



Joe Meanen

“One of the 61”





Photograph capturing the first blast 21.59






Newspaper article

Out of the Piper Alpha oil rig disaster that cost 167 lives, the stories of courage and amazing escape

SURVIVOR OF THE INFERNO



Mr Meenen, his badly burned hands sealed with plastic, recovering in hospital yesterday

THE searing heat melted steel and made the sea boil — but Joseph Meenen came through. Around him the Piper Alpha platform was being blown apart, claiming lives of 167 men.

For others, like Mr Meenen, there was a chance. In the darkness of the rig's living quarters, a gas leak lit a catastrophic fire that was spreading as the platform began to collapse.

By a trick of physics they lived. Finally as the inferno consumed the North Sea giant, those still alive found a gas cloud — that and by chance of time the water and sky for rescue in a calm sea.

Mr Meenen and 40 others escaped the hell on Sunday. A gas leak lit a catastrophic fire that was spreading as the platform began to collapse.

The probable cause: The platform had recently been struck by a storm. The heat of the fire was so intense that the steel structure was melting. The cause of the disaster could be seen 60 miles away.

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Piper Alpha Memorial Hazelhead Park Lest We Forget

