**Robert John Montgomery (Jackie) Gibson**

**21st July 1972**

SEFF remembers Robert John Montgomery (Jackie) Gibson who was murdered as a result of the Provisional IRA’s targeting of Belfast City and its’ citizens in a day forever remembered as, Bloody Friday.

Jackie was born at Derryboy, Co. Down. He was married to Moreen Gibson and they had five children, Robert, Hilary, Lynda, Stephen and Dorothy. He was a bus driver with Ulsterbus and a part time Police Reserve Constable.

Along with his wife and two daughters he was a member of Raffrey Presbyterian Church choir, often taking the solo lead, he had previously been a member of Crossgar Choral Society, and proudly sang with the Belfast CE Choir. He was extremely well known in the local area and was very highly thought of.

Jackie was paying in the money to the office from his bus route on the 21st July 1972 when he was murdered by a Provisional IRA terrorist bomb which exploded in the Oxford Street Bus Station in Belfast.

46 years later he is still much loved and missed by his family. Jackie’s patch on the quilt - A Patchwork of Innocents is memorialised by the RUC Crest, an Ulsterbus and musical notes to show his work and his love of singing.

SEFF’s thoughts and prayers are with the Gibson family today and everyday and all families impacted by ‘Bloody Friday.’

**The events of Bloody Friday**

The bombings happened during an 80-minute period on the afternoon of Friday 21 July. At least 24 bombs were planted; at least 19 exploded and the rest failed to detonate or were defused. At the height of the bombing, the middle of Belfast "resembled a city under artillery fire; clouds of suffocating smoke enveloped buildings as one explosion followed another, almost drowning out the hysterical screams of panicked shoppers". According to [The Guardian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Guardian): "for much of the afternoon, Belfast was reduced to near total chaos and panic. Thousands streamed out of the stricken city […] and huge traffic jams built up. All bus services were cancelled, and on some roads, hitch-hikers frantically trying to get away lined the pavements".

Nine people were murdered and a further 130 injured, some of them horrifically mutilated. Of those injured, 77 were women and children. All of the deaths were caused by two of the bombs: at Oxford Street bus depot, and at Cavehill Road.

Those murdered:

Stephen Cooper (19) William Crothers (15) John Gibson (45) William Irvine (18) Thomas Killops (39) Brigid Murray (65) Margaret O'Hare (34) Stephen Parker (14) Philip Price (27)