

Unanswered Questions About Port Arthur

Details That Point to a Coverup At Port Arthur ----- Email:
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What Was Alleged Martin Bryant Did That Day & Things That Happened Up To His Sentencing:

Before looking at the unanswered questions one needs to be aware of what it is alleged Bryant did that day. The exact details can be found on the DPP's Case Court Transcript page on this site - below is a summary:-

The case against Martin Bryant alleged he killed Mr. & Mrs. Martin at Seascope Cottage Guesthouse sometime before 12.40pm then travelled south 6km to see a Mr. Lerner then proceeded into the Port Arthur Historic Site and after an argument with the parking attendant went to the Broad Arrow Cafe and bought lunch. He sat having lunch inside then went outside to finish it. At 1.30pm he then went back inside the Cafe and opened fire with a COLT M16 CAR .223 Cal. Rifle killing 25 people in 90 seconds then left the Cafe shooting at people in and around the car park killing and wounding more - during that time he switched guns to an FN SLR .308 Rifle . He then is alleged to have driven his yellow Volvo out of the site shooting people along the way and at the tollbooth. He then abandons his car and transfers some of his implements to a BMW which belonged to his victims at the tollgate (he leaves behind the keys to Seascope, cans of petrol and a Daewoo Shotgun and ammo) . He then stops at the service station up the road shooting more people and takes a hostage who is forced into the boot of the BMW. The BMW then proceeds at high speed 6 km north to Seascope where he stops and shoots at cars on the highway injuring more people. He then takes his hostage inside Seascope and sets fire to the BMW. The time is now around 2pm. Local police wait in a ditch for several hours while shots are fired from Seascope. After dark Special Operations Group Police arrive at Seascope. During the night police talk on the phone to someone identified as "Jamie" at Seascope. Many shots are fired from Seascope during the night but nobody outside is hit.. At 7.45am the following morning Seascope erupts in smoke on fire. At 8.40am Martin Bryant -clothes on fire emerges from the rear of Seascope staggering and unarmed and is apprehended by police with TV News cameras rolling. Bryant remains in hospital isolated for several weeks. He denies committing the shootings to police when interviewed. He pleads not guilty for months. His first lawyer is removed in unclear circumstances and his second lawyer gets him (reportedly under pressure) to later plead guilty (thereby avoiding then requirement for a proper jury trial and scrutiny of evidence). Bryant's isolation continues to this day with his relatives being refused access to see him.

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

Below is a summary of the main unanswered questions about the incident in sequence of their happening under topic headings. Some of these points are covered in more detail on other pages on this site. Many more questions are raised on the CD-ROM referred to on the Introduction and Credits page.

PRELUDE

New South Wales Premier Barrie Unsworth said in 1987 "There will not be any change to gun laws until there is a massacre in Tasmania" following the a meeting of the States failing agree on uniform national gun laws. (Was this setting the stage ?)

Despite repeated refusal by the States to go down this path why were National Uniform Gun Laws all prepared and ready in Dec 1995 to go to an upcoming meeting of State and Federal Police Ministers due sometime around the time Port Arthur occurred ?

Why did Tasmanian Premier Ray Groom in an unprecedented move resign on 18th March 1996 as Premier (just 2 weeks after Howard wins 1996 Federal Election) and take over all Tasmanian portfolios that would have anything to do with a massacre at Port Arthur - Minister for Justice, Attorney General, Tourism (including the Port Arthur Historic Site), and Workplace Safety ? Tony Rundle an ex journalist takes his place as Premier.

Why did the Tasmanian Mortuary Service have a special Chevy Mortuary Truck capable of carrying 22 bodies made shortly before Port Arthur ?

THE MARTIN'S AT SEASCAPE

Why would Bryant want to kill the Martin's - owners of the Seascape ?

How and when could he have shot them that day with the neighbours house only 20 metres away ?

Why is the evidence of the guests who stayed at Seascape overnight inconsistent with that of other witnesses regards the presence of a yellow Volvo before noon ? Were there 2 yellow Volvo's and Bryant being emulated in order to make him the patsy for this incident ?

BROAD ARROW CAFÉ

Why would Bryant want to shoot so many people he did not know - MOTIVE ?

Why was a management work seminar scheduled that Sunday for staff of the Port Arthur Site - only one ever held and none held since - for that day and why was it held at a location 2 hours drive away ? .Was it to get key staff away ? And isn't it also a coincidence it was scheduled for almost the exact time the shooting began - 1pm.

Why was the only local policemen in the Port Arthur area sent to investigate a phoney drug tip-off (heroin in a bottle which turned out to be soap-powder) in the most distant part of his police district (only one ever recorded) shortly before the shootings started ? And was that diversion also to prevent him from closing the drawbridge to the mainland which would have bottled up the gunman ? And isn't it another incredible coincidence that only 4 minutes after they reported by radio arriving at their destination that the shooting started in the Cafe ?

Why did that caller ring the local police and not dial 000 (911) - was it was because 000 number is recorded ?

How could Bryant, an unskilled person of low intellect, kill 25 people in the café by head shots and wound numerous others fired from the hip in 90 seconds ?

Why did senior Tasmanian Police keep police away from Port Arthur for as long as possible - 6

hours - when police headquarters was only an hour's drive away ? Was it to allow the crime scene to get messed up ? And why did they let only the small handful Special Operation Group personnel into the Seascope site ?

Why was the Café's emergency exit door that jammed faulty ? Was it deliberately tampered with ? And why did it reportedly go missing after the incident - was it switched ?

THE ROAD TO SEASCAPE

Why was the yellow Volvo left behind with ammo etc... in it at the Tollgate ? Why change cars and at where it was done ? Was it to leave something of Bryant's there at the Port Arthur crime scene ?

Why take a hostage at the Service Station ? Put a man in boot ? Why not just kill him as he had been doing since it started ? Was it to keep police at bay at Seascope under seize standoff conditions until night fell ? Why would he do that or was it to allow other to escape in the cover of darkness ?

SEASCAPE

Why was a trail of destruction led to Seascope ?

Why would Bryant set fire to the BMW ? Was it done by the real gunman to destroy fingerprint and other evidence ? Or was it to create a beacon to attract police ?

Why were SOG snipers told not to shoot at a man seen on the roof of Seascope with a gun ?

Why did so many shots fired from Seascope that night hit nothing given Bryant was claimed to be a crack shot ?

Why did Seascope ignite that morning like an incendiary bomb had gone off ? And why did it happen that morning and not in the dark ? Was it to destroy all evidence inside including making an examination of the bodies those dead inside difficult - in terms of determining time of death ? Why would Bryant want to do that ?

Why would Bryant knowing he was surrounded lite such a fire - it would only serve to force him outside to be shot at or captured ? Why would police lite one knowing hostages were inside ?

Why were fire trucks prevented from putting out the fire after Bryant was grabbed police knowing hostages were inside ? Seascope was only smoking when he was grabbed.

Why did Bryant stagger from Seascope as if drugged and the burns only to the back of his body if lying down ? Was it the fire that woke him up after being drugged by the real gunman and his helpers ?

AFTERMATH

Why was there no positive ID of Bryant done by police by lineup or mug shots as required by law ? Why hasn't anyone identified him positively ?

Why were there no fingerprints found on - the sports bag - the guns - the surfboard ?

Why did the Tasmanian Mortuary Service, which had a special Chevy Morg Truck capable of carrying 22 bodies which was used at Port Arthur, sell it shortly afterwards - and why would they need such a truck of that capacity - for a State where on average there are 6 murders per year and not all occurring at the same day, place and time ? Why did the operator of the service recently publically criticise Cafe witness Wendy Scurr in a letter to a newspaper for querying this unusual vehicle and its history ?

Why was Bryant's hands and face uninjured when his Colt M16 CAR rifle was found which blew a cartridge in the breech and exploded making it unoperative ?

Why were 2 sports bags found when witnesses said the gunman had only one ?

Were the guns found at Seascap really Bryant's and were they really the ones used on the day ?

Why was the COLT CAR rifle missing the pistol grip and why was the FN's barrel bent and had parts missing from it when recovered from Seascap, and those parts never found ? And how could the COLT - a plastic gun - survive a fire intact ?

Why were police, the media, Justice Minister Ray Groom etc... saying the people in the café were all shot within 90 seconds when witnesses there claim it was between 5 to 6 minutes - why the reduction of the time ? Was it to justify the rapidfire aspect of the guns for a ban ?

Why was the Broad Arrow Café bulldozed so quickly - was it to destroy evidence of what really took place there - like a second gunman backing up the main gunman ?

How did the media know it was Bryant before he was arrested at 8.40 am that Monday morning ? How could the Hobart Mercury know it was him for their morning print run for that day done much earlier than 8.40 am ? The man on the phone's name was "Jamie".

Who doctored video footage of a running man adding the soundtrack of shots from another video and presented this as Bryant (prior to his trial) which was also used at his trial as evidence which was shown on Channel 9's Ray Martin Current Affairs Program ? Was it Channel 9 who did it and if so was it at Ray Martin's own instruction ? (For Overseas readers Ray Martin was a TV Current Affairs Host with thoroughly anti-gun views). Was it the DDP or the Tasmanian Police ?

Why has there been no Coroner's Inquest ? This is something totally unprecedented.

THE COURT PROCEEDINGS

Why did Bryant persistently state under questioning he did not go to Port Arthur that day and did not shoot anyone ?

Why did Bryant plead not guilty for months ? Why would someone do that if he knew he could be identified ? Why was he isolated for months and his mother refused access ?

Why was Bryant's first lawyer removed ? Who removed him ? Why did he only plead guilty after pressure from his new lawyer ?

Why was Hobart gun dealer, Terry Hill, who was alleged to have sold the weapons to Bryant was dragged into court over it and the minute he started wanting to get Bryant and other witnesses into court to testify the action was dropped - as if authorities didn't want any scrutiny of the evidence ?

Also - why did the Tasmanian Police and DPP try to get Terry Hill to admit he sold him the guns by offering immunity (the guns Bryant said he never owned).

Why did the DPP censor and edit out so many pages of Bryant's taped police interview ? And how could the recording equipment for that interview breakdown ?

Why have the Tasmanian DPP Damien Bugg QC and other people associated with the case been promoted ?

POLITICAL REACTION - NATIONAL GUN LAWS

Why did Prime Minister John Howard in the say "some firearm owners were going to have to make sacrifices" when announcing the National Gun Laws he imposed.

Why did John Howard also decide and declare a coronor's inquest into Port Arthur be denied - when it is not his responsibility or jurisdiction to do so ? What was John trying to hide ? Was he trying to protect some of his mates in the Tasmanian and Federal Liberal Party who were involved - Ray Groom perhaps ?

Why did Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer after the imposition of the Howard imposed gun laws following Port Arthur say: "This is all about removing guns from urban areas".

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