

Corporate Killing, the devastation



Graham Meldrum killed 12th July at Allied Bakeries, Glasgow

By Karen Thompson partner

My partner Graham Meldrum was killed at work on the 12th of July 2005, another person who leaves for work never to return. He was working as an agency driver for TNT and delivering to Allied Bakeries in Glasgow.

Nearly two and a half years after the tragedy that robbed me of my partner and his children of their father the companies pled guilty to breaches of health and safety legislation following a court process that was unnecessarily protracted to the point of being farcical at times. On 5 November last year ABF Grain Products formerly Allied Bakeries were fined £19500 for three breaches of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and TNT logistics who supplied the lorry and trailer were fined £14000 for a single breach. At the court case we heard that concerns had been raised regarding trailers at this plant since 1997.

While no financial penalty can bring Graham back the combined total of £33500 for two companies of this size is insulting and does not act as a deterrent for other employers who ignore their obligations to protect their workers.

A Fatal Accident Inquiry is due to take place on 17 March, nearly three years after the tragedy. Following conclusion of that hearing the companies and the individuals responsible for health and safety within these organisations can get on with their lives.

With the guilty plea for us the tide of pain and trauma, the nightmares of wondering what happened and why still remain, still haunting us, still overwhelming us. Graham's family and friends are disgusted at how little the lives of workers amount to in our steadily increasing corporate world. I should be grieving, I should be rebuilding my life and mourning a wonderful man but instead I'm fighting tooth and nail for wee bits of information. We are now nearly two and a half years from Graham's death and I couldn't tell you what happened or if he suffered. There is something inhumane about this.

Concerned for the welfare of all workers Graham Meldrum was killed in a workplace incident on the 12th of July 2005 at Allied bakeries in The Balmore industrial estate. Graham was 40 years old, he left elderly parents, a partner and children to mourn and pick up the pieces. Graham's death was horrific and needless.

A gifted decent man has been denied his tomorrows. Graham was renowned for his respect and care for all workers, his 16 years as a transport manager at Greencity Wholefoods, a workers co-operative are testament to this. In order to expand the companies business Graham took on temporary employment as an agency driver through SUZIELINE, a Bellshill employment agency to allow him to gain experience driving HGV1 vehicles, before returning to Greencity, a cause close to his heart. This was not to be.

His disjointed dancing and love of punk music as well as Johnny Cash made us all smile .We have to learn from his death, it can't be in vain. We ask you to remember him today, we ask you to look after yourself and your colleagues regardless of who they are, temporary, casual, agency, whoever, we all have the right to life.

We understand the pressures of work as did Graham but they are not worth dying for. Graham's family and friends have had to endure his loss, we don't wish it for any other family.