**WO(RSM) 1 Richard Michael Heakin RRW**

**12th August 1988**

SEFF remembers Richard (Michael) Heakin, a 38-year-old Warrant Officer 1st Class of the RRW (Royal Regiment of Wales) who was murdered by Provisional IRA terrorists on 12th August 1988 in the Belgian port of Ostend.

Michael had stopped his car for a traffic light when he came under attack. Two men in their 20s approached his car, one opened fire and both men reportedly fled on foot toward a city park. Michael was married and had a 9-year-old son and a 7- year-old daughter, died at the scene.

The UK Defense Ministry said Heakin was going home on leave from his base at Moenchen Gladbach, West Germany, and planned to take a ferry Friday night to Dover, England.

After the shooting, police took witnesses to the ferry dock to try to identify the assailants from among passengers on two ferries to Dover. They were not spotted.

Michael’s funeral was held in Knighton, Wales, where more than 1,000 mourners were said to have attended.

Michael was in civilian clothes but drove a British-made Vauxhall with British Army of the Rhine tags. Some personnel when crossing the German border put normal UK plates of the BFG VRN on to try and disguise their identity as British soldiers.

By Christmas 1988 all cars were given a new UK number plate and a UK Tax disc to try and give any soldier a safer trip backwards and forwards between BAOR and the UK.

Michael is remembered on SEFF’s most recent Memorial Quilt - Uniting Innocent Victims. He was one of 15 innocents murdered by Provisional IRA terrorists via its’ mainland European campaign of terrorism.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the Heakin family today and every day.