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Jo Cox Murder - Thomas Mair Found Guilty

Wednesday, 23rd November, 2016

Thomas Mair has today been found guilty of the murder of Batley and Spen MP Jo Cox.

Mrs Cox died after being shot and stabbed in Birstall near Leeds on June 16.

Following a hearing at the Old Bailey in London, Mair, aged 53, was also found guilty of grievous bodily harm, possession of a firearm with intent to commit an indictable offence and possession of an offensive weapon.

West Yorkshire Police Senior Investigating Officer Detective Superintendent Nick Wallen said:

"It is still hard to comprehend the magnitude of what happened in the quiet market town of Birstall on that day in June.

"The murder of Jo Cox is a tragedy on so many levels. At the centre is the devastation caused by the loss of a Mother, a Wife, Daughter, Sister and Friend; but this killing, the first of a serving, female, Member of Parliament is also felt acutely by the local community, by the people of this country and across the world.

"Jo Cox MP championed the democracy and inclusivity of this country and for that she paid the ultimate price.

"Thomas Mair is a cold blooded killer. He calmly planned her death, lay in wait and then killed Jo in a sustained attack as she went about her daily business of trying to help people in her local community.

"I would like to pay tribute to the people who bravely came to Jo's assistance at the scene, one of whom, Bernard Kenny, nearly died as a result of injuries inflicted by Mair. I would also like to praise the courage of the two unarmed neighbourhood police officers who arrested Mair just minutes after, while he was still armed with a gun and a knife. I cannot praise highly enough Jo Cox's family. Throughout what must be the most terrible of times, they have acted with nothing other than stoicism and dignity seeking only to ensure that Jo's legacy is a positive and lasting one.

"This joint investigation between West Yorkshire Police and the North East Counter Terrorism Unit sought to understand the man that Thomas Mair is. He had never come to the notice of the Police before, living a solitary lifestyle with no social circle around him. This was a murder motivated by Mair's apparent political and ideological beliefs involving the use of a firearm and as such was an act of terrorism. Evidence of his interest in extreme right wing has been uncovered. Nothing can excuse the evil and the horror his

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actions brought to the town of Birstall on the 16th of June this year.”

Thomas Mair Trial - Statement by Detective Supt...



West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner Mark Burns-Williamson said:

“I am of course relieved that this trial has now concluded and that the correct decision has been reached.

“My thoughts remain with Jo’s family through what has been an extremely difficult ordeal, they have acted with such dignity throughout.

“This was a horrendous, politically motivated, brutal murder against a young woman, a mother and an MP.

“West Yorkshire Police have responded to this terrible situation with real professionalism and true compassion.

“Everybody from those that responded on the day to the murder investigation team working towards this verdict have demonstrated the best in policing.

“I also want to pay tribute to Jo’s staff who were with her on the day through to the bravery and overwhelming support shown by members of the public including Bernard Kenny.

“The world is a much poorer place with the loss of Jo and I know her constituency of Batley and Spen have really suffered.

“It now falls on all of us to continue Jo’s legacy to combat hatred in all its forms and to make sure Jo’s words ‘that we are far more united and have far more in common than that which divides us’ live on here in West Yorkshire.”

West Yorkshire Police Chief Constable Dee Collins said:

“My thoughts today are with Jo Cox’s family. Their lives have been changed forever as a result of Mair’s actions and I hope today’s verdict brings some comfort.

“Jo’s murder touched people worldwide, but nowhere more so than in her home constituency. It is testament to the

community that, from this tragedy, they were galvanised and drawn together united by their grief and determined to demonstrate that together we are all stronger.

"I am extremely proud and grateful to my own officers, staff, criminal justice colleagues and to members of the public, who put themselves in harm's way that day and gave evidence in court, and to the team who carried out a detailed and thorough investigation leading to today's outcome."

Murder of Jo Cox - Timeline

Wednesday June 15

17:00 – Thomas Mair seen entering the public library in Market Street, Birstall. He requested access to the computer equipment and was seen to log on to the systems.

Mair specifically asked if he needed to book an appointment at the surgeries held by Jo Cox, MP. The defendant was seen to read a poster on the wall advertising the surgery planned for the following day.

Thursday June 16

09:30 – Mair left his home address in Lowood Lane, Birstall. He wore a white baseball cap, dark green waist length jacket, dark trousers and shoes. He carried a grey canvas shopping bag.



09:47 – Mair seen on CCTV walking past Master Cars on Dark Lane.

09:49 – Mair seen on CCTV walking past Overfinch towards Gelderd Road.

09:58 – Mair seen on CCTV outside PC World on the Birstall Retail Park.

10:06 – Mair seen in WH Smith browsing the books and newspapers – notably he now wore a black baseball cap underneath the white one.

10:33 – Mair seen on CCTV walking past the Pheasant Public House heading in the direction on Birstall town centre.

11:39 – Mair seen on CCTV passing Sliderobes on Gelderd Road close to the junction with Leeds Road, Huddersfield Road and Nelson Street.

Noon – Mair headed into the town centre, walking across the junction with Smithies Lane and entered the market place. Subsequently he was seen going to and fro across the market place and entering various bus shelters around the square.

Approximately 12:45 – Bernard Kenny arrived in Market Street with his wife to visit Birstall Library. He waited in the car while she went into the library.

12:51 – The car containing Batley and Spen MP Jo Cox, her manager Fazila Aswat and her senior case worker Sandra Major arrived at the library for a pre-arranged surgery to be held between 13:00 and 14:00. All three got out of the car to go to the library.

Mair left the bus shelter at the junction of Chapel Lane and Market Street and entered Market Street.

Mair began his attack on Jo. Witnesses describe hearing a popping sound and screaming. Bernard Kenny saw Jo fall to the ground and saw the defendant brandishing a knife. Witnesses describe how she was shot, stabbed and kicked as she lay on the ground.

Mr Kenny got out of his car and made his way to the scene to try and help. Mair turned to him and stabbed him in the abdomen. Mr Kenny was forced to retreat and collapsed. Mrs Aswat began to swing her handbag at Mair to try and keep him away from Jo.

West Yorkshire Police received its first call in relation to the incident via 999 and immediately dispatched police officers to the scene.

Mair was heard to say words to the effect of "Britain first, this is for Britain. Britain always comes first."

A witness recalled Jo laying on the floor calling out to those trying to help her "Get Away, Get Away. Let him get me, let him hurt me, get away." Mair threatened other witnesses as they approached to try and help.

12:53 - Following the incident as Jo lay injured on the ground, Mair walked casually away down Market Street towards Bradford Road. He made his way into John Nelson Close and into the back garden of a house there. He removed his cream hat and grey suit jacket. He re-cocked the firearm causing a spent cartridge to fall to the undergrowth, a live round was transferred from the magazine into the chamber and the firearm was ready to be fired again.

13:01 – Emergency services including police and ambulance arrived and found Jo Cox collapsed and unconscious. An extensive search for the suspect began.

13:10 – Mair was seen by two unarmed police officers walking along Leeds Road towards Morley. He walked into Whitehorse Gardens turning into Risedale Avenue.

The officers shouted for him to stop and drop the bag. Mair eventually released his grip on the bag, turned out his pockets causing items to fall to the ground. Mair raised his hands to his shoulders and said 'it's me!' Mair was searched and a knife, firearm and ammunition were found.

13:45 – Mair was arrested and cautioned

13:48 - Despite attempts to resuscitate her, Jo Cox was pronounced dead.

Thomas Mair CCTV Footage - June 15/16th 201...



Investigation

Following Mair's arrest, West Yorkshire Police began its investigation into the murder of Jo Cox MP, the first female serving Member of Parliament to be killed.

During the days after the incident specialist officers including police dogs searched the home of Thomas Mair and recovered a number of items including print outs of his internet history where he researched Jo Cox, Neo-Nazi, White Supremacy, British National Party, public shootings and assassins.

The North East Counter Terrorism Unit (NECTU) worked alongside officers at West Yorkshire Police's Homicide and Major Enquiry Team to gather information on Thomas Mair and discover his motive for the attack on Jo Cox.

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