

THE  TIMES

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MAGAZINE

**10 YEARS ON
THE SURVIVORS**

By Tim Teeman

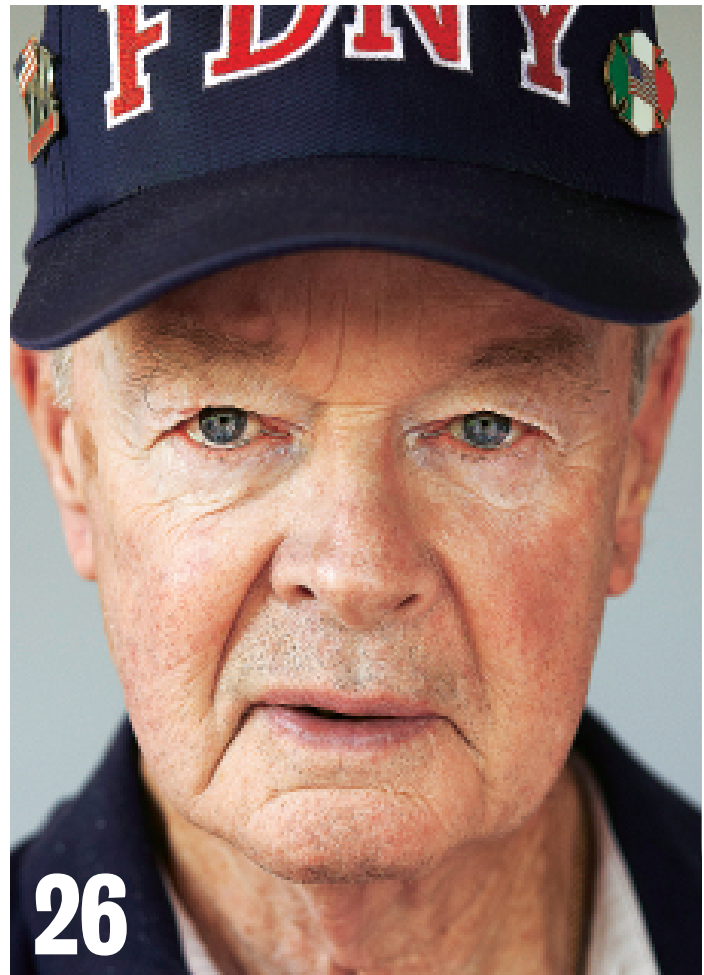


9/11 Special 03.09.11

Retired fireman Bob Beckwith

Ten years have passed since **September 11, 2001**, but what has happened to some of the people caught up in that momentous day? In this special issue of the Magazine, we meet the **survivors**, such as the dust-covered bank teller (p24) and the businessman (p48) whose images came to symbolise New York's remarkable spirit. We speak to the retired **fireman** (right) who went to the site to help and ended up standing next to **President Bush** (p26), and to an injured young woman and the marshal who carried her from the ruins of the **twin towers** (p30). Brian Clark and Stanley Praitnath recount their **escape** from the southern tower (p46), two of only four survivors from above the point of impact. Howard W. Lutnick, CEO of Cantor Fitzgerald, reveals the **emotional cost** of losing 658 employees (p42), including his brother, and **four widows** describe grieving for their husbands (p36). Vivid, shocking, upsetting, inspiring: their stories embody a day that remains impossible to forget.

TIM TEEMAN, US CORRESPONDENT, THE TIMES



To watch video interviews with the survivors, recorded by photographer Mike McGregor, go to thetimes.co.uk/magazine

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THE SURVIVORS

September 11, 2001. 9.59am, Eastern Time: the southern tower of the World Trade Centre, New York, collapses 56 minutes after being hit by a Boeing 767; the northern tower, attacked first, would stand for a further 29 minutes. The casualties, says Mayor Rudy Giuliani, 'will be more than any of us can bear'. Yet many did walk away from this apocalyptic scene. A decade on, and over the following 28 pages, Tim Teeman tracks down the people who cheated death

IN THE RUBBLE
Immediately following the collapse of the southern tower, and before the northern one came down, an unknown man calls out to see if anyone trapped alive needs help

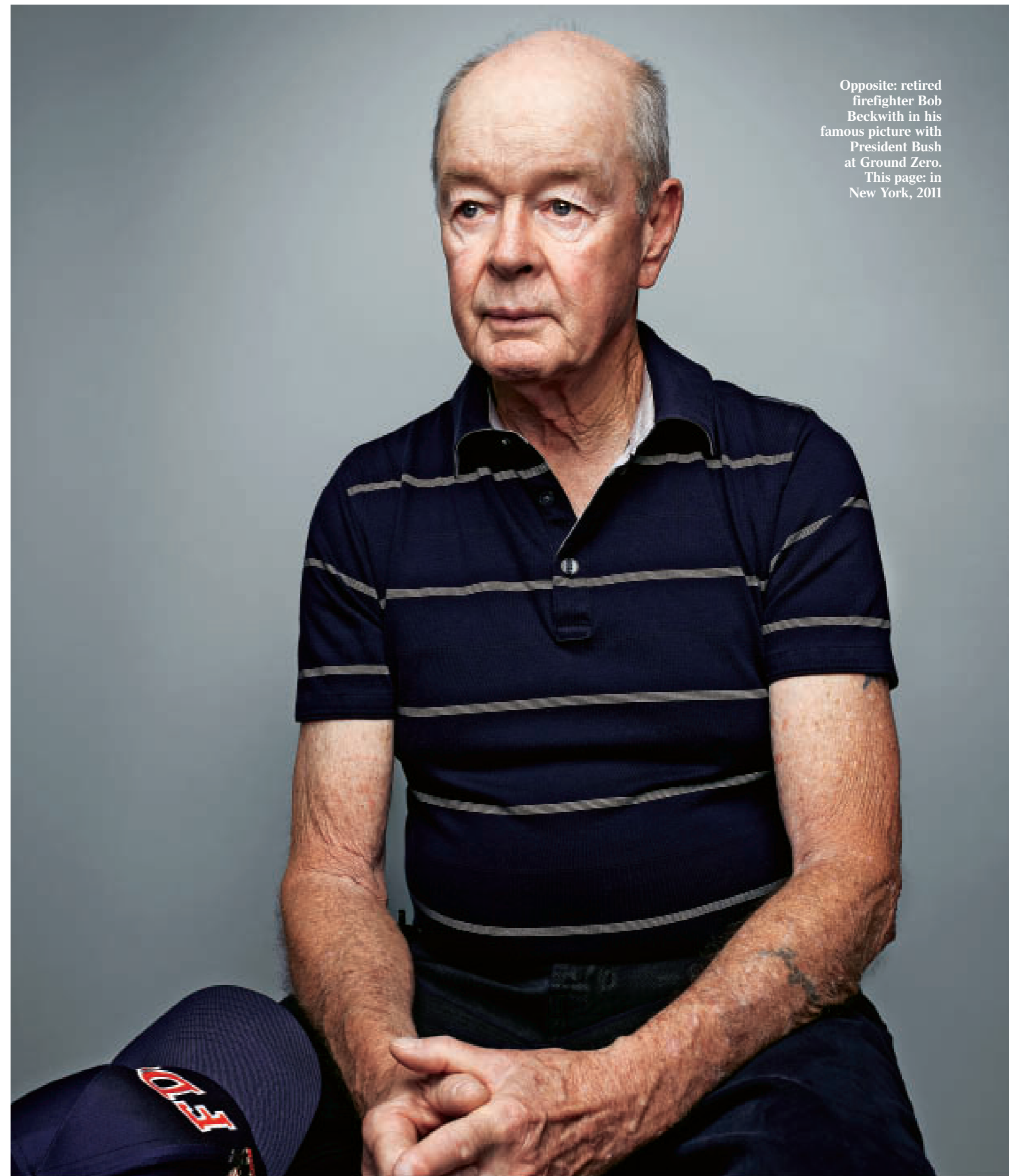
THE DUST LADY 'After that day I drank to the point of blackouts. The drugs came later'



Opposite: Marcy Borders after her escape from the northern tower.
This page: photographed in New York earlier this year



THE FIREMAN 'September 11 changed my life for the better, but I wish it had never happened'



Opposite: retired firefighter Bob Beckwith in his famous picture with President Bush at Ground Zero.
This page: in New York, 2011

Marcy Borders, 38, from Bayonne, New Jersey, became known as “the dust lady” after her picture was taken following the former Bank of America’s assistant escape from the northern tower. After becoming addicted to alcohol and drugs, Borders attended rehab earlier this year.

“This is the most clear-headed I have felt in a long time. I got out of rehab in May. I was there a month, after becoming addicted to alcohol, cocaine, crack and marijuana. I didn’t care about myself or anyone else. I couldn’t deal with life. I had become a garbage can. I dropped to around 90lb. My life wasn’t getting any better. I wanted to end it. I have two kids – Noelle is 18, a senior in high school, and Zayden is my 3-year-old son – and I made a conscious decision to save my life for them.

“I hadn’t been right since September 11. My life had been in tumult, on a spiral. My partner Donald, Zayden’s father, was a huge support: he doesn’t do drugs and he tried to help me even though I was horrible to him. Now I go to Narcotics Anonymous meetings every day.

“Before September 11 I was spontaneous, outgoing, ambitious. I was 28, making good money (\$32,000 a year), working as an assistant in the legal department of the Bank of America on the 81st floor of the northern tower. I’d been in the job a month and felt I was moving on up.

“That morning I was at the copy machine when it happened. I heard a whoosh and the building rocked back and forth. I started seeing paper falling outside the windows, chairs and computers and eventually people. I saw cracks in the wall, which made me worried the building would fall. I was scared out of my wits as I passed people on the stairs. Sometimes it seemed I jumped whole floors. It really beat up my legs. It felt like it was the end of the world and I had front-row seats.

“Three minutes after I got out, the southern tower fell. The smoke caught me and threw me on all fours. I breathed in and my mouth was coated. It was so quiet, like everyone in the world was checking to see if they were still alive. I couldn’t see my hand in front of me. I was saying, ‘I don’t wanna die,’ when this shirtless guy put me inside a building. I never saw him again and I want to thank him for saving my life. It was at that point that ‘the picture’ was taken. Eventually I walked uptown, then got back to Bayonne, by ferry, that evening. I thought we would die, that the boat would be hit by a missile.

“The first I knew about the picture was the next day when a friend of my mother’s called. I asked my mother how she knew it was me: ‘It’s your nose,’ she said. I was in newspapers all over the world, even Arabic ones – I started to think Osama bin Laden would come after me. I was just thinking crazy. The picture made me angry at first. Didn’t the photographer think

about helping me? How could I be famous but still poor? They called me ‘the dust lady’. I didn’t like that: it would be better to have said ‘the woman who was covered in dust who didn’t know what to do’. People dressed up as ‘the dust lady’ at Hallowe’en, which upset me.

“After September 11, my life went downhill. I was afraid to get on subways or go into state buildings. The last time I had been in a place of work it almost killed me, so I wasn’t interested in work. I had no income. My mother helped me. I drank to the point of blackouts. The drugs came about a year before I went into rehab. I didn’t care. I lost control. Despite my behaviour, Donald stayed. I’m glad he did; if he hadn’t, this place would have turned into a crack hotel.

“My number one goal is to get back to work – so if anyone’s hiring, please help me. I’m not going to let anything else screw me up. As a legacy, I’ve written 60 pages of a book, which I’ve called *The Dust Lady After the Dust Has Gone*, and am looking for a publisher.

“The picture made me angry at first. People dressed up as “the dust lady” at Hallowe’en, which upset me”

“I’ve kept the clothes I wore that day, unwashed: a black fitted top, cream fitted skirt and high boots. I’m not sure if they’re a good-luck talisman, in that I survived in them, or a bad luck one for having worn them that day. Maybe I’ll clean them and wear them the first day I return to work.”

Bob Beckwith lives in Baldwin, Long Island, with his wife Barbara. Beckwith, 79, retired from the New York Fire Department after 29 years but on September 14, 2001, he went to Ground Zero to aid the emergency services and by chance became part of one of the most famous images.

“My family didn’t want me to go. I was 69 and too old, they said. But on September 14, wearing my old fireman’s uniform, I drove into the city, went to a fire station in Little Italy – Engine Company 55 – and talked my way through the security cordons around the Towers. The sight that greeted me reminded me of the British Blitz. I didn’t care; I just wanted to dig and find some of those poor people. I joined a ‘bucket brigade’ of workers, carrying buckets from the debris, including

paper, parking cards, pictures and, of course, body parts. As a fireman I’d come across them before, but there were 3,000 people dead here, so that’s a lot of body parts.

“We were working hard when suddenly we heard, ‘The President is on his way.’ Everyone was chanting, ‘USA, USA!’ as he walked down the street, and, ‘Hey, George, whatcha going to do about this?’ A guy who looked like a Secret Service guy said to me, ‘Is this safe?’, pointing to the pumper [fire engine] I was standing on. ‘Show me; jump up and down on it.’ The next minute the President is standing below me. I pull him up, we joke that we’re physically in a tight spot, but as I go to get down, he says, ‘Where are you going? Stay right there.’

“So there I am standing with President Bush and I’m saying to my dead mother, ‘See, Ma, I’m with the President.’ I didn’t see any photographers or TV cameras. A few minutes later, the guy I thought was Secret Service gave me an American flag. It turned out he was Karl Rove, Mr Bush’s adviser. After that, I just went back to work.

“That night, the union called and told me: ‘Don’t come back to the site. You’re too old and we don’t want to have to pick you up.’ They asked if my uniform still fitted. Yes, I told them. ‘Then go to as many funerals and memorial services for dead firefighters as you can.’ So I did: sometimes two or three a day. It was the little kids and wives you felt sorry for.

“The pictures of me from that day went around the world. But who am I to be on the cover of *Time* magazine? It made me uncomfortable. The phone rang with inquiries from TV stations all over the globe: Germany, Ireland, China. There were reporters outside my door. When Osama bin Laden died, they were setting up lights outside the house at 2am.

“I met President Bush four times after that day. If you didn’t know him you probably thought he was a bad guy, but I did know him and he was a good guy. After voting Democrat all my life, three years before 9/11 I became a Republican. He put his arms around me on one occasion and said, ‘Well, Bob, you made me famous.’ The 9/11 Memorial Museum at the site has everything I was wearing that day: the helmet, uniform, boots. My wife thought I should have kept them and sold them later if one of our grandchildren needed help with their college fees. But I believe we should never forget what happened that day. To me, it’s an historical event like Pearl Harbor.

“The photograph changed my life: without it I’d be sitting here, watching TV, waiting to get old and die. But instead I’ve travelled. My sister says it made me come out of my shell. Go figure: 9/11 changed my life for the better, but I wish it had never happened.”

To watch video interviews with Marcy Borders and Bob Beckwith, go to thetimes.co.uk/magazine ➔

THE OFFICE WORKER 'I don't have kids; everyone who died did. I still feel guilty about that'



Opposite:
Dominic Guadagnoli
carries Donna Spera
to triage after her
escape from the
World Trade Centre.
This page: Spera
today, with her
mementoes from 9/11



US marshal Dominic Guadagnoli, 42, was photographed carrying administrative assistant Donna Spera, 46, who had escaped from the southern tower, to safety. The two remain friends today. Guadagnoli lives in Pensacola, Florida. He is married with two children. Spera lives in Old Bridge, New Jersey, with her husband.

Donna Spera, 46

“One of the guys on our floor said, ‘Let’s get the f*** out of here.’ We took the stairs down. I was hysterical, crying. We got down to the low 70s-floors, that’s when they made the announcement that our building was secure, so we made our way back up to the ‘sky lobby’ of the 78th floor with its elevator banks. My friends and I were going to get an express elevator down. Others went back to their desks. They would die.

“There were about 200 people on the 78th floor when the second plane hit: I was one of only 12 that survived. I went flying but stayed conscious. My friend Casey died next to me. I still ask myself, ‘Why did she die and I survive?’ I’m short, not even 5ft: that’s the only explanation I can think of. I don’t have kids; everyone who died did. I feel guilty about that.

“In the darkness I and two other people followed the voice of this guy – I don’t know who it was – to go down a set of stairs. We passed my friend Michelle running up to get her backpack. She never made it out. I was hysterical and injured – my arms were burnt – but I didn’t feel any pain because of adrenalin. I was focused on getting out to see my husband, Ted. Outside, I literally fell to the ground.

“Dominic swooped me up. I remember photographers and saying, ‘Don’t take my picture,’ and, to Dominic, ‘Don’t let go of me.’ He stayed with me the whole time in triage. I was taken to a hospital in Brooklyn. That’s when the pain kicked in: I had gashes all over, including my shoulders and head, second-degree burns. I remember my husband finding me that afternoon in my hospital bed and running into the bathroom to be sick.

“Two days after 9/11, the nurses showed me the newspaper with the picture of me. I thought, ‘Oh my God, that’s not how I want to be famous – crying with blood all over me.’ The picture was published all over the world. TV shows wanted to ‘reunite’ us. What were they waiting for? I’m married, he’s married. If that picture stays in people’s minds, don’t use it as a way to remember me, but to remember all those who died or were injured.

“I am too injured to go back to work. As I physically healed, my mental state deteriorated. I have no patience for people. I couldn’t sit at a desk, especially one in a high-rise building. I live in Old Bridge, New Jersey, and I haven’t been back to Manhattan.

I don’t like being away from home for too long, even if I’m going shopping. I don’t go near bridges. I am scared of being buried. Ever since, I have had a fear of dark-skinned people. I know it’s irrational and prejudiced and am trying to fight it. I blame 9/11 for not having children: I miscarried once afterwards and then we found we couldn’t.”

Dominic Guadagnoli, US marshal, 42

“I was having coffee in my office, a block from the World Trade Centre, when I heard a huge boom. A colleague and I ran down Broadway. The first people coming out of the buildings were hurt, emotional, crying, but not hysterical – just confused. The next wave were more upset, perplexed, wet – sweat or sprinklers, I guessed – clothes torn, covered in soot, in shock, quieter. I helped them to the triage centre that had

‘We passed my friend Michelle running up the stairs to get her backpack. She never made it out’



Documents and a lost shoe amid the surreal aftermath of the fall of the twin towers

been set up at the Millennium hotel. The next wave were bleeding, crying, screaming: the walking wounded.

“Donna was handed to me by some guys in shirts and ties. I snatched her up and carried her to the triage centre. She said, ‘My back hurts, don’t let me go.’ I saw photographers taking her picture and I felt like saying, ‘Put your cameras down and help people,’ but I knew they had jobs to do. If you look at the picture I’m trying to turn away, saying, ‘Don’t take a picture of this poor woman.’

“At the triage centre Donna said, ‘Don’t leave me.’ ‘You’re going to be all right,’ I told her. ‘You’re going to go home to your family. You’ll see your husband and kids.’ She doesn’t have kids, but I didn’t know that. An ambulance took her away.

“Ten minutes later there was a rumbling sound, the southern tower falling. I ran towards the towers, then thought, ‘What am I doing?’ and ran north. I thought, ‘I’m going to get buried alive. I can’t outrun this building.’ At that point, a guardian angel pushed me towards a subway stair. I dived down there. Then everything went black and I thought, ‘I don’t want to be buried here,’ so I went back up to the street.

“I ran towards the Trade Centre. There was another huge rumbling, deep and guttural. ‘S***, I can’t believe it’s going to happen again,’ I thought as the northern tower fell. I cheated death once. I wouldn’t again. But I made it back to the office and called my dad. That night I watched my one-year-old sleep and listened to the fire engines go by, wondering, ‘What happened to that girl Donna?’

“The photograph of me carrying her appeared in the papers next day. TV shows called to see if we’d be reunited. We’re both Italian-Americans so when we met about a month afterwards, we ate, drank wine, hugged, cried. The media wanted us to be together romantically. ‘If you and Donna weren’t married, would you be attracted to her?’ someone asked. She’s constantly referred to as ‘the girl’ and I’m ‘the marshal’. I joked we should have a tryst out of town. But there are none of those feelings. We love our partners very much. Every day for the past ten years that photograph hasn’t gone away; I’ve given talks, speeches, been on TV. It’s not that it isn’t important to me – but I am tired of it.

“I’ve moved to Pensacola, Florida, but I’ll never forget that day. My life physically, emotionally and spiritually changed in an instant. I cheated death twice. For a year afterwards, loud noises made me jump. At an air display the sound of the airplanes freaked me out so much I screamed, ‘Get me out of here!’ and curled up in a ball. Donna and I haven’t seen each other in four years but we e-mail, text and I send her flowers every 9/11. We will always be friends.”

THE WIDOWS

'We met other
September 11 widows
but we just clicked.
Our husbands were
the same guy, in
different bodies
– they loved pretty
women, children, life'



From far left:
Claudia Gerbasi
Ruggiere Donovan,
Pattie Carrington,
Ann Haynes and
Julia Collins Lindner

Claudia Gerbasi Ruggiere Donovan, 42, Ann Haynes, 49, Pattie Carrington, 44, and Julia Collins Lindner, 49, lost their husbands on September 11. Claudia was married to Bart Ruggiere, who worked on the 105th floor of the northern tower as an energy trader for Cantor Fitzgerald. Ann was married to Ward Haynes, a derivatives broker at Cantor who sat next to Bart. Pattie's husband was Jeremy "Caz" Carrington, an interest rate swap trader at Cantor. Julia was married to Tom Collins, managing director at Sandler O'Neill & Partners, on the 104th floor of the southern tower. The women became friends in July 2002, call themselves the Widows' Club, and in 2006 published a book together, *Love You, Mean It*.

Claudia "I would have been more bitter had I not met these women. We've been able to be brutally honest with one another. If I had said to my mother, 'I can't cope with another day of this,' she would have panicked."

Julia "We met other September 11 widows, but the four of us just clicked. Our husbands were the same guy, in different bodies, with their boisterous personalities. Everyone wanted to hang out with them; they loved pretty women, children, life."

Pattie "That morning Caz forgot his work pass and came back to the apartment. I still think if only he'd discovered his pass was missing a little later, the delay might have meant he lived. I heard what had happened at work. I tried to call him. I went outside and saw smoke in the distance from the towers. I deliberately didn't watch TV. To this day, I've seen very few images of it."

Julia "They found Tommy's body, which is unusual, but they wouldn't let me see him – I begged but they said, 'Remember him as he was.' I feel like he almost made it out. I got his briefcase, computer, chequebook, everything. I keep it all in a chest. I haven't made peace with not seeing him, but I feel the luckiest of the unlucky. My three friends here didn't get 'bodies'. People say, 'At least you had a funeral; closure.' But I couldn't accept he was dead. I woke up one morning and it was like he was spooning me, and he whispered into my ear, 'I'm not with you physically, but I'm with you every day.'"

Ann "Before Ward had left for work that morning he had brought our daughter, Elizabeth, in for a kiss and said, 'This is our little angel.' As the morning went on, friends came over. One of the children mistook one man from the back for Ward, and my heart stopped when they said, 'Daddy.' I didn't accept something bad was happening.

I washed his clothes in the machine, defiantly, thinking, 'He's coming home.'"

Claudia "Bart called me twice that morning. I thought he was pranking. He said, 'A plane

hit our building.' He thought it was a two-seater, 35 floors below. He said, 'We're going to get out of here. We gotta go.' We always said, 'I love you,' at the end of every call. But he hung up – if we hadn't had such a good marriage, that could have sent me over the edge later on. My brother-in-law called. I said it was all fine and he said, 'It isn't.' Then I watched TV. I tried Bart's desk phone, cellphone... Nothing. When the northern tower came down, I started screaming. I know he called 911. There's a tape of him asking, 'What's happening? Are rescuers on their way? We can't get out.' I can't listen to it. I don't want the last I hear of him to be his panicked voice. I imagined him creating peace with himself in his last moments by having a Macallan whisky at [northern tower restaurant] Windows on the World."

Julia "We all had nightmares. Did they suffer? We all agreed they wouldn't jump. They believed they would get out. I feel Tommy got out, or almost got out, then the building

I didn't accept something bad was happening. I washed his clothes in the machine, thinking, "He's coming home"

came down. Maybe he rode it like a skier."

Pattie "I didn't immediately realise the weight of what had happened that day. I'm a happy, uncynical person. People were looking at me with protective expressions. I couldn't accept Caz was dead for a long time. At the memorial service, I turned to my father and asked, 'Why are they acting like it's a funeral?'"

Ann "I made the mistake of reading about the body parts rescue workers found. I was like a moth to the flame and got more and more upset. Ward's co-workers and I came up with the idea they had gone into a conference room believing they would be fine, but the smoke overcame them and they lay down and succumbed. I can live with that, not pain and suffering."

Claudia "I got Bart's American Express card returned, charred. Eventually, I got a knock at the door saying some remains had been found and they were at the medical examiner's office. Then more of Bart was discovered."

Pattie "Nothing of Caz has been found. I expect advances in technology will mean something will eventually. I'll be ready for that knock at the door. I can't say I'm any more at peace

without a grave than I would be with one.

I still feel his presence, whether it's the sight of a hummingbird or a wave of emotion that brings you up if you're down. He'd want me to be happy, whether that's on my own or with somebody. It would have been our anniversary on September 30, and leaving church the Sunday morning before September 11, he turned to me and said, 'Stop. Let's think about our first year of marriage.' That night we were driving back into the city, arguing about something. He grabbed my hand and said, 'Hold my hand. One day it won't be there.'"

Ann "Our shared friendship has picked all of us up when nothing else has. It grows, and has changed over the years, but we know we're always there for each other. I dated for a while, then married someone else and had another set of twins by surrogate. Now we're getting divorced, but this divorce is nothing like losing Ward. I'm sure I'll date again, but I don't need to get married."

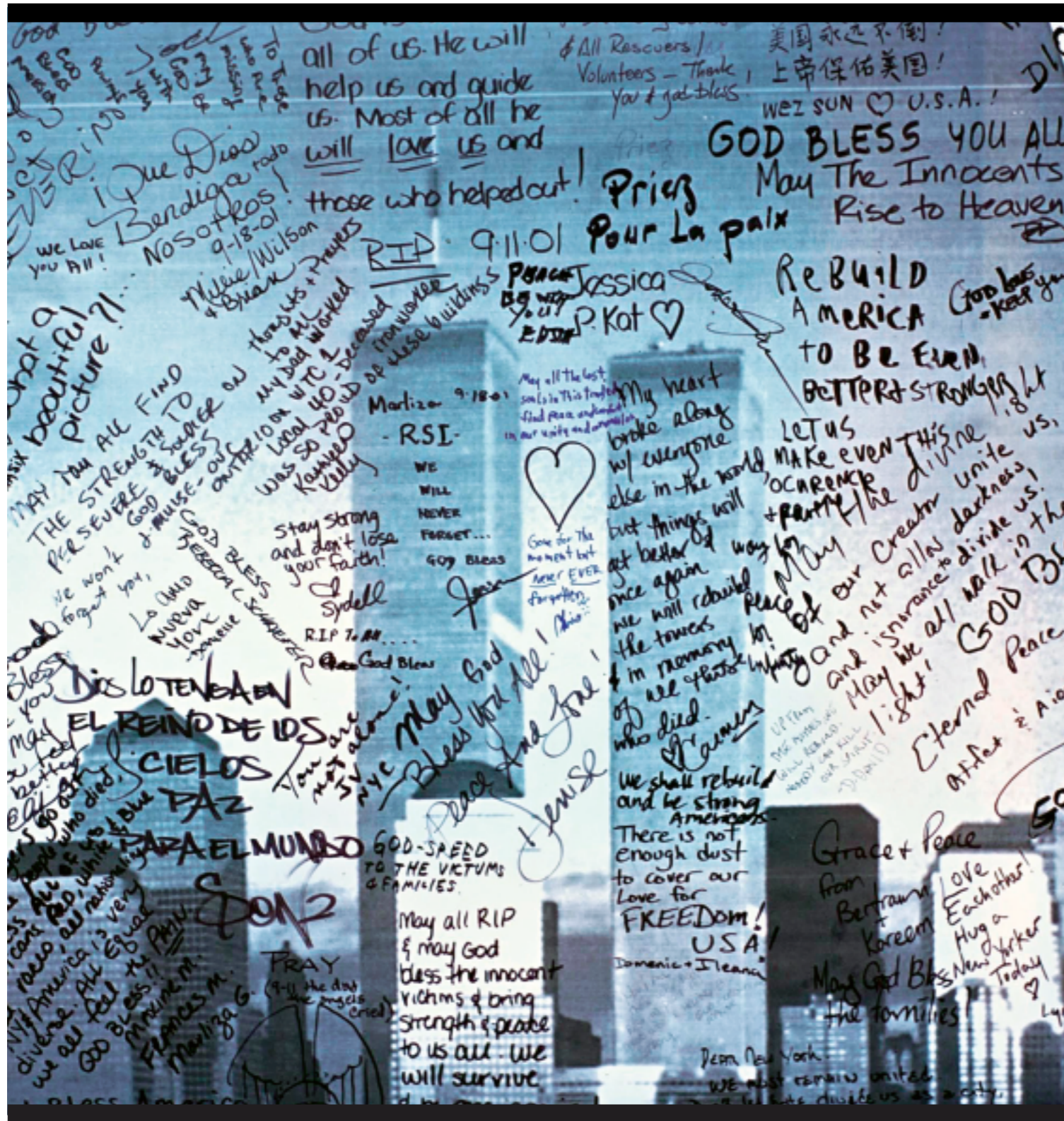
Julia "I looked at Ann and thought, 'How does she do this with kids?' Then I thought, 'I want kids too.' I married my husband Chris in 2006. We have a nearly three-year-old adopted daughter, Charlotte Rose, and Chris's ten-year-old daughter, Ivy, from his previous marriage. It takes a strong man to marry a widow."

Pattie "I work in Boston but still have the apartment in Brooklyn and beach house on Long Island that Caz and I shared. It's hard to let go. I love the fact his shovel is still in the garage. I kept the last two beer cans he drank from. I still have his old boxer shorts which I wear to bed, and his sweatshirts and baseball caps."

Claudia "When I started another relationship, I felt I was letting Bart and his family down. But his sister said, 'If it had been the other way round, this is what we would have wanted for Bart.' They came to my wedding. We all celebrate Christmas together. They've embraced my new husband, John, and our daughter, Isabella."

Pattie "Caz and I wanted babies. When he died, I had to accept that I wasn't going to have them. I'm sad about it, but I'm more sad about losing Caz. I miss him; we would have had a family. I have my career, our homes, I still feel as if I am living with his strength and inspiration. I love life but I'm not sure I could ever laugh as robustly as I did with him. I now have a partner, Vinnie, whom I love and he has older daughters and he's very unthreatened by what I will always feel for Caz. Vinnie and I have a love you grow old with; Caz and I had the love you grow up with."

Ann "Life is short and I'm not going to waste time being bitter or angry. I wish Ward was here to see our kids growing up. They want to make him proud. September 11 gave me sadness, suffering and heartbreak, but it also showed me courage and kinship." ➔



Opposite: a photograph of the twin towers covered with tributes. This page: Howard W. Lutnick, chairman of Cantor Fitzgerald



THE CHAIRMAN 'I wrote a couple of thousand condolence notes. I did it from 2am to 5am'

Howard W. Lutnick is chairman and CEO of the investment bank Cantor Fitzgerald, the hardest-hit company on September 11: 658 of its employees – including Lutnick's brother, Gary, and his best friend, Doug Gardner – were killed in the northern tower. Lutnick, who is married with four children, faced controversy in the weeks after the tragedy when the company was accused of not doing enough to compensate victims' relatives. He is also chairman and CEO of the brokerage firm BGC Partners, Inc.

"If I could somehow do it all over again, I would stand by the doors of the World Trade Centre and not let anyone in. It's so hard to square what happened to our firm; it's not possible for all of these people to have been killed together. We hired people we liked. Inside Cantor we really were a great group of people who cared for each other, combining friends and co-workers in a special way. What other firm employs 48 sets of brothers?"

"After September 11, the purpose of our business became to support the families of those who died. For a long time I couldn't say the number 658 without crying. I was not capable of dealing with the magnitude. Someone would ask what had happened to someone who had died, and I would see them in my mind's eye and that was the moment they were killed. I would tell myself, 'Pull yourself together,' but it would happen again and again and it went on for months.

"That morning, I was taking my son Kyle to his first day of kindergarten. The school administrator told me a plane had hit the building. Immediately I knew I had to go get my guys, help my friends. As we drove down Fifth Avenue, I could see one tower burning. I knew right away it was ours. It was instantly horrible. The driver was crying, 'It's bad, it's bad,' all the way. I got to the doorway of the building and grabbed people as they came out, asking what floor they were from. I wanted to hear that someone had made it out from ours.

"If the northern tower, our building, had collapsed first, I wouldn't be here. When the southern tower collapsed it sounded gargantuan, combining the roar of a jet engine and a giant creak, like the boat in *Titanic*.

Everyone ran. This tornado of black smoke seemed to be chasing me. I dived under a car, certain I was going to die. I didn't know what was in the air, but I knew instinctively not to breathe. I thought: 'I was uptown. I was safe. Now I'm gonna die, son of a gun, I'm gonna die.' The world was black and silent. I didn't know if I was blind or deaf. Then I saw my hand, and as the world became grey, I knew I was alive and had to get out of there.

"Over the next few weeks, every time I saw someone who worked for us or had worked for us I was so ecstatic I grabbed their face

and kissed them. I wrote 2,000 condolence notes. I did it from 2am to 5am. I was having nightmares, so I wrote these notes, sometimes five pages if I knew the person. I would tell stories about them, thinking their children would want the notes some day.

"Of course, I had survivor guilt. I wasn't responsible for what happened to those who had died, but I was responsible for helping their families. That's what drove me and the employees. I could not have cared less about work. Going home and hugging my wife and family was the number one thing I wanted to do. The only reason to work was to help the families. To the surviving employees I said: 'We can either shut the firm and go to 20 funerals on 35 days in a row, or work harder than we ever have for the families.' Our London office was the reason we survived. I don't know if all those who brought us flowers or sent us food realised how their care and love helped us to survive. Amazingly, we were able to be a profitable company in the first full quarter after 9/11.

"Early on I said that the best way to show people who were killed that we loved them was to care for those they loved. In October

'A tornado of black smoke seemed to be chasing me. I dived under a car, certain I was going to die'



A burnt police car outside the World Trade Centre following the attacks

there was a brief period where the media questioned our commitment. But I didn't mishandle it. I would do it the same way again. We were so decimated we could not afford to make mistakes. We only had criticism from people who didn't know our plan. With 20/20 hindsight this is what happened. Let's say we'd written to a young woman who lost her husband. But our human relations department has been wiped out, so we'd written to her at her last-known address – it might not even be current – and anyway, she's staying at her mother's. She doesn't know we have offered 10 years of healthcare and a minimum of \$100,000 per family. With 658 families affected, that's \$65 million.

"That young woman might have felt we hadn't done anything for her yet, and of course we hadn't. But we would. We calculated what we needed to survive, then distributed the money to the families. The figure exceeded everyone's expectations. We gave 25 per cent of our profits to the families. The surviving workers never let down their dead colleagues in working to support their families. We had so many people join us afterwards. They knew we were in a tough spot and they probably earned less money than they could have gotten elsewhere, but they accepted that we had to take care of the families. There was a relief fund, a victims' compensation fund; I held 'town hall' meetings. My wife set up support groups.

"I always felt I would have time to grieve for my brother later. He was mine, he was inside me. I didn't plan his memorial for months; I didn't bury the fragments of his bones for almost a year. I had too much to do. I had to go to so many funerals. I had to make sure the firm was capable of caring for these families. I had a spectacular relationship with my brother – I always did. I didn't really have any unfinished business with him. He knew I loved him and how much I loved him. He helped me because, ultimately, I was able to really talk to the families who had lost loved ones because I was one of them.

"Every September 11 we hold a memorial service. We read the names of everyone who died. We have a special charity day every year and a day when everyone forgoes their pay for the day to raise money. We have tried to turn a difficult day into something beautiful. I am proud of how we took care of the families, proud that so many children of those who died have come to work for us. It's an extraordinary compliment. We are the world's pre-eminent middle-market investor bank; BGC is the No 2 in the world in the inter-dealer broker market. I am honoured to be associated with both. In the worst of circumstances, these employees covered themselves in glory. It makes me proud every day to walk in the door." ➔

THE BLOOD BROTHERS 'Brian held my hand and said something that I will go to my grave with'

Brian Clark and Stanley Praimnath worked in the southern tower, Clark as an executive vice-president of brokerage firm Euro Brokers on the 84th floor, Praimnath as assistant vice-president in the Loans Operations Department for Fuji Bank on the 81st. They were two of only four survivors above the point of impact in the tower – in which at least 618 people died – and before that day had never met. Clark, 63, lives in Mahwah, New Jersey, with his wife, Diane, and has four children. Praimnath, 54, lives in Valley Stream, Long Island, with his wife, Jennifer. They have two daughters.

Stanley "I was looking out of the window and saw a plane getting bigger and bigger. I saw the 'U' on the tail, for United. I heard its revving sound, picking up speed. It seemed like it was coming for me. It did this little tilt. I said to God, 'I can't do this, you take over,' dived under the table, then the plane hit, 20 feet away. I heard a thunderous boom and explosion. The floor above me collapsed; only the table, on top of which was my copy of the Bible, stayed standing. The rest of the office was broken up like match sticks. The sprinkler system came on. It was like somebody had thrown a bag of dried cement into the air. I was scared the air pressure would suck me out of the gaping hole on the side of the building, or that I would get electrocuted. I thought, 'I'm going to die.' I was screaming, 'Lord, send somebody to help me.' Then I saw the beam of a flashlight."

Brian "The fuselage went in at the 78th floor, the wing tip at the 81st. I was terrified for ten seconds. For five seconds, it felt as if the building moved six to eight feet, then for five seconds it seemed to click back into place. I got my flashlight. Some unseen hand or force or phantom guided me to Stairway A. I heard a banging sound from the 81st floor and a voice: 'Help, help, I'm buried, I can't breathe. Is anybody there?' For some reason, I had this ring of fresh air around me: physical or miraculous, I don't know. I saw a hand which had smashed a hole in this wall."

Stanley "I had crawled the length of the room, only to be confronted by a wall. I knew beyond it lay a stairwell. I couldn't breathe. There was

so much smoke. The smell of jet fuel was so profuse. 'Can you see my hand?' I shouted to the flashlight. Brian told me to jump up, he would catch me. I tried; missed. Brian told me to think of my family: 'If you want to live, you're going to have to climb out.' I'm 180lb, I have a leg wound and punctured hand. I plead, 'Lord, if you wanted me to die, why bring me this far across the room? Why not leave me to die? I've got to get home to my wife and two girls.'"

Brian "I don't hear this. He's talking to himself and looks like a caged animal."

Stanley "I jump up, he reaches down and with one arm grabs me under the neck and around the shoulder and scoops me up and over the wall. We both fall backwards, me on top of him. I hug him, kiss him on the cheek. He says, 'What are you doing?', gets up, straightens his jacket and holds out his hand. 'Brian Clark.' 'Stanley Praimnath,' I reply. He doesn't let go of my hand. He says something that I will go to my grave with. He tells me he was born and raised in Canada as an only child and all he ever wanted was a brother. He had a gash in his left



palm, and I had the cut in my right. He joined them and said, 'So we're brothers for life, blood brothers.' We rubbed our palms together and Brian said, 'Come on, buddy, let's go home.'"

Brian "By the fifteenth floor, I say to Stanley, 'Let's slow down, I don't want to come back here tomorrow on crutches.' I still think there'll be a tomorrow! At street level, we're shocked to see everything ashen grey and covered in debris. We come across some priests. We all pray. Stanley says, 'I think the tower is going.' I said, 'There's no way...' Then the southern tower, where we had just come from, started to fall. From our vantage point, the windows of the upper floors above the smoke popped into space, lit by the sunshine. It was kind of beautiful."

Stanley "It was like diamonds falling from the sky. The implosion caused a vacuum, dragging the smoke back towards the core. Suddenly you couldn't see people; it was like a giant tsunami."

Brian "We took refuge behind a church. We made it into a building with 30 other strangers. Then outside, we were separated. We don't know how. For about ten seconds I have the strangest feeling Stanley isn't real, that I've imagined him. Then I find his business card in my pocket."

Stanley "For two days afterwards I go in and out of sanity. I suddenly don't know who my wife and children are. Two days later, I remembered everything."

Brian "We speak once every three months at least. I'm much more carefree than Stanley. I don't have nightmares, I sleep soundly. I'm an optimist. I like giving speeches. I've been in TV green rooms with Binyamin Netanyahu and Serena Williams. I lost 61 colleagues; Stanley, 18. My sadness is that the whole event was so senseless and ruinous for so many families. But I'm not dragged down by it; I don't have survivor guilt. Every day is great, some are greater than others. Because of 9/11 I have a full awareness of how precarious life is."

Stanley "We'll both spend the tenth anniversary at the church where I'm a pastor. I feel special, privileged. Some people are still waiting for their loved ones to come home."

To watch video interviews with Stanley Praimnath and Brian Clark, go to thetimes.co.uk/magazine ➔



Stanley Praimnath (seated) and Brian Clark, photographed in New York. Opposite: survivors leaving the World Trade Centre on 9/11

Ed Fine, 68, became known as “the dust man” after his photograph appeared on the cover of Fortune magazine. Fine lives in Watchung, New Jersey, with Ingrid, his wife of 47 years. They have two children, Stuart, 44, and Heidi, 42.

“I have the suit, briefcase, shoes, ferry ticket and World Trade Centre pass from that day. I still wear the shoes and use the briefcase. The ferry ticket says, ‘Enjoy your trip.’ Well, the trip there was very enjoyable; the trip back not so much. When researchers said the image of me from the day was ‘inspiring,’ I told them, ‘You can hear my story, as long as you pay me \$911.’ I didn’t think they would. Many did.”

“That day, I shouldn’t have been anywhere near the Towers. I had recently started an investment banking business with my son, Stuart. He called the night before to tell me he was too sick to go to a morning meeting on the 87th floor of the northern tower. He asked me to go instead.

“My meeting finished early. I took the elevator down to the 79th floor where you caught express elevators to the lobby. I needed to go to the bathroom but figured I could hold it in. An elevator arrived. I ran for it, but was two seconds late. I believe if I had gotten it I wouldn’t be talking to you today. Those elevators took a minute and a half to go down. Twenty seconds later the first plane hit and I heard jet fuel went straight into the lift shafts. I don’t think it reached the bottom.

“I looked down the hallway and coming towards me was a cloud of glass, smoke and fire. I heard screaming. I ducked into an adjoining hallway. I saw people covered in dust, their faces cut and bleeding. Eventually I found the right exit staircase and led a small group of people. We ran down about 25 flights until it started to get crowded. There was very little talking. At the 45th floor a woman was handing out wet paper towels. I took one. It probably saved my life.

“As we got lower, I thought, ‘I’m definitely not going to make my next appointment.’ On the 3rd and 4th floors the sprinkler system had activated and we waded through 4 inches of water. Outside I looked up and saw fire and smoke coming out of the windows. I walked a block or so and sat down on a wall beside a church. My knees were killing me having walked down all those flights. I got up two minutes later and heard this resounding boom. I turned around and saw what I later knew to be the southern tower falling. I was mesmerised. I felt someone run past me; they slapped me on the back and screamed, ‘Run!’ I turned left to go uptown when I saw a priest and emergency worker standing staring downtown. I looked at what they were watching and saw a mountain of smoke and debris coming towards us on Broadway. I thought, ‘Oh s***, how ironic. God saved me, took me out of that building.

Now I’m going to be killed on the street.’

“All three of us got down on the ground, the priest praying like crazy. A couple of seconds later we were covered in this very warm cloud. I was thinking, ‘I’m never going to be able to hold my breath. I’m going to die here.’ I remembered the wet towel I’d been given and put it over my mouth and nose and breathed – I don’t know for how long, it seemed like for ever. I felt people walking on me and thought, ‘I should get out of here.’ The moment I opened my eyes, I was hit with a burning sensation.

“A few minutes later it was still pitch black above me but around me was grey. I found a bus, but I was the only one on it that was covered in dust and soot. There must have been around 15,000 people waiting for the ferry. People looked at me and said, ‘Were you downtown?’ I wasn’t aware how bad I looked. These emergency teams offered medical attention and water. I said I just wanted to get on the ferry and go home. Ambulance workers wanted to brush me down, which I said yes to, figuring I didn’t want to get dust all over the car. When I got home Ingrid told me I should

see the doctor, who told me my blood pressure was perfect, my lungs clear, but my legs would be stiff like iron rods the next day.

“I didn’t watch television immediately: I didn’t want to see footage of people jumping from the buildings. I realised four or five times I could have died had I made different decisions: if I’d gone to the bathroom, if I’d gotten into that elevator; I thought I might just sit and wait for it all to calm down but didn’t; then lying in the debris and remembering I had the wet paper towel.

“Six months later, I was called by Alan Shortall, CEO of Unilife [then called Unitract and now listed on Nasdaq as ‘Unis’]. He talked to me about the company’s product, an automatically retractable syringe that becomes disabled after use, and its potential for preventing needlestick injuries and syringe sharing. Most of the past nine years have been devoted to getting it commercialised. For me, it was the purpose for which I was saved.

“I didn’t have therapy. I’m not a big boo-hoo guy. Oprah’s team called looking for people who’d been traumatised by the event and I told them that wasn’t me. People said I was a symbol of the defiant American businessman, but I didn’t want to be that. When I see my picture, it makes me realise our lives hang by a thread: you could be doing what you’re doing and then in the next instant – bam – you’re dead. Before 9/11 I was a workaholic. I always said, ‘Next year I’ll change,’ but never did. Now Ingrid and I spend time enjoying life: we’re more in love today than when we got married. I’m focused on work, but it doesn’t consume me. There’s no computer in my holiday luggage.” ■

‘I was mesmerised. Someone ran past me, slapped me on the back and screamed, “Run!”’



Panic-stricken pedestrians flee the cloud of debris that engulfed Ed Fine