**Johnny Fletcher**

**1st March 1972**

SEFF remembers Johnny Fletcher who was murdered on 1st March 1972. Johnny was a part-time UDR soldier and was aged just 43 years when murdered by PIRA.

Johnny was abducted as he was driving away from his farmhouse to work. He was frog-marched into a field by PIRA terrorists and executed. His brutal murder was witnessed by his wife Edith. Johnny was off duty at the time of his death.

The Fletchers had no children but they owned a 20-acre farm along the Garrison/Leitrim border. It is widely believed that Johnny Fletcher's murder was fuelled by a PIRA campaign to ethnically cleanse the Fermanagh borderlands of the Protestant community, creating "buffer zones" from which they might then launch attacks further inland.

A close family friend to the Fletchers, and fellow UDR soldier John McClure chillingly recounts: "They shot him 33 or 34 times. They dumped him on the river bank, and strolled across the border into Leitrim."

Two days after carrying his friend's coffin, Mr McClure fled the small border community of Garrison with wife Ivy, and their five children, aged twelve to three. They went to live in Churchill. The three other Protestant families remaining in Garrison decided to go too.

Johnny has been described by many as being; a courageous soldier and a generous, decent family man.

SEFF's thoughts and prayers are with all those who were affected by the murder of Johnny Fletcher.