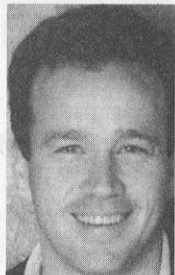


Meet Joe Allen



JOE RYAN ALLEN

A Knack for Connecting

Joe Ryan Allen was one of those guys who still had his friends from first grade. His brother-in-law described him as “the family ambassador” because of his knack for connecting with people.

Mr. Allen, 39, had done well in his career as a bond broker at Cantor Fitzgerald. But the centerpiece of his life was his many friends and his family—a younger sister, three older brothers, six nieces and nephews.

His sister, Jennifer D’Auria, said Mr. Allen was single and thinking about settling down after seven years in Los Angeles trying to be an actor, and many more years of being an inveterate world traveler. “He did everything he wanted to do,” Ms. D’Auria said. “He was always out with friends, he was always getting together with the family.”

He was her rock, she said, when their mother died of cancer in 2000.

“He would be depressed because other people around him had problems; they weren’t his problems,” said Robert Diodato, his best friend. They grew up in Bronxville together and met in fourth grade. “He was one of those friends you speak to four or five times a day. He left a tremendous void in a lot of people’s lives.”

I never got the opportunity to meet Joe Allen, and for that, I am saddened. Joe died on the morning of September 11, 2001, a fate shared by far too many Americans on that day. We’ve tried to imagine what it must have been like for Joe on that morning and the closer and closer we get to understanding what may have happened to him, the more it breaks our hearts. We will know so little of Joe’s final moments, other than the facts that he went to work that morning, was trapped above the impact of the first plane strike at the World Trade Center, and made a call to his fiancée to tell her he loved her, he wasn’t going to make it, and to ask her to give his love to his family. We will never know if Joe was alive when the building came down; just one of so many questions that will never be answered. What we do know is that we will all spend just a few moments out of almost every day wondering what it must have been like in those final minutes.

My family spends a good deal of time in and around New York City and Joe was a family friend that I never got to meet. Joe was one of the people on the east coast that my family always told me I would love to meet. As I watch the documentaries on the victims and the documentaries on the attacks, I am coming to realize that Joe was just one of so many good, hard-working people that met with their end on that morning. They were people that even though you never met them, you will think of them for the rest of your life.

In the months following the attacks, the New York Times ran a special “Portraits Of Grief” section where their staff writers wrote portraits of the lives that had been interrupted by the 9/11 attacks. These portraits have been compiled into a book called “Portraits 9/11/01.” In the book, you will find a picture of and a small biography about the victims of that morning. They were people just like all of us who were killed for getting up and going to work. Help us to preserve the memories of the victims by picking up a copy of this book and sharing it with your families both today and in the future. To the left is Joe Allen’s “Portrait.” Though it would be impossible to capture how much Joe and the other 9/11 victims meant to the people who shared in their lives with mere words, I think this book will serve as a reminder of the tragedy to inspire each of us as we move on through our lives.