

# MUM ON 'BRAINWASHED' KILLER



Innocent... young Thomas on bike

**IN** June 25-year-old Thomas Evans from Buckinghamshire — who went by the name Abdul Hakim after converting to Islam — was killed fighting for terror group al-Shabaab.

It was behind multiple atrocities in Kenya, including the 2013 Westgate shopping mall attack in Nairobi which killed 67 people. Journalist RICHARD KERBAJ spoke to his mother Sally Evans for documentary My Son The Jihadi.

WHEN Sally Evans opens her pantry door she sees a smiling face.

Son Thomas painted it in green, pink and purple as a four-year-old. It reminds her of him as a child.

Today she is tortured by the knowledge he grew up to be a white jihadist who committed terrible atrocities.

Four months ago, former teaching assistant Sally, 57, saw a picture on Twitter of his body. He had been killed by Kenyan soldiers while attacking a military base.

Since then Sally, who believes he is "burning in hell" for his crimes, has searched her memories to try to work out how he became a monster.

Sally's Irish father ran a pub in Camden, North London. She married at 21 and a decade later in 1990 was thrilled to find herself pregnant for the first time.

When Thomas was almost two the family moved to High Wycombe, Bucks, and had another son, Micheal. Sally remembers Thomas as full of energy but shy and gentle.

Three years later, his father left home. Thomas gave Sally cards on Mother's Day and Father's Day, saying she was "both to me and I love you".

At 14 he grew his hair and dabbled with booze and cannabis. Sally let him convert the family garage into a den — with a table big enough for a hookah pipe and bottles of alcohol. It was better, she thought, to let his hair down at home than on the town.

Strapping 6ft 2in Thomas had told Micheal he wanted to become an electrical engineer with the Royal Marines to "serve my country". He landed a local apprenticeship.

He lost the job three years later after converting to Islam and offending his employer with his extremist views.

About a quarter of High Wycombe's 120,000 population is Muslim. Micheal says as a teenager Thomas had been vocal about his dislike of "P\*\*\*s", as he called them — and added: "He went almost from one extreme to another."

Sally believes his conversion began when he made friends with young Asian men at a gym. He went on to change his name to Abdul Hakim.



Love and hate... Thomas, left, in combat gear and Sally, above, with pic of him as child

# I'm relieved jihadi son's dead.. he'll burn in hell

Sally said: "I respected his right to be a Muslim, but he repeatedly told his brother and me we were destined for hell unless we converted." In 2011 Thomas said he wanted to live in an Islamic country.

He was stopped by counter-terrorism officials at Heathrow trying to jet to Kenya. Four months later, he went to Egypt. On January 19, 2012 Thomas rang Sally, saying he was in Somalia and had joined al-Shabaab. The following Christmas Eve he rang to say

he had married a girl of 13 or 14 who did not speak English.

In 2013 Sally had a row with Thomas over al-Shabaab's Westgate attack in Kenya. She wrote in her diary: "Selfishly, I'm relieved he wasn't involved, but very angry with him because he thinks it's OK to murder innocent men, women and children."

On June 14 Sally and Micheal found out Thomas had died. They were horrified to learn of the atrocities he had committed — including behead-

ing Christians and setting fire to churches and villages.

Witness accounts obtained by Channel 4 linked Thomas to attacks last year in the Lamu region of Kenya, where more than 90 people were murdered.

Sally said she will forever miss Thomas, the young boy she remembered. But she is glad the person he became — Abdul Hakim — is dead.

● RICHARD Kerbj is The Sunday Times Security Correspondent and producer of My Son The Jihadi which will be broadcast on Channel 4 on October 22 at 9pm.

## IS boss 'hit by missile'

By JOHN FAHEY

**EVIL** IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was blasted by an Iraqi air force missile, it was revealed yesterday.

But it was unclear last night if he was still alive. Reports claimed he was driven away from the smouldering wreckage after his vehicle was hit while travelling in a convoy on Saturday.

He was en route to a meeting in Karbala, Iraq, which was also blitzed. Many IS leaders were killed or wounded.

An Iraqi military statement said: "The fate of murderer al-Baghdadi is unknown."

Iraqi security sources previously claimed that al-Baghdadi, who has a £6.5million bounty on his head, had been injured or killed in past air strikes.



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## RON HERO DIES

THE Secret Service agent who saved President Reagan's life after he was shot has died aged 85.

Jerry Parr bundled Reagan into his car when he was hit by John Hinckley in Washington in 1981.

He ordered the limo to go straight to hospital instead of the White House. Doctors said it saved Reagan's life as he was bleeding internally.

Parr died of heart failure in a Washington hospice.

**Sun**

TWO Only Fools and Horses fans dressed as Batman and Robin will drive across Europe in a yellow van from Newport, South Wales, for charity.

**SPOT**

## TROLLEY SCAM

SHOPPERS are boasting of beating the 5p carrier bag charge by nicking supermarket trolleys.

Customers put snaps on Facebook of trolleys stacked with goods in their homes. The trolleys cost stores £100 each, but shoppers get their hands on them for a £1 deposit. One man, from Trowbridge, Wilts, posted a picture of one in his kitchen and said: "5p for a bag. Get f\*\*\*\*d. I got a £1 trolley."