Private Richard (Richie) Greener - 20th August 1988

SEFF remembers Pte Richard (Richie) Greener who was murdered 32 years ago today via The Ballygawley Bus Bomb which stole his life and seven of his colleagues. 28 others were left physically and/or psychologically injured.

Richie was from Whitley Bay, North Tyneside he was a Private in the 1st Battalion of the Light Infantry and was a proud soldier.

When Richie returned from leave he would stay with his Mum and Dad, Michael and Dorothy Greener.  He also had a brother (Vic) and a twin sister (Susan)

Richie also known as Richie was a devoted UB40 fan and loved listening to their music, that is why UB40 were chosen to represent Richie on the 'Terrorism knows No Borders' Memorial Quilt along with his cap badge.

Richie was one of 8 soldiers within the 1st Battalion of the Light Infantry who was murdered when the bus they were travelling in was attacked by a Provisional IRA roadside bomb on the Ballygawley to Omagh Road.

The soldiers had been in Northern Ireland around 18 months and were returning to their base in Omagh when the bombed exploded under their unmarked bus.

Richie's twin sister Susan has faithfully come back to Omagh on a number of occasions in recent years to honour her brother's memory. Last year she gave her first public interview since the atrocity back in August 1988.

Susan recalls the moment that she heard the fateful news:

<link href="<https://static.bbc.co.uk/news/1.287.03360/icons/generated/icons.fallback.css>" rel="stylesheet">

"I was in the house. My eldest daughter was five months old at the time and my mam and dad had been looking after her and they rang us because they had seen it on the news.

"I went round and I was actually changing the baby's nappy when the MOD (Ministry of Defence) turned up.

"I just heard my dad crying, which I had never heard in my life before. The press was camped outside, so I was trying to protect them (mum and dad) from that. To be fair I can't remember a lot of that day after that."

Susan went on to reveal that her brother had put in place plans to leave the Army months after the attack.

"He was supposed to be coming out that Christmas, him and his friend were setting up a business to do roofing, so he had actually already paid to come out of the Army when he was killed."

Susan has previously commented that a return to Omagh was something that concerned her significantly and that she "didn't really want to come the first time".

"It gets easier every time I come over. Everybody is so nice and welcoming. It is not what I thought it would be," she said.

"I don't think I have grieved properly still. It got pushed back. It is just a case of getting on with it. I still think of him everyday."

See: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-northern-ireland-45240378/soldier-killed-in-ballygawley-bomb-was-set-to-leave-army>

SEFF's thoughts and prayers are with the Greener family and all the other bereaved families and surviving injured of the bombing this day and every day.