he and a colleague arrived at Liverpool Street, the fire brigade were already there and he took a call that a person was 'under a train' at Edgware Road tube station.

It later emerged that the body



**MBE: Insp Glen McMunn**

had been blown up in the blast, right through an underground tunnel and onto the track of another oncoming train.

But as the situation rapidly developed, events took another turn and while on his way to Edgware he took another call to say that people were coming out of the station at Russell Square with bomb injuries.

'I knew there were already people dealing with the Edgware situation and so I diverted to Russell Square. I got there about 9.20am; we were the first police vehicle on the scene.'

He describes people stumbling from the station, covered in soot and blood.



**A commuter took this picture on his mobile as people were evacuated from the Underground**

'I originally thought that they had been travelling on the train but they had just been standing on the platform when they were hit by the bomb blast.'

Insp McMunn ran to the platform of the Piccadilly line, where the fated train had travelled from Kings Cross.

'When I got down there I saw the driver of the train on the platform. He was hysterical and just waving his arms saying a "bombs gone off, a bombs gone off".'

The tunnel was in a particularly deep underground station and Insp McMunn says that there was little room to move.

There were four paramedics on the scene by now and he explained that the bomb had gone off and that people were still trapped inside the carriage, around 300 yards into the tunnel.

'We didn't know if there had been a secondary device planted in there or if there were any chemicals down there, but they all agreed to come down with me.'

By this time around seven BTP officers and other plain clothes officers from the police headquarters had joined them in the search for people who may still be alive.

The group had to make their way through the tunnel, with only the aid of emergency lighting and a few torches, through choking smoke still billowing from the burnt-out wreckage.

'I heard a pop when I was down there and think that may have been the bomb going off on the bus outside; we carried on.

'We saw people stumbling along through the tunnel, they were the walking wounded.

When I went into the carriage, it was like Armageddon. The doors were blown out; there was blood everywhere and body parts. I think 22 people died in that first carriage.'

**We had to use coats from the deceased as a makeshift stretcher. She had lost an enormous amount of blood. I think she had technically passed away about three times on the way to hospital**

As the group managed to get into the train, they immediately saw a man with half a leg missing; the paramedics had to get to the priority cases and treat them or get them out as quickly as they could.

'Virtually one of the first people we went to was Gill Hicks, she was sat up and you could see that

she had lost one of her legs. She had lost a lot of blood, you could see one of the legs was literally only attached by a sinew, but she was conscious.'

Gill, a 37-year-old Australian who had lived in London for 12 years, had been on her way to work and was running late after being pushed off the previous train by another commuter, when disaster struck.

'We had to use coats from the deceased as a makeshift stretcher. She had lost an enormous amount

of blood. I think she had technically passed away about three times on the way to hospital.'

Insp McMunn has since seen Gill again at a commendation ceremony and a number of officers, including PC Steve Bryan and PC Aaron Debnam, who had helped to carry her out, had a tearful reunion.

'She thanked me for taking the decision to go into the tunnel. It's nice to think you may have had even a small part in saving someone's life.'

She has since married and was determined to walk down the aisle with prosthetic limbs.

The group of officers and other emergency service workers managed to pull out around six or seven people altogether, even searching under corpses for signs of life.

Insp McMunn, was also at the scene of both the Ladbroke Grove rail crash in October 1999, which killed 31 people, and at Southall when seven people died.

'If there is one thing that is positive - it is the team work everyone put in. At one point I wondered whether I had made the right decision, I am married with kids, I did not know whether the tunnel would collapse or if there were any other devices on there and neither did anyone else.

'I am glad we did. I look at Gill and the way she has got on with her life. It's someone like that who lost both her legs and is still so positive that are the real heroes.'



# New Year Honours List

## Order of Knighthood

**Christopher Fox** QPM, president, Association of Chief Police Officers. For services to the police.

## Commander Of The Order Of The British Empire (CBE)

**David Frederick Stevens**, QPM, Lately chief constable, Essex Police. For services to the police.

## Officers Of The Order Of The British Empire (OBE)

**John Douglas Allan**, sheriff for Lothian and Borders. For services to the administration of justice.

**Gillian Elaine Baker**, inspector, West Midlands Police. For services to the police.

**Nicholas Patrick Bracken**, detective chief superintendent, British Transport Police. For services to the police.

**Peter John Michael Clarke**, CVO QPM, deputy assistant commissioner, Metropolitan Police Service. For services to the police.

**Kate Anne Flannery**, inspector, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary. For services to the police.

## Members Of The Order Of The British Empire (MBE)

**Christopher John Allison**, commander, Metropolitan Police Service. For services to the police.

**Neil Doig**, constable, Lothian and

Borders Police. For services to the police.

**Deborah Anne Lynne Russell-Fenwick**, constable, British Transport Police. For services to the community in London.

**Gary Goose**, detective chief inspector, Cambridgeshire Constabulary. For services to the police.

**Kevin Lambert**, chief superintendent, Gloucestershire Constabulary. For services to the police.

**Christopher Mackenzie**, constable, Greater Manchester Police. For services to the police.

**Glen William McMunn**, inspector, British Transport Police. For services to the community in London.

**Stephen Paul Mingay**, temporary inspector, British Transport Police. For services to the community in London.

**John Nicholas**, senior traffic warden, West Mercia Police. For services to the police.

**Ian Michael Parks**, BEM, special constable, Durham Constabulary. For services to the police.

**Patricia Ann Percival**, head of the corporate communications department, Northamptonshire Police. For services to the police.

**Jean Gwendolene Thomas**, head of nursing and counselling, occupational health, Metropolitan Police. For services to healthcare.

## Members Of The Order Of The British Empire (MBE),

## Diplomatic service and overseas list

**John Bradman Douglas**, commissioner of police, Montserrat.

**Ian David Huggett**, sergeant, Metropolitan Police. For services to Royalty Protection.

**Phelim Patrick O'Higgins**, sergeant, Metropolitan Police. For services to Royalty Protection.

**Christopher John Tarr**, inspector, Metropolitan Police. For services to Royalty Protection.

## Royal Victorian Medal

**Allister Saville Brown**, constable, Metropolitan Police. For services to Royalty Protection.

## Queen's Police Medal (QPM) England and Wales

**Martin Peter Baker**, chief constable, Dorset Police.

**Janette Berry**, chief inspector, chairman of the Police Federation of England and Wales.

**Kevin Bowsher**, chief inspector, Metropolitan Police.

**Della Mary Cannings**, chief constable, North Yorkshire Police.

**Michael Craik**, chief constable, Northumbria Police.

**James Dickie**, detective superintendent, Metropolitan Police.

**Clinton Edward Elliot**, former general secretary, Police Federation of England and Wales.

**Patricia Ferguson Gallan**,

assistant chief constable, National Crime Squad.

**Steven Barry Greenacre**, inspector, Greater Manchester Police.

**Meredydd John Hughes**, chief constable, South Yorkshire Police.

**Davina Jessie Logan**, deputy chief constable, Northamptonshire Police.

**Douglas Gardner McKenna**, detective superintendent, Metropolitan Police.

**David John Murray**, chief superintendent, Thames Valley Police.

**John Raymond Prunty**, detective superintendent, Metropolitan Police.

**Terence Lewis Anthony Ward**, constable, Merseyside Police.

**John Horace Wood**, chief superintendent, Staffordshire Police.

**John Yates**, deputy assistant commissioner, Metropolitan Police.

## Scotland

**William Bald**, deputy chief constable, Tayside Police.

**James Hudson Green**, chief superintendent, Strathclyde Police.

**Brian Powrie**, chief superintendent, Tayside Police.

## Northern Ireland

**Robert John McKernan**, detective inspector, Police Service of Northern Ireland.

**Paul Richard Sterritt**, constable, Police Service of Northern Ireland.

**Gary Francis Stewart**, superintendent, Police Service of Northern Ireland.