Wesley and Bertha Armstrong

Wesley and Bertha Armstrong were murdered 31 years ago today as a result of the Enniskillen Poppy Day Massacre committed by PIRA terrorists on 8th November 1987. Wesley was aged 62 years and Bertha 55 years at the point they were murdered.

Retired RUC R/Con Wesley worked for Customs and Excise most of his life and then in later years he joined the team in BT. He served in the part-time RUC Reserve in the 1970’s.

Wesley was a Sunday School Superintendent, Circuit Steward; he loved his Church and cherished his Christian faith.

Meanwhile Bertha was viewed as a family woman committed to her children and a proficient home maker. She loved animals and was said to be capable of cooking or baking almost anything.

On that fateful Sunday (8th November 1987) she had the roast in the oven, potatoes and vegetables peeled and Eves pudding sitting waiting for the custard to be made, that meal was never able to be completed and enjoyed as it should’ve been.

Daughter Stella Robinson fondly remembers much loved parents and recounts within the 2014 SEFF Publication, ‘For God and Ulster - the vow of those who reject violence’ as follows: “The first I knew of the bomb was hearing a noise, but I thought it was the neighbour behind closing their garage door. Then a short while after the doorbell rang and it was my husband’s aunt, Angel Robinson, standing at the door. I could see dust on her coat, on her shoulders, and she looked shaken and was in hysterics. She said “Stella, your parents have been in an accident”.

“I just thought she meant a car accident, and she came in and said there was an explosion at the cenotaph”.

“I couldn’t and still can’t understand it. Why would anybody want to hurt people on their way to church? They just wanted to respect and remember the dead of two wars”.

Wesley and Bertha are remembered on SEFF’s first Memorial Quilt, ‘Your Legacy Lives On.’ The images used for Wesley are; a Poppy and a Wheelbarrow plus butterfly and a set of music notes depicting his interests in nature, how important he felt Remembrance to be plus his love of music.

Meanwhile in Bertha’s patch was included a Poppy, cupcake and a Rooster. Again demonstrating her love of baking, the importance she gave to Remembrance and her love of animals.

Wesley and Bertha are survived by offspring, Stella, Pam, Moyna and Julian. Trevor passed away in recent years.

SEFF remembers the Armstrong family today and every day.