Ian Gow MP - 30th July 1990

SEFF remembers Ian Reginald Edward Gow who was murdered 30 years ago today by Provisional IRA terrorists.

Ian Gow was a UK Conservative and Unionist Party MP, he was also a solicitor by profession. While serving as Member of Parliament for Eastbourne, he was assassinated by Provisional IRA terrorists who exploded a bomb under his car outside his home in Sussex. He was the last British politician to be murdered by Republican terrorists.

On 30th July 1990, the Provisional IRA planted a bomb under Mr Gow’s Austin Montego car in the early hours, which exploded in the driveway of his house in Hankham, near Pevensey in East Sussex. The 4 ½ lb semtex bomb detonated at 08.39am as he reversed out of his driveway, leaving him with severe wounds to his lower body. He died just 10 minutes later.

During a period of national service from 1955 to 1958 he was commissioned in the 15th/19th Hussars and served in Northern Ireland, Germany and Malaya. He subsequently served in the territorial army until 1976, reaching the rank of Major.

Mr Gow was considered a close ally, confidante and friend of the then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher for the majority of her premiership but by the point of his death he was reported as believing that the point had come for her to retire. Just six months after his murder, Margaret Thatcher ‘s position at the helm of UK politics came to an abrupt end.

Ian Gow is remembered on SEFF’s Memorial Quilt, Terrorism knows NO Borders, sharing a patch with his close friend Airey Neave who had been murdered by the INLA 11 years previously.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the Gow family today and every day.