**Lord Mountbatten, Lady Brabourne, Nicholas Knathcbull and Paul Maxwell**

**27th August 1979**

SEFF remembers Lord Louis Mountbatten, Lady Brabourne, Nicholas Knathchbull and Paul Maxwell who were murdered in Mullaghmore, County Sligo by Provisional IRA terrorists.

Admiral of the Fleet Louis Francis Albert Victor Nicholas Mountbatten, 1st Earl Mountbatten of Burma (born Prince Louis of Battenberg), was a British Royal Navy officer and statesman, an uncle of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and second cousin once removed of Queen Elizabeth II. During the Second World War, he was Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia Command (1943-1946).

He was the last Viceroy of India (1947) and the first Governor-General of independent India (1947-1948). Mountbatten was married on 18th July 1922 to Edwina Cynthia Annette Ashley, daughter of Wilfred William Ashley, later 1st Baron Mount Temple, himself a grandson of the 7th Earl of Shaftesbury. Mountbatten usually holidayed at his summer home, Classiebawn Castle, in Mullaghmore, a small seaside village in County Sligo.

The village is only 12 miles (19 km) from the border with Northern Ireland and near an area known to be used as a cross-border refuge by IRA members. In 1978, the IRA had allegedly attempted to shoot Mountbatten as he was aboard his boat, but poor weather had prevented the sniper taking his shot.

On 27th August 1979, Mountbatten went lobster-potting and tuna fishing in his 30-foot (9.1 m) wooden boat, Shadow V, which had been moored in the harbour at Mullaghmore, County Sligo.

Provisional IRA member Thomas McMahon had slipped onto the unguarded boat that night and attached a radio-controlled bomb weighing 50 pounds. When Mountbatten was aboard, just a few hundred yards from the shore, the bomb was detonated. The boat was destroyed by the force of the blast, and Mountbatten’s legs were almost blown off. Mountbatten, then aged 79, was pulled alive from the water by nearby fishermen, but died from his injuries before being brought to shore. Also, aboard the boat were his elder daughter Patricia (Lady Brabourne), her husband John (Lord Brabourne), their twin sons Nicholas and Timothy Knatchbull, John’s mother Doreen, (dowager) Lady Brabourne, and Paul Maxwell, a young crew member from County Fermanagh.

Nicholas (aged 14) and Paul (aged 15) were murdered outrightly by the blast and the others were seriously injured. Doreen, Lady Brabourne (aged 83) died from her injuries the following day. Six weeks later following the attack, the then Sinn Féin vice-president Gerry Adams crassly justified Lord Mountbatten’s murder.

In May 2015, during a meeting with Prince Charles, Adams did not apologise. He later said in an interview, “I stand over what I said then. I’m not one of those people that engages in revisionism. Thankfully the war is over”.

Many will view these words as irony in the extreme from an individual whose life, inclusive of actions and words have been a revisionist continuum. In 2016 an appeal for finance to commission a short film called ‘Boat Boy’ describing the life of Paul Maxwell was made by writer Joe Madden. The Film has been developed and went live in 2019.

The Film explains how the former Portora Royal pupil had taken a summer job as a crew member in Mountbatten’s boat Shadow V and was saving his pay to buy a bicycle. SEFF challenged Mr Madden at the time upon the language used in attempting to secure backers for the Project, he described the brutal murders of the four people concerned as “an act of War”.

We responded; “What happened in Mullaghmore, Sligo was an act of terrorism, an act of cold and brutal murder, an act of cowardice - it was not an act of war,” he said. If the narrative is not accurate to the reality of events then the film’s potential for good is thwarted. If it was a war then senior members of the republican movement, who now wear suits, and others who don’t belong to that elite, plus many others would be up in The Hague for serious war crimes.”

On the day of the bombing, the Provisional IRA also ambushed and murdered eighteen Regular Army soldiers in Northern Ireland, sixteen of them from the Parachute Regiment, in what became known as the Warrenpoint ambush or the Narrow Water Massacre, a civilian also died in the attack. It was the deadliest attack on the Army during ‘The Troubles.’

The innocents of the attack at Mullaghmore are remembered on SEFF’s Memorial Quilt ‘Terrorism knows NO Borders.’

Our thoughts and prayers are with all the families whose loved ones were stolen away from them on that day of blood lust from The Provisional IRA.