

# The Day the TOWERS Fell

SEPTEMBER 11 happened almost two decades ago, yet it still feels like yesterday. A horrible day that changed the world forever, it's one of those days where most people remember where they were when it happened. Two members of the RSGC community were impacted directly and agreed to share their stories with *The Shield*.

BY LAUREN MANDARINO

## Cindy Barkway, Mother of Jamie '17 and David, Class of 2020

Cindy Barkway was five months pregnant when her husband, Dave, a Managing Director of BMO Nesbitt Burns, had to go to New York for a business trip. Knowing that his trip wasn't overly busy and that there likely wouldn't be another opportunity to get away before the baby came, Cindy booked a ticket on points to join her husband in the Big Apple. The couple – college sweethearts who married in 1997 – left their two-year-old son

Jamie at home with Cindy's parents, and spent a wonderful Sunday in New York, where they celebrated Dave's 34<sup>th</sup> birthday.

"We went to dinner and a movie. It was really nice," said Cindy. "I specifically remember Dave saying he was getting old. Of course, that seems so young now, looking back."

The next day, Dave had meetings and Cindy walked around New York. They went for dinner together in the evening.

That was September 10, 2001.

The next morning, Dave told Cindy that he had a breakfast meeting. He kissed her goodbye and left for his meeting. Cindy had some time before her flight home that afternoon, so decided to go for a walk around SoHo.

"I was in a taxi when we could see that a building was on fire. There were all these people looking at the building and I didn't really know what was going on," she said. "I got out at the top of Soho and went into a store. That's when I found out that it was the World Trade Center. I was just standing there thinking this can't be true. I thought I should go back to the hotel and I figured Dave would be going back there too."

Cindy started to make her way back to the hotel, realizing that she had no way to get in touch with Dave. There were huge lineups at all of the pay phones and people were screaming.

"I turned the corner and all I could see was dust. I guess that's when the first tower came down," said Cindy. "At one



Dave got to enjoy the first two years of Jamie's life, but never got to meet his younger son, David.



**Dave and Cindy, college sweethearts, married in 1997.**

point, I was walking behind a woman who had a cell phone. I heard her say that she had seen people falling from the buildings, but all I kept thinking was that I've got to get back."

With all of the traffic stopped and everyone trying to evacuate, it took Cindy a long time to get back to the hotel in Times Square. Dave wasn't there. Shortly after she watched the second tower go down, Cindy heard from someone from Dave's work. They had received a Blackberry text from him saying that he was on the 105<sup>th</sup> floor of the World Trade Center and that he needed help.

"I was stunned. He was in the north tower at the Cantor Fitzgerald offices," said Cindy. "I figured he had about an hour and a half to get out of the building and I truly thought he could get out. I was obsessed with watching the TV."

It was only when Cindy heard the Chairman and CEO of Cantor Fitzgerald speak that she understood that no one higher than the 90<sup>th</sup> floor would have made it out.

"That's when I realized that he probably died. Obviously it was very emotional," said Cindy, whose parents had driven to New York at that point to be with her. "My dad wanted to go back to Toronto, but I wasn't ready to leave yet. I thought I would be leaving him behind. We stayed a few more days and went to the Missing Persons Bureau to give in his toothbrush



and hair from his hairbrush for DNA and try to find out whatever we could."

There was no information to be found – and the hard part was still to come.

When Cindy returned to Toronto, she had to face Jamie to tell him that his Daddy wasn't coming home.



**For a decade, Cindy went back to New York with her family for the anniversary of September 11.**

"My sister brought him out and I just about fainted when I saw him," she remembered. "I was sad for myself that I had lost my husband, but I was very sad for my kids that they had lost their father. But I also knew that I had to take care of myself so I could take care of my kids.

"That first week, I never felt hungry or tired. I think I was just in shock. My mom would tell me when to go to bed or eat. I finally remembered that I was pregnant and I had to look after the baby," said Cindy. "Trying to sleep, eat healthy and exercise gave me focus. My boys have been my focus to help me get through this. I didn't want this horrible thing to define their lives and I didn't want to be sad or angry all the time."

When the baby was born, she named him David, after her husband.

The first year was certainly a difficult one, but Cindy made it through, focusing on getting through one day at a time with the help of family, friends and a wonderful community around her. In fact, she never spent a night alone.

She speaks to Jamie '17 and David, Class of 2020, constantly about their father, and his photos decorate their home. But Jamie has no memories of Dave and, obviously, David never had the chance to meet his father.

"I feel like I know a lot about him and what he was like," said Jamie, who attends McGill University. "Family members and my mom tell me stories and great things about him."

For a decade, Cindy took both boys down to Ground Zero to visit the site and see Dave's name etched on the memorial. As things got busier in the teenage years, she and the boys would volunteer somewhere for the day.

"I wanted them to know what happened, but I didn't want them to grow up angry or anxious about it," said Cindy. "I

just try to parent with love, support and compassion, and be there as much as I can."

Cindy has had to wear many hats as a single parent.

"You just sort of step up to the role you're given," she said. "Sometimes I think I don't know if I can do this, and other times, I know I can and I'm pretty proud of my two boys and where we've come."

Jamie is certainly proud of his mother.

"She's an incredibly strong woman and she has done a great job at both parts of the parental spectrum," he said. "She raised David and me really well, pushing a lot of the same ethical and moral ideologies on us that RSGC does."

As for Cindy, she continues to push through day by day, embracing her boys and the community surrounding her. Her smile is genuine and lights up her face, although not a moment goes by that she doesn't think about Dave.

"Life is hard and sad," said Cindy. "You can't always control what happens to you – you just try to do the best you can with the obstacles that you face."





## Mary Garafalo, Mother of Connor MacDonald, Class of 2021, and Alexander MacDonald, Class of 2024

On September 10, 2001, Mary Garafalo remembers being at a dinner party, thinking how perfect her life was. With a great job as an investigative reporter for WNYW, Fox 5's flagship news station in New York City, wonderful friends, a loving husband, Angelo MacDonald – who adores her – and a baby on the way, Mary felt like she was on top of the world.

And then the whole world changed.

On the morning of September 11, Mary, 14 weeks pregnant, wasn't feeling great, so she decided to sleep in and go into work a bit later. A frantic Angelo called at about 9:00 am, right after the first plane hit the World Trade Center. Within minutes, Mary had her journalist cap on and was in a taxi on her way to the site.

"Nobody knew what was going on – everyone thought it was a little plane," said Mary. "Traffic had just stopped. It was literally like the movie *Independence Day*. Everyone had gotten out of their cars and was looking up. We all saw the second plane hit the tower. I got out of the cab and started running down towards the tower."

Mary, whose cell phone wasn't working, found a pay phone to call her office and let them know she was a few blocks away. They warned her not to go there because they were under attack and sent a car for her and a crew to go cover the story from the airport.

"We got to the airport and there were helicopters, tanks and 300 police in full riot gear with interlocking arms, holding shields and pushing everybody out of the airport onto the highway. If you dropped your purse, you couldn't even go back



**As an investigative reporter, Mary covered stories like the Gulf War, Waco and 9/11.**

and get it," she recalled. "I had to report live and I didn't even know what I was reporting! All I could tell you was what I could see: there are tanks and there are dogs."

At this point, no one in Mary's life other than Angelo and their doctor knew that she was pregnant. So when Mary started to bleed by late morning, she didn't tell anyone.

"At that moment, you're not really thinking. You're just being a team player. It was the biggest news story of my life, of our generation, so I convinced myself that I was just spotting," said Mary, who has also covered stories like the Persian Gulf War, the Bill Clinton/Monica Lewinsky scandal, the Waco Siege, the Susan Smith murder case and the Sicilian Mafia in Italy. "But as the day went on, I was bleeding really heavily. If I was in pain, I didn't know – I was running on adrenaline."

Eventually, Mary's crew started to realize something was



wrong. She told her cameraman that she was pregnant and that she thought she was having a miscarriage. When they were finally released at 4:00 am, they tried to get back into Manhattan to get to a hospital, but all of the bridges were closed. After much convincing, a police sergeant drove Mary – who was prepared to walk across the bridge on her own – to a hospital, where Angelo met her.

Mary said that all of the hospitals were on high alert and remembers that the one she went to was full of staff. Every doctor was in.

"But I realized that no one was there except for me because nobody survived this," she said.

They did an ultrasound and found that there was no heartbeat. They wanted to do immediate surgery, but Mary would have

none of it – not when she knew the story of a lifetime was still happening outside the hospital doors.

"I said 'what? I can't go to work tomorrow?' They said no because I could go into spontaneous labour at anytime. I left anyways and went home. I went to work the next day and was absolutely catatonic. No one knew except for my cameraman."

Mary went to the hospital at the end of the week for surgery.

She now has two beautiful sons, Connor MacDonald, Class of 2021, and Alexander MacDonald, Class of 2024, both of whom were born in New York. Her investigative prowess and determination have earned her seven Emmy awards. Her husband Angelo still adores her. But Mary will never forget September 11 and all of the people who were lost.

## Memories from the Class of 2002

As I recall, the first vague news we heard of a plane running into the World Trade Center came at the end of an assembly in Ketchum Hall. Like many who heard the news that day, we first assumed this was about an unfortunate private pilot in a small plane.

There was a TV in the grad lounge in the Senior School, one of the only ones around that actually got a signal, and several of us decided to stop by to check the news before our next class. That's when the gravity of what was really happening hit us.

Eventually, Dr. Newton wondered why none of his AP English students had shown up for class and went looking for them. When he found us and saw the news, he was stunned. We sat and watched in shocked silence as the towers collapsed one after the other.

In an era of smartphones and constant connectivity, it is now difficult to imagine back to a time when an event of this magnitude could happen and people only learned about it hours later. But that's how it happened for us. One by one, students and teachers alike trickled into our small, now packed, windowless grad lounge and watched the world change on a small TV in the corner.

I don't think anyone went to class that morning.

— Chris Roscoe '02

