Ivan Hillen 12th May 1984

SEFF remembers Ivan Hillen on this his 36th Anniversary. On 12th May 1984 Ivan was murdered by PIRA whilst working on his own farm at Augher.

Ivan aged 45 years, was a member of the Ulster Defence Regiment (6 UDR) who was off duty at the time he was gunned down by cowardly terrorists.

Ivan’s brother-in law Harry Alexander painfully recalls: “It was the hottest May Day I ever remember. The tar was bubbling on the road - I distinctly remember that. It was quite some time before all the agencies had carried out their bits and pieces, and at the latter end of the day I identified the body, as closest next of kin. And when the body was removed, I set to washing his blood from the passage of the pig house where he had been shot. He was on his way up the passage with his bucket on his arm, looking to the side at his livestock, when they hit him. I measured it - he was hit seventeen times at a range of seven feet with two AK47s. That's the chance he got to protect his own life or to get away. He was in a building with three walls of concrete and two AK47s to his front - he didn't have a chance”.

“The death of Ivan was an unbelievable shock for the family. I know it was a too regular occurrence across the province, but that doesn't make it any easier for an individual family. When I came home, my wife said 'how are you going to go out again and leave me here?', and the only way I could get round it was to say 'for Ivan's sake I will do it, for as long as the Lord lets me, for I'll not let him down'. And she agreed ….

Ivan was a committed soldier and family man whose murder shocked many from across the community.

SEFF’s thoughts and prayers are with Ivan’s widow Helen, his son Rodney and the wider Hillen family circle.