

As I have recently commenced my role within the SEFF South Armagh Gateway Service, based in Bessbrook I feel it appropriate to acknowledge the devastating impact that terrorism had upon that part of our province. The area in question was known throughout as 'bandit country' based on the high level of terrorist activity conducted by the notorious South Armagh Brigade of the IRA. Research highlights that Newry & Armagh accounted for 11.92% of fatalities during the troubles (432 in total) which was the third most affected region out with Belfast. 218 of those murdered were members of the Security Forces. Keeping the peace in such a hostile and dangerous environment was extremely difficult and the Police and Army faced a daily onslaught of guerrilla warfare, resulting in their transportation throughout the terrain only being possible via the use of helicopters. Any legacy proposal aimed at dealing with the past must address the outstanding truth, justice & acknowledgement issues facing innocent victims such as the families of those from the Kingsmills, Tullyvallen and Darkley massacres. The perpetrators of such must be held to account and made to atone for their heinous crimes before they can even begin to comprehend any form of meaningful closure. The clear up rate and amount of convictions for such atrocities remains alarmingly low, an instrumental factor of which was the close proximity the area had with the safe haven that was the Irish Border.

The establishment of the SAGS denotes a new beginning. At last there is a support organisation for South Armagh innocent victims located in South Armagh. We as an organisation have taken the opportunity over the last month to integrate into the area and utilise our new office space. During the upcoming weeks and months we will further develop our outreach potential by organising meetings with local representatives, engaging with local press and organising outreach events such as our official launch. We look forward to having the opportunity to become involved with the local community and deliver advocacy services to victims that thus far have not been able to avail of the support available.

Ian Irwin

SEFF AfIV New G.B Advocacy Worker

My background is in law, having graduated from my law degree in 2015, I then worked as a paralegal in two national law firms before studying for my Masters in Commercial Law in 2018. Following this, I studied the Bar Professional Course and I was called to the Bar of England and Wales in July 2019. Throughout my academic career I have always enjoyed volunteering with various charitable organisations.

I was part of the Unseen Exploitation Society that attended local schools to discuss employments rights with students. I also volunteered with Link Age for four years as part of their befriending programme. Last year I volunteered with the Personal Support Unit. Its aim is to assist those engaged in legal proceedings who have no legal representation and provide guidance.

I hope to support and assist innocent victims and survivors through my work with SEFF. I believe that the combination of my legal experience and volunteering work will enable me to do this and I am looking forward to undertaking the role of Advocacy Support Worker in October 2019.

Iona Gallagher



Advocacy for Innocent Victims Newsletter



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Dear Member

There has been considerable change within the AfIV Advocacy team. You are aware of Ian Irwin and Alan Lewis joining us and the opening of the Bessbrook office. Following recent interviews in London to replace Aitor, Iona Gallagher has been appointed to the London post. (pen picture on page 4) We are actively recruiting to fill the two vacant posts in NI; the closing dates for applications is Friday 27th Sept. Interviews will be held the following week.

As many of you know, in my earlier life I was a member of the Royal Marines. The 22nd of this month marks the 30th anniversary of the PIRA bomb attack on RM Deal, that killed 11 RM Bandsmen and injured 21 others, many of them with life changing injuries. This is but one of the many atrocities committed by terrorists in the UK and the RoI. Our thoughts are with the families and survivors at this time.

There is a continued drive by republicanism to force Government to instigate the proposed structures as recommended by the Stormont House Agreement. We understand why they wish these to be enacted as they are grossly unfair and seek to shift the balance of responsibility of the vast majority of deaths from the terrorists to the Security Forces. Recently two academics and Daniel Holder from the CAJ gave a presentation to the NI Affairs Committee, and one of them admitted that it is unlikely that any terrorists will be prosecuted. However the pursuit of others will continued in order to meet an ideological outcome.

Yours Faithfully

Ken



The 'Ceasefire' 25 years on and why many believe they still 'haven't gone away'!

The 1st September 1994 saw the 25th anniversary on the supposed first ceasefire by the Provisional Irish republican Army (PIRA) after sustaining an intensive campaign of violence since it came into being in 1970. This is seen by many as the key moment in time that changed our recent turbulent past. But there had been a number of ceasefires at different stages of the troubles, going back to 1972, these tended to be short periodic ceasefires, some around Christmas, the motives of which were questionable, hardly for the security forces who in a day or so they would be trying to again cold bloodedly murder, was it more for the provisional volunteers to give them a rest over the festive period.

On 1st September 2019, first day of the ceasefire, Aaron Haggan was born, the son of Jackie and Kim Haggan; his Father an off duty RUC Officer had been murdered on the 10th March 1994 at Dunmore Greyhound Stadium shot dead in front of his pregnant wife. The 13th October 1994 then saw the Loyalist paramilitary groupings UVF, UDA and RHC call their own ceasefires. All of these proscribed organisations went on to cause further heart break and carry out further murders in future years when supposedly committed to Ceasefire's. On the 13th August 1995 we had Mr Adams make his famous proclamation when questioned about the PIRA whereabouts, "they haven't gone away!". Intelligence suggested they had been operating under a new guise at the Direct Action Against Drugs and murdered and injured numerous alleged drugs dealers. How right Mr. Adams was, they hadn't gone away and came back with venom, on 9th February 1996 the PIRA officially broke their cease fire with the London Docklands bombing resulting in the murder of 2 innocent victims; Inan Ul-haq Bashir and John Jeffries. June 1996 saw the murder of Garda Jerry McCabe in County Limerick. On the 12th February 1997 Stephen Restorick a serving member of the British Army was shot dead in Bessbrook and on 16th June 1997 we had the brutal murder of 2 RUC Officers John Graham and David Johnston in Lurgan. Right from the start of the peace process, there is reliable information that the PIRA through 'Spike' Murray was arranging the importation of clean weapons to be used in further murders, in anticipation of token decommissioning that they realised would have to take place. One of these weapons brought in from the States is believed to have been used in the murder of John Graham and David Johnston.

A month later in July 1997 we had the 'theatrical' call by Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness for PIRA to call a ceasefire, 'surprise, surprise', the very next day they did exactly that, who would have thought it? The general underlying threat of a return to violence has continued to be insinuated many times over the years, usually at commemoration events mostly connected to the glorification of terrorism. In January 2005 we had the beating to death of Robert McCartney by known Republicans, the powers that be; politicians, PONI and senior Police Officers are strongly alleged to have assisted in the republican movement cover up and the denial of justice for the McCartney family, probably rationalised by a supposed 'greater good'. The threat of a return to violence to many members of our society still exists, there has been the constant suggestion by politicians both North and South of the border that Brexit could see us in a return to our violent past, the use of such language being shamefully used to try and blackmail the electorate. We still have to listen to ex Provisionals such as Martina Anderson (6th August 2019), publicly shouting 'Tiocfaidh ár lá' and then further stating, "Don't think we have suffered your oppression, your state killings and assassinations for decades"; not one word of the over thousand plus PIRA murders and many more thousands physically and psychologically injured through their actions.

Sinn Féin speak of equality, community reconciliation, respect and diversity for all, but this glorification and justification of Republican terrorist actions; is just a never ever ending theme. There is the continued condemnation of any of the actions or use of force against terrorism; but paramilitaries want to put across they were in a supposed 'war'. We know isolated wrongs were committed by the Security Forces, but these were minimal in comparison, despite severe provocation that realistically would not have been endured in many other parts of the world. Some former terrorists with their media 'celebrity status' have manipulated and indoctrinated some of our supposed academic elites, who look more at their complicated underlying causes or excuses for the campaigns of violence that ordinary decent law abiding people have little understanding of; giving minimal consideration to the indiscriminate suffering caused to innocent Victims who more often than not had no control over their fate. However, we have to be measured in our response to these acts of provocation and incitement, too often there has been 'knee jerk' reaction that plays into the hands of those who promote the distortion that the 'troubles' at best was a two sided 'conflict' of equal wrongs. Whereas, the truth and facts depict that it was mainly a campaign of unjustified abhorrent attacks by paramilitaries on the lawful communities of Northern Ireland, Great Britain, Republic of Ireland and Europe. A measured response will win over the more rational and moderate of our academics and in turn hopefully convert the important influential middle ground.

Pete

Memorial Unveiled to John McCready by his Son Martyn



In recognition of Orange Victims day, at a Service in Bangor Orange Hall a Mirror was unveiled by Martyn McCready in memory of his Father who was murdered on the Cavehill Road, North Belfast. John was shot by PIRA on the 27th January 1976 and died as a result of his injuries 10 days later, 6th February 1976 in the Royal Victoria Hospital. This had the hallmarks of being a random sec-



tarian attack with no other obvious motive.

The SEFF Advocacy team has been working with Martyn in his search for justice and truth, providing him what support and advice we can. At the unveiling ceremony Martin recognised the loss the wider Orange Community had suffered during the 'Troubles' stating, "I would also like to remember all the 335 Orangemen and one Orangewoman who lost their lives in cowardly acts of violence". We would also like to take the opportunity on behalf of SEFF to send our condolences to Martyn and his wife Doreen; Doreen's Mum recently passed away on the September 2019, she was 98 years of age. Our thoughts are with Doreen, Martyn and family.

