SEFF
SOUTH EAST FERMANAGH FOUNDATION

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

Community Relations Council
Diversity Equity Interdependence

SUPPORTING VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS, STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES

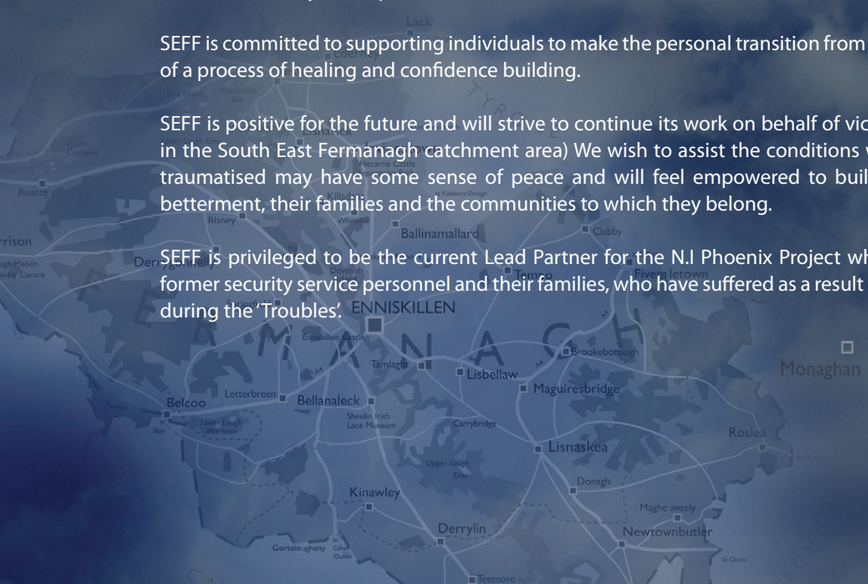
South East Fermanagh Foundation (SEFF) is a group of victims/survivors from the community of South East Fermanagh, and was formed in 1999 as a result of identified needs amongst those who have been the innocent victims of paramilitary terrorism in this part of Northern Ireland, together with their families.

Over the years, the Foundation has steadily grown whereby it now offers a full welfare/benefits advice service, multiple complementary therapy treatment options, a befriending support service, counselling, a full educational and training programme, Youth and Community outreach projects respite support and a raft of other advocacy and representation-based work.

SEFF is committed to supporting individuals to make the personal transition from "victim" to "survivor" as part of a process of healing and confidence building.

SEFF is positive for the future and will strive to continue its work on behalf of victims/survivors (particularly in the South East Fermanagh catchment area) We wish to assist the conditions whereby some of the most traumatised may have some sense of peace and will feel empowered to build their lives for their own betterment, their families and the communities to which they belong.

SEFF is privileged to be the current Lead Partner for the N.I Phoenix Project which supports the needs of former security service personnel and their families, who have suffered as a result of the violence perpetrated during the 'Troubles'.



"I'LL NEVER FORGET" - SEFF

"I'LL NEVER FORGET"

INNOCENT VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF TERRORISM RECALL THEIR EXPERIENCES

SOUTH EAST FERMANAGH FOUNDATION (SEFF)

“I’LL NEVER FORGET”

INNOCENT VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF TERRORISM
RECALL THEIR EXPERIENCES

SOUTH EAST FERMANAGH FOUNDATION (SEFF)
STORYTELLING AND RECOGNITION PROJECT

Community Relations Council

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Foreword

By Kenny Donaldson, Director, SEFF.

I am proud to say that I am the current Director of SEFF. I came to SEFF three years ago, and at the particular time when I arrived SEFF was going through a transition phase, it had been without a coordinator for some period of time and there was a job of work to be done in the early days, in trying to pull everything together, to basically go through our priorities and to carry out an appraisal of where we had come from and where members wanted or needed us to go to.

Now I have to say that over this period of time, I have had exceptional support not only from the board members but from you the members.

SEFF is very much a family focused organisation, it is not just in terms of the direct victim who belongs to us, but very much the wider family circle. We do pride ourselves on trying to, in our small way, strengthen communities within these areas of South East Fermanagh and further afield.

I want to pay tribute to the staff at SEFF and their commitment and many times that goes well and beyond the call of duty. To work within the victims sector is a form of public representation, it is a vocation, and anyone who signs up looking at their job contract and thinking that they have a maximum of 20 or 40 hours in the week to do, whether you are part or full time - they are not for this sector. You have to give much more in furthering the cause to which we belong.

The first day that I arrived at SEFF, that was the first thing that I actually wanted to go and see was the memorial up in the COI grounds and I remember coming up and seeing that memorial. I was born and raised outside Crossmaglen, South Armagh where memorials are planted on roadsides right across that area as a supposed 'honour to republicans.' I think it speaks volumes for the communities of these areas of innocent victims, that their memorial, is within the grounds of a church and that memorial is in the shape of a bible.

The role of faith is extremely important within these areas and I think it is no small coincidence that County Fermanagh over the worst years of the Troubles, and this was one area that was amongst the worst affected across the Country, yet people within the broad Unionist community did not turn to the gun or the bomb. They did not turn to violence. They stayed on the right side of the law and they joined the lawful organs of our State and they went out and they did their duty for this community. For those of us from my generation and younger - we enjoy a sense of liberty and freedom because of the sacrifice paid by others before us.

In giving a background to this initiative which we have dubbed the storytelling and recognition project, we thought it useful if we would give some sense of the origins of where this came from. We all know that right across Northern Ireland there are people telling their story in reference to what happened them over those terrible years of the Troubles and we in SEFF thought it was very important that the record was set straight by those who are the innocent victims of terrorism. The recording process has been ongoing for some six months now, where very brave people from throughout County Fermanagh and further afield have come forward and have shared with us, their experiences and traumatic events, which requires them to need support from our organisation today. We would like to place on record our deepest thanks to the funders who have enabled this project to take place, and that is the Community Relations Council of Northern Ireland, so a big thank you to you.

Now in terms of this particular project, this is a first but also big step by the innocent victims of terrorism within these areas at addressing the rights and wrongs of the past. We are very conscious that a story has been told in Northern Ireland and further afield by republicans and that has not been matched by the innocent victims of terrorism. It is important that your place is very much rooted in the history of this place. We will not stand idly by and allow others to misrepresent what happened in Northern Ireland.

Our people were slain for no other reason but for the uniform they wore on their back or for the particular place of worship that they happened to attend on a Sunday. And that is unacceptable. We will continue to be a voice of conscience and reason in the months and years ahead to try to ensure that Northern Ireland regains some semblance of morality that has been stolen from it.

Services Offered at SEFF

SEFF has a range of core services that it delivers for its members and we view these services as being extremely important. Those services are welfare and benefits support, counselling and befriending, which many would say is the gateway service to an awful lot more of what we offer in SEFF. We are very fortunate, to have committed volunteers throughout our organisation who ensure that a "Team SEFF" approach is followed.

Now the counselling service was slow to get off the ground in County Fermanagh, particularly within males in our community. But it has to be said that this taboo area that once was, has been broken down and people are now coming forward asking for that help, and that is very important.

We also deliver a full array of complementary therapies covering; massage, aromatherapy, reflexology and acupuncture and those again are services that we find actually bring people into the heart of the organisation.

Volunteering

On the issue of volunteering, SEFF would like to think, that it actually epitomises what Volunteering for other's benefit is all about. Two years ago SEFF was granted the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. That particular award was the first time that a victim's group from Northern Ireland, was recognised in that particular way. SEFF was clear at that time that we were not accepting that award purely on behalf of ourselves but rather we were accepting it on behalf of all those organisations across Northern Ireland who are doing such excellent work within this arena.

SEFF's Development and Message

The best way to measure SEFF's development over the years is maybe to look at its strap line of four years ago - when SEFF's strap line was 'Supporting Victims of Paramilitary Terrorism'. Our strap line in 2011 is now 'Supporting Victims and Survivors Strengthening Communities.' The organisation acknowledges and believes that victims do not exist in isolation from the wider community and we want to create the circumstances where those victims can move forward in their lives with a sense of confidence and with a renewed belief and actually be survivors of the terrible events that shaped their lives all those years ago.

In that vein we have developed different arms to the organisation and these are community development and youth outreach and again we are privileged to say that we actually are a host organisation for two youth workers.

Two other very significant projects that SEFF are involved with at this moment in time - is that we are the lead partner for the Northern Ireland Phoenix Project - which at long last is actually delivering for the ex-security force constituency, right across Northern Ireland on a very strategic basis. That means your ex-UDR, Royal Irish, RUC, and Prison Service etc and all others who served in the security forces plus their immediate families. The recipients of this Project have a sense of fellowship again with their fellow comrades.

The other project that is very dear to many of our hearts is the Justice for Innocent Victims of Terrorism Project. Now, SEFF acknowledges that as an innocent victims sector that we cannot provide that high level advocacy and representational support service that is required for the innocent victims of terrorism around areas such as the Historical Enquiries process re-examination of past murders carried out over the Troubles period.

We instead seek to put in place a resource which would support people right through the HET process in giving them some semblance of justice, acknowledgement and recognition, for what happened to them all those years ago.

J.I.V.T. is at the start of this process, an application has been submitted, and I hope that in the short number of months ahead, that we will be able to report progress in this regard.

Concluding Remarks

I think that where SEFF has got to at this particular point in time is a tribute and a legacy to all those who have gone before, and I hope that wherever they are up in heaven, they are looking down, that there is a smile on their face, that they are glad to see that we are carrying on work in their name and we are determined along with others to ensure that those individuals are not murdered a second time. They were cruelly taken from you and us, all those years ago, and bereaved families were left picking up the pieces. We will work to ensure that your loved ones did not die in vain. We will work to ensure that no one will ever successfully justify what they inflicted, they murdered people and there is no justification for murder and we remain very much committed to ensuring that message is spread across Northern Ireland and further afield in the years ahead.

I have worked with SEFF for three years and in all of that time, Eric Brown chairman of SEFF has always been a source of strength to me, he has always been accessible. I am fortunate to be in a paid staff position, and yes I like to think that I do work above and beyond what that role entails. But Eric is the figurehead of this organisation, he has overseen SEFF develop to where it is today. And I think that the members of SEFF and indeed, the wider community owe him a debt of gratitude for what he has done.

Foreword

By Eric Brown, Chairman of South East Fermanagh Foundation (SEFF)

I have been the Chairman of SEFF since 2003. I am the last of three men whose idea it was to establish SEFF in 1999. There was no funding then, but we were aware that no services were available in our area for those who had become victims of paramilitary terrorism or for those who had served or were injured serving their country. In our opinion very little was being offered for these people.

As a tribute to those who had died, we decided that a memorial should be erected. Funders we spoke to at the time, were not interested in donating grants for a memorial. We discussed how we would seek funding and as suggested by SEFF members we made an appeal through other organisations. We received great support and generous donations from the Ulster Defence Regiment, RUC George Cross Association, Ulster Special Constabulary Association and the Loyal Orders.

The dilemma over where to situate the memorial was uppermost in our thoughts as we did not want to erect this memorial at the side of a road, as was the behaviour of the Republicans.

We contacted the Vestry of Holy Trinity Church of Ireland in Lisnaskea and at their vestry meeting with the minister they offered a permanent site in the church grounds to locate the memorial.

The design of the memorial encouraged much discussion. It was settled that the shape of the memorial would be like an open Bible. We carried out a lot of research by contacting every family to ensure that all details of those names to be inscribed on the memorial were accurate.

Nearly all those who received Invitations, attended on the day of dedication. Holy Trinity Church was packed and people connected to those whose names were inscribed on the memorial came from the local area, and from England and Scotland. The huge attendance and positive responses from family, relatives and friends justified this long lasting memorial being dedicated to those who had loss their lives during the troubles.

A very generous collection on the day amounted to £1,600. When all expenses were paid a surplus of £1,000 which was donated to Holy Trinity's Roofing Fund for their generosity to SEFF.

In 2003 SEFF received funding from the Community Relations Council and this enabled us to increase our membership. Due to the demand of services requested and offered we moved to larger premises. Today we offer a very high standard of services that meet the aims and objectives of SEFF. In 2009 we were recognised for our services by being awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Services. This was a great honour and we are very proud of this award.

SEFF is currently the lead partner in the Phoenix Project, a caring service for former members of the security forces and their families. We are also involved in research for several other projects.

SEFF continues to monitor all services offered and with feedback from membership we endeavour to deliver a high quality of service that meets their needs. While we have come a long way since we established SEFF I feel that there is much more we can offer our members.

At the end of this Story Telling Project I would like to thank Robert Lyons, Lyons Digital Productions for recording and editing the interviews for the DVD and Anne Palmer journalist, for interviewing participants for this Book.

Lastly a big thank you to those who willingly participated in the interviews and I am aware that for some it was very difficult recalling traumatic experiences from the past.

All stories in this Book are as spoken by the interviewee and are their personal experiences.

"They that sow on Tears, shall reap in Joy." Psalm 126 verse 6

Phyllis Carrothers

Dougie and Phyllis Carrothers married after a whirlwind romance, sparked when they met at the Twelfth in Kesh. But the world stopped revolving for this happy couple and their three children when Dougie was murdered on his own door step in a booby trap car bomb, callously planted by the IRA.

We met at the Twelfth of July demonstration in Kesh in 1975. Dougie was eating a bag of chips and the dye was running out of his collaret on to his shirt as it was such a wet day. I was with my sister and I had an umbrella and I thought oh my goodness, I'll offer to shield this chap from the rain, so he sheltered under the umbrella and I remember eating a couple of chips. He asked me out that night.

I worked in England and was home for a holiday. I was heading back to England on the Sunday night. Dougie asked if he could write to me and wondered when he would see me next - so I came back in September for a weekend, he collected me from the airport and the next day he proposed to me. We had written letters to each other, there were no mobile phones back then.

I worked my notice at my job in England and came home on 1st December. We were married in the Elim church outside Brookeborough with a reception in the Ortine Hotel, Lisnaskea on 17th January 1976. We had our first son in December that year, our second son the following December and our daughter three Decembers later. Our family life was solid, and on that day that Dougie was murdered our lives changed forever.

Dougie was in UDR when we married and after several years he joined the RUC Reserve part time.

I will never forget that moment whenever I saw the police coming to the office door at Lisnaskea High School where I worked. I saw the bottle green skirt and I thought - oh something is wrong. The police woman told me Dougie had been blown up.

I thought, I'm sure Dougie is not too bad. The police woman took me in her car to the hospital. I recall coaxing her to drive on the hard shoulder to get past the cars so I could get there quickly to see Dougie. As we approached the exit at Lisbellaw nearest Enniskillen, we saw an ambulance and she said we will follow the ambulance. I kept hoping and praying that he would be okay, that it was only a minor incident. I never for one moment thought that it was anything as bad as what it turned out to be.

At a check-point I remember the police woman saying to soldiers "please let us go through, this is the man's wife". When we got to Enniskillen I had lost sight of the ambulance. I know now that the ambulance had gone to the morgue, and not to the front of the Erne Hospital.

The police woman had not stopped the car before I opened the door and was out and abandoned her but did not know where to go. She ran after me and I was brought into a family room, and sat there and waited and kept asking to see Dougie and nobody would take me to him.

Some time later the Sergeant of the station Dougie was attached to came in and when I saw his face, I knew there was something more serious, and when he got down on his hunkers beside me, I realised that Dougie was dead.

I remember feeling torn by wanting to stay with him or hold his hand, but thinking I need to get to the children as I did not want them to glean anything without me telling them. So I didn't see Dougie.

I was taken to Lisbellaw to my sister in law's home; my two boys were there and my daughter was in bed and our doctor was there. I had to tell our children that their Daddy was dead, he had been murdered.

Dougie was a wonderful father, he did everything he could to provide for the children and myself and we only had 15 years and four months to the very day we were married.

We had been living in our home in Brookeborough for about 13 years when our neighbour Cullen Stephenson was murdered in January 1991. At that time our children heard the gunshots and thought their Daddy had been shot. We were advised to move to Lisbellaw, and our daughter Angela, had to move primary school in her P6 year. We were in our home in Lisbellaw less than three months when Dougie was blown up in an under-car booby trap bomb outside our front door.

At that time, Angela was a few doors away with her aunt. Dougie had waved to her and indicated he would pick her up in a few minutes. She was the last member of our family to see him alive. Andrew and Derek were at school in Lisnaskea High school, and Portora and I was at work, in Lisnaskea High School.

My children were aged 10, 13, and 14 and they grew up overnight. I tried to be mother and father to them.

My main focus in life was to look after the children and provide for them. Three years after Dougie's murder I started to work full time to put the children through their education.

The children have done me proud. Eldest Andrew is an orthopaedic consultant and Derek is an engineer, married with four of a family and my daughter is a GP - Dougie would have been so proud of all of them.

We still miss him very much, it will be 20 years since he was murdered in May, this year 2011. It feels as if, I have been shouldering all this on my own for so long. Dougie's absence is more keenly felt at different times of the year. My daughter Angela and one of my sons, Andrew, are getting married this year and even yet, as these weddings approach, I am feeling the loss of Dougie so much.

It is hard because 20th anniversaries of other events are talked about and publicised months in advance but Dougie's murder, because it is a single incident, will never be publicly mentioned. It will only be the family and I even though his murder has left the same devastation behind, as bigger atrocities.

I am now the proud grandmother of five little grandchildren and Dougie would have been so proud of each of them. Rebecca, the eldest is seven and twins Joshua Douglas and Laura are aged four, little Dougie is 18 months and Patrick six months. The two boys Joshua (Derek's son) and Dougie (Andrew's son) both carry the name of their grandfather Dougie. I find that very poignant and it's very important that Dougie's name, Dougie Carrothers, lives on in two of his grandsons.

I think what has kept us going is just that simple faith of taking a day at a time, getting up in the morning and God giving the grace and strength needed to cope each day. If I think too far in advance I just get the collywobbles and feel as if I could go to pieces.

One person was convicted in connection with Dougie's murder, the man who did scout, but he got early release under the Good Friday Agreement and the other two went on the run. I have never approached the HET because I assume it would be too painful.

I have been involved with voluntary organisations such Police Welfare, other related RUC Associations and the RUC George Cross Widows' Association as committee member and currently I have been Chairperson of the RUC George Cross Widows' Association for three years; we have 454 members. I was privileged to serve on the pilot Victims' Forum and currently on the Transition Victims' Forum. I think with the help of God I have coped. I have been able to sit among others who previously I would not even have been able to look in the eye. This does not mean that I have conceded in any way, I still think the same that I always did, but for the sake of my grandchildren and their future I want this province to be a better place. I never want them to come through what my sons and daughters, their parents went through. I never want them to experience anything like that - ever!

Lily Graham

Lilly Graham first met her beloved husband to be, Jimmy Graham at her sister's wedding. She was bridesmaid. The happy couple later married in August 1967. In April 1968 they moved to their new home in Lisnaskea, had two children, Sharon was born in 1969 and Thomas entered the world in 1973.

Jimmy Graham

We were only married 17 years when Jimmy was murdered.

He joined the UDR in 1970. He was ambushed in 1980 at the phone box 250 yards from our house. Jimmy got back to the house, but they came over the fields to get him and he shouted to me to go to get his gun but I couldn't go I just froze. I went upstairs, he shouted to me to get the children for they were looking out through the window.

He got a lorry stopped and took cover underneath it and shot at the terrorists down the field but they escaped. Ronnie Graham and the police came on the scene. A neighbour coming down the field with cows for milking was taken hostage up by Cooneen forest and they only let him out when sure nobody was around to get them.

Then Jimmy was fired on a couple of times on the school bus, with the children on board. He was taking the children swimming to the Lakeland Forum, from Derrylin Primary school and that was where he was murdered on February 1, 1985. On that day, I was in Lisnaskea shopping and heard police sirens I thought to myself there is some poor creature in trouble. I went to the Post Office and was told I was wanted in Kells' shop. As soon as I walked into Roy Kells' shop I knew. Roy brought us up to Lisnaskea barracks and Dr Henry was there and my two children from the High School. Jimmy's car was brought home and put in the garage and our dog never left the car, would not even come out to eat.

Funeral of the late Jimmy Graham

We went to the scene at Derrylin Primary school and people were calling to the house and we brought Jimmy's remains home on Saturday night and at 2.00am on Sunday, two car loads of boys were going down the road cheering and blowing the horn. It was desperate. Our light above the sitting room fell on top of the coffin, just as those cars passed. I don't know why, but that is what happened.

Our children took it really bad. None of them would sleep in their own rooms for a long time after it and they just could not get settled.

Good support came from UDR - and some of Jimmy's former colleagues were more than helpful. They called three times a week to see if we needed anything and the welfare team helped.

It was difficult losing the family breadwinner as there was no joint bank account, so the bank held all funds, until it was sorted out. I was working in the High School and not earning very much and then they gave me approximately £7 a week income support and when everything was sorted out in July with the bank, they took that money back again. So it was hard.

We had pigs and cows to keep and I was working at the same time just to get by. I did not even know how to pay a bill.

We had good neighbours but none of our Catholic neighbours came to the house during the funeral. Those who came were from Derrylin and a few came to the house, but fair enough, if I had gone to them, they would have done anything for me. A Catholic neighbour was told if he went to the funeral he would be next, but he did go to the funeral. I think people were not showing up, because of the fear. Jimmy was getting threatening letters before he was murdered which I knew nothing about, until I was informed later.

Funeral of the late Jimmy Graham

When Jimmy was on duty I sat up and knitted. Often I went outside and opened and locked garage doors to let him into the house. I sat up with sows pigging. I used to lock the door and take the key outside to the sows with me, to be cautious. I was in the forces with him really. It just brings everything back, especially Birthdays, Christmas and even the Twelfth of July when he would be getting ready to go out with his sash on.

My son Thomas joined the UDR and I was absolutely terrified because of what we had been through. There were many sleepless nights. Thomas was then in the Royal Irish for 16 years. I talked him out of going to Afghanistan. I am now a grandmother - I have three grandchildren so I'm kept busy. Today, Thomas is in his third year working in the After Care team in Enniskillen looking after disabled soldiers and he enjoys it very much, he is just giving back what people gave him.

Sharon Clarke

Robbed of a loving father at the hands of IRA terrorists, Sharon Clarke recalls the impact of loss on her childhood, family life and her education.

My father James Graham was murdered on February 1, 1985. I remember Daddy going out at 7.00pm every night and he came back around 3.00am. I had Polo Mints for him to go with his packed lunch, each night before he went on UDR duty. I just thought if he was hungry he would have the mints. He would put them in his front trouser pocket and he would always say: "Well me and the boys will have a feed of Polo Mints tonight".

The first time he was attacked at the phone box near the house, my brother and I heard shots, jumped up and looked through the bedroom window. We saw three men coming through a hedge and mum standing at the top of the road and Daddy coming roaring at us to get down from the window.

He ran upstairs to get his gun, and I remember him shooting back and the men running through the fields. A neighbour came and said her husband had been kidnapped. When the police arrived, Daddy told us to go to school, his face was covered in blood and asked if he was all right.

I recall my two uncles being shot, and about a fortnight before Daddy was killed out at Derrylin, he got a letter to tell us to clear the country. Which he would not do.

The day Daddy was murdered, I was on work experience with a hairdresser, when I was taken to Kells' shop in Lisnaskea and up to the police station. We went back home, and people called to the house at three and four in the morning.

It was a frosty morning when Daddy was buried and I was angry and very cross.

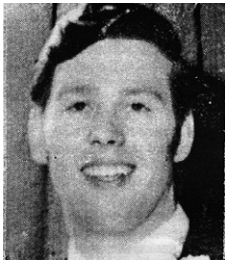
Mum had two jobs to keep us going and money was very tight. I left school at 15, and got a full-time job to help mum with household bills. I missed out on opportunities. When younger I wanted to be a nurse but I never got the qualifications.

Growing up, at school I felt different because girls in class would talk about days and outings and their fathers. I missed my Dad the most when I got married and when his grandchildren came along, he never had a chance to see them or watch them growing up.

I hope my children don't have to grow up in the atmosphere my brother and I grew up in, that they have to look behind them all the time, or be afraid of bomb attacks. I hope they live a normal life and get educated and that peace returns and stays.

At the time of the murder, Mammy felt under strain, she was on eggshells for a long time, in case they came back. We now know that when Daddy was shot at the phone box, the men were coming back to finish us three off. I found that out a couple of months after all this was over.

My brother grew up very quickly and became man of the house and took stress off Mammy's shoulders, when he was third year at high school.



The late Cecil Graham

With three Graham brothers being murdered we often questioned why. It was very hard on my Grandad to see his sons wiped off the earth for really no reason, other than wearing a uniform and being what they were.

I remember if we were going out in the car with Daddy, I would sit directly behind him on the driver's side so that if anybody was going to shoot him from the back that they would get me first.

We had good support when Dad's murder took place but all the people who used to come to the house faded away and we lost touch. But now from the different things we have become involved in, taking part in activities with SEFF or the Ely Centre, I can build up a trust with people again.

**Ronald Graham 39, UDR, was shot and killed by the IRA on June 5th, 1981, while delivering coal in Lisnaskea.*
**Cecil Graham 32, UDR, was shot by the IRA on November 1st, 1981, leaving the Lisnaskea home of a relative. He died two days later.*
**James Graham 39, UDR, school bus driver was killed by the IRA on February 1st, 1985, at Derrylin.*

Eric Brown

Eric Brown served in the RUC and UDR during Northern Ireland's troubled times, working on patrols in Londonderry, Antrim, Belfast, South Armagh and Fermanagh. He recalls some of the stress and trauma he experienced at the hands of paramilitary terrorists.

I joined the RUC and in 1970 transferred to Londonderry. Things were kicking off big style. In 1972 I was on patrol with a colleague when I saw a car parked in Ferry Quay Street near a jewellers shop. I said this must be our first car bomb. We cleared the street. When reinforcements arrived, we had a cordon in place, but a guy got through and was about to park his car close to the car bomb. I ran from the Diamond and shouted at him in strong language to get away. He drove out of the area. I turned to make my way back to the Diamond and at that moment, the car bomb went off. That was March 2nd, 1972 and the time was 27 minutes past four. I distinctly remember flying through the air and observing the engine flying through the air above me. When I hit the ground I'm sure my companions thought I'd been blown to bits. When they got my distance I was staggering about looking for my hat. I sustained injuries to my face, cuts to my head and I stayed on duty until 9.00pm when I was sent home and to hospital for a check. There were about 80 civilian casualties. I was on duty the next morning again at 8.00am.

In 1975 Eric left the police, and in 1978, joined UDR in Antrim, before transferring to UDR in Fermanagh in 1987.

I transferred to 'C' Company Lisnaskea, it was completely different experience than serving in Antrim.

One Sunday afternoon I was at home in Lisnaskea when I heard this unmerciful explosion close by. I ran around the back of a nearby pub and saw a member of my own company lying on the road and his leg was missing. Alby Ebbitt, a fireman arrived. The victim had been injured by bomb under his car. It went off before he was totally in the vehicle so the explosion took his leg. He was conscious and bedlam broke lose and Alby Ebbitt was administering first aid and he said to me, Eric keep him awake, don't let him go to sleep and I remember to this day, I was slapping him to make sure he would not drop off. We wanted to keep him conscious until the Ambulance arrived. Apparently this is something to do with treatment of shock. It was a traumatic experience at the time. You could actually see the boot with his foot in it lying close by. We tended him beside where we found him. The ambulance was very quickly on the scene.

During that time one incident stuck in Eric's mind. Along with his wife, Eric had taken his dogs for run around a local beauty spot on Lough Erne shores, but had left his protection gun in the car. While he was with the dogs, a carload of men pulled up. Eric recognised the vehicle as one that his UDR patrols were already familiar with.

I saw the car stopping and one guy getting out of the passenger side and another getting out of the back off side. I said to my wife, I don't like the look of this, if this is what I think it is, you run one way and I'll run the other way. I said I think these guys are after me. One guy opened the car boot, and was just reaching into it, when out of the blue, appeared an army patrol. The guy just closed the boot casually looked around him and got back into the vehicle, but did not drive off. I took my chance gathered the dogs up as quick as I could and I got my wife back into the car.

Eric asked the army to search the vehicle, and waited for news, but heard nothing about the outcome.

It angered me at the time, because I thought these people are just not reacting. Eventually I was told the car was stopped

and nothing suspicious was found. A search of the area took place three days later. I was annoyed at that, because we were living in a situation where men's lives were at risk. But in the last few years I talked to a Special Branch man and related the incident to him and he looked at me straight away and he asked me - "Eric do you think that army patrol vehicle turned up by sheer accident?" And the penny dropped then. They knew, that there was going to be an attempt on my life.

Valerie Brown

Valerie Brown is married to Eric Brown, founder member of South East Fermanagh Foundation. In 1973 Valerie joined the Ulster Defence Regiment in Antrim, as a Greenfinch working with other married women who had joined. Promoted to lance corporal in 1974 Valerie trained new Greenfinches many of whom had children at home. During her three year UDR career Valerie experienced RAF helicopter searches and vehicle check points and the 1974 motorman operation out on very cold nights. In 1976 Valerie was promoted to corporal working in motor transport helping to keep Landrovers in service.

During the winter months 1975 while based in Antrim we helped Seven & Ten UDR in Belfast to do the searching. We worked out of the old Grand Hotel, which is now Castle Park Shopping Centre in Belfast. Often we were verbally abused by young girls because they did not want to be searched. I could not have carried out all these duties without Eric's help at home to look after our two children.

One time in Londonderry, Eric came off police duty at 4.00pm and his police work mates went on the 4.00pm shift and he wasn't home long before four of his mates were blown up. This was really shocking to us and it came home to me how serious it was. We lived outside Londonderry and often heard bombs. But I never was involved in any of them.

John Hallawell, husband of my close friend Ann Hallawell, was murdered in Londonderry and that was very traumatic time for us all. I went to visit her whenever I could. It must have been 1984 when John, a community police officer was lured to his death to a house in Shantallow. When he came out of the house he had his personal weapon on his knee but it was no good, he was shot dead. Ann had to rear three young children, on her own.

I left the UDR in 1976 to do nursing. I had always wanted to be a nurse. Eric joined Antrim UDR in 1978 and in 1987 we decided to move to Fermanagh and Eric was transferred to Four UDR. When we sold our house in 1988, I came back to Fermanagh it was a completely different situation security-wise, as the threat was more extreme. I used to hear stories when I went to the UDR camp about people being murdered or intimidated from their houses. We used to get calls in the mornings to say there was a severe threat and to watch our security and watch going out that we should check our cars.

Valerie and her husband lived on Lisnaskea Main Street and opened a residential home for the mentally ill. Some local people warned them of potential threats in addition to warnings by UDR intelligence.

One Sunday afternoon in 1990, Eric and I took the dogs for a run to Kilmore Quay. We got out of the car and Eric left his personal weapon in the car. Suddenly a car came into the park he believed its occupants were suspected IRA men. He said you walk behind me and just then I had visions of being shot and floating down Lough Erne. We saw the men going to their car boot. Eric walked on and all of a sudden the army appeared and it was that appearance of the army probably save our lives. Eventually we got the dogs in and as we came out of the Quay we met the army. We told them what we thought. We do know they searched and found nothing in the car. About three days later that area was searched for weapons, by which time they would have been back and taken them away. That time was very traumatic for us.

We curtailed where we could go and what we could do after that incident. Nothing was spur of the moment and we did not go to unsafe areas.

It was very dangerous for those who served in those days but it was those who were at home, who lived on their nerves suffered most. I have met many widows whose husbands or sons were killed and who served our country and they are the real victims of the Troubles and I really have great admiration for those women who reared their youngsters and got on with life and did not complain.

Tommy Hallawell

John Hallawell, was cut down in his prime in 1983. As a community police officer he was arranging an outing for young people providing new opportunities away from everyday conflict of the Troubles. The IRA shot him in Londonderry. Today his brother Tommy Hallawell, who lives in Enniskillen reflects on the impact of that tragic loss.

When my brother John was shot dead, my mother cried every day about him and his loss. Eventually it killed her. The doctor told me it was a broken heart, she had died from.

My brother John Hallawell was an RUC constable, he was a community relations officer stationed in Londonderry. In 1983, he was killed, actually shot, when he was out seeing people about bringing groups of children away to Portrush. When he came back out from seeing these people, there was four people waiting for him and they shot him after he got into his car. I was working in BT in Enniskillen at the time and the manager said "I have bad news for you, your brother has been shot and he is dead. The minister from Ballinamallard is after phoning me and telling me". I just thought - oh my God - in shock.

John left two sons and a daughter and they were aged 13, 11 and 9 and now his son is a detective sergeant in PSNI. My niece is married to Harry West's son and is a school teacher and his other son who is 33 is getting married. John's wife Ann lives in Ballinamallard and my mum actually lived with them, for my father he was not well and he died at an early age. She thought about John every day. She has since passed away.

When my brother was murdered of course then there was no counselling so it was up to yourself how you coped. Then with the Enniskillen bomb, there was still no counselling.

I have a portrait of my brother up in my living room and I speak to him every morning and that helps for I know he is still there.

John Hallawell

Prior to Christmas one of my nephews was hoking in the attic and came upon a recording on an old disc and did not know what was on the disc. So they took it to somebody in Omagh to get it looked at and it turned out that it was a recording of John's wedding. I could not believe it, this wedding, and there he was, large as life with Ann his wife and my mum and various people from Ballinamallard. Getting that recording just before Christmas, after all those years - it has helped even more.

No one was ever caught or convicted for my brother's murder. We know who did it and we know who was in command at the time. We do not have the evidence to prove it. Today with this new DNA whether they can get something from it, who knows, but they still have still his file.

We are the victims and if something came up in the near future it definitely would ease a lot of pain. My memories are of my mother and of his widow and his children. They never go away from you and knowing these gunmen are still loose, there is always a concern that another mother or children or a wife could be bereaved in the same way.

They say it is all over in Northern Ireland, but it is not, it will never go away. I am not politically minded but I have my beliefs and my wife and these have pulled me through difficult times.

On the day of the Enniskillen bomb in 1987, I was there with a photographer to record the TA guard marching on to the Cenotaph. I have belonged this last 30 years to the TA at Rossorry Church Road. Every year we put out a Cenotaph guard in Enniskillen. The photographer had just started recording when the bomb went off. My son, who was about 14 at the time, was standing behind me and I suddenly heard this loud bang, and this cloud of dust and then a lot of screaming and shouting. Unfortunately I lost a cousin there, who was Sammy Gault, an ex RUC sergeant. But I stayed and helped the injured for about an hour and a half. Johnny Megaw was the first casualty we took off the rubble, and I had been speaking to Ted Armstrong on the way up and lo and behold Ted was another casualty who had to be taken out. We found Sammy Gault and we took him out of the rubble, there was quite a few of us there helping. Then we were standing on a great slab of cement and young Stephen Ross was underneath it. So with help from quite a few of us, we got the cement off and there was a bit of small brick that was wedged in keeping the slab of cement off young Ross. He was lucky, he was curled up in a ball. And then he was taken off to hospital.

After the Enniskillen bomb, it was hard to cope with, for I could not get it out of my mind and I felt my hands were dirty all the time. I just could not get my hands cleaned, I felt. One night I was just going over to sleep and Bang! - this explosion sound went off in my head and I said to my wife there is another bomb. I don't know what happened to me but after that I had peace, I just had peace.

Margaret Nelson and William Nelson

Margaret and William Nelson revisit a dark day, recalling the abduction of two of their grown up children by the IRA from their Rosslea border home. They speak of the trauma suffered by the entire family.

According to Margaret Nelson on the evening of September 3rd, 1981, she left her home to take a short walk to the neighbouring house of her brother-in-law. Her husband William was due to pick her up, on his way back home from a church vestry meeting.

> All our five children David, Sharon, Mervyn, Keith and Linda were in the house, the farm work was finished and they were watching television. A red van came up the street and David, who was aged 21, looked out and shouted to the others that it was the IRA. He saw men in uniforms with balaclavas over their faces getting out of a van with guns.
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> Mervyn ran to lock the door but the IRA got into the house. The children ran upstairs and David went to get the shotgun and Mervyn ran towards the bedroom upstairs but one IRA man caught him on the stairs and they threatened to shoot him if David didn't do what he was told. Keith climbed out the windows upstairs but an IRA man scout caught him on the street and slapped him. Linda had hidden behind the piano, in the same bedroom where Sharon was sleeping. Sharon, aged six, was taken out of bed, thrown on the floor and tied up. Three of the children were tied up in the living room. David and Linda were taken out of the house, Linda was thrown into the back of the van and driven away. Those in the house were told not to contact anybody and that the IRA would be back. They went round by the Lough with David and Linda – I think there must have been six IRA men and they put David on the tractor. The tractor wouldn't start, as the trailer on which they had the bomb sunk into the boggy field, and they could not get it out. It was supposed to be the largest bomb in Northern Ireland, and it was due to go to the border check-point beside us. Next thing the IRA told them to run home and Linda had no shoes on her.

Parent William Nelson recalled driving back from his church meeting oblivious to what had been going on while he was out of the house.

> When we went back to the house we met two of the children coming across the lawn and we couldn't understand what was wrong - they were in their bare feet. So then they told us about the van and the IRA and what had happened.
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> By good luck or God's guidance the bomb was in a trailer which sank down and it couldn't be moved so after a while trying to get it out, they decided to abandon all, so they just left the children to walk home, in their bare feet – with no shoes on. They had to walk home, three quarters of a mile. We presume the IRA were going to an army checkpoint not far from our house, and that they were going to make our son drive the tractor to the check point.
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> I went to Canon Kille and told him the story. He came out. Police and army came. It had a big effect on us, you try to forget it but it keeps coming back in the family, but it hit Margaret more than it hit me and the youngest fellow. To this day he checks the windows at night to make sure they are closed and he would still be nervous since that happened. It was a big experience for us and Margaret to this day would still be nervous about it, it is not easy to get over these things. I would not show my feelings, but it would be working inwardly. I had to go on nerve tablets and I'm on them since till this day. I wouldn't show the fear, but I had that constant dread where you are never sure what is going to happen next.

I never considered moving house. I got the opportunity to do so at that time but I said no. I was born and reared there, so I would never think of leaving. There was none of us on the security forces nor any of my children. There are other houses in the area and we were picked out just because we were Protestants. I can't see any other reason.

I would have felt bitter after that, for the way it was carried out and the way the family was treated and nobody seems to have seen anything, and definitely to this day, I would feel bitter.

Margaret Nelson said Linda had just got engaged and she did not even want us to leave her in the house on her own. I was glad to see her getting married because it affected her deeply. Sharon does not remember as much, she was so young, but she was nervous. David, Mervyn and Keith got on with their lives but it hurt them to think that it was possible they had been set up.

It was a very traumatic experience, it left us very afraid, I would not stay in the house on my own, and it was nerve-wracking when we could have been minus our five children because if that bomb had gone off, it would have killed many people.

No one was ever caught for this incident, not that we know of. We had no sense of judgement or justice. Some border community relationships broke down after the incident, due to lack of trust and fear.

I said I would never leave, we were married 1968 and we built up our home, and I did not see why we should let the IRA put us out of our home. Certainly I have mellowed but I would never forgive. I can go out now and I can play my game of bowls and I can mix with people but that is all.

Today, I think we are survivors, certainly we were victims at that time. But we have stayed and kept our family together and our children have built houses beside us, which is great.

At that time there was no talk of counselling and I had depression. I got counselling 15 years ago but it brought everything back into the mind and it was very heart-breaking. I don't think it will ever really leave my head, what could have happened to my family, and the trauma my children went through is what I have to live with till the end of my days.

William John Barton

After a spate of shootings and attempts on his life, William John Barton (Johnny) looks back on a way of life on the Fermanagh Donegal border. For the first time he talks of the legacy of fear living in an isolated borderland, the impact on his health and his family and the deeply painful decision to sell up and leave his farm and agricultural livelihood and take his family to Kesh village.

William John Barton

I owned a farm at Mullinmeen, Drumskinny, Kesh and it ran to the border with Donegal. My main farming was dairy, and I kept pigs. I went down to the yard to go to the piggery, on February 2, 1972. I had the door opened when shooting started and bullets were hitting me, hitting the door and the wall, I went down to the ground. They seemed to disappear, I don't know whether they thought they had me killed or not. I crawled into the pig house, and stayed in there. I knew the wife in the house hadn't heard the shooting. I made my way back to the house. It was tough.

My wife walked half a mile to a neighbour's house further in the lane to get him to take me to hospital. I was in hospital two weeks and had to push to get out. I had to see the nurse everyday to get my back seen to. My back was badly wounded and a bullet in the knee had to be removed. I got home but meantime authorities had arranged a house for me in Kesh. I declined it. I said no, this is my home. It was left to me and had been in the family name for generations, and everything was going well for me and I was happy with the living we were getting on it and I did not want to go. It took me a good while, to get back to farm work. My back was very badly injured and I haven't got over it since.

A year later, I was working near to the same place, the shooting started again. It was July 1973. Gunshot hit the wall and I got hit on the hand, I was able to make my way into the house beside me, and could not get out again. I had to stay in. They had bullets ringing off the door and wall and finally they turned the guns on the house and fired through the back door into the house. My wife and three wee boys were inside. It was a good Summer morning and they were up. My father was alive at the time, but was in Hospital. But the wife had chips of the wall in her hair coming out from the house, where the bullets had hit. Finally she made her way to me, I was still lying in the pig house. She said they are away for I see them running down a neighbour's field heading for the border. So I got out and she went to the neighbour again to take me to hospital. My father aged in his 80's became run down badly from the first time for he had been worrying about me and what was going to happen to me. I went to hospital to see him and I had to keep my bandaged hand up behind my back so he wouldn't see it. The following morning, he passed away.

I mind people coming to the wake and couldn't believe the sight of the inside of the house. But I had to give in to moving house. There was no choice. The army said we would have a 24 hour guard, till we got out of it. We were arranging the funeral and getting an auctioneer to get everything sold. So the auction appeared one week in the paper as a clearance sale. Whatever was bid on, went. It was a buyer's auction. My good stock sold out for very little. We stayed that night of the auction and moved to Kesh next day. We had no help. There was no counselling. There was absolutely nothing for us. I came to Kesh and there was an empty house and nothing to do and that wasn't my way of life. I was used to being out everyday

and working the farm, and I was away from the whole of it. The compensation I got for those two incidents would not even buy a fill of heating oil today.

It was wild sore on the family and children, one of the boys we couldn't get him settled at night at all. He was taking nightmares. They were young at the time and it was hard to get them out to primary school. Every morning, they had to go out past the spot where I was nearly killed by the gunmen.

On moving to Kesh I lost my self-confidence, I just couldn't walk into a neighbour's house and sit down. If the wife was out for a night, I'd just go away to my bed. I'm 81 years of age now.

The colonel in charge of us in UDR was good to me. He took me full time on the guard, as there was no other work. I was there for a number of years, till my health failed. It was a 24-hour job. It finally got too much for me. My health was getting bad and I had to go to hospital for an operation. So they moved me to a store, a day's work and you got home at night.

I believe the IRA targeted me because I was a UDR soldier. I think there was ethnic cleansing. There were two men, lived along our lane, both single men. The IRA never touched any of them. Yet they targeted me twice. Whether it was that I had a family and had intended some of the family would get the farm. But it didn't work out, all is gone and I'm sitting here. I get good support from my family. I did not regret being in the UDR. I was in the B Specials before that. I know I did suffer over the head of it, but I would do it again. I think my contribution helped to bring peace.

At the time of the Enniskillen bomb I was standing at the Cenotaph talking to a photographer when the bomb went off. We were showered with rubble. Wreaths were lying on the ground, they had fallen out of my hand. I gathered them up and away I went to the car. I could stay no longer. It still is tough and I suffered depression and nerves and I'm on anti-depressants. I'm 81 now and two years ago I had a nervous break down. I was not sleeping. When I went to bed things all came up into my head and I could not sleep. I take a tablet at night and it puts me to sleep and I get a better rest. But it will never leave me until the day I die. Never.

In the future I would love a holiday. I don't drive much. We could have had a bus trip but we are not able to go on a bus. We are past that now.

The first attack there was three gunmen, three guns were used and police came to hospital to take a statement. They said there was three weapons, three different kinds of ammunition and one short bullet which jammed an automatic weapon. If that gun had not jammed, you would not be here today, they said. It was a damaged round, he showed me that and there were other empty cases in his hand. "I think it was the man above, only for him I would not be here today."

No one was ever brought to justice for any of those attacks, not one.

NB Johnny has learnt recently that the family farm they were forced to abandon, sold for over 10 times the price that he received when being compensated when these traumatic events occurred.*

Alison McElhinney

A series of death-defying attacks on Tyrone farmer and part-time police reservist Stewart Courtney, dominated the teenage years of his daughter Alison McElhinney. The trauma impacted on Alison's school days, family life, farming activities and influenced her career choice.

My father was Stewart Courtney from Aughrainey, Donaghmore, Tyrone and that is where I was born and reared. Dad owned a large farm in a predominantly Roman Catholic area. He was a B Special and later joined the part-time police reserve. I was at school in September 1975 when the principal took me out of class and I saw my mother in tears and she informed me that after he left us to school, on his way back home my father drove into the yard at our house and was ambushed.

My sister went hysterical when we went to collect her from school and my brother was so young he did not realise what was going on. From that day forward things changed dramatically at our home. My father was critical for many days, but pulled through and was discharged from hospital. From that day on we had 24-hour police and army security. We were taught how to use a shotgun; one was left loaded upstairs and another downstairs. Our car became an ex armoured police car. Where we travelled everywhere in, church, school, days away?

My father recovered and through time went back on duty. We lived with that strain. While he was on duty, cars used to come up and down lanes and into the yard at night with no lights on. The silent telephone calls and while he was round the farm, the cattle were let out, fences broke and gates left open. Really we progressed through life on a knife-edge.

I had always wanted to join the police and was successful in 1977. It was determination on my part that I wanted to prove to my father that I was as dedicated to the job as he and my uncle were. My mother was against it, she did everything in her power to deny me going into the depot. I went straight into the crux of the Troubles, and my first station at age 18, was Enniskillen.

While at home one weekend in 1980 and Dad was going out on the tractor to tend to cattle and asked if my brother and I would I come later to help. A short time later a neighbour came screaming into the house to get down to my father, so Jonathan and I ran to the back land and I saw my father bringing this fellow up the road with a gun to the back of his head, and blood pouring out of him. My father said there is another man in the field and we needed to find the guns they were carrying. I was left with this gunman who was lying on the side of the road and my father's gun guarding him. As my father scoured the field for the gun, my brother seen the other gunman take off in a vehicle and he jumped into the jeep and went after him. I was getting abuse from everyone that drove past, claiming it to be brutality. Some tried to stop; the police seemed an age to come. As at this stage our security had been taken from us, so we had to wait on the police from Dungannon to arrive.

Jonathan, my brother, followed the gunman into a safe house in Donaghmore housing estate and seemed an age before he returned. We started to fear for him. My father had combed the field and located the weapons which the gunmen had been carrying.

After they took the gunman away and interviews began, I seen the look of fear on my father's face as the Detectives asked for his Walther revolver for Forensics. That look haunts me. Giving up the only protection he had.

Of course, the whole cry from Authorities was to move out, sell up? Why, why should we move from a farm that had been in the family for generations? What was left for my brother if we moved out?

My mother took it very hard, I supposed I was based in Enniskillen and she was living with it day and night at home. I remember while on duty one day and I got a phone call from my mother in a distressed state. She said she'd had enough, that my father hadn't returned home from the Mart and she feared the worst and she was going to take her own life. I remember phoning a neighbour telling her the story and jumping in my car and driving home. Travelling down that lane I saw all the cars and feared the worst. Thank goodness my neighbour had got up to her and my father had arrived home in the middle of the entire trauma. My mother suffered with depression, with little help from experts.

Security had returned to the house after the shooting incident and in March 1985 my father was in the back of the police security car when it was mortared by terrorists at the top of the lane. The mortar blew off the back door of the car, but despite all three being injured, they drove to Dungannon Station. The terrorists then opened fire along the front of the house; my mother and brother were inside. Not knowing how serious injuries. Again I got informed about the incident not knowing how serious my father and been injured and made the journey home again.

Throughout my career in the police force I was heavily involved with the police widows and pensioner and being in a MSU visited many terrorists scene and had to go to many houses to deliver the terrible news to families. It never got any easier and I knew in a way the pain that those families were going through.

I continued with my job and was on duty of the Enniskillen Remembrance Day bomb in 1987; standing at Herbie Fallis's Chemist shop when the explosion occurred. Everything went in slow motion. I fell backwards in the shop window and another lady fell on top of me. As I got to my feet I ran towards the Reading rooms having seen the wall fall in slow motion. The screaming of those people and the dust. I remember one woman scrambling on the ground screaming for her child. Telling me her child was under that rubble. I saw the bodies and gave the woman to a person I knew and told them to take her away from the scene. As I tended the injured a small nun came towards me asking me what she could do. Dear love her. She had blankets and water in her hands. The dust just hung over the whole scene and we worked at clearing the rubble. I never forget the taste of dust in my mouth and the slow motion. Thoughts going through my mind were: why is no ambulances coming, where is the digger and why are they not coming. I will never forget that day: it will always live with me.

My father dropped dead going on duty on the 12th April 1990 aged 54 years, one week before my brother's wedding.

Leslie Swindle

Lorry driver Leslie Swindle survived an IRA bomb explosion after a deadly device was planted on the cab roof of his lorry. Trauma and injury took over his life in the immediate aftermath, impacting on family life and income. He served in the UDR and RUC.

On October 1st, 1990 I went to the lorry as usual and listened for the birds to go out of the bushes. If the birds went out of the bushes I always had it in my head there was nobody about, because when I went down to the lorry, usually I moved the birds, in the early morning. But on that particular morning, there were no birds.

I checked the lorry, started it and a car pulled up and it was police protection. I spoke to the boys for a few minutes and they drove off and I got into the lorry and headed through Maguiresbridge for the A4 Belfast road. I braked to slow up to get onto the A4 and the lorry gave an awful shake and I was blown up into the cab roof. I thought someone had thrown a drug bomb or opened up gunfire on the back of the cab. I knew there was nothing under the lorry because I had checked. I got halted, but the doors were locked. I got the door burst open, and ran away. A vehicle came along the road, for fear it was the enemy again, I took to the hedge. I made my way home and went to the neighbours and phoned for police and ambulance. Police took me to hospital.

The roof was blown off the lorry, windows were blown out and the door was kinked outwards at the top, and by the time I got home I was bled out with the injuries, two ear drums burst and shrapnel in my shoulder and two bones broken in my shoulder. My hearing was affected badly. I got to hospital and was in a lot of pain and got into the ward and then to theatre.

Now, I know that I was watched a fortnight before I was bombed.

It was a booby trap bomb, they had set it on the white roof of the cab in a white bag over my head and with the height of a lorry you don't see the roof. Whether it moved driving around corners I don't know, but it took the skin off my face and left it pure raw and there is a lot of metal stuck in my shoulder yet, too near nerve endings to come out.

I had joined UDR part time in 1973. Then I got a job driving a lorry. I joined the part-time RUC reserve in 1980 and was stationed in Newtownbutler. I had a warning before Christmas,1982. I decided to park the lorry home under street lights at all times. I thought it was as safe, as anywhere.

After surgery, police authorities arrived at hospital, they were helpful and kind. Afterwards, I realised I had no wage coming in other than £61 a week for my wife, myself and two children, it was not very much to live on.

We were savers and had put a few pounds away thankfully because I don't know what we would have done. We could not get money from the authorities, only a bit of sick pay and there was no Disability Living Allowance. I could not work and we had to buy medication which was a burden. Police welfare came, but it took 10 months before I was sorted out financially.

I had to move house three months after I was blown up, from Maguiresbridge to Lisbellaw, where the authorities allowed me to live. I moved on December 21st, 1990 and I had to buy a new home.

Then a good friend Cullen Stephenson was shot in Brookeborough in January, 1991 – and a short time after this Douglas

Carrothers, my wife's brother was blown up and killed.

Leslie's wife, his daughter and Douglas's daughter witnessed the terror through the window. Leslie spent 18 months on the sick, then went to the full-time RUC reserve for he could not go back to an everyday job.

It did make big changes to our lives and my daughter went to further education and was intimidated out of it by comments from some nationalists who said they would get her father. My son took on a fatherhood role till he married and my daughter and wife protected me full time. I have to give them thanks for what they did.

Injuries left me with back and shoulder muscle loss and over 20 years on, I'm still on medication. There is still shrapnel in my back. Many nerve endings were cut. I received 47 stitches in my back and six in my shoulder where there was no flesh left on my bones.

Robert Glover, the boss of the quarry firm I worked for, was murdered 13 months before I was hit, for providing supplies to security forces.

Two men were caught for my attempted murder and Douglas Carrothers' murder and they did a few years in jail and got out under the Good Friday Agreement.

I always worked with a mixed community and I make it my business to mix but there is bitterness and hurt that will never go away.

Today, I am a survivor but I spent many nights thinking about what happened. I could not sleep and it played on my mind. It was a big change to our lives. I have another brother in law Noel Carrothers, Dougie's brother, I am close to. He was always there along with my own family to help me through. I retired, I went off on a medical in year 2000 and have not worked since, because of the impact of what happened.

I would not have joined if I knew the pressure we were going to be under. In the early troubles we joined for the good of our country and safety of homes, wives and children and thought we were doing a good thing. As time passed we were just being nipped off one by one and as part-time security force members we were targets. You had to be watchful all the time.

Noel Carrothers

Hugging his wife goodbye before going out on UDR duty at night, is a moment Noel Carrothers and his wife always cherished. IRA attacks on a friend and the murder of his brother Dougie Carrothers heightened fears for his own life, as he served during the Troubles.

The devastation that my brother's death brought is very hard to explain. It meant trying to sleep at night, while worrying about which of us is going to be next, especially when the terrorists hit my brother in law, Leslie Swindle and my brother. My family advised me to get out of the security forces, as they did not want another family member killed.

I used to lie awake at night wondering what I should do. I didn't want to let comrades down and I didn't want the IRA to get the better of me. Through it all I went back out on duty after a few weeks and continued serving. I joined the UDR in 1972 when I turned 18 years. I believed the troubles could be brought to an end in a short time soon after I joined, if enough people would get out and apprehend the few trying to cause trouble. Previously I had watched my Dad and older brothers going out to the B Men at night, and times were reasonably peaceful back then.

In October 1990 my brother in law Leslie Swindle was blown up and seriously injured after IRA terrorists planted a bomb in the cab roof of his lorry. He survived this bomb attack.

Leslie and I were close and still are, we went cycling, swimming and running together. The night before he got hit, we had been out together on the bicycles. It really put the fear of death through me, knowing that both of us could have been taken out, the night before when we were cycling home, when the IRA had already made plans to take his life.

I felt that I would be in danger if I went back out cycling or road running so I had to stop, but it was the only way I could really clear my head on a night if I wasn't out on patrol, was to do exercise and free up the mind.

I continued serving until 2002 when I was medically discharged from the army. Rising bollards had been shot up accidentally under my car at Clogher and my spine was injured and I was unable to work. That meant I went from working hard in two jobs, to just sick pay of £65 a week. It had a big impact. We just had to struggle on for a long time until eventually I got an army medical disablement pension which greatly helped things.

Two IRA men were arrested in connection with the attacks I have mentioned and they did time in jail for that, but under the Good Friday Agreement, they were released after a few years.

During those times I had to be very vigilant, and check under my car and watch every entry I went past, and be careful where you went and who you got into contact with, because the troubles were so fierce, that you just never knew when it was your turn.

I could have been out on patrol with corporals and comrades and next morning I would get a call to say that one of them had been shot dead. That news coming ringing in your ear, I just never felt the better of it for weeks. I just never knew when I went out on patrol where there was a bomb waiting or a gun on a high hill.

When I went on duty, I never knew if I was going to get back home. My wife often would not sleep, nor would not even lie

in her bed, she would walk the floors until maybe 3.00am until I returned home from duty. And she would be down there opening the door to let me in quickly.

Whenever, I left to go out at night having given my wife a goodbye hug - I never knew if it would maybe be the last hug, ever.

Ernie Wilson

A terrifying IRA bomb explosion on a school bus transporting children to school, sparked a chain reaction which dramatically changed the life of driver Ernie Wilson. He recalls the trauma of the incident, injury to a school child and the loss of his son James in the aftermath, a shock which turned his hair white overnight.

On June 28, 1988 I had children on the school bus. The bus had been parked at Maguiresbridge and I drove to Lisnaskea and Sylvan Hill to collect more pupils. I was just starting off in gear and there was a flash and a bang, and the bus blew up. I could not see or hear anything, then my sight came back again. Then I had the sense to stop the bus but the brake pedals were gone, I pulled a small hand brake and it worked. I walked the seats or what was left of them, and there was a young girl injured and there was a hole right through her arm and I trailed her down and put her onto the back seat. I would say this girl actually died on me some several times, but I resuscitated her and I got her breathing again and handed her out to the army. This child a pupil at Enniskillen Collegiate Grammar School, was Gillian Latimer. Arlene Foster, now an Assembly Minister, then a school pupil was sitting beside her on the bus. The army thought there was another bomb in the bus and they wanted everybody out. Thank God Gillian survived, she was taken to Erne Hospital and Royal Victoria Hospital and is now a grown woman and working.

I walked down the road, in a daze and I met James my son going to his work in his car. I said the school bus was blown up James and I was in it and the children and that was when it hit me. I couldn't believe I was still alive when I looked at the bus. It was downhill from there on.

About one year later my son died by suicide. I would say it was the bus bomb that caused that, for he used to help me to search the bus every morning, but that particular morning he drove the bus out and didn't search it.

It turned my hair white over night, losing my son James who was aged 27 years. It was devastating. We went everywhere together. James was definitely a victim of the Troubles.

I think James must have felt that he had let me down, which he didn't, but he might not have known that. I still have not got over it since 1988.

I don't think I would have got through life only for support from my wife, family, and my faith. I still live in Maguiresbridge. My life hasn't been great health-wise, I just don't want to go anywhere any more, and that is the way an experience such as this leaves you. My wife May's faith, got her through it, but Joy and Mervyn the trauma wrecked them for a while.

James didn't smoke nor drink. He was a saved Christian before he died and that was a big comfort to me.

Ernie believes he was targeted by the IRA because he was a soldier. He served with UDR and RUC until demobbed in 1992. I never felt like leaving the security forces, after the bombing.

I'm now aged 75 years and I would do exactly the same as I have done in my life again. I wouldn't change a thing. It was the life I chose to live and what's come has come, God and my faith has kept me here.

After the bomb, I did not drive a school bus because it was not fair to the children but work inside schools until I retired.

Ernie Wilson

I did not get any support after the bus bomb. There was not much support at that time. If it happened today you would have organisations like SEFF which would help.

The impact on family life was devastation. There was no talking or counselling. The doctor put me on tablets for it. I find it hard to talk about what happened.

I'm not looking for credit for it, but I got the British Empire Medal for resuscitating and saving Gillian.

I had deep bitterness at the time, but my faith got me out of that.

I would have the odd dream about James and I have a photograph in his room and no matter where you go he is looking at you. May, my wife and I talk the odd time about it but we would be very gentle, we understand each other. It will not leave me because I was too close. It will be with me until the day I close my eyes.

Today I look upon myself as both a victim and as a survivor. I have survived twice now in bombs and I reckon it was God saved me, nobody else.

Arlene Foster

As a child, Arlene Foster (nee Kelly) experienced the heart-felt wrench of leaving the family farm on the border following an IRA attack on her father. But the flight to a less isolated community was also fraught with danger - as in 1988 Arlene was caught up in a bomb explosion on a school bus in Lisnaskea.

When the bomb explosion went off, a piece of debris came down through the bus and hit Gillian Latimer on her arm and she was very seriously injured.

I remember after the bomb went off, it is a very eerie feeling, everything seems to be suspended in animation, as if everything was in slow motion, but of course the seconds were passing. We got off the bus screaming and ran across the road.

As usual that morning in 1988, I had got on the bus at Castle Balfour Park opposite where I lived and went down Main Street in Lisnaskea, picked up people at the parochial hall and went towards Drumhaw and at Sylvan Hill, there was a huge explosion. About ten children were on the bus. And I was sitting beside Gillian Latimer as she and I used to fight about who would get the window seat or go outside on the aisle. If you got beside the window, you could sleep on the way to school. So I had won the battle that morning and I was sitting at the window and Gillian was sitting at the aisle seat.

I was going to Enniskillen Collegiate School and was in lower sixth year. Ernie Wilson was the bus driver, he was a part time UDR soldier but we never thought about that.

Ernie was injured as well, the rest of us apart from small injuries were traumatised but not physically injured really.

Looking back now, putting a bomb on a bus where you know there are children going to be, it could have been so much worse. It was bad already, Gillian was in hospital for a long time and Ernie was in hospital too. Gillian was the most injured in the bus and it was a horrendous occasion because it could have been a slaughter of young people; we could have all died.

We got out through the bus back door, the bomb was at the front obviously where Ernie was and the impact of it blew back and that is when Gillian got hit on the arm. We could all have been killed, there is no doubt about that.

Before I lived in Lisnaskea, we had lived on a farm close to the border.

I think that I was always aware that Daddy was in the police and he would be away working. We had a small farm; 12 cows and 50 acres and I had a very idyllic upbringing. My birthday is in July, so I always had my birthdays in the hayfields, so I loved living in the countryside and my grandmother in her 80's lived with us. On the 4th January 1979, Daddy went out to close the byre up for the night and bring the cows in. I was sitting at the table with my mother in the kitchen and gunshots rang out, very rapid gunfire. I will always remember my mother's face just went completely white, she did not say a thing and then, my father came into the house on all fours blood dripping from his head.

He told us all to get up the stairs, he had flares in his bedroom. After he put the flares off, police arrived in seven minutes. They think the gun jammed and apart from that, my father had danced about to try to avoid the gunfire and he did very well. Dad was shot in his head but it skimmed him and so he came into the house, put off the flares and sent a radio message for help.

Meanwhile the gunmen had gone to Dernawilt Cross and stopped somebody, to escape. It is thought it was Seamus McElwaine, IRA, who at that time was aged 17 and as we know he was later killed by the SAS in 1986. He was a prolific murderer at that time in South East Fermanagh. I'm very grateful that it wasn't meant to be and that my father survived, but it had huge consequences for our family. We were advised to either move away completely or to somewhere else in Fermanagh that was 'safer'. We moved to Lisnaskea. That was a big shock for the whole family. My grandmother lived until 97 years and used to call the Lisnaskea house 'The box', because she could not get out to the countryside. My younger brother who was only four at the time, probably would have continued with farming that land, he did not get the opportunity to do that. I think my father was the first 'only son' to be targeted. Protestant 'only sons' in the border areas were being targeted and there was a definite feeling of ethnic cleansing, that they were removing eyes and ears of the British establishment from border areas. Further police officers and soldiers were murdered who were 'only sons' and that took away their families. Before that I did not know the difference between Protestants and Catholics, I was only aged eight years and all of that is brought into very sharp relief when there is an attempt made on your father's life.

People have asked me in the past, is that why I am involved in politics now, but I can't answer that, because I don't know. Certainly it made me very aware of who I was and what my father was doing, trying to protect people. He helped people right across the community. I think the most hurtful thing for him was the fact that he had been set up.

We moved to Lisnaskea and Daddy remained in the police and thankfully he lived to fight another day.

Jean Henry

The IRA bombed a filling station in Lisnaskea run by Jean Henry and husband Ivan and waged a war of attrition against them for serving security force members. The terrorists' campaign of intimidation and threats lasted years, until the Henry's faced difficult decisions about leaving.

My husband Ivan and I had a filling station in Lisnaskea, and we had a bomb in it in August 1988. Ivan got a phone call at midnight to say there had been a break-in at the premises.

We arrived accompanied by police, they investigated and it looked like there was only a break-in. The two police men and Ivan walked round the building and I was inside, and the policewoman, had stepped out, and there was a bang. I could not see anything. The police man pulled me away from the door, and said we needed to get out of there. We called to each other, through the dust. Eventually we got into the police car. It would not start. Their car radio was broken too. At the road I met an off-duty policeman I knew and I just said we have had a bomb. He asked if anyone was hurt and I said I don't know where any of the rest of them are. At that moment, Ivan arrived.

I only had a few cuts from the glass, Ivan was cut on the legs and the police were cut in different places, but the police woman down her whole left side was damaged she had lost her uniform off her left side and she had lost her eye. For week and months I could not go to sleep – every time I went to close my eyes I could just see and hear the flash and bang and see this girl.

That night we were taken to the police station for an interview. Then I feared the IRA would go to the house and kill my children. My sister stayed with the children that night, and everything was fine.

Next day we came back to the filling station, and wondered how we came out of it alive. The whole end of it was gone. The booby trap bomb was in a dog kennel, where an airline was kept for pumping tyres.

After a long time seeing doctors and a psychiatrist, for the traumatic stress, I was advised to go to see this woman police constable to see what she was like now, to update the mental image of that was bothering me.

The police arranged for me to see her and to me she was a totally different girl. She talked to me and had a patch over her eye and showed me the shrapnel through her body and she said look – don't be worrying about me – you know I'm alive I have only lost my eye. But I just couldn't get over it. I was having nightmares all the time.

We kept getting phone calls saying there is a bomb on the premises and this went on. Then we got this phone call and this voice gave me a code and said I'm such a person from the IRA, there is a bomb in the filling station now and nobody will be alive in this one.

I tried to ring the filling station and there was no reply – the phone was constantly engaged and there was no mobile phone then. I panicked and rang the police, and told them. Police told me to stay in the house at Letterbreen and they would come out to me.

They sent a Lisnaskea police car to the filling station and everything was all clear, there was nothing at it. They had just done that to upset us.

I was a total wreck I couldn't sleep nor eat – I couldn't let the children out of my sight and I was phoning Ivan and asking him was he all right.

Eventually we moved up to Maguiresbridge where we were a bit closer and Ivan would have been home sooner. We still got the odd call about different things.

One night, Ivan got a call, this is such and such a brigade of the IRA and the caller gave him a number and said, if you want to live and stay in the filling station, you have to stop serving all the security forces. If you don't take heed – you know the consequences.

Then after consulting with the police and talking to them, it was agreed we would put a notice in the paper to say that we could no longer serve members of the security forces.

Our own Protestant people thought we were wrong in what we were doing, but we felt at the time we were left with no alternative. We feared that Ivan would be killed by the IRA or blown up, or something would happen to the children. Our children were terrified.

We believe we were targeted probably because we were the only Protestant owned business at that time in Lisnaskea. Neither Ivan nor myself were members of the security forces. In 1996 we had a boycott, Catholic people said Ivan was at the road blocks, and spat in a woman's face. I spoke personally to this woman and she denied having said this. They tried to burn down the place and graffiti was written on the walls of her business.

Business was affected. Maxol who we were renting the property off, were well aware of everything and they stood by us.

Then things settled down for a while after that – then we started to get the telephone calls again that there was a bomb in the filling station or that there was a bomb at the house or Ivan was threatened over the phone.

We suffered on with it then and got out of the business in 2000 because– financially then it was getting to be a burden to us.

I was at my wits end and with the annoyance of it and all that had been said, and Lisnaskea was my home town, and my parents are buried in the Church of Ireland cemetery and I was just out of my mind. So we got out of it, and left. We just closed the door and left.

Looking back on it, if I had know in 1988 when we had the bomb – if I had known that I was going to suffer as much I probably would not have stayed on. We would have looked for a filling station somewhere else.

It was very difficult it was tough, I'm not over it yet – I will never get over all the effects of what people did and said.

No one was ever caught for the bomb, or for the phone calls or for the intimidation.

George Latimer

Former border dweller George Latimer has suffered the great pain of loss at the hands of terrorists. He was victim of a terrorism forced exodus from his family farm near Newtownbutler close to the Fermanagh Cavan border. The Latimer family home was attacked twice in 1972. Richard Latimer, one of three brothers was shot dead at his hardware shop in Newtownbutler in 1980.

After I married, I worked the family farm, and joined the UDR, I had been in the Ulster Special Constabulary previously. A couple of years later we were attacked at our farm on March 16th, 1972. My brother and I came into the yard and gunmen opened fire, we ran for cover. My brother got into the house, assembled a weapon and returned a few rounds and then it was all over. As that summer went on, trouble was hotting in border areas, people were being murdered and blown up in bombs and shootings. A lot of my neighbours had been murdered and it was getting that there was one murdered every month, at that stage.

One evening in October 1972, terrorists had another bang at us, it started at 6:30pm, and lasted four hours. The army gave us cover before this and the SAS had been round the houses, but the farm was dominated by high ground and we were in a vulnerable situation.

We were advised to leave by the army and politicians. My brother and I lived on the farm with our wives, my mother, sister and daughter (three years old). We decided to move, so the place, cattle and machinery were auctioned. My wife and I and my mother were given housing executive houses in Lisnaskea. My brother bought a house. We were there for eight years but became targets under threat once again.

I joined UDR full-time after I left the farm, and later joined the police reserve. During this time we learned that a 12 year old boy had been getting up at 5.00am and targeting me going to work. He was caught, was tried at court and given a few years sentence for offences. Luckily I had already moved house.

A few years after that I fell into poor health started taking epileptic fits so I retired from the police.

My brother Richard Latimer, 39, was shot at his Newtownbutler hardware business. They came in on June 7th, 1980 and murdered him as he worked behind his shop counter.

My father-in-law James McKee, 60, was shot in April 1978, after he delivered meals to a school in Carrickmore, Co. Tyrone. Terrorists ambushed him. He drove for a mile to the Omagh to Cookstown road, they followed him, got onto the bus and shot him dead. All those things put strain on the family, murders and having to move house and the loss of life was the biggest strain.

We were on the USC so when it disbanded, the three brothers myself (George), Robbie and Richard, joined on the same day in April 1970.

My father died in 1971. When my brother was killed in 1980, it was a big shock and strain for my mother. Every time we were on duty she worried until we came home and it was the same for my wife and children. They did not know if you were coming back again.

After the killings I knew somebody local had set us up, it was not strangers who came in and knew your daily routine. When the terrorists did the shooting they brought somebody in to do that.

I think putting on the uniform being a British Soldier was the biggest thing the terrorists didn't like. Once you put on the army uniform you were a marked man.

There was a lot of very good after support from comrades and the army.

One neighbouring farmer stepped on a mine and was blown up. We went to the grim scene. As he was there with his dog and it was hard to tell the human remains from the animal. It brought it home to you, what could happen to you and what you were up against.

That was the same day I attended funerals in Enniskillen of two other murdered UDR men.

When we left our farm and home in 1972 we never received one penny of compensation.

My opinion is that some authorities turned a blind eye to terrorism issues. After the farm shooting the Garda searched the area but could find no trace. A week later, my brother, my father- in-law and I went over in a boat and we found empty bullet cases no problem.

We did not have a good family life because we did not want to go out at night, we were afraid of the car being booby trapped.

I don't think I would join if I had to do it all again. I saw too much grief in my time I was serving, I saw people badly injured. Two or three comrades whom I served with were murdered and two or three others went to Canada to start a new life.

George McVitty

Fear over the IRA threat to Protestants, or Unionists living in border areas, and especially those in the security forces, led to difficult decisions for George and Violet McVitty. In a fight for survival, they left behind a farm of land they loved at Garrison and took with them only a few sticks of furniture, and their little children.

I inherited two farms, from my father and uncle. I was born at Knocknashanon. Violet my wife and I married in 1961, and had four children. We farmed and I worked driving a school bus. I was on the USC from age 17 and I joined the UDR. Foot and mobile patrols with UDR and the army, took us to Enniskillen HQ, and Garrison night after night, hail, rain and snow.

Then the IRA shot one of us. My neighbour and colleague Johnny Fletcher lived right on the border. We left him home at night, going on foot patrol to the house and we would walk the road back, dispatch and go home. The IRA shot him one morning, they took him out of the house, made him hand over his rifle. He had hidden the rifle outside but had to knock the house door, to get the bolt from inside. His wife had to hand it out to him. They marched him down the lane and on the river verge in a field, they shot him and walked over the border and away on about their business. They took his gun, his SLR. I was caretaker at Derrygonnelly school and UDR came for me and brought me to the scene, and it was not a wonderful sight. It was traumatic. The ambulance took him away. The army was there around the place.

This planned murder was enough for George to feel threatened.

Violet always went round the outside farm houses before me, for fear there would be a man waiting for me. She checked everything before I appeared.

I lost my job, I did not go back anymore, for I drove a school bus and there was six unapproved roads from Garrison to Belleek. I took the Shore Road to and from home at Garrison, Enniskillen, Derrygonnelly, and Knockmore for bus loads. UDR patrols were being targeted in these areas. We stayed up many a night, if a gate rattled you were up sitting in the window for hours, you would not go to bed at all. Then they decided the UDR would not get any more police protection. As the crow flies, we lived a mile from the border, and could hear shooting practice usually on a Sunday.

After Johnny Fletcher was shot the UDR decided we would be better moved away from the border. Our major came down had a chat with us and UDR colleagues moved us to a derelict house, at the point in Churchill. When we got there one man was covering rat holes in the floor, he had it swept and a fire on for us. We only brought a couple of bits of furniture because there was only one kitchen and a bedroom each side of it and we stayed there for about two years. I used to salt and grit roads at night in Winter and go on UDR patrol.

My wife had three children to look after and was expecting at that same time. When we left the farm we lost that child of eight months. The child took viral pneumonia in the middle of the night and we rushed her to hospital in Enniskillen but she died the next day – it was a big headache on us too.

No politicians ever came near us. Harry West MP came to Churchill and said he might get me a job in forestry. But I got a job as a lorry DoE driver and was there till I took asthma, I fought it for years until one day I could not go to work and they paid me off and I got redundancy and I come off on a pension. I believe my ill health is linked to stress of the house move from our border home.

We never went back to the farm at Garrison, we gathered up the cows and put them on a trailer one day and Roger Corrigan sold them in the mart. We left furniture and all behind, we only brought what would sit in the wee house with two rooms. It was my inheritance but what could we do about it, we were lucky to get out of it. We kept land for three years. There was no let-up in tensions.

The four children, John, Raymond, Edel and William were small at the time aged from three and six years and they had to attend various different schools.

My father was a man of 70 years, and I did not want him up and down out of that farm. We told him we would be better getting a house of our own and sold the farm. It was difficult to come to that decision. With small children we had to do it.

There is a feeling of loss of hundreds of thousands of pounds, with the subsidy people are getting for land now. Looking back I would not do it again, not for any government, no matter what I thought about my country for I got no thanks for what I did. I would say I was discriminated against, as people in other jobs if they got moved, they got compensation. We got nothing. But Arlene Foster and Sammy Foster did start up a campaign to fight for compensation and recognition for people forced to leave homes and borderlands in the Troubles.

The IRA shot another one of us, Alan Ferguson, down beside where I lived on the main Belleek Garrison road.

Violet McVitty

Family life for Violet McVitty changed forever, following a tough decision made with her husband George, to leave their Fermanagh border farm. Their flight from danger with small children in tow, was sparked by an IRA attack on their neighbour.

I started going out with George when I was aged 18, we married when we were 22. I was born in Leitrim in 1939 and my family moved to Garrison when I was seven. I met George when I was at school. Raymond our eldest child was born in 1962 and Adel 1963, William 1964 and John, 1966.

In 1972, it was the start of our Troubles. George was on the B specials and then the UDR and we lived on a farm on the border at Garrison. When he was on duty, I was at home with small children.

It was 1971, a B-men's hut down in the hollow from us was blown up. I'll never forget that night, it blew the house windows in and dogs of the country went mad barking. We had no electricity, only an oil lamp. I froze in bed with fear. I actually got pure stone cold. George was on duty and waited for him to come home around 2:30am but he did not come until after 5.00am, and his face was black from an ambush at Kinawley.

At that time our fifth child was on the way. My neighbour woman came the next day to see if everything was all right. She said I thought of you, and I thought I was all right but, we moved house then to Churchill in 1972 and the baby was born in May and died in July. It was just pure stress through the pregnancy you know, nothing else. You know I still think back, what would she have been like today, she would be 38 now; the baby's name was Julie. Dennis was driving the school bus and the terrorists blocked the road too. We were glad to get the Churchill house, just two rooms, a kitchen and toilet.

We had moved from the border fearful after our neighbour and friend John Fletcher was shot on the border on March 1st, 1972. The UDR patrolled down round there. When George fed cattle, I went with him, he took his weapon.

I don't remember much about leaving, as the UDR members packed stuff and brought it away. We lived at Churchill for two years and they would not take rent from us, they were very good to us.

With the move, in one way we were glad to get away from the stress. George's parents and his two sisters lived in our farm house after we left. They had lived beside the man who was shot and were fearful and uneasy. They were not on the forces.

We knew we could never go back to Garrison. George sold the 100 acre farm and bought 18 acres outside Enniskillen and a derelict house.

One Sunday George was not at home and I saw a car coming up to the house with four men in it. They got out and walked around the school bus my husband drove for a living and I watched them through the window. I knew they were up to no good. We were in fear from that time until he came home. There was no phone and no way to contact people.

I would not sleep in the house on my own at night, the fear comes from that time. I had not a care in the world when I was younger.

When we moved house to Churchill, from the Garrison border farm it was as different as day and night. I did not have a car, the children were at school, I was on my own until evenings. It was a big difference from being on the farm with things to do and I had the car, and could go anywhere I wanted. I lost all that. I got depressed. Then we got the house outside Enniskillen, it was a bit of a lift. It gave me something to work at doing up the house, it all had to be done up from scratch.

I often thought it was not worth it all, being in the forces. George always said he did it for his country and I understood that, but where did it get us today - nowhere. I probably advised him not to serve, but he would do his own thing and I appreciate that, I would do my own thing too.

There was a lot of financial loss. We had 100 acres of land and he was driving the school bus full time. We were just starting to get on our feet. I got a job in school dinners and that helped a little bit money wise. It is only in this last lock of years that we feel we can maybe live.

I was a victim of the Troubles and I have survived the conflict.

There was no support, there was no such thing as counselling. I'm sure if there had been any, we would have gone to see them, but that is 39 years ago, it's a life time.

There were no victims groups and no SEFF. People at SEFF are very good and kind. Our son Raymond does wood work classes with SEFF, George says he is too old for that now. We have been on trips, we enjoy them because you have a great crowd going and every one mixes. We have met people who have been through similar experiences and we have talked to quite a few of them, and there is a sense of connection and we have something in common.

**UDR soldier John Fletcher, 43, Protestant was killed by the IRA on 1st March 1972, off duty at his border home, near Garrison, Fermanagh.*

Raymond Madill

A long police career around the Fermanagh border spanning decades of the worst of Troubled times, gave Raymond Madill a unique insight. He shares a mixture of memories.

I was born in 1948 in County Cavan. In 1952 my grandparents moved to Aghadrumsee and when I was aged 12 my parents and I moved there too. My Dad and uncles were Ulster Special Constabulary members. They did a lot of shooting on ranges and I thought this is great- I'll join whenever I am the age. At age 16, a school class mate and I, Robert Wiggins went to the USC shooting ranges, where they allowed us to shoot 303 rifles and 45 revolvers and in individual competitions.

When I was 17, I joined and the sergeant instructor fitted the tunic and issued the kit and surprisingly I got the 303 rifle and 50 rounds of ammunition without being trained on it.

I enjoyed my time in the USC at the hut with plenty of shooting and even got paid for it. Funny enough they call people tight who still have their first pay packet, but I have still got my first USC pay packet and I have an old five pound note and two single pound notes and a ten shillings (£7.50) and that was for six months. It worked out at £15 a year and if you were a special sergeant you were really in the money, you got £17 a year as I recall.

Things were quiet around that time. The B-men hut and Dernawilt hut housed two platoons for Rosslea and Aghadrumsee, about 60 men. They talked about security in later years and manpower but back then there was another platoon at Fivemiletown, Magheraveely, Cooneen, Newtownbutler and Lisnaskea and there was hundreds of men who could be called out quickly without the same communications as exist today, sometimes you had to hop on your bike to call out to other platoon members.

My motivation for joining was the ranges shooting. The civil rights marches started later and house squatting and the RUC decided to bolster station strength and mobilised B-men and I went to Rosslea. I walked the Alsatian dog called Nimbus through Rosslea, out the Monaghan Road to the customs hut where I took a drop of tea and went through the south of Ireland and up through Clogh back to Rosslea, there was no remarks passed by anybody. Later, it started to get violent and when the B men disbanded, I went to the RUC, where I served long enough to get on to PSNI. I did 34 years service.

At the start we were all armed and then during my time in Rosslea we were disarmed and so I saw the disarmament.

I was sent to Belleek after that and we were re-armed then. There was a carnival at Garrison and a marquee for a dance - so the police Landrover was sent with a couple of men in it. The IRA arrived and stole the Landrover and equipment. People were more friendly towards police and willing to help, so the crowd opened up and let the police out and closed over again, so they got away. The two men on duty survived without a scratch. There was no shooting, it had not got murderous at that time. The Landrover was recovered in Sligo. All I lost was my rain coat that was in the Landrover.

Give them their dues, the people were always friendly and seemed to accept police around Belleek and Garrison. We got on well with the civilian population and the doctors were very helpful especially in times of attacks including the late Dr Brian Finn who lived near the police station.

From my time in Belleek I remember Constable Bob Keys that was killed and Sean Prendergast a soldier, but I find it really difficult to talk about them, and what happened to them.

My family were not pleased with me being in Belleek because it was worse than Rosslea. In Belleek there was one way in and out if you wanted to stay in Northern Ireland; until you got to Rosscor Viaduct then you had a choice of two roads. I never got home except on days off.

I lived beside Lackey Bridge, in the townlands of Tattymorris and you could hear Clones clock chiming across the border. I went to my uncle's house and he brought me home, I would lie in the back of his car and as he slowed down at our lane and I would hop out, gently close the door and walk home. I never brought my car home and I stayed indoors when I was there.

The USC Association Lisnaskea Branch is at Maguiresbridge. A few years ago I got elected to the welfare office. I completed a befriending course and I visit people who have been bereaved or lost husbands or sick. We take them on trips or for a meal in Enniskillen and a chat. It means a lot to them and SEFF means a lot to them and the Phoenix as well. A lot of people are not sure if they are getting their claims or entitlements so we help and guide them.

The time I was in Belleek, there was a funny incident at the new line road at the time of road closures. On our side we were detailed out, with 15 policemen, engineers, helicopters and cordons and 200 men. We went up to close the road and who do you think was on the other side - one Garda. So the engineer officer took his map out and said right the border is there and the Garda looked and he said no - it is here, and then the engineer said - no it is there …and this went on…and the Garda must have been in a hurry home for dinner for he said I'll tell you what now – I'll toss you for it.

**Robert Keys, 55, RUC, Protestant was killed in an IRA rocket attack on Belleek police station and army base in 28 November 1972.*
**Prendergast, Sean, 22, British Army was killed by the IRA in a landmine attack near Belleek on 4 April 1977.*

Desmond Wilson

Survivor Desmond Wilson recalls an IRA attack which left him with 105 lead pellet holes in his flesh, and his determination to remain on his border farmland, and serve on the RUC.

Just to think that those three boys stood there waiting on me, to murder me and I walked by them innocently, to put me car into the garage. The viciousness of them to lie there to murder me, they were not waiting there for the good of my health. Only the gun jammed they would have put me down.

I am Desmond William James Wilson of Corsenshin, Newtownbutler. I joined the B Specials at 18 – during that time there was very little trouble up until 1969 when they were disbanded. I then joined the UDR for a short time in Newtownbutler. I served with men like Richie Latimer, shot in his shop and Harry Creighton and Robin Bell.

Then I applied for the RUC because we were a police family, my brothers were on the police and I preferred the police. I was accepted into the part time reserve. During that time I served in Newtownbutler through some very serious times with comrades like John McVitty, Bobby Crilly, and Winston Howe, and men like that who were murdered – all those good men.

I was there the night the thousand pound bomb went off in Newtownbutler - that was a tremendous bomb, that was the night that Ernie Madill was injured.

On 27th November 1984 when coming off duty at my own bungalow on the farm, the IRA ambushed me. I usually worked Saturdays at weekends because that was the time we were valuable and they wanted extra police duties about the area. I parked the car at the front of the bungalow and walked around the back to open the garage door, to put the car in. I closed down the garage door and just as I was locking the wee back door I was ambushed from the top of the oil tank. I was hit on the left hand side with 105 pellet holes in me and 98 in the door.

At that time I was carrying a Walther Pistol but it was on this left side and I could not get it, so I got out of the line of fire, ran down the road and my good wife who died of cancer eight years ago, she rang the police, at Newtownbutler and they came and picked me up down the road in an armoured car. They brought me to Lisnaskea police station where the late Dr Anderson gave me an injection to kill the pain and then I was rushed to Erne Hospital, Enniskillen where I remained for three weeks.

Now when I think back on it, I was guarded at hospital as well of course then when I came out right enough it was just like walking out again into open space again – from the security of the station right into open space again.

The IRA admitted in An Phoblacht that despite the quick reaction of the RUC from NTB, the three volunteers returned safely to base- and they admitted it.

While I was in the hospital, for the first week they did not do anything because of lead poisoning. After a week they operated and took out all the shattered bits of the bone and cut my nerve in my arm I am still marked there. I still have lead in my neck and in my vein and I can still feel it. They said that would do me no harm. I have the pellets from the shooting removed during surgery, I kept them as a souvenir.

I came home anyway and I got a lot of security cover from police guards that time and they gave me a lot of cover on the farm.

It was a very dangerous time and the police put in cameras and lights and obviously they were very keen for me to leave my farm. My father was living at the time and he was a very staunch loyalist and he said we'll try and stay, so we decided to stay. I would not be one of those people who would run away, so I did not run away, I stayed on my farm and I bought land since. It would have been one of the ways of getting me out of my farm land where I lived, that they would possibly would gain my farm.

So I went back to police again but was transferred to Lisnaskea and there I made my way through the thick and thin of Lisnaskea up until the present time, going off on retirement two years ago.

You just had to watch yourself. I was not one to run away or juke behind hedgerows on road stops I went out and stopped the vehicles or whatever I had to do. I carried out my duties to the best of my abilities and have certificates for long service and fairly good praise from the authorities. I lost my wife to cancer there eight years ago which was a bigger blow, and is still a bigger blow than anything I would have come through due to the IRA.

I still have not forgotten what happened to me, because somebody set me up. But living in the community, where I am living, you pass your hand you get on with it and as neighbours you have to get on with it, and help each other. At the end of the day, we were a police family and I am still very loyal to the crown. I did not look for any help or counselling.

No one was brought to justice, but I would have been set up from my own county. It was investigated and no one was got for it.

Margaret Dillon

Many husbands in the security forces were out working long hours in Troubled times. But like so many wives who were the backbone of society, Margaret Dillon from Maguiresbridge stayed at home and looked after the children, and provided support and stability for the family.

My worst memory of the Troubles is, from the early 1970's. I went to Armagh with my Mum she was actually on a walking stick after an operation. I had my two small children with me, Andrew almost four and Karen almost two was in the buggy.

We visited Mum's relatives in Armagh, and we went into a lovely boutique and I was trying clothes on for a forthcoming wedding. I had a rig on from the shop and a police man put his head around the door and said you all have to get out, there is a bomb at the door.

I had to gather my two children up plus my mother on a stick and we had to walk out past the bomb, and I could see the wires and everything it was a wee grey Mini-Clubman – it was so frightening and we just got halfway down the hill when the bomb went off. There was debris everywhere it really was scary. We went down the hill to where my Mum's friend lived practically where the police station is. The lady of the shop said your clothes are up there, but you can just let them go, you can go on home in my clothes, it's okay. I was so shaken I don't even remember driving home. I was never as relieved to get home.

My husband Winston who was in the RUC was stationed in Fermanagh. I met him when he came to Lisnaskea. Things were not so bad then, we married in 1965 and the Troubles started and he was in Lisnaskea for a number of years and then transferred to Newtownbutler. It was just like the wild west.

Winston lost an awful lot of friends and really at night when he was coming home finishing work at midnight, I was sitting at the back window waiting for the car coming down the side of the house and wondering if there was anybody down there just about to fire at him.

Then he went from Newtownbutler to Fivemiletown and things were not much better there. He lost several colleagues there as well.

He was promoted and stationed then at Clogher which again was another border station. My children never really had a life with their Daddy, he was always working. Well he worked when he had to go to work, but when he had a day off we never stayed at home, we always went away up to a Co. Antrim coast or somewhere where no one would have known you – so you let yourself go and enjoy yourself.

Winston was coming home from Newtownbutler in the early morning hours, and in those days you were not allowed to leave your car on the street. When he came home, there was a car outside with wires coming out of it, so he alerted and got his colleagues down and they cleared the street and houses and the bomb went off a couple of hours after that.

You were always nervous and fretting for your children or fretting for your family. Winston was stationed at Newtownbutler when they blew it up and when they shot UDR and police reserve and he knew them all and he would tell you to this day he is lucky that he is still alive. He would have had a lot of near-miss trauma.

I didn't really get any support – in those days just maybe from your parents or your in-laws who would have helped out – but my mum was pretty good.

When they talked about women joining the part time reserve I was one of the first to apply for it and I would have liked to have done my bit. I was talked out of it because I had young children and my husband was already serving.

Then my son joined part-time UDR and that was more stress but he did not stay on it for too long because with is full-time job, it did not suit.

Winston had been at a lot of murder scenes and one that he would talk about to this day would be Robin Bell. He was practically first on the scene and Robin was still alive, yet when they took him away he died in hospital. He stayed with Robin until the ambulance came.

My husband would have turned to me for emotional support. I tried to keep myself, so that he was not worrying about how I was feeling.

When Winston was coming home from NTB he never came the same way home. He would have taken a different road every night and day.

Because we lived in Fermanagh we were closer to the border. We had a lot of bad situations in Maguiresbridge. There were several murdered around and when those situations happened they did put a lot of fear into you.

The only time we could relax was when we went on holidays and felt as though nobody would have known us and we could just do what we wanted to do.

My husband is ten years retired now. Sometimes we have flashbacks and think we are so lucky to have come so far. Even though you are retired you still have to be on your guard all the time.

Heather Johnston

Heather Johnston

Growing up on a farm in the midst of 'bandit country' in the Troubles Heather Johnston witnessed some harrowing terrorist incidents. Having trained as a nurse in Dublin, Heather found love and married a Newtownbutler farmer. She progressed her nursing career at Erne Hospital Enniskillen, but the advent of the Omagh bomb changed her life dramatically.

I actually lived at Ardkirk on the southern part of Cullaville, which everybody in Northern Ireland knows as the 'IRA- bandit country' in Crossmaglen. We were a family of nine and my Dad and Mum lived with us and reared us as a Protestant family in a very difficult period of the troubles. Daddy inherited the home farm and was angry with his brothers and sisters for leaving, because he said as Protestants they would not be put out of their home.

I went everywhere with my dad particularly on the farm, I was an outdoor person loved animals, wherever Daddy was, I was at his heels. I went to Crossmaglen a lot with him on the tractor or the Anglia van which one day had piglets in it and next day we had to wash it out and had our wee seats in it.

My Daddy's motto was - in life it is easy to love the ones you love, but not to love your enemy. He said play them at their own game and a lot of the IRA locals were his neighbours and so called friends, but to live there, we had to have that.

One evening I was with Daddy going up in the van and the machine guns started just before we hit the ramps and the barracks. The army barracks was on the right and the IRA were on the left. There was machine gun battle going on for two and a half hours and we had to lie in the back of the van, we could not go forward or back. Once the firing stopped Daddy reversed and headed the back road home. He was so white and he told me to lie down at the front seat at the pedals, next to him and hold his foot trembling on the pedal, he was so nervous.

Nobody injured. But mentally people were injured – to be quite honest it had an adverse effect on Daddy. I suppose he would have had depression, now when I look back, really I am not surprised.

The first bomb that ever really hit is as children was when two police men were killed in Crossmaglen and it happened on our home farm. Their car was blown to bits in a booby trap bomb. One of the police men was our friend and I remember the tears and hurt in Mum and Dad's face and this is when it hit us, this is really war.

On another occasion I was with Dad on farmland and a stranger came and said to Daddy that on the top field he had seen a stray bullock. Daddy knew the territory but the stranger could not tell him the direction the bullock had steered from. Daddy said if I find it – I'll let you know. Daddy noticed a cattle lorry on the brae above his field. He did think it a bit suspicious. He said, we'll go and get ready for Sunday school. We were only gone, over the hill when apparently the IRA let the back of the trailer down, they had it covered with hay bales and they riddled up a platoon of young British Soldiers, just below our farm. It was horrendous. I suppose the guilt Daddy felt – he had suspected

something. But he could not have done anything because they had it all arranged, he would not have stopped it. I still hate the smell of the blue methyl spirits sprayed over the blood of all the young men who were killed, because they could not wash it off the road – it just stained it.

Then Heather went to study nursing in Dublin.

I achieved nurse of the year in the South of Ireland and I think for a Protestant to have achieved that was a knock on the teeth and they did not like it.

I met a guy from Northern Ireland, Noel, my Husband and at the time I met him in Newbliss – he was thinking about joining UDR but decided not to join.

When we were getting married we booked a hotel in Armagh and we thought it was safe and we put our deposit down. We went to a police sergeant friend and she said not it was not safe to have a wedding in it – because of Noel's and my family being in security forces. We lost our deposit. I remember a couple of my friends could not come to our service in First Castleblaney Presbyterian Church because it was too dangerous.

Later Heather got a nursing job at Erne Hospital in Enniskillen.

The Enniskillen bombing was bad because we nursed victims. It is something I find difficult to talk about. I had a Catholic friend and she said "Heather I feel so embarrassed to be a Catholic and here today". We moved on from that and still had the young fellows and young boy continuing back up and down to the wards for continuous surgery and it was hard, nursing something that you knew should not have happened. The injuries sustained and the fear in their eyes and even in our eyes, and because you were medically trained we were meant to be fit to deal with this.

Having further trained as a paediatric nurse in Belfast, Heather worked on at Erne Hospital Enniskillen and was on duty at the time of the Omagh bomb.

Really, I suppose I ended up a victim of the Omagh bomb. I nursed that whole day because of all the children who came to the Erne Hospital as the Omagh children's ward had closed. The paediatric nurses came back on duty and I worked until midnight. The carnage there was with those children was unreal. Some of us would go to the toilet and vomit at the sight of the burns and the wounds, and I suppose what would be poignant to me would be the two Spanish children, I nursed.

Heather and her husband Noel

One of the Spanish children had already died. Two of them needed to be transferred to Belfast – one to RVH sick children's Hospital to be ventilated and the other to Dundonald Hospital, for plastic surgery.

Whatever happened the anaesthetists decided these children could wait till morning to be transferred by helicopter or ambulance. I was asked would I travel with them and I said I would. I remember getting them on the ambulance and helping and the shock when I realised I was not having a doctor or an anaesthetist with me because none were available - and I was left with these two critically ill children.

The ambulance men were excellent in helping Heather to cope with them. One child was safely delivered to RVH sick children's hospital – to be ventilated. The second child was then being driven to Dundonald Hospital for plastic surgery, when a road collision occurred.

I would always have been a person of faith and I remember I stood up, just at dual carriageway, the Methodist church, the Presbyterian Church is all on the one line and I remember the ambulance man saying to me – "Heather it is not far now". Next thing – I just remember flying through the ambulance and rain on my face and hearing someone saying somebody's neck was broken. Then wakening up on a ventilator. After that – I blurred in and out of consciousness. I was fired right through the Ambulance windscreen.

In our accident there had been a fatality. It was not intentional by no means but you always carry a sense of guilt because that was a father with two young children who died that day. And it was terrible for my family, for Noel. Police came to tell him. He has never really talked about it, but I have through cognitive behavioural therapy. I had post traumatic stress. It is horrendous to suffer and you won't go out in the car unless you take a Valium because you are so jumpy if you see an ambulance the fear of God gets into you. I was shown tactics and how to cope with life outside, how to cope with post traumatic and depression and for example the doctor would have said it was not my fault that we crashed.

Financially it almost bankrupted us, my identity had been lost as a nurse I lost my career following sick leave. I thought they would grant me another year until I rehabilitated better – but I think my confidence had gone.

Then I took a rare disease one in 3 million people take it called TTP - which meant I lost my large bowel, it is an autoimmune disease and it affected four of my organs – heart, brain, and I was on kidney dialysis and I had a bag on for a long time.

In the near future I will have to try to return to work because like all financial compensation, it runs out. But I have no UK nursing registration which I feel sad about – there was no leniency towards allowing me to practice to keep nursing hours up for live registration.

My children suffered in a big way. I would have missed out on them growing up but we were privileged in that we had good child minder. I would have been in and out of hospital following the Omagh incident and the TTP and has left me now that nobody would want to employ me.

Somehow I have come out of it thinking I am alive I have helped other people there is always a way forward I believe.

Heather Johnston

Robert Carson

To this day Robert (Curley) Carson remembers with fondness Ivan Hillen, a UDR colleague and a man whom he knew well and greatly admired. Ivan was shot dead by the IRA on his farm. Significantly, Robert zooms in on the conflict he felt at showing emotion at Ivan's funeral, whist wearing a UDR uniform, due to the perception that big boys don't cry.

Farmer Ivan Hillen was shot in his piggery as he was feeding his pigs. He went down to the farm in his pick up, went into the sheds and when he was feeding them, he was shot dead. This attack happened shortly after I joined the UDR in 1980. I would say it was probably one of the most influencing things in my life because what I saw there was a very innocent man, whom I knew very well. The man that I knew, there was no harm in him, he was always smiling. Ivan was a UDR platoon commander, as well as a farmer. And to think that one day he was taking you out on patrol, and days later he was shot dead.

I felt sadness at what happened and the fact that he never was around afterwards and questioned why he was shot. Him of all people. Why shoot him. It was very sad for him and for his family. Then I remember all the talk about it afterwards, such as you know what happened and questioning how do we stop it happening again and how do we go about solving all these problems.

We in UDR would have done soft target protection in and around his area, but with all the soft target protection, it made me think it was not working. It is obvious there was more to the issue than target protection.

But as soldiers, I can remember the funeral and all the people at it – I saw all the sadness, the crying and as a corporal or a lance corporal they were the ones that would try to keep it together. I suppose it would have looked like a soft spot if you were seen to be standing crying, I thought. But then there were grown up men from other denominations standing at the graveside crying as well – so I suppose really the way it is looked at in the army is that big boys don't cry. The stronger people, they are the shoulder to lean on. They are not going to fall apart – as it were. But there would have been people at that funeral who I would have thought would not have cried, but they were actually seen to be definitely affected by what happened. But then after that we were back to patrols again, back out doing the same job again. Time passed.

Even now, thinking about this project he is in my mind, with his smiling face. I know it happened that long ago, but it has never gone out of my head, and I am just a person who was a soldier along with him. I think what about his wife and family and how they felt. It was a very sad occasion.

The night Roy Weir was shot in Clogher, we were out on patrol in Fivemiletown. Some time near 11:30pm or midnight, we would have normally gone back to Clogher Deanery to get something to eat. This night we decided to get chips in Fivemiletown. Next thing, there was a commotion on the radio about a shooting in Clogher. At this stage we did not know it was Roy. Eventually we were tasked to go to Clogher on back roads.

At Clogher police station special branch briefed us to search or check two houses, to find out who was there or if anybody was in them. We went up the street as a patrol of four with a police man towards this house which overlooks the Deanery.

When we got there, we noticed a car parked up with the engine going, and all the regular soldiers were out. I thought it was strange, but was told its registration checked out okay earlier. I thought it is probably not safe to go in and around it, as it

might blow up. I went on the radio and said this is not cleared, I'm not going past it. Time started to lapse, but we found a way to get over to the house despite the suspicious car. Under foot, there were empty cases, so I knew I was on the firing point.

The attackers had left a stolen car with the engine, at the house we were checking, but had made off with another car belonging to the innocent people who lived there, having tied them up.

The IRA had taken over the house and lay waiting for someone to shoot - and they shot Roy Weir. Roy drove on to a house and nobody would open the door to him. He had to drive back to the Deanery and got medical help from the boys on the gate and a helicopter got him to hospital. But there was these innocent people and they had done absolutely nothing wrong, and had nothing to do with it but they were targeted as well by these gunmen. They were devastated.

Roy Weir survived that attack. He used to teach our children and they loved him to bits. He is now deceased.

I don't remember anybody being got for that incident. I don't think anyone was ever got for the shooting of Ivan Hillen either.

Those are the kinds of things and even to this day you are thinking some one should have been brought to justice for that, soldiers were shot but rarely was anybody ever brought to justice for shooting a soldier.

Thomas Watson

A family history of service encouraged Thomas Watson to join the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) in 1983, he recalls some of his experiences during that time.

During the Troubles, my older brother Robert was a member UDR C company, part time and I joined in 1983 and served right through to 2006, and that is when the so-called peace got rid if us. I come from a background in Security Forces, my father was in C Company 4th Battalion UDR/B Specials before that.

I remember my father coming home from work with the River Services and getting changed and heading away again at 6.30pm – 7.00pm. We would have been in bed when he came home and the next morning, we would be up for school and he would be away back to his civilian job again.

One night in late 1970's Albert Beacom was shot and I remember my father and Mitchell Patterson a neighbour, who came down and Dad had his own gun at home, his SLR. They headed out towards Albert's to where the shooting was, and they didn't come back until late. Then we found out later that Albert had died.

Our other friends who were killed, included Cecil Graham, in 1981, who was always about our house and Jimmy Graham was always at our house too and he died later in 1985. But in school, I was 5th year and I remember Ronnie Graham getting killed in 1981, he was shot, out the Derrylin Road out of Lisnaskea, delivering coal.

So that left you thinking when you were at school – so who are they – the IRA

When I left school I had a job working with Roman Catholics and because my father and brother were in UDR, I got digs about them.

Then when I was 18 in July, 1983, my cousin was killed at Ballygawley – so I said to myself, it is time now. I told my manager that I was joining the UDR, I signed up in October that year and got into full time E Company based at St Angelo camp, Enniskillen.

I did eight weeks training Ballykinler and back to St Angelo and one of the first things officers told you was to keep a low profile - don't actually let them know that you are in the UDR.

On my first patrol was in Derrygonnelly, I was recognised by a member of the public, and my corporal pointed this out to me.

But I remember attending an incident in which Ivan Crawford, RUC, was killed. I was in the sanger in Angelo and heard a bang and I knew it was a bomb - so I buzzed my corporal. With St Angelo so close to Lough Erne, the sound of the blast travelled over the water. We heard on police radio that a bomb had gone off in Enniskillen. We stopped at the Chapel and Cathedral and found the bomb was down in the hollow of the town. Ivan Crawford was still alive when we got there. There were police down with him and it had been a bomb in a bin. Ivan and the other policemen were walking past and the bomb detonated. There was abuse from Roman Catholics coming up from a nearby club, cheering because they got a policeman. It just shows there was much hatred put into people.

After that we did the cordon and found the firing place, was a nearby premises, where the terrorists had lain in wait on a mattress. So that was a really bad time.

We did border closures from Kesh through to Aughnacloy. Some you drew lots for, to watch concrete dry just in case somebody touched it. I remember being at one of Kinawley's border crossing points, where the Army Engineers cleared into the crossing point, then the Garda and the Irish Army were on the other side. They never acknowledged us at all, you could have been standing beside them or a few feet away but they gave a blank look. We were actually meant to be working together. But if you go out to Kinawley now, there is a yellow digger that we spent a long time trying to capture, but they never actually brought it across the border. This is the digger that is viewed as an IRA monument at Kinawley. It is the one that kept the illegal border roads open.

I joined the Ulster Defence Regiment not because I was a Protestant. I joined because I thought I was going to do something for my country and 23 years later I still think I did something. Fermanagh was relatively peaceful from the loyalist paramilitaries, but if I had stopped a loyalist paramilitary on the road – in my view they were no different from a republican paramilitary. A terrorist is a terrorist – no matter who it is.

Well known republicans were also pulled in to road checks at Tullyhommon outside Kesh, giving abuse to the patrol and refusing to provide information on where they were coming from and going to, now you see them sitting in government up in Belfast.

I'm actually back now working with police because there was no work out there for ex members of Security Forces – at the end of the day you are back working with people you worked with all your life.

I have two children, a son aged 12 years and a girl 9. I don't want them growing up the way I grew up in the late 1970s and 80's, the time the hunger strike by the IRA terrorist where all of the Roman Catholics voted a terrorist to be a MP for Fermanagh South Tyrone, that was a very bad time for Fermanagh and Northern Ireland. Maguiresbridge was nice in the early 70's and children from all schools ran about together, but when the republican element moved in, attitudes changed and there was more division. In the early 1970s – everybody ran about together and we respected each other. I was brought up to know there is nobody better than you and nobody worse than you – we are all equal – you get one life – enjoy it.

Noel Johnston

A tragic shooting accident robbed Noel (Hank) Johnston of his policeman father, at the tender age of eight months. Poignantly, this loss led Noel to an army career. Serving during the Northern Ireland Troubles, he experienced the loss of colleagues and people from his community. Love, and courtship in a time of conflict involved border crossings and meetings at army check points.

I was born on August 22nd, 1960 and the Troubles had a major impact on my family life from childhood. I was the only boy in a family of five. My Dad, David Johnston served in the B Specials 1956 until 1961, then joined the RUC. One night in April 1961, while on duty a colleague accidently shot him dead on the bridge at Derrylin on the border, as he returned from checking the area for movement. He was 27 when he died.

Mum was left on her own, as we grew up, the farm dad bought before he died, was sold and we moved to Crom, where our family lived for four generations. My mother worked night and day seven days a week and knitted, she never smoked nor drank and never went out of the house. We were basically left with nothing and a few pounds that Mammy got when Daddy died, and I got £450 compensation when I was 18.

The most significant point for me as a child aged 12 was the murder of Robin Bell in Newtownbutler. The Troubles were always in the media and if anybody came to your house in those days, the main topic of conversation was the Troubles and when you sat round the fire and had a cup of tea. The army lived in Crom in the early 1970's so it was a way of life for us. I joined the regular army in 1976, spent a year with them and joined part-time UDR at 18, served four years and went full time in 1982.

Probably the worst time in the Newtownbutler area for murders was 1978-82. Ritchie Latimer who was in our section, was murdered in June 1980 and I was pallbearer at his funeral. It was very emotional although I was proud to do it.

Victor Morrow, another section member, was shot shortly after that on Clones Road going to work. We were called out and where Victor fell on the road, he still had his lunch box under his arm, he didn't really have much of a chance to take his hands out of his pockets. That was one of our colleagues and friends lying there and we operated a cordon until 2.00am until police relieved us.

It doesn't hit you at the time because you feel actively involved, it is only when you are on your own that it hits home and a crowd of us used to meet for drinks back then, it was a release valve. We got no counselling. We counselled each other - but we did not know it at that time, because we had no one else to talk to about it.

I went full-time in 1982 until 2001. The Enniskillen bomb had a huge impact on us. I was there that day. It was a horrendous sight and you wouldn't like anyone to experience that sight that we suffered and what the people who died and were injured suffered that day. It was the slaughter of the innocents.

When I was full time - we were at Ronald (Ivan) Funstons at Kesh, as the quick response force. Ivan was shot on his tractor, he was feeding cattle and we were in the air in a helicopter going to Belleek and were diverted so we literally missed that incident by minutes. By the time we got there, they were gone, but he was still on the tractor, and we assisted to do what we could, but with family you could imagine the scene that greeted us.

We did it in a professional manner, we were trained to deal with those things and we got on with it and we did the best we could.

When I was part-time UDR and milking in the parlour, police guarded me mornings and evenings from 1978-82. My mother used to sit in the dairy, as an early warning because with the milking noise I would not have heard anything or anybody coming. I would tell Mammy not to come down but she insisted. But it was the fear. It was the unknown. When I was full time on duty I had eight other armed members with me on patrol and it was when off duty you only carried a pistol and the chances of getting to use it were slight.

When I was full time UDR in 1982 I met Amanda, my wife in 1983 at a dance at Laghy, outside Magheraveely. I left her home that night across the border, ironically, I could not have picked a worse place to go courting, on the other side of the border in the Republic in those times.

But I left her home that night and picked her up the following Sunday and I did not visit her house after that for many, many years. While courting, we used to meet at the Killturk checkpoint on the Clones Road and Amanda's Mother used to drive her into the middle of the check point and we had arranged with the army that we would be there and we would change over cars, she would get into my car and away we would go. It is a very unique story and there are not many cases where that happened.

We married in 1987 and were not allowed to get married in Amanda's Church in Clones, nor Crom Church because of the security threat, so we married in Lisnaskea Church. We had three children Ashley, Jamie and Luke and they grew up with me being away 90% of the time on check points and patrols.

The peace process has to be applauded and it is working, I just hope it continues. It is a pity that all those good young men and women died. But that is war and the innocent suffer.

I suppose there was peer pressure to join UDR, and my father was security forces so I wanted to follow in his footsteps. If I had to do it all again, I wouldn't change anything or do anything differently, I would do it all again in the morning. I have no regrets.

Daddy gave his life for his country and I got him a memorial stone through SEFF, two years ago at the Church of Ireland. His name is on USC arboretum memorial in Derby. I was determined he would not be forgotten.

I would definitely class myself as victims but also definitely I would class myself as a survivor.

When I think about friends murdered, and no one was ever apprehended, that is frustrating. I think it is very sad that nobody was caught and that justice has not prevailed.

**Ronald Funston, ex-UDR was killed by IRA on 13 March 1984, near Kesh, Tullyhommom-Pettigo border. He was aged 28, Protestant.*

Eric Glass

Eric Glass survived terrorist attacks on his life in Fermanagh during the Troubles. During one border attack a work colleague was killed and others were injured. Family members were traumatised. In another shoot-out, Eric fought back using his protection weapon, after being lured to an isolated farm house, where he was ambushed near the border. An IRA volunteer was shot dead in the crossfire. Eric served with the B-men for a year, and joined UDR in 1970. Eric lived at Magheraveely, close to the Fermanagh Monaghan border. After his home was fired on in 1972 and the army moved in with him for two months he decided to live in Enniskillen.

> I worked with Fermanagh District Council, and in 1978 I was driving with eight men in the van to work. Between Belcoo and Garrison, terrorists opened fire on the van. One man sitting directly behind me got hit through his chest, it hit a bone in the back of his throat and burst a main artery in his arm and he bled to death. Another man sitting in a wheelbarrow was hit in the hand by a bullet. He lost his arm and hand.

Eric drove a half mile with burst tyres to a shop to call for police help.

> I ran into a nearby shop and grabbed two dish clothes in plastic bags from the shop counter and went to the injured man. He was lying on the floor and I opened his shirt and put the two dish clothes into the massive hole in his chest, where the bullet had come out. The ambulance came and transported him to hospital but he died on route. I was let out of hospital the next morning. I went back to work and they took me into the Town Hall to drive the official car and I did that for two years until I took the dog warden job.

In February 1992, Eric had a phone request from a man, to pick up a sheep dog he wanted put down, as the caller claimed it had bitten his niece on the face. Eric agreed to pick up the dog and took directions, calling home to pick up his lunchbox and his PPW. He put his personal protection weapon on the passenger side of his van and threw his donkey jacket on top of it. When Eric arrived at the isolated farm house near Belleek, two men came to the passenger and driver's side of the vehicle roaring that they were IRA men and for him to get out of the van.

> I whipped up the gun and quickly cocked the weapon and fired three shots out through the passenger door at the fellow that was there and I swung round quickly to the driver's door and saw the other fellow was opening the driver's door, but when he saw the gun, he went to run back and I pushed the door open and he had his gun but he had twine on it and it was hung around his neck and he ran across the front of the house to the far corner, and I jumped out of the van quickly, and lay down at the front wheel, I fired a couple of shots. I don't know what I was firing at in panic. Somebody fired a shot and it burst the front wheel near my head and I decided to take and aim shots because I was wasting ammunition.
>
> There was a fellow at the house and I could see him coming out to try to get a shot at me. I took a nice aim, pressed the trigger, nothing happened. The weapon magazine was empty. I knew I had a magazine in my jacket, I jumped up quickly and ran around the open van door, pulled out the jacket, and the empty magazine fell to the ground. But two men jumped out over a wall and instead of taking an aim shot and shooting me, they ran down with two guns and an automatic and they scattered the stones on the ground in front of me and my legs were getting it. I banged on the magazine quickly and the fellow was only yards away from me - I fired a shot and he let a kind of a squeal out of him and went in by the side of the house and I thought I had hit him. But there was four of them and I could account for all four, you know I mustn't have hit

him, and he was very close to me, I don't know how I missed him, but just at that he ran around the corner and somebody shouted, two, three and four, run for it, they ran and two of them ran towards the van and out over a wall and away at that. I had a radio in the van, and I called work, and I said this is Eric and I'm badly wounded in the legs.

Using a sweeping brush as a crutch, Eric struggled to the house of an elderly man to phone for help from a Belleek police sergeant, who called for helicopter assistance.

I looked down and the trousers were torn and the two bones were sticking out of my leg, I seemed to keel over and I could not move. I was feeling weak, I looked through the window and this fellow was coming back up over the wall again. I remember having the gun in my hand trying to press the trigger but the fight had gone. I thought, if he comes into the house I'll just lie down and let him shoot away at me, because I couldn't even get the trigger to press. But he came up the outside of the van and took the gun from a man lying on the street and went away off down the field. The van suddenly moved a bit down hill with a bursted wheel, just enough so I could see the man lying on the street.

Following an emergency helicopter airlift, Eric spent nine months in a Belfast Hospital. Later he was summonsed as witness to two different Dublin trials of three men caught by Garda in connection with the gun attack. All three men were convicted. Two were handed 12 year sentences and another got 13 years. However The Good Friday Agreement was signed six months later, meaning early release for these prisoners.

The next morning, the authorities were at my house looking at my security because they said one of the men leaving prison in Dublin had talked about unfinished business in Fermanagh.

I was awarded the QGM at Buckingham Palace, as I was a UDR serving member in the 1978 incident. It meant a lot to me. Then for 1992 incident at Belleek, I got a DCM and it was very important because it was a meeting with Her Majesty Queen for only my wife and myself.

Eric met Bishop Eames and Denis Bradley and discussed the difficulty he would have in forgiving those same men, if they said they were genuinely sorry. He is also bothered that some Republicans later elected to Stormont, had attended the funeral of the IRA man shot in the gun attack.

The trauma had an awful effect on my wife and family. My daughter was working in Craigavon and a neighbour told her a dog warden in Fermanagh was shot, not realising who it was, and she said that is my Dad. It had quite an effect on her. My other daughter was at Kesh RUC station and heard the commotion and someone closed her office door so she could not hear what was going on and she had quite a panic. My wife worked in Erne Hospital and when she heard a Mr Burns (Clerk of Fermanagh District Council) wanted to see her, she realised something was desperately wrong. My wife is not that well with nerves and I think that all this came from the build up. I would be terribly restricted in what I watch on television, more so than anything else, anything with blood or hospitals or shooting or anything like that, I would not sleep at night, not even yet.

** The civilian worker shot while travelling to work in the van with Eric Glass on 21 August 1978 was Patrick Fee (64) Catholic*
**The IRA man who died in the attack on February 5th, 1992 was Joseph MacManus, 21, from Sligo.*

Audrey Watson

Growing up as a child of the Troubles, gave a whole generation a new vocabulary, new fears, emotions and anxieties. Audrey Watson shares a child's eye view, with her vivid recollections.

My own earliest memory of the troubles would have been when I was at primary school and one Sunday lunch time, we were sitting around the table and Dad told Mum he was joining the UDR. A friend of his had been killed and he said he was going to do his bit. Sunday lunch was spoiled. I can remember mum was very unhappy and we did not know what was going on as children, we sat there and followed the lead from the grown ups and they were all very anxious, Mum didn't agree but Dad was sure that he was going to sign up.

Well he did join and was in the UDR for all of my school years. I can remember he would have done duty three or four nights a week and we very seldom saw him for he would have slept in the mornings when we were going out to school. Most nights he would come home at about 3.00am. My bedroom window was above where he parked the car. He would get out of the car and start whistling and I always remember I would lie there and hold my breath until the whistling stopped because I knew then that he was inside the back door. I would hear the key turning in the door and knew then that was him in safe for another night. He probably doesn't know that I heard any of that.

The house was always full of soldiers getting a cup of tea or young soldiers away from home. Towards the end of primary school years, a soldier was shot near our house. The house was full of army and police as a sort of a command centre for the murder investigation. But from a child's perspective, I was annoyed we could not get to our bible meeting and my social life had been stopped.

For years Dad had to work even if we had a dentist or a doctor's appointment to get to. A phone call would come to the school, advising us to come on ahead home on the bus, your dad has been called out to an incident. He was a farmer, so he would have downed farm tools, put his uniform on and disappeared. I never knew when he was going to come back, or if he was coming back at the time.

I ended up then for some strange reason marrying into the same thing, going out with my husband to be, Trevor Watson, who was in UDR full time. He had just passed out and become a soldier when I first met him. His brother had been shot but thankfully not killed. We always had to be careful about where we went. He always carried a gun. I was always petrified of somebody seeing it. I was always trying to cover it up. I remember going to a barn dance and he told me there were people at the dance who he was looking for in his job. I was scared they would recognise him and something would happen. But we all got through it and thankfully no one close to us lost their lives. But there was a lot of friends and a few members of family did.

Mum was a single parent for most of her life because my Dad was working so many nights. She did all the home work with us, all cooking and she looked after the farm. She kept everything going, kept everything together.

I might have seen Dad in the evening for an hour or so or I might not. Every other child's parents I remember brought them home from school or met them off the bus but Dad never did. He never made that routine, we never went to Brownies or cubs and never regularly went to any associations because Dad would never set up a pattern. To go into church every day at the same time, Dad thought was a risk too big to take, even though he was a deeply religious man. He would vary his route,

or make us late, which I hated because I love being on time. He would get us in very early and not stay, he would drop us off and come back for us. I remember after the Darkly murders where the people were murdered in the church in Armagh, church doors were locked and we always were so used to having church doors open. Any wind or heavy rain that rattled the front door, you could just see everybody freezing in the church and just looking round at each other as if to say, what was that ? Also it didn't help that church was beside the police station so any loud noises or lorries rumbling past you were asking, is that a bomb, is that something going on outside, will we get home today, will Dad be there, will he get called out somewhere?

After I married into that lifestyle it was the same thing. I could have anything organised, family parties, or an outing and at the last minute my husband would get a call to say, you are needed at work. Eventually after our first child was born, I said I did not get married to be a single parent, and I don't want my children to not know their father. So we discussed it long and hard. With long conversations we eventually decided money wasn't everything, and that family life and peace was a lot better than the money that he was going to earn, so he left and our second child was born after that, so she never really saw her Dad in uniform or knew anything about it, only what we have told her.

Unfortunately things have picked up again and the threats have started again recently. I was horrified a couple of months ago when my husband stopped the children from getting into the car before he gave them a lift to the school bus. I explained, Dad was checking for bombs under his car and they had to wait in the house. And it took me back 30 odd years to what we had gone through. I thought please God don't let another generation have to go through this, because it's just not fair. We were enjoying the times we had, freedom, we would go many places – we were always cautious I suppose, it was a life long habit, but children were able to mix with everyone. When we were young we didn't mix with other religions we just stayed within your own group, because we were never sure who you could trust.

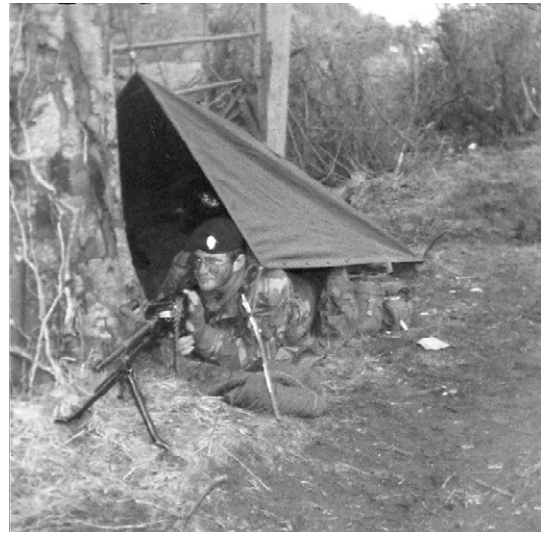
Trevor Watson

The phone rings. There is bad news. Trevor Watson recalls the day his brother was shot, and the trepidation he experienced with family members, fears about his brother's survival and what the future held.

My brother was a part-time soldier in the UDR and was shot on 12 January 1985, I was 18 years old at the time. He was visiting his girlfriend's home, outside Lisnaskea on his way home from work. His girlfriend's father and uncle had been shot dead some years before that due to them being in the UDR. Another uncle, also in the UDR, was to be shot dead shortly after my brother's shooting.

Standing outside our house in Maguiresbridge, three miles away, we heard shots around 6.00pm. Within minutes the house phone rang. It was someone from the scene calling to say he had been shot getting out of his car.

It was harrowing driving to that house. I went with my father, also a UDR member, we stopped short of the house, saw flashing lights of police cars and my father said that he didn't want to go there, he knew what it is going to be like for he had been to too many like it. But, he plucked up courage and said he had to see it, no matter what, and we went on to the house, just before the ambulance arrived.



Soldier Trevor Watson in action

In the house my brother was lying on the kitchen floor and the blood was running out of him. Police were administering first aid to him, but we saw that he was alive, he was moving, but he was in a fairly bad way. He was shipped off to Musgrave Park Hospital and was there for over three weeks. When I visited him in hospital I could smell the burning flesh from the gunshot wounds and I could smell the gunfire because the wounds had to be left open for air to get at them. Fermanagh was taking a severe hit from the IRA at that time. My brother got out of hospital early February 1985, but that day, another uncle of his girlfriend's was shot at Derrylin. Eventually my brother was medically discharged from the UDR.

Before my brother's attack, I had already decided to join the UDR and was due to sign up in February 1985, which I went ahead with. Today, I am an ex UDR/ RIR member, I served just over 13 years until I left in April 1998.

I signed on to the UDR at St Angelo, the Headquarters for the 4th Battalion UDR, as planned, but by doing that I was a target at all times. The way terrorists worked back then was to pick on certain families, whether that was part of their ethnic cleansing strategy or whatever I don't know.

My whole family had worked on the UDR, including my father, who started out as a B Special. Originally from the Castlederg area, my father moved to Fermanagh and worked on Colebrooke Estate under the then, Lord Brookeborough until he died in early 1970's, after that my father moved with his family to Maguiresbridge.

I remember the day Cecil Graham was shot in 1981, we were great friends. When I was still at school, I helped out at busy times on different farms doing various jobs including helping with calving, working with Cecil Graham and other local men. I was on a week's work experience on a farm when Cecil was shot at Donagh, I remember Dad lifting me from the farm and telling me that Cecil had been shot. He survived a few days in hospital but eventually died of his wounds. I went to his funeral and I can still hear the piper playing in the graveyard, he got a full military funeral in Christ Church, Maguiresbridge, I have to walk past his grave ever Sunday that I go to church.

A UDR platoon colleague John Earley was killed in a bomb explosion on a foot patrol outside Belcoo in February 1986. I had just came in off patrol in that same area that morning.

The way they worked it was, you just got on with it, the section was called in the very next day so they could do their duty and get time off for the funeral. It was a very traumatic time because I think John was the only person killed in action while on active service in this area on the UDR at that particular time. I remember the chapel in Lisnaskea was half filled with UDR E Company for the funeral and it was hard to bear. For a lot of people, myself included, it was the first time they had been in a chapel. John Earley was one of the few Catholics in E Company back then. I do not remember the priest mentioning that John was blown up or killed or murdered, I was very disappointed by that.

With all the different incidents that happened, the time you talked was always with your section and men you worked with, often in the dead of night when you were on stag in the sanger. To talk to people who understood and were thinking the exact same things as you were actually helped.

While serving, we went to various camps for training on mainland UK. In the beginning camps were designed to help take the pressure off and to give people serving in Northern Ireland a break, eventually there was more soldiering done at camp. We also got the odd chance to train overseas. On one particular trip to Belize, Central America, I got more than I bargained for. Unknown to me, a fly had laid eggs on my head when I was there, after I got home, it was so cold that the eggs buried into my head for heat. I only found this out when I went to the Army Doctor with a severe pain in my head. Luckily for me, he had served in Central America and knew exactly what the problem was, he slit my head open there and then and removed the eggs from deep inside my head. All that's left now is the scar!

I got married in 1992 while still serving in the UDR. I married the daughter of UDR man who lived near the border. This helped in a way as there was that understanding that you always had to be careful, you were not allowed to cross the border, nor set up patterns. You always had to check under your car and take your pistol with you at all times.

We had our first child in 1995. At that stage the Northern Ireland situation had broken down again, there had been a bit of peace and normality but not for long, troubled times returned with a vengeance. I had to go on duty to police stations and check points and that meant going away a full week or ten days at a time and my wife was at home and would have struggled. She was holding down a job and looking after the children when I was away. Many times we would have been planning to go somewhere but I would have got a phone call to go in for extra duties and everything was put on hold and all that was said was - all is fair in love and war!

I put in my resignation from the UDR in 1997, left 1998, and became a lorry driver. Roads were open then on the border. I remember going across the border for the first time after I had left the UDR and it was like driving through a glass wall and I thought to myself – it looks the same on this side of the border. I was always looking over my shoulder the first five to six times I went across but then everything relaxed and got became more normal. I remember the first time I crossed the border

I was amazed that it was the same colour of grass! To this day, driving down many of the roads, I still look at places where I lay behind a ditch or in a forest in the UDR on the Fermanagh side of the border, you never forget.

On the issue of support from the UDR authorities, I don't think there was any support or any kind of counselling in those days, it never was mentioned. The time my brother was shot there was a vehicle supplied to the family and a driver to bring them up to hospital – there was the likes of that support available, but for mental support, it was a case of getting on with it.

There was a fantastic sense of relief that day I resigned. Pressure was building up and nobody would have ever talked me out of handing in my notice. I just felt pure relief. I think it was one of the better ways to come out of the job because I knew it was my decision and I was not going back.

Kenneth Dunlop

Serving as a UDR soldier living on the border with the Republic of Ireland, presented many unsavoury challenges for Kenneth Dunlop, during the Troubles. He recalls an IRA raid on his family home on Mullaghfad Road, near Cooneen Cross.

I joined the UDR January 16, 1972 with my brother Noel, because there were people along the border losing their lives and being put out of their homes.

We had been in the UDR six months when our house was attacked. A car load of provos came into the house demanding our two SLR guns. There was a ceasefire and they probably thought, the guns would be sitting in a corner. But we had been trained to dismantle the weapon, hide the parts, we were trained to build that weapon in the dark. They found only a helmet and uniforms and went away empty handed.

On November 16th, 1972 we were going to the opening of Coleshill new army barracks and the weapons were ready in parts but not loaded. We were due to leave at 7.15pm. Mother said to me before you go, put antifreeze in that car because there is going to be a hard frost. I drove to the shop for anti freeze and coming back up our short lane of 50m to the house, my father stopped me and said don't go any further the house is surrounded by IRA men and he said go and get help.

I reversed back down the lane to a neighbour's and phoned the authorities to say the house was under attack. At Cooneen Cross I borrowed a weapon from a UDR man and headed to the house because my weapon was still at home unloaded.

When I went to the house my brother was already outside and told me there was a 200lbs creamery can bomb at the back window.

Back to the Cross I met a policeman from Clogher and explained the situation to him. We went to the house, I showed him where the bomb was. As I reversed back down the lane I swung the lights of the car round and there was, an M1 Carbine gun lying there. My brother had seen a fellow getting out of the car and lifting the creamery can out – he ran and got his gun, built her up in the dark and when he saw the fellow striking the fuse, he opened fire on him. He injured the man through the jaw and he ran and dropped all.

My brother hit the fellow and he did not hit the bomb and was lucky enough because if he had hit the bomb he could have set the whole thing off. Those ten men who had the house surrounded also dropped two blast bombs in the front of the house.

Police and army came. Next day we were due to go to a 2.00pm wedding, a neighbour was getting married. We could not get into the house to get our suits because of the 200 lbs bomb. It was around 2.00pm when the army did a controlled explosion on the creamery can bomb and they tipped the barrel over in case it was booby trapped and defused it.

We rushed into the house, got the suits on and walked in to the middle of the wedding sermon and went on to the wedding that day.

A controlled explosion blew out all the windows and ceilings, so we could not go back to the house. We never claimed for

anything, we bought our own glass and plasterboard and supplies and did our own work. In those times you did not claim, you tried to get into your house quickly. We lived in caravans at a neighbour's house for a month and got the house back to square one. We were advised to move away by clergymen and others. We were offered different houses but, as my father and all the family were there, father said this is my home, we will protect it while we are here. We would not move out and did not move out.

Because the wedding was on, there had to be poteen for the wedding. Mullaghafad was a typical place for making it and one fellow was in that area to pick some up, an hour before the raid and saw the suspected raiders getting Dutch courage drinking poteen. They were all local men and the car that was used and left at the back of our house was there, so we were fit to know who was involved.

All those suspected of involvement seemed to have short lives or did not have such great lives, and have since passed away, according to Kenneth. He also believes those who watched his house lived in the area.

We were targeted because we were on the front line and they wanted to cleanse us out of that area. Where we were living, and up to the border there would have been very few Protestants.

My father and mother would have been fairly staunch and would have had no fear although there would have been more fear for us because they knew the danger we were in, but they did fear they were going to lose their two sons. My father would have done a lot for us, before we went out mornings he checked ditches and the lane and he would have done a patrol, while casually looking at cattle. When he was coming up the lane again he would have given us a signal and we would have moved out.

The worst thing about that night of the raid was that we had my aunt and two children visiting been as my uncle was training at Clogher. There could have been two families wiped out. I think it is all down to my father's quick action. He was standing in the darkness outside the house, and at that time we had no telephone and no electricity. He saw the guys coming and surrounding the house. It was the lights of the car coming up the lane and with him shouting and my brother shooting they hadn't a clue what was happening, so they aborted the whole mission and that saved our lives.

My brother Noel, got made a BEM for firing the gun and making noise and hitting an attacker and saving every life. There would have been a short bomb fuse with a short time to get out of the house. It would have been demolished. If we had gone out of the house they were going to shoot us. If we refused to go out of house, they were going to fire blast bombs into the house and kill us anyway. Their main objective was to kill everyone in that house - mass murder that was it.

Thomas Forster

A burst of shots ringing out over his car in the early hours of the morning en route to work, left Thomas (Tommy) Forster in a state of high alert. He was a farming border dweller, serving in the UDR in dangerous times. The harrowing scenes of utter grief he witnessed after the murder of a friend Harry Creighton have never left him.

I used to live in Magheraveely near Newtownbutler in Fermanagh close to the border. Standing down fro the B Specials, I joined the UDR and served four years. I lost a good friend of mine, Lance Corporal Harry Creighton. Harry worked with me on patrols through Newtownbutler. He lived at Magheraveely close to the border. Word came through to the barrack the IRA had fired on him and shot him so the ambulance was called and Dr Anderson was called to go out. But he did not know where Harry lived and rushed to the barracks and asked me to come with him to his house.

I will never forget the sight we saw that night. His poor father and mother were holding on to him at the back yard and he lay bleeding. I had to pull them away from their son, so the doctor could see to him. It is something you would never forget and I never thought I would witness the like of it for a small village like Magheraveely. He was killed in August 1972.

After four years part time I joined full time UDR, stationed at Lisnaskea, with C Company. I was doing guard duties at Lisnaskea, St Angelo and Coleshill and patrols. One morning I was going to do patrols at St Angelo. I was going through Donagh at 5:30am to get to St Angelo for 6.00am. As I drove out, at that time of the morning I knew there would not be much traffic. I decided to turn off my lights and drove on at high speed. And as I reached the main road at Donagh, a burst of shots went off. I think there was about six shots, and one person jumped out in my way, he didn't stop me, I was going too hard for him, so I drove on, I didn't care whether I hit him or not. But anyhow I got away. I drove as fast as I could and I reported in to my superior officers at St Angelo. They asked me if the car was hit and they asked me and how I knew that it was the IRA, and I said I did not know as I did not stop to ask. It was rather cheeky of me I suppose, but anyway I was not hit.

Coming home from eight hours patrol duty I was asked to make a report at Lisnaskea police station. Police said they had enquired around Donagh, but no body heard any shots. However I had a Roman Catholic neighbour whom I knew very well and he told me that he heard shots coming from Donagh area, last night I wondered what they were shooting at. I didn't say it was me, or anything else. Obviously the people living close to Donagh didn't hear anything, but a man living less than a quarter of a mile away did hear it.

The amount of times that I know I have escaped but I do believe neighbours or some one must have kept us right.

One night in Newtownbutler we were doing a check-point and a bomb went off an in old railway station and another at the bridge. A police patrol leaving RUC station was blown up, thank God no one was hurt. That night we did not know what road to take home. We hung around until day light. I went home, my wife was there with our four small children and she didn't know what was going on, there were not many phones in 1972. The women at home with children did not know what was going on when we were on the streets or in the country, we knew what was talking place, but I always felt the women had suffered a lot because they had to wait till we came home or to see if we would come home.

I couldn't take the kids to school because I had to check the car and I would not take the chance of anything happening.

One morning I came home from duty and the wife had started the cow's milking machine and I saw a car reversing into my

avenue and drove out quickly, and it was McElwaine the leading provo driving the car. I had my rifle. I jumped into the car and dove after them. I gave chase towards Donagh but they got away.

I realised later an undercover army outfit had been lying in watch and they chastised me. They said you could have been shot yourself as well as them. I could have been shot by friendly fire. Thank God I wasn't.

One morning as my wife was working in the milking parlour just prior to me coming home off duty, she looked around and saw a man in the doorway, she screamed, as she was fearful. It was someone innocently looking for directions. Sadly, three days later in 1985, she suffered a miscarriage of our baby boy.

One day my wife and I were driving past Carrick gate to go to Lisnaskea to shop and we heard a shot and something hit the windscreen. My wife asked "Was that a shot?" and I said "yes". I learned three years later I was fired at, as a bullet ricocheted off the windscreen and hit the wall of a house at that spot.

I was medically discharged from UDR in 1986.

We would often wonder what we did it for when you see the gentlemen now in the Assembly and Parliament. If I had to live life over I would do it all again because I would feel I would have to. I feel my comrades would join again, yes. It certainly was not for the money, we spent a lot of hard cold nights on duty. But we got through thank God.

Scariest moment part-time was when you came home in the dark of night and you put your key in the door to open it, if you had a rifle in one hand, and the other hand was opening the door, it was no good to you, those moments were very frightening, getting through the door, locking it and getting behind the wall fast in case somebody fired through the wall.

These are other incidents I recall from those Troubled times:

24.12.1976 – Desmond Rickey, Lisnarick, Newtownbutler injured in booby trap explosion.

13.11.1976 – Claymore mine found by army at Donagh, Newtownbutler.

6.11.1976 – Army Ferrett armoured car blown up in Claymore mine attack.

29.8.1976 – Claymore mine found by army at Lettergreen, Newtownbutler.

8.1.1977 – ATO killed at Clogher, Newtownbutler whilst defusing a bomb.

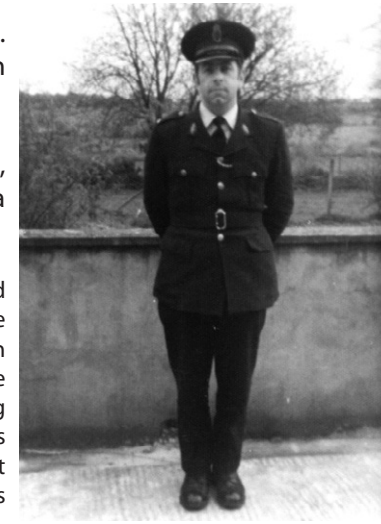
13.3.1977 – RUC mobile patrol ambushed by gunmen at Ballagh, Magheraveely. One RUC Constable killed in ambush.

21.1.1978 – RUC patrol ambushed when Claymore mine was detonated in the town land of Edergole, Newtownbutler.

11.6.1978 – Military patrol ambushed at Conaroo, Newtownbutler by a Claymore mine.

Harriett Kirkpatrick

A deadly IRA landmine attack claimed the life of policeman Winston Howe. Looking back, his widow Harriett recalls this tragic loss and the trauma which followed.



Winston Howe

Harriett Kirkpatrick (Howe), fondly remembers her first husband Winston Howe, as a quiet, sincere, steady and loyal man who loved to play a trick on her or a joke.

I met Winston and he was an auxiliary policeman (police reserve). We married and had two boys. In the early 1970's two local men were murdered and in the late 1970's the violence increased. It was difficult. We were on the farm and I was working and Winston was doing guard duty in Rosslea police station and I always felt he was safe while in the station but travelling in and out was always going to be his problem. I did the farming when he was on duty and when he was at home we always did it together. I was always first out through the back door or any door just to protect him. We did a lot of movement about the farm yard in the dark. We did not put on lights because we felt that this highlighted you.

I will never forget the night that neighbour Johnny Kelly was attacked. He was a policeman as well. We were milking cows and he lived quite close to us. When we heard that, Winston had to go immediately to Johnny's house and I went with him. The Kellys left the area and we stayed, carrying on with the farming. But the next hurdle was when Herbie Kernaghan was murdered on October 15, 1979. I was working in the school that day and I was the last person to see Herbie alive and Winston was on duty that day and he was sent to the scene and he was the first person to see Herbie dead. That really had a huge impact on Winston. He changed after that. He tried to carry on as normal but that was all over the winter months from October until February 11, 1980 when Winston was murdered.

It was a beautiful morning, the sun was shining. He had gone on duty at 8.00am. That day I worked in the school kitchen, as our boys were at school and we had lunch and every thing was going as normal until Canon Kille arrived into school about 1:50pm and I thought when I saw him, something had happened, he was so pale and stressed looking and he said: Harriett - I have bad news for you.

Winston died in an IRA landmine explosion near Rosslea and another police man was killed with him.

I never cried for 11 weeks and it was June before it really hit me. The next hurdle was the six month period and landmarks, which were difficult. It came around to Herbie's memorial in October and Christmas was very lonely. I contacted UDR and police widows and Sylvia Kernaghan, Herbie's widow and I became great friends. I went back to work eventually. I found money really difficult because when Winston was living we didn't have money and after he was murdered I did have money, but I didn't have Winston. I suppose in some respects you were lonely but the stress of the whole thing had left you. That was a real mountain that had gone, because on reflection you never knew when you went out to the farm whether the IRA was watching you or whether there was security forces around the house protecting you.

We had thought about moving from the border at the time of other murders and attacks, but the question was where do you move to? There was the farm and cattle, so what do you do - get up and run - no. Winston was determined to stay. He had grown up on the farm, it was his home place. Keith our eldest son is there now. He is very happy there and he is married now and that is his home.

When Winston died Keith was nine and Leslie was seven. Keith coped better, he was older and took to the farming and Leslie talked less about his father. We tried to carry on and maybe did not talk enough about it. Sometimes you don't know how to deal with these things.

I found great healing at the time of the Omagh bomb and I say that shamefully because somebody else's suffering helped me get rid of some of my built up stress, tension, suffering or all those emotions you suppress. If people cried on television I cried along with them, in a strange sense it was some of my counselling.

I'm happily married now and I have moved into a new life, yet still, I can cry so easily if the subject is opened up, it's still so fresh. I really feel for people when it happens to others because I can understand the situation they have been thrown into.

You can't change the past. The thing that hurts most is terrorists being in Government and the fact that terrorists are trying to be equal to the victims which is very hurtful.

** Winston Howe aged 35 years and Joseph Rose aged 21, both Protestant, both died February 11, 1980 in IRA land mine attack on RUC patrol, Lisnaskea Road, near Rosslea.*

Ian Wiggins

Serving as a police officer with the RUC in the area of South Fermanagh during the troubles, brought Ian many shocking and challenging experiences, including six attempts on his life by Republican terrorists.

Suddenly I heard a shot. It was January 24th, 1994. My wife who was a civil servant and a former member of the part-time RUC Reserve, were driving home from work to have tea round 5.00pm. As I drove into the laneway to our home suddenly I heard a shot. My wife said that was a shot. I immediately selected a lower gear and accelerated up the avenue to our home. I then heard a serious of shots and could hear the car being struck by the gunfire which sounded like being hit by hail stones. I later discovered the car had been hit six times on the left passenger's side where my wife was sitting.

I drove up to the garage door and gunfire continued. At this point I could go no further. I looked towards the gate over my left shoulder, which was about 60 yards away, and observed a hooded gunman wearing a combat jacket and blue jeans. He kept on shooting at the car.

I immediately told my wife to get down in the car; I jumped out and ran to the rear of the vehicle, to draw the shooting away from my wife. I drew my revolver and opened fire on the terrorist. There were only six rounds in my gun, so I fired three and kept three rounds. The gunman immediately ran off towards the road. I ran after him through the gate where there lay quite a few empty shotgun shells on the ground. I then knew what type of firearm I was up against when I saw the empty shells and that there may well be other gunmen. The terrorist made his way down the Crom Road, where he disappeared into a small plantation. Realisation struck me that help was needed and by the time I got back my wife was on the phone reporting the incident. I spoke with the officer and requested a tracker dog to search the area for the gunman, whom my wife saw running across the fields towards Lisnaskea. Shortly after the dog handler arrived and the dog immediately picked up the scent and tracked him to a house 400 yards away, where three men, one with a serious hand injury where discovered. It was later revealed, the gunman was the man with the injured hand, caused while trying to destroy the soles of his military boots with a carving knife that slipped. He did this so he wouldn't be traced by his footprints. All three were arrested, but later two were released without charge. The third was retained in custody but refused to admit his part in the shooting. Despite intensive searching the firearm was not found immediately after the shooting. But three days later a woman police officer found it in a deep stream search.

When the gunman was shown the weapon he admitted his part in the attempted murder of my wife and I, and he was later convicted to 15 years imprisonment. Subsequently he was released after five years, under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement.

I joined the RUC during 1967 during peaceful times. I was stationed in Clogher, Co Tyrone for a number of years then transferred to Lisnaskea traffic branch in 1970. As a result too of increased terrorist activity traffic Branch was stood down and I was transferred to Newtownbutler. With the increased terrorist activity the Army was moved to Lisnaskea RUC station and it was against this background that the first attempt was made on my life.

On Sunday June 11 1972 a colleague and I, Constable Victor Buchanan, went to investigate terrorist activity. We were in an upstairs room of the building when my colleague triggered a booby trap bomb. I remember being blown across the room and hitting the wall. The pressure of the explosion on my body was so horrendous that I thought I was going to implode, but when the pressure receded I found I could still move my limbs. When I got to my feet the room was filled with white smoke.

I called to my colleague, but could not hear my own voice. When the dust slowly cleared I saw Victor's arm being raised in the rubble. When I went to help I realised that he had sustained horrific injuries to the side of his face; his eyebrow was near the bottom of his chin and a gaping wound where his eye should be. As my hearing was still affected from the blast I could not hear if Victor spoke or not. I pulled him from the rubble and his Sterling sub machine gun, which now had a bent metal butt due to the force of the blast. I tried to go through a small window into another room but could not. Fearing Victor had broken ribs I lay him on the floor and I ran three quarters a mile to my car then to a local farmers to use his telephone, but he did not have one, so I had to go to another farm to report the incident to Newtownbulter Station and for them to send an ambulance. I returned immediately to the scene where Victor was coming round, so I got him out of the building into the car. I was going to bandage his head but as the blood was congealing I left it alone.

Very quickly Police and Army arrived followed shortly by the ambulance, removing Victor to the Erne Hospital in Enniskillen. But his condition was so bad he was taken by Army helicopter the Ulster hospital in Dundonald, where he was placed in Intensive Care unit.

I was kept updated on his condition, but only his parents and his girlfriend where allowed to visit. On the Wednesday of that week I received an urgent call from the hospital to come as soon as possible. Although Victor was in a serious condition he was conscious, and as I was not allowed to visit, Victor thought I had died in the blast, so he needed the reassurance of seeing me to help with his recovery. Up to the moment my wife and I arrived into the ward, Victor had not realised I survived the bomb as he had no recollection of the event after the bomb went off. I gave him the full account of what happened even to when I was going to bandage his head. When I next visited Victor he had told me he had told the doctor about the incident, and the doctor said it was a good job I didn't bandaged him as there was as a fine piece of wood in the eye which could have penetrated his brain. It was a frightening thought, which I have never forgotten.

As a result of this ordeal I was advised to go and see my doctor, who put me on sick leave for four weeks to help me recover from the shock and trauma. I resumed work against my doctors wishes on the 11th July 1972 at 4.00pm. We were detailed to pay particular attention to Newtownbutler and prevent Republicans from removing bunting and union flags which were erected for the Twelfth of July celebrations.

Because of the high treat level from the Provisional IRA, I was not allowed to drive my own car from work, so arrangements were made for the Lisnaskea patrol to lift me at 2.00am when I finished work. We came across a herd of cattle on the route back, and rather than have an accident the Sergeant in charge felt it better that we herd the cattle together and put them back into the field. Once the four of us where back in the Land Rover and as we drove off towards Lisnaskea, I seen large blue balls of flame erupt in front of the vehicle. Again I was involved in another explosion in the form of a landmine this time. The vehicle was showered with stones, clay and other debris. The shockwaves from the explosion were enough to lift the Land Rover up on two wheels, but the driver, a former Irish Guard gallantly struggled to keep us on the road. I felt certain we were going to crash into the hedge, but the vehicle finally dropped onto all four wheels again. Suddenly a car drove out of a laneway ahead and headed towards Lisnaskea at high speed. We automatically assumed this vehicle had something to do with the ambush so we gave chase and informed Lisnaskea Police station accordingly. We kept up pursuit to Lisbellaw where a UDR patrol stopped the car on Main St. We all felt it was our lucky night and at last we were about to capture some terrorists. When I got out of the Land Rover I observed two young people in the car, a female and a male. Right away I knew there was something not quite right about them. They were well dressed and didn't look like terrorists. We later discovered they were an innocent courting couple who had chosen the wrong place to park. I am guessing they didn't forget that night. The next morning I was back on duty but was advised to go on sick leave again. I refused, although I was still shaken after the incident I remained on duty.

At approximately 1.15am on 27th August 1972 a report was received from a part time member on the UDR that shots had been fired at his home. He returned fire and put up flares. The following morning I reported to duty in Newtownbutler RUC station. I met the newly promote Sergeant from Co Down. He had no experience of policing in the border and asked me to accompany him to the home of the UDR man involved. A total of ten rounds had struck his property and we were able to establish that the gunfire had come from high ground, approx 500 yards away, which was only a short distance from the border of the Irish Republic. The young Sergeant who had very little knowledge of the IRA campaign on the border, suggested to me that we should try and find where the terrorists had fired the shots from, with a view to gathering the fired cases for forensic examination. I advised him this would be unwise as it may be a trap to lure us there for another booby trap. It was advisable I told him for the Army to come and check the area instead. He accepted my advice. Subsequently the following day the Army searched the area and they found nothing. Late afternoon the following evening a heavy explosion was heard in the area where the shooting had occurred. I accompanied other police to the scene and found a large crater at the entrance to a field. Very quickly we established that someone had been blown to pieces by what appeared to be a booby trap bomb. I found the remains of a black and white collie dog at the scene. At this stage we did not know who the person was as there was no identifiable objects remaining apart from the dog. At this point I suspected that it was William Trotter as I had often had seen him about the village with the black and white sheep dog. We later confirmed that my suspicions were correct and it was William Trotter. I assisted other police officers at the scene with the recovery of the remains of the deceased. Had I not intervened and spoken to the young Sergeant who listened to my advice that Sunday morning, there was every possibility that I or some other member of the RUC would have been killed. That was the terrorists intention obviously because we found where they had fired the shots at the UDR man's home which was about 50 yards from where the booby trap bomb had exploded.

Roy Kells

To this day Roy Kells can still feel the heat of the bullet which grazed his head, after he was shot by an IRA gunman. Roy's memory of that incident is so powerful; it enabled him to recall the experience which sparked a fight reaction.

I was working in our shop window in Lisnaskea, and it was 5:25pm I remember well that particular date February 25th 1981. I was standing looking out the window with two other assistants. One was putting a light bulb in at my right hand side. Looking out on Lisnaskea Main Street I heard bang, bang, and I looked to my right and saw this gunman standing four feet away from me. I just looked into his eyes and he looked into mine and the gun was pointing straight at me and he fired another shot and it just grazed my head – I can literally feel the heat of it, even yet. It just tracked my hair on the left hand side and I fell to the ground and he fired two more shots over my head. This man was reputed to be IRA man Seamus McElwaine and he never let anybody live and all he had to take was three steps and finish me off in the window, but by the grace of God thankfully he didn't. He ran into a neighbour's house and a UDR man was up the street, heard the shooting and threw me a revolver and said he is away into a neighbouring house and I chased him and searched but there was no body. There were five customers in the premises four Roman Catholics and one Protestant and I asked where did he go and the Protestant said, he went up that way there and the other four said they didn't see any thing. So I went up and he wasn't there. It was a very fortunate escape and I thank God, it was only for the mercy of God that I was allowed to live, because the same gentleman never allowed anyone to live before, because he finished off several other of my former comrades.

Whenever he had fired the shots and I was lying in the ground I saw him opening his coat and putting gun inside his coat – just like that, and running.

I can still literally feel the heat of that bullet, I will never forget it I, the blood was still running out of me, it was in the Main Street. There was no impact on me, nothing at all, because there was a fellow who worked two doors up, gave me his revolver, and I got chasing after this client and it took it out of my system.

After I attended the funeral of one of the first UDR men shot in Fermanagh, I decided to join the regiment. Frank Veitch was killed in 1971 at Kinawley RUC station and I went to the funeral with friends and I decided that day to join UDR. I said to Albert Liddle a commander at that time, I'll join for 18 months, and Albert said Roy it will not even last that long. I was on UDR 22 years after that and I did my first patrol in 1971. There was more murders in 1972 than at any other time throughout the whole troubles. Our shop was burned on November 3rd, 1973 and only the four walls were left standing. I went to Sandhurst in 1974 on a commission and then was in Lisnaskea platoon. During 1976 we had another bomb and the shop was blown up by a duffle bomb and completely wrecked.

One night there was a bomb at Norman Lee's filling station at Newtownbutler Road and I went out and was told there was a bomb at the back of my shop.

I went to check the back of the shop and could not find any bomb. I hopped into my car, came down Bank Brae and a bomb went off in Joy's boutique in Lisnaskea. Debris and smoke went out over my head and a group of people standing down at the Northern Bank, I was told later, said that is the end of poor old Kells. But I reversed the car and they couldn't believe when I drove out of that bomb. About three months later I wakened up one night and I was shaking. I wasn't injured or anything but the whole debris went out over my head into the market yard. It was just delayed shock after the explosion, whereas with the shooting incident I had got it out of my system by taking action.

In the late 1970's I was at the high school fitting curtains up a ladder and I got down and walked to the UDR centre. At that time shots were fired and nobody knew where they had come from. Next morning police asked if I had been in the high school as my car was parked outside the school and the gunman recognised it as mine. Therefore they believed I was inside school and why they fired five shots which went through the rungs of the ladder that I had been standing on.

I enjoyed my time in UDR and the comradeship. But I left on the last days of the UDR in June 1992. I would do it all over again, but I feel we were distastefully treated at the end. Although I got out all right with my life and I am glad of it, I made many friends, we had great fun, and craic and for the sake of the country I would do it all again.

Karen Sheridan

Growing up on the Cavan border with Fermanagh, at Kilcorby just across the river from Aghalane Bridge. Karen recalls shocking childhood memories of the murders of her neighbours, husband and wife Tommy and Emily Bullock, and of the murder of her uncle John Smyth in County Tyrone.

We lived three miles from Aghalane Bridge at Cavan and Fermanagh border. My earliest memory of living there was when Stephen Bullock's shop and garage was blown up, I remember us looking over the hill and seeing smoke rising up into the sky and seeing Giselle helicopters flying around. I was five years old and terrified I remember asking my mummy would the robbers come and get us.

Aghalane Bridge had been blown up a number of times, there was a Bailey Bridge erected as a temporary measure to allow traffic to continue across the border, I remember in our kitchen at night while having our tea the noise of the vehicles going across the bridge. On another occasion when we were coming back from Omagh one Sunday afternoon, there was a crowd of men trying to push an Ulsterbus (which had been hi-jacked and burnt out the evening before) over the bridge, they succeeded and in doing so took a bit of the wall with the bus, I remember there was a bit of wire erected to cover the space left by the gap in the wall.

Not forgotten : The late Tommy and Emily Bullock with friends

My Mum from Omagh and my Dad from between Ballyconnell and Belturbet were married in 1965, and moved to the Co Cavan farm. Daddy had rented Tommy Bullock's land. Because our land was at one side of the river at the border and Tommy's was the other side, Dad would have moved cattle back and forward. Mum and Dad had decided to move to Fermanagh from Cavan, and Dad approached Tommy to ask if he would sell the farmland. Tommy said no he would not sell. The last time Daddy saw him was the day he was murdered. Daddy called up with him, he was going to the solicitors to sign for his own farm land he said to Tommy, if I thought you would sell me this farm, I would not sign for it. Tommy replied saying Charlie, go you and good luck with your farm and that was the last time my Dad saw him.

My Dad was in the pub at Ballyconnell that night, when the TV news said a couple had been murdered. This man in the pub cheered and my Dad hit him and walked out. He came home and Mum then was terrified because they thought they would come now and get us for what Dad did - hitting the man in the heat of the moment.

I remember Emily and I remember Tommy and I was not very old at the time. I remember it being said that the terrorists would have had to shoot his wife Emily first, in order to get Tommy, because she was a crack shot. And that always stuck in my mind. That was September 21st, 1972.

My uncle went to the funeral with mum and dad and granny kept us in the car. I remember bagpipes playing, it was like that tune, look what they have done to my son. It was a warm day and I remember us driving past their farm and our cattle lying out. Mum said it was unbelievable to see the tragedy that was in that house, and then to see our cattle lying content in their field. That was the September and we moved from there the following March 1973.

My Daddy's cousin Richard Latimer was murdered in his shop in Newtownbutler in June 1980. I remember mum and dad going to the wake and funeral; I stayed at home to look after my younger brothers and sister.

In 1981, my Uncle John Smyth, an RUC man was murdered on August 2nd and he left a wife Doreen and three children, that was very hard for us. We had spent the day the beach oblivious to what had happened and when we came home a neighbour told us about it, we rang my grandparent's house and there was no reply, we knew then that it was true.

John was a wonderful man, a dedicated policeman, very much in the ethos of going for the criminal or terrorist, he didn't want the man in the street, or traffic tickets or anything like that. His death hit us hard; it was very tough and very sad. His father and mother were broken-hearted and I feel my cousins and aunt missed out a lot, since 1981, those children never grew up knowing what a wonderful father they had.

My uncles were in the UDR, B- Men, police reserve, as a child down in my granny's I remember my uncles going out to duty at night, my memory is of them putting on their putties. They also did guard of honour at Eva martin's funeral. So you had always that worry about them.

When we moved to Ballinamallard, going to my granny's house there where two routes that my mother took, either via Irvinestown or Trillick. If she took the Trillick route at night, I hated it because I knew we would be passing where Robert Jameson had been murdered. I used to hide behind the driver's seat on the floor until we passed the crossroads.

Then the next thing was the Enniskillen bomb, I knew Kit Johnston, a wonderful man, he used to come to our pub in Ballinamallard. I knew Sammy Gault who was among the victims. Mr Ronnie Hill was our school headmaster and it was an absolutely awful thing to see that happen to a man who had a fountain of knowledge and was so middle of the road and very Christian. He would have taken no side or he would have been very straight, and he was a great influence on me in school. To see him lying in hospital – I remember going to see him – it just broke my heart.

**Thomas Bullock, aged 53, UDR, and civilian wife Emily aged 50, were shot by IRA September 21st, 1972 at their farm, Aghalane, Derrylin.*

Beverley Coulter

Observations from a Southerner: Nurse Beverley Coulter originally from County Cavan remembers the day her uncle was murdered in Tyrone and talks about what she noticed in society whilst border-hopping.

I remember my family going down to Grannie's house on a Sunday from our home in Cavan. We had no telephone at the time. And we landed down at the house and we looked in the window and there were four dinners sitting on the table and we could not understand why these four dinners were sitting on the table. There was nobody home.

Looking back, we knew there was something wrong but we just did not know what it was.

It was 1981 and I was aged about eight. We went over to an uncle's house and my aunt came out crying John has been killed. Then we turned on the television news and it said two RUC men had been killed in a bomb explosion outside Loughmacrory.

And I remember my mother crying. I never had seen grief – I never knew what grief was. This was my first experience of it – of somebody dying in our family and it was horrendous. My mother cried for weeks and went to stay with my bereaved aunt who was then aged 28. It was an awful time.

My uncle was called John Smyth and he was aged 32 when he died and he died with a man named Alfie Woods who had seven children. John had three children and he was mad about them, the youngest child was 18 months old at the time, a child of five and a child aged two.

It was a landmine which happened out of the blue. There were two police cars and they were unmarked, the men who had the bomb equipment were on the top of a hill and they were able to set off the bomb from the hill which caused a land mine explosion at a culvert outside Loughmacrory, Co Tyrone. It killed the two of them outright. My uncle and the other man were blown right across the hedge. I remember the family talking about it saying there was body parts everywhere and we never went to see it or to see what happened – but it sounded horrendous at the time.

I remember John a little, and his youngest daughter now she is 30 and she has two children and I often wonder what he would have thought of his grandchildren now. She can't remember her daddy – but I am sure it must be strange for her to hear stories about him. She never really knew him and he never got the chance to nurse his grandchildren or laugh with them.

But his children have not forgotten what happened, but they don't feel angry about it. They just know it was part of the Troubles, well on the outside they don't look angry. I know my mother's generation, do feel anger about it – but our generation feel differently.

Even though we had family members in the security forces, we could never talk about them or their jobs, because we were from Cavan living on the border area, you just didn't want that information falling into the wrong hands. Mum said, we were not to mention it because she was too scared about getting them set up.

Being brought up in the South as a Protestant gives you a different view on things and a different perspective on the Troubles.

While we had family living in Northern Ireland, we weren't in the middle of that fear that they felt. But we could see it when we came to the North, we felt when we came across the border – it was just them and the IRA, and we did not realise there was anybody else. That was because of how they felt scared all the time.

I think my mother's generation in the north, went through a lot of hurt and distrust and they had a fear and that fear has not gone away for them.

I nursed in Belfast. On the Falls Road, I saw a mural about Bobby Sands and it is about the laughter of our children – our revenge is the laughter of our children. And I thought it is true because children are our future, they are ahead, they forget about the past and they don't know any different, and they are not affected by history.

That is what is important – the future and the children who come next – so they know about history but don't use it to hurt other people.

I nursed a convicted IRA man and I remember going in to the room and thinking - if you knew my background – would you hate me? But he was just the same as me – he was no different and he had two little boys sitting either side of his bed watching their father dying in front of them – it was awful. I just thought, these people suffer in the same way we do, it is all equal, in different ways.

I remember seeing a gunshot wound from a paramilitary punishment shooting. I expected a gun shot wound to be massive, to be a whole limb destroyed. It was only a small hole and I thought it would be something that would destroy the whole body. I could not even dare to imagine what it was like if somebody had got shot with a wound to their head - the damage that it would do to a person. How somebody could go out - from any side of the community and put a gun to somebody's head – I can't understand that.

In elections, I think it is really important to pick who you want to vote for, as you have a choice to pick your government, local government or your assembly.

I think back in those early days of the Troubles there was no real leadership. It was outright violence that took place. There was no leadership and no politics and people said - well politics does not work. In my view, politics works really well when people have to sit down and talk to each other. It works really well, way better than people ever realised.

Sylvia Armstrong

The first woman reserve RUC constable to do duty in Northern Ireland was Sylvia Armstrong. Looking back Sylvia recalls the decision to sign up alongside Lady Brookeborough in the 1970's.

I was the first woman reserve constable to do duty in Northern Ireland. Lady Brookeborough was the first to join, but did not do duty at the start, but came and was measured for her uniform, the same as everybody else.

Looking back I remember I worked for the late Lord John Brookeborough. I was working there in 1972 and he held a meeting in the memorial hall in Brookeborough, where he recruited for the RUC Reserve. He asked me would I go and make tea for the men, there probably were 30 – 40 people there. Lady Brookeborough will come and give you a hand, he said.

So the two of us went and we made the men tea and he asked before we went, could we fill up the forms for them, it was the same form as was used to apply for the regular police. Yes I said we would fill up the forms and we did the forms. Most of them did join that night.

We filled up the form and asked for name, address and they wanted measurements, height and I said to Lady Brookeborough, this is exactly the same form as we would have to fill, and I said the only difference is that it says what is your chest measurement.

She says that is right and I said we can change the chest to bust and fill up the forms. So lady Brookeborough and I filled up our own forms.

I went back to work and Sgt McAleer the recruiting officer phoned Ashbrooke regularly to see if we were serious about joining this RUC Reserve. We said we were, we didn't intend at all to do it before we went to the meeting. Then different people rang asking if we were serious and we said yes we were serious. Anyhow, that was in 1972 and it was 1973 before they took us seriously. My date of joining was 8 February 1973. I came over to the police station in Lisnaskea and Sergeant King said you can do duty any time and I said I have no uniform. So he gave me a torch and it was a few months before were got fitted out for uniforms. But I worked in civilian clothing and I did the beat. There were height restrictions, the same as the regular RUC - but I started in Lisnaskea without a uniform.

We went to Sprucefield and were measured for uniforms and it took them a while to come and we had a handbag and a torch. On a monthly basis, we went to the police station in Enniskillen for classes. There were a good few other women joined shortly after, I remember Iris Boles, who was the traffic police and Elsie Wiggins who was a police office worker and Esther Crawford and Lillian Beacom and we were all accepted and we did our weapon training in Enniskillen which Lady Brookeborough was very keen on doing.

People living in Cornagrade phoned to complain about the noise. But anyhow I enjoyed working with the RUC, they were very nice to work with, very helpful.

My husband died in November 1979 and I sent in my resignation to the chief constable, but I got a letter back saying that he would not accept it, he said to wait a year because I would have time to think about it. But he accepted my resignation when I wrote again the next year and I said the children had lost their father and at that time there was a lot of terrorism and

it was not a safe job to be in, especially up round Altawalk and other areas, back in those times.

I got the years in until 1980, I did not do duty after Wesley died, but I did enjoy my time with them, they were very helpful I must say. We had to do road stops the same as the police.

In fact Lady Brookeborough and I were out on beat one day and she asked me - does that woman look all right in the middle of the street. I said, no she doesn't, and Lady Brookeborough went over and asked if she was all right. But she was a lady who was bit senile, and had left the nursing home and Austin Patterson said to us, that lady keeps wandering about, but she wanted her bicycle to go back to Belleek.

I would have said the police would have tried to protect me as a woman, I did go out in the car with them, when they went to Altawalk and wherever, but they would always say to me, you stay in the car, we will go and investigate. They did not put me on the front line.

My husband was not a policeman. The reason that I joined the RUC was that I knew he was going to join and I would rather go out myself, because Wesley would have gone to the front line. He died in 1979 of a brain haemorrhage, and we had three children at school, so that was difficult. Norman Hannah was my only brother. My father was a B Special and mammy did not got to bed worrying about Daddy coming back. Norman my brother and Wesley my husband were both on the B men. I joined party because I had a family background serving in police and partly because I did not want Wesley to join.

It was a serious time, there was a lot of trouble in 1972 and 1973 and there was a lot of terrorism. Looking back I loved working for Lord Brookeborough. I left him to go to work in Dowlers in Lisnaskea and I worked there for 26 years.

Sammy Brush

Former Postal worker and part time soldier Sammy Brush, was shot by the IRA. He survived the attack on his life and 30 years on, his attacker was tried and convicted.

I survived a murder attack in June 1981. At that time, I was a part-time UDR sergeant based in Aughnacloy and I was a postman in the Ballygawley area in my civilian work.

It was a beautiful sunny Saturday and it was great weather in the month of June. I had always taken precautions because I knew I was a likely target as there had been three other attacks on postmen colleagues in the Dungannon and Ballygawley area.

I had light body armour, a light bullet proof vest, which I wore all the time under my shirt. I wore a vest underneath it then the bullet proof jacket and then my shirt and my post office jacket.

I know that many people were tempted, especially in good weather like that, to leave off bullet proof clothing. But I stuck to it religiously every day.

About six months previously, I had purchased a .38 Smith and Wesson revolver, because I found that the UDR issue personal protection weapon, a .22 Walther pistol, at that time was liable to jam. I carried it in a shoulder holster and it was always with me. I chose a five chamber revolver, because it was smaller and easier carried and concealed than a six chamber model. I also carried five rounds in each trouser pocket.

On this particular day, 13th June 1981, just before 1.00pm clock, I had three more houses to do – but I had a white nine inch by four inch envelope with a typewritten address for a Mrs Mary McGarvey of Cravenny Irish, Armaloughey Road Ballygawley, and it was a first class letter. There were two houses up that lane but that was the only letter that I had for that lane that day.

I drove up the lane, it was about 300 yards up a country lane with the odd pothole and grass growing up the centre of it and banks of each side and hedges. In the month of June when the hedges were thick you could no more see through them than you could see through a wall. I drove on to the street, past the gable end of the house and turned sharp right to the hard core area in front of the house. It was a two bay single storey farm house and at the other gable end of the house there was a lean-to type shed and the front door was in the centre of the house and the rear door came out into that lean-to shed.

When I drove onto the street everything seemed normal enough. I noticed there was a green Volkswagon car, which would have been on that street three days out of five, but it was parked further down the street than usual.

When I stopped the van, I left the engine running, opened the door, and got out and went to the front door. I noticed through the window that there were people in the house and that struck me as strange, because whenever there was anybody in the house at that time of year, with good weather, the front door would have been lying open. Usually Mrs McGarvey or her sister Miss O'Hanlon would have come and got the letter from you or I would have thrown them in to the hallway.

I put the letter through the letter box and as I was turning away from the door, turning to the left to go back to the van one gunman

had come out from the lean-to shed and started to fire at me with a hand gun at about 12 feet away or three to four yards.

The first shot and bullet hit me in the left side of my chest, now the body armour stopped that bullet but it burst a large hole in my flesh, it drove the light body armour into the flesh. While the bullet did not penetrate the armour, it hit me quite a kick and it sort of spun me round then and the second bullet hit me in the right side of my upper body and chest and it went through the right lung and out at the centre of my back just about half an inch from my spine. The light body armour stopped the bullet going out, but it had already done the damage. I wanted to get out of the killing zone.

I ran round the back of the post office van to get out of the killing zone and unto the laneway. The other man had come out of the hallway behind me and they both fired shots and followed me up the lane.

Two other bullets shot me and hit me in the back just at my left and right side of the back, almost at the bottom of the rib cage, those were stopped by body armour, but they caused quite a lot of damage to the kidneys, because of the bullet shock waves. I had blood in my urine for months after that, and still my kidneys are not one hundred per cent.

When I was running out of the area, I was trying to draw the revolver out of the left hand shoulder holster with my right hand. Something was wrong with my right hand, and I managed to get it out with the left hand.

Once I got the revolver out I saw one of the gunmen about 30 yards from me and I fired two shots at him and he disappeared out of my line of sight and went back down on to the street - and I lost sight of him.
Then I heard rustling in the hedge behind me. I fired two shots at the sound and everything went quiet. I had fired four rounds and had only one left.

I reckoned that I had to get out of there – because to stay there was to die. If they did not attack me again, I would have died of my injuries. Because the breathing was getting very difficult and my sight appeared to be not as clear as it normally was. I could taste blood in my mouth, it was the effect of the blood going into the lung, that it gave me the same taste.

Then I got the revolver into the right hand and got lying on top of the right hand and I got the four empty cases out of it and I got four fresh rounds in. There was only one way out of it as far as I was concerned and that was back the way I came in.

So I went back with my revolver in my hand ready to fire or face whatever was there and the post office van was still sitting in front of the house with the door lying open and the engine running.

I got into the van and reversed out back up onto the lane way. I only had feeling in my thumb and little finger on my right hand.

Once I got reversed and back out, I knew that if they fired at me, I knew I was reasonably safe because between the UDR and Post Office mechanics they had put a steel plate in between the wooden partition behind the driver seat of the van.

I drove to Ballygawley police station. There is a steep hill on the Armaloughey Road with a sharp left hand bend at the bottom of it and I thought that I might not be able to get around it as my condition was getting worse so I fired a shot to try to draw attention. Nobody heard it as the people who lived in the nearby house were in Portrush. Somehow I managed to get around the bend, across the A4 and got stopped at the police station. I remained sitting in the Post Office van, blowing the horn, eventually a policeman came out. I was taken to South Tyrone Hospital in the back of a police car.

George Gilliland was the policeman made marvellous work that particular day because he was trying to use the radio, to get information from me and drive the car at the same time.

They got me to South Tyrone hospital and just as they were getting me out of the car the bullet that had gone through me fell down onto the ground at the hospital entrance.

Meantime, it turned out I had hit one of the gunmen - Gerry McGeough. He was hit with one bullet that went through his spleen and the bottom of his left lung but lodged close to his spine.

He was dealt with at Monaghan hospital went to St Vincent's Hospital in Dublin, by Irish army helicopter and spent time in intensive care, and the bullet was removed. He got the last rites, in Monaghan Hospital because they thought he was not going to make it. Then he was returned to Monaghan Hospital about three weeks later but he escaped.

Two garda were sitting outside the room where he was in the hospital. And a crowd of people came to visit him and Gerry McGeough went out dressed as one of the visitors and escaped.

He eventually went to Sweden to look for political asylum and in his application he told the whole story of what happened and that went a long way towards convicting him of my attempted murder on 18th February 2011. Gerry McGeough 52, of Carrycastle Road, Gortmerron, Dungannon, was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment in April 2011 – and is expected to be released within two years under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement.

McGeough was arrested by police at election count in Omagh in 2007, having stood as an independent republican candidate.

It is almost 30 years now and it took that length of time to get a conviction and I suppose it is some closure as far as I am concerned. I know there are a lot of people in this country who have not had any closure in the sense that nobody has ever been convicted or brought to court for either attempting murder or murdering some of their loved ones.

Sadly George Gilliland was one of two policemen murdered during an attack on Ballygawley RUC station on 7th December 1985.

Cecil Jones

A threat to his personal security forced Cecil Jones and his wife Gloria to move from their caravan home in Lisnaskea. Cecil recalls the day he found out, police were already aware of the threat and were waiting for a shoot within the 30mph zone in the town, and how his dogs alerted him to potential danger, and survived a poisoning attack.

I came home from guard and parked the car outside. It was a mark four Cortina, and I would have had my 9mm Browning pistol. The rest of my kit was in the boot.

On that particular day I did not take my kit out of the boot. I went straight into caravan and I was pulling my boots off to go for a rest, when this awful carry-on started with the two Doberman dogs barking. On one side of our place was a garden and the other side was a playground. I feared something had happened between the dogs and children. So I lifted the 9mm Browning and I ran out, just in time to see this guy jumping out from a part of a garden shrub area which would have been 5 yards from the back of the car. The guy ran up and there was a car sitting up the top of the road and the car door was open and he dived straight into the back of the car. Now he was carrying something I am not sure what it was, and the car went away off. I asked my neighbour Tommy if he had seen anything but he said no definitely not.

So then I went to police and at that stage I started to put two and two together and obviously I knew what had happened. A string of events came to light.

We were told later by a track jogger, that a person had been seen walking along a hedgerow close to us, and that someone used to lie up there watching our caravan.

My dogs, the black Doberman used to run to the drain and would pick up something and follow it and I used to think it was rats. So there was definitely something there. But it came to pass that there had been a hit on me and obviously I knew that, by what that boy was at.

Police, told me they were waiting for a shoot within the 30mph zone.

I was very careful going out to work but where my weak point was – was coming home. Usually, when I got home from a 24 hour guard, I drove down and parked outside the caravan and normally I would have opened the caravan, then gone to the car boot, taken my kit out, locked the boot and gone into the caravan. And that was my procedure or habit or whatever, but that morning I did not do that – so I believe if I had of gone to the boot that morning - I would have been dead. Because that is what he was waiting for.

Going out in the mornings I was always very careful. I would use the dog whistle and the dog would come to the front door. I always checked if there was anybody about before I opened the door. I would lean out and let the dog into the field and let him work away until I got ready. I got up two hours before I was due to go to work. I went out with the 9mm cocked ready, put the dogs into the sheds the same way you would use a sheep dog or gun dog.

I would go up onto the road and there was a number of occasions when the police actually were up there watching, and that said a lot.

Some mornings I went to the road maybe 50 yards or more with the dog going into the hedge, I would go back put the dog

in and drive out – but always checking the vehicle and under it.

Weeks before that incident my dogs were poisoned. I arrived home from a UDR event and saw the dogs were all swelled up. I rushed them straight to the vet at Erne Veterinary and he said we will do our best, but these dogs have been poisoned. He treated them and made them sick to remove the poison, and they survived it.

With all the things that happened, it all came together for me and I realised the dogs were poisoned for to get them out of the road.

It ended up that we had to move straight out of there, and moved in with Gloria's Mum. Before I came out, the doors in that house were never locked - but then when I came about the house, they kept the doors locked. We were there four weeks when the deal came through with the house we were buying in Lisbellaw.

Over the head of that I suffered depression. I was treated for it by an NHS counsellor but I knew they were Catholic and I did not actually say what the real problem was. It was only last year that I discussed my concerns about this. It is not to say that every Catholic is bad, you don't know who is good or bad.

I served UDR September 1977 to September 1984. It was inevitable that I would have joined UDR considering right back to my Grandfather there has been a history of being a military family.

It certainly was difficult for my wife there was obviously thoughts about leaving the job. Gloria never said to leave it, but I felt, leaving was not the answer because you were still marked as such.

As far as I was concerned – if you were going to be in the job – the safest way to be in it was full time.

Rodney Crawford

Rodney Crawford lost his much loved father in an IRA explosion. Rodney recalls the painful experience of bereavement, loss, and concern over the lack of justice, as his father's killers were never caught.

The last words I ever spoke to my father remain with me to this day. He was going out to do his RUC duty to serve his country, he said to me,- I could do without you going to Fivemiletown tonight, because I have a car coming in and I want you to give me a hand to work on it. I replied to be honest, I don't think I'm going to bother going out tonight and my father said I'll rush on here son because I'm running late. That was 6:30pm on Friday 9 January 1987.

Noble Irvine Crawford

I sat in the house and was snoozing in the seat watching TV at the same time and the phone rang at 10:30pm. It was Rector Archdeacon Foster and he said, there has been a terrible incident in Enniskillen tonight and I have reason to believe your father may have been involved in a bomb explosion and that he understood my father had gone to hospital.

About ten minutes later the back door got a knock and it was Archdeacon Foster in tears, very distressed and he explained that my father was dead.

You can imagine my mother was in an awful state, very distressed. I could not bring myself to accept the fact that this had happened. An hour later neighbours came to offer condolences. And the time reality really sunk in was when Sir John Hermon, then RUC chief constable landed to the back door with his top officers to offer condolences.

My father was Noble Irvine Crawford, known to his friends as Ivan. He was a part time reserve RUC officer. He served as a regular constable from 1970-1973 and was in UDR for short time and B Specials until disbandment.

My father and another police constable were on a town beat patrol through Enniskillen walking down the street and as my father approached the litter bin on the footpath, it exploded and he took the full impact of the explosion.

The hardest part for me was going into the hospital mortuary to see my father's body laid out with so many wounds due to the blast. Looking back now, I think I did the best thing as otherwise I may have had an element of guilt or questions. But because I went to see my father, now I know the extent of his injuries and it was nice to take that final moment of time to speak to him, to reflect and to say my last goodbyes.

There were people arrested on suspicion of his murder but unfortunately nobody was prosecuted.

What consoles me emotionally is the fact that the Lord will take it into his hands and deal with the perpetrators in his own time.

Yes there was an element of anger at the time, however I could not be angry with everybody, I was a young man aged 19 and had to get on with living my life. It would be wrong for me to brand every Catholic person the same way was you could brand some of the terrorists. I felt like going out and doing something stupid, but I decided not to get involved in anything like that.

After my father's death my mother was helped by various agencies, however she still had my youngest brother aged 13, to bring up and educate. My mother had to do all those things alone and make decisions because she was on her own. I helped her out as best I could. When my father was murdered, I was the eldest son aged 19 and another brother aged 18.

I feel badly let down by the fact that there was not more counselling at the time, for me and my brother, as we were working age. Certainly my mother and younger brother were seen to, with offers of trips away.

A short time after my father's death, I was working at a car one evening and I turned round to ask my father something and suddenly realised he was not there. I had a welding rod in my hand and out of sheer frustration I threw it and it through the garage window and I emotionally broke down.

I picked myself up and carried on with the job but it was difficult. I suffered depression a long time after it.

Before he died, my father and his sister had tried to trace my grandfather's relatives in Canada. My father did not live long enough to find them. When we located them, I decided to meet the relatives. I stepped off the plane, I was aged 20, just after losing my father. I spent six weeks in Canada and the depression was not as bad after that, and it left me as years went on. Going to Canada toughened my mind, broadened my outlook on life and helped me mentally.

Joining the UDR in 1988, helped me to get over loss of my father because the job was so intense. I served with fellows who experienced being attacked and being briefed before you went on patrol, certainly brought a lot of it back, but at the same time it mentally hardened me.

I would have no objections to what the HET historical enquiries team is doing currently. Certainly it would be nice to get a phone call or even for families to liaise with police every 12 months or two years to keep you informed. It's over 25 years now since this incident and no police person has discussed with us what is currently happening. I believe you are basically just another statistic.

**Mr Noble Irvine Crawford (49) died 9 January, 1987, Protestant RUC reservist, killed by the IRA in a litter bin bomb attack during a foot patrol in Enniskillen.*

Anonymous

I have three memories of growing up in Lisnaskea. One as a child, another as a commissioned army officer patrolling Lisnaskea Main Street and finally, a memory of moving back from England to live in the area.

After leaving Lisnaskea there was an attempted murder of my father. It was a very difficult time and a major factor in my decision process to join the British Army.

Initially I wanted to join the police but my father was fighting for his life in the Royal Victoria Hospital. His form of communication was pencil and paper and my instruction was to forget the Police and get out!
You really take stock and listen to your father at moments like that.

After a while I got frustrated, it was like the old cliché like father like son and I wanted to follow in his footsteps and make him proud. I decided to go for a commission in the British Army I didn't tell anybody about it apart from my brother who was a serving RUC member and he didn't seem particularly keen on the idea.

After successful completion of the Regular Commissions Board I informed my father. He wasn't impressed, far from it. He saw the British Army as numbers, cannon fodder. I was initially disappointed but equally determined to do something as I like many others, had seen and had had enough. It wasn't a case of fighting back but defending what I believed to be right.

On completion of training my father was a proud man and of course one of the first places I was sent to was Omagh which entailed coming back to Lisnaskea, both my father's previous postings in the RUC. Nothing had changed, the buildings, the smell and in some cases the people.

During a training course a news flash was announced about a number of men arrested in relation to a particular crime, unrelated to the attempted murder of my father. After a subsequent court case, one of them received a life sentence. I cheered at the result. My comrades didn't understand what the nature of this result meant to me. One of the men was allegedly involved in the attempted murder of my father.

On a different occasion I met another person allegedly involved in the attack on my father's life. After an uncomfortable few seconds I wanted to go after him but was advised very quickly: 'don't do time for scum'.

I met this person on foot patrol in Lisnaskea. I had to remember my training and what my core values were as a child, 'stay within the law and don't take the law upon yourself'. Our upbringing was fairly strict, but I highly respected what my father taught me.

No one was convicted in relation to the attack on my father's life.

Growing up as a child in 1971 when the troubles were in full swing you had to take a lot on board. With what was happening on a daily basis you become streetwise fairly quickly, compared to children nowadays. The fact that my father was in the security forces and we grew up in a security forces bases' here. I remember from the age of four being taught how to search a car, not answer a telephone or if you did answer the phone try to identify the caller.

Even going to school you were taught at age six about setting patterns, who you mixed with, suspicious activity and reporting back in. Nowadays we would never consider such actions but that is what it was like growing up.

I have very fond memories of Lisnaskea growing up but also very dark memories. Going to school with my classmates and then learning that their father had been murdered. Knowing who they were in the community and having to deal with that. Wondering and praying that your own father will make it home safe, afraid to turn on the News at Six.

Two good friends of the family, Norman Prue (RUC) and George Maughan (British Army) were shot dead outside the Chapel (6 May 1979). A Sunday morning will never forget. It was after Sunday school, we were in the RUC Station when my father informed us what had taken place earlier. Norman Prue collected me from school the previous Friday. You took a fairly mature attitude to the events, you had no choice. My father drove us home and told my mother who broke down in tears. It was quite difficult to deal with from that moment and that day has stuck with me.

Eight to six weeks later Norman Prue's son returned to school who was a really good friend and saying listen I'm really sorry about your father - that was a lot to take on as a child.

The Graham brothers were murdered in a close period of time. After the first attempted murder of Jimmy Graham, I was sitting in the back of the school bus with his son, we were Primary 6 -7, I asked Tommy on the welfare of his father, and Tommy replied that he will be dead within six months. He was. Can you imagine primary school children having such a conversation today? You don't want to think about these things but they do haunt you.

I remember the morning Jimmy Graham was murdered. That family went through hell. There is no question about it. They were victimised right from the beginning through to the very end. Even today it is still talked about and the pain the Graham family went through. When I heard the news, I was walking down the playing fields over looking the cinema in Lisnaskea. We had children's minds, and we were trying to take on the reality of it all.

Whilst in the army, I attended a Remembrance Day parade at St Lucia Barracks. Before the minute's silence, they mentioned names of people who were murdered or gave their lives during the Troubles. Thomas Graham read the names of the fallen, starting with his uncles and ending with his father's. It hit me hard yet I believed it to be very significant that his son should be given the honour as he had followed in his father's footsteps to be a serving member of the security forces. That must have been hard, no question about it.

I let my daughter read this and I was taken aback at her disbelief of the events took place. She had no idea of my childhood or what happened to her grandfather. I sincerely hope that she never experiences the horrors that took place here. I would love to find closure but it's too hard to forget as there is not a day passes that something comes back, especially now that I'm home again.

Cecil Haire

A booby trapped bomb set by the INLA in an abandoned lorry in Belfast, seriously injured RUC Sergeant Cecil Haire, and claimed the life of his police colleague Constable Gary Martin. Born in Maguiresbridge, Cecil was a member of the USC member, the UDR and then joined the RUC, in 1972.

Cecil shares his traumatic experience of the explosion.

Constable Gary Martin got into the lorry and he put one hand on the steering wheel and his foot on the step, he put his other hand on the seat. It was then that the explosion took place. I never heard the bang of the explosion. When the explosion went off, I was approximately three to four feet from where the bomb was. Gary was blown out of the cab of the lorry and he went out over me travelling, in my opinion, at very slow speed through the air. I could not understand why he was going so slowly. It was all in the flash of time."

RUC Sgt Cecil Haire

In 1981 on the 27 April, a report had come into Woodburn police station that a lorry was blocking the road. On arrival at the lorry, I knew immediately that this was suspicious. I told the boys not to get out of the Landrover. I had dreamed it the night before, and that it was a blue lorry.

A blue box type lorry was blocking the road when we arrived. We did not get out of our vehicles. A senior officer came to the scene, looked around and opened the vehicle. Then he asked me had I checked the vehicle and I told him I had not, nor was I going to, because I thought it was suspicious.

We were in the middle of Lenadoon, a hard republican area, at that time. It fell to me to have the vehicle cleared or get the army technical officer to examine it. I was asked by the senior officer if I had a heavy goods vehicle driver and I said "No, I hadn't." I honestly did not think we had one, but I did not want anyone to move this vehicle. So this big fellow Gary Martin, over 18 stone weight, said he could move it.

Before Gary was actually blown out of the cab of the lorry, I could see in slow motion, the cab of the lorry blowing up, like a balloon. Another young fellow was badly injured and he never wore a police uniform again. At this stage I knew a bomb had gone off. I kept saying to myself, "You are dead." I couldn't get the thoughts out of my mind that I was dead, I knew something was wrong. I examined myself all over, just to see, I felt my legs and arms, head and I still kept saying to myself, "You have got to be dead." Then I checked my body again and I knew I was alive because I could see the some of the boys around me and others on the ground.

I did not understand why I didn't hear the explosion or why I did not put up my hand and catch Gary as he was going through the air. I now know this was a matter of a split second – then it was gone.

I was not aware that my clothes had been blown off. I was left with no parts of my uniform on at all. I still have my cap

that I was wearing that day, the peak is almost blown out of the cap and the badge is bent. I was aware that I could feel blood coming down so I knew I was bleeding. I could taste the flame in my mouth, as I had got flame into my throat. I could get the smells of the stuff burning, something that did not leave me for a very long time. I then got the smell of my own face and my arms and my hair burning. I did not know then, but I know now that I had a lot of shrapnel wounds to the head, legs and body. A lot of shrapnel is still in there, my flack jacket that I was wearing, had come off, the cover was blown off it completely. My leather gunbelt was broken in two and the barrel of my revolver was bent.

The wreckage after the explosion

A military ambulance arrived and we were put in to it to go to the Royal Victoria Hospital. On the way to the hospital, Gary, who later died, was lying on his tummy. I asked the other boys were they okay - one of the policemen said he was - the second man I asked was badly injured and bleeding from the head but put his thumb up to say that he was ok.

I turned to Gary Martin and asked him if he was all right. I used his nickname Barney to ask if he was okay, but he never moved. I asked him again and he never moved. After a couple of minutes, Gary got up on his elbow and he looked right round us all and then just dropped dead on the stretcher.

Cecil Haire following bomb injuries

At that stage, I knew that Gary was gone. I remember arriving at the hospital and that I walked in. Nurses came along and talked to me, but everything then became hazy. I remember nurses working at me. I did, to the best of my knowledge and belief, hear one of them say - he is gone and pulling the sheet over my face.

To this day I still have flashbacks. When they come, I can see it all again, I can see big Gary and I will always remember Gary dying. He died very peacefully, very courageously, he had great courage and he never once made a noise nor shouted that he was in pain. I know big Gary knew he was dying and I also know he was not afraid to die because he had not a care in the world.

As a result of my injuries, I have been left with what is classed as severe brain injury and memory loss. I know I survived well. Since then, I have led a good life or what I can remember of it, and to this day, I am happy.

To the people who blew me up and killed my colleague - my colleague is happy, the people who blew him up and who injured me, have yet to meet their maker. We have peace, do they have peace?

I hold no grudge to anyone, but justice will come to them one day!

**Gary Martin 28, Protestant, RUC, killed 27 April 1981, by Irish National Liberation Army, INLA, in a lorry booby trapped bomb, at the Shaw's Road and Glen Road area of West Belfast.*

Bertie Graham

Tuneful farmer, Bertie Graham inherited a song from his UDR colleagues, and to this day, when he sings it, he dedicates it to all who served and all who lost their lives. Bertie from outside Aughnacloy served for over 40 years, he recalls losing his relative and neighbouring border farmer Cyrus Campbell in a shooting.

I remember one morning, I was out checking the farm stock out on the back hill, and a fellow who was actually a second cousin of my own, he would have owned the land on the opposite side of the wee river. We would usually meet when he would be down checking his stock and I was checking mine, and we would have a chat. But this morning, he never arrived.

I was back up to the house to make myself a drop of tea, when a local garage man landed in the yard and he says Bertie, you will not believe it, but I am after finding Cyrus Campbell shot dead, at the local cross roads. That really knocked me for six.

He told me exactly where it had happened and he said Cyrus is dead and he is slumped over the steering wheel, it looks as if the windscreen shattered they shot him coming down the hill. Well he would have had to come down a steep hill to a cross roads where he usually turned, he would not have been more than a quarter of a mile from where I was down feeding the cattle, to where he had been shot.

I was numb – it was not like losing somebody in a natural death and you wondered what it was all about but then again it was happening somewhere else. Although Cyrus was related, there was another young man a second cousin as well and he was shot, he was an RUC reservist. Some of my neighbours were shot as well, and every one of them, even though they were not related, I really felt it.

How anybody would ever have attempted to take Cyrus' life, I don't know – because he was such a civil sort of person- he was a bachelor and he would not have said boo to a gander. He was that sort of a fellow, would in no way have drawn attention to himself or been any way active or that, where you would have thought was making himself a target. He would have been that quiet and reserved sort of a fellow – he would have been the last in the world you would have thought would have been taken. But he was an easy target. You could not have missed him; he drove the car at about 20mph. I missed him afterwards.

Being a farmer too, and serving with the UDR, I remember security issues being brought home to me one morning. I was milking the cows and working feeding them down silage and when you have a number of cows in a shed, you don't hear anything, and all of a sudden this voice said to me – you are a very foolish man.

I looked up and there were two policemen standing looking at me. Now they had come into the yard, and I did not hear them coming in to the yard, with the noise of the animals and all. Actually what they were pointing out to me was that my personal security was very poor. But that was how you lived. You lived with it, but it did bring it home to be how vulnerable that people were, particularly in their own environment.

You were always aware of that. One of the big things I suppose from that point of view, was that I missed out on a lot of functions, staying away from them because I thought that is what I had to do. I loved playing bowls, at the hall, but we were on the side of the road and I felt I would be a risk to the rest of the folks there, so I stayed away.

I thought that it was my duty, to stay after the B Specials disbanded and go into the UDR, and I am very glad I did, because

I felt I made a contribution to the security of Northern Ireland. And after all that was my main object in life was for Northern Ireland, to remain as it is, as part of the UK. But to be done, not in any underhand way and it has to be done the proper way and that was my thinking on it, and the proper way to do it was to join this new force, the UDR.

I inherited a song named 'The Border Company Song'. Where that song originated was from our full-time guard platoon, and later an operational platoon, known as the 6th platoon. I was not there the night the song was composed but it was the boys from the 6th platoon who put the few words together and as far as I know the major author of the song would have been the late major Roy Weir – late of Fivemiletown, and there were contributions from others as well.

At a function shortly after it had been written or composed, we had a party night and 6th Platoon boys said Bertie we want you to help us to sing. So they produced this on paper. That first time I sang the song, the UDR was eight years in existence. After that night the young lieutenant, platoon commander folded it up and he said right now Bertie that is our song, but it is your song now – so you sing it – and I have been singing it ever since. Every time I sing it – it is dedicated to the memory of all members of the UDR and those who were murdered or paid the supreme sacrifice.

**Cyrus Campbell 49, UDR Private and border area farmer was shot and killed on 24 October 1983 close to his home at Carricklongfield, near Aughnacloy, Co. Tyrone.*

Doreen McGee

Shot by the IRA, one time victim Doreen McGee retraces her horror on the border, and the loss of her boyfriend at the time. Hers is a story of survival, against the odds.

I lived at Belleek and joined the UDR in 1979 after my boyfriend Alan Ferguson was shot dead at Garrison. I thought well, he is gone now and maybe I should try and do something, try to help. I was shot in February 1980, I was 22 years of age. I worked in Kent Plastic factory in Enniskillen, my full-time day job and I went out on duty at night with UDR. My mother saw a car stopped down at the side of the road near the house. There was a man working at a car, he had the bonnet up and the boot open, so obviously he had let on that the car had broken down. When I went down about 30 yards, I came face to face with three gunmen standing behind the hedge. I kept thinking will I run or stand or what will I do, so I just stood. The three came onto the road side and one of them said – don't move, and at that, the other one put up the gun and shot me and I fell onto the road.

They kept firing back towards the house, probably thinking Daddy would run out and they would get him. But he did not know what had happened. Meantime Mummy ran back in to him and she said, Doreen's been shot, then, I heard the man who was supposed to be working at the car, calling them, to come on – to get away. They kept firing back and must have been a half mile down the road, but bullets were actually lodging beside the windows, and some were hitting the side of the road where I was lying. I thought, they have got me down now, they will finish me.

I heard recently who set us up and I am bitter, to a certain extent yes. I was 22 years of age. I was left with a bad leg since. I can hardly remember what it was like to have two proper good legs.

When Mammy told Daddy I was shot, he got his gun but they were too far away. We had no phone, and he went to the neighbour's house, and phoned the ambulance.

Police, came to cordon the road. No time then till I heard the helicopter, they said they could take me to the hospital, but it would be a problem getting me over the fence into the field. I said I'll wait until the ambulance comes. I got to hospital A&E and the blood was pumping and I remember nurses putting pressure on it – to try to stop it. I actually got eight pints of blood. At X-ray they found I had a fractured femur. I remember nothing then, until I came back to the ward, I was in intensive care and I woke up in traction. They moved me to Musgrave Park Hospital by helicopter. I was there from March until June and went to Chessington until September. Then I fell and burst the knee muscle and had to come back to Belfast for surgery. I was there until February- so that was a year in total, in and out of hospital.

That happened to me on the Thursday and my parents and my brother John were all gone out of the house by the Monday. They moved. They just threw everything into black bags and got out bag and baggage practically.

They moved to a house at Carrickreagh it belonged to the Duchess of Westminster. Then the IRA put a bomb under Daddy's car in Enniskillen. Luckily it did not go off. My father Robert Granleese, joined UDR part time at formation and was there until he retired and my brother John was UDR full time.

I went back to the factory briefly, then I went on the sick, then incapacity benefit. I never was able to go back to the UDR. I was medically discharged after the shooting.

There was no such thing as support then- nobody seemed to bother, not like now, where you have all the different groups and that. I was left to cope with it. I found the best way to cope was to put it to the back of my mind and not think about it.

I was very lucky that I did not lose the leg. The bullet passed right through me and came out my hip.

The impact of losing my boyfriend was awful. I had been going with him steady for three years. He was 22 when he was shot, he was out on patrol up at garrison, it was a Sunday evening. My neighbour Tommy Ovens came to tell us, he spoke to Daddy and he was white as a ghost, even his lips were white and he said Doreen, Alan has been shot and I remember asking, is he dead.

Years later, I got married, I have three children, but I am separated.

I don't think much of these peace times. I always said there would never be peace in Ireland because there is so much bitterness put into the children now.

Nobody ever was brought to justice for shooting me, nobody ever was got and they knew that they had come across the border the evening before. I don't even think there was anybody ever got for shooting Alan either. But there again – are they ever caught?

They would only get a slap on the hand anyway. The majority of them are out now running about again.

I am angry yes. I think somebody who does that should be shot themselves. They should bring back the penalty. Because I think they deserve it.

I would join UDR again. Yes I would.

Ruth Watson

Fears of gunmen and fears of trees where possible dangers lurked are the stuff of childhood memories tempered by loss, injury, terror and trauma recalled by Ruth Watson, who grew up in Harryville Maguiresbridge.

My brother Robbie was shot on Saturday January 12, 1984. I was at secondary school, and I was sent to the shop to buy cinnamon sweets for an older neighbour who fed them to her dog. Mum said don't call at Boyd's House on the way. Of course I called to my friend's house. While I was there, a knock came to the door. I was called out. Ruth you are wanted up at home, the neighbours said. They said don't worry about the sweets you are wanted at home you will not be scolded. I asked what was wrong and they said Robbie had been shot and they did not know if he was dead. We went home and my sister was there and the kitchen was full of people. Mum and Dad and brother Trevor had gone to the scene. We waited for a phone call. It felt like hours, then the phone rang. We froze, not one of us could answer the phone. We were fortunate to hear that Robbie had been injured but it wasn't life threatening. Then we had the trauma afterwards and how it affected Robbie and him moving back home and any bang or noise affected him. On February 1st Jimmy Graham was to drive to Musgrave Park Hospital after his school run – to pick my brother up, but he never got there. Jimmy was shot dead in Derrylin.

My father and three brothers, were in the UDR. Normality for me from an early age was running to the shop at 6.00pm to buy some food for my father's bag for going on duty at 7.00pm. As a child I lay awake at night, I never slept until Dad or any of them came in from duty, that was still primary school days. I never went to bed on my own, I always slept with the light on.

Derek Breen, a police man, was shot at the Talk of the Town pub in Maguiresbridge. It was February 11th 1986. I was coming back from Kelly's shop and heard the shots and it was the shock and the fear of it, I recall. Directly opposite our house was the Church of Ireland rectory and huge trees that ran up the avenue and down the field and I had such a fear of those trees. Most people would be afraid of the dark or ghosts but I always had this fear of an ambush. The fear was associated with, a dread such as what if the IRA are lying waiting for some of my brothers and they hear a noise and they shoot me. The relief I felt when all those trees were cut down was immense.

Sunday was Dad's day to check the car oil and water and I sat on the gate and chatted as he worked. One day, a man jumped out of a car, ran up beside Dad and shouted that they weren't going to leave one of the Graham brothers nor one of the Watson brothers alive. He ran to the car again and that was it. I have always tried to visualise this man's face but I can't remember him.

My cousin Tommy Harron, UDR was blown up on July 13th, 1983 at Ballygawley, in a Landrover heading to Ballykinler for training. I was 11 and we were waiting to go to the bog to cut turf when the call came through.

Dad got a bad beating outside Donagh one night on patrol. One attacker took Dad's rifle off him and Dad got an awful beating. I remember him coming home and the whole trauma in the house in relation to it.

I was thinking of all the soldiers who used to call at our house, at three in the morning looking for a cup of tea. One Christmas they landed to Mum with a big hamper to her and tinsel and balloons hanging from the Landrover. There were good moments and a sense of belonging at the same time.

All these experiences probably have affected me but, because I was younger, it was a way of life. There was no support then.

Following a shooting or injury, you went back to school and no body asked are you okay, you just got on with it. Yes there most definitely should have been counselling.

Ina Latimer

Running a farm and raising a family during the Troubles, was a demanding juggling act. Ina Latimer recalls the day her husband decided to join the UDR, and the impact his tour of duty had on her and their young family in the years that followed.

I have been married to George Latimer for 51 years and we did everything together and shared no secrets. But one day he went to town and got a sack of potatoes, set them down on the street when he got home, sat on top of them and said I have done something that I haven't discussed with you, I have joined the UDR. I was flabbergasted.

He thought the Troubles were only going to last for a couple of years. He joined as he lost a good friend Harry Creighton, killed in an IRA gun attack. That made George think he should be doing something of use to help and not let it happen to somebody else. We had three small children at that time.

Raising young children Ina observed how they absorbed everything that was going on around them during those troubled times.

Once George was away in the car at a funeral and the children were waiting for him to drive them to a cousin's birthday party. George had an accident, hit a pothole. He had stitches to his head and returned home, with the crashed car, the youngest child Derek aged two asked if his Daddy was in a bomb.

I was listening to the six o'clock news about a rumpus in Londonderry, it was Bloody Sunday and little ears pick up things. When anybody came into the house, my son would ask, is that a goodie or a baddie Mammy.

I always thought my husband would be coming back following UDR duty because I had a wonderful faith. I never felt alone. I always went up the farm yard at night and felt somebody walking behind me, keeping me safe. It was a worry where our sheds were, and with hay bales on top. There were warnings to be careful. School children were warned not to pick up empty cigarettes packages or not to kick them in case it was a bomb. They grew up with that, everything had to be checked.

One day I put a cake in the oven. I decided to cut my hedge with clippers. I brought the cake timer with me, set it on the hedge and clipped on and forgot about it. The timer went off; I jumped, threw down the clippers and ran for 200 yards. I thought it was a bomb. Those nervous moments stick out in your mind.

Our eldest girl, at age nine, worried a lot about George going on duty. She wakened up with nightmares and dreamed he had been shot and she had his funeral planned and hymn numbers to be sung. I held her in the bed and consoled her. We took her to a GP and she went on Valium to settle her. We had to stop her seeing her Dad go out at night in uniform.
Now that child went through a lot and still does. Her childhood memory is that her father was always too busy on duty to be a Dad to her.

Our son, youngest child, always had a broken toy for his Dad to mend on off duty nights. He hung onto his legs and all these toys had to be fixed. I think it was an excuse to be close to him.

With children going to church, usual questions would have been -have you got your hymn or prayer book with you. But our

children would ask Daddy – have you got your gun ?

When George went out at night we lived for the door opening and the key turning in the door, knowing he was inside it and that he was safe for another day.

A cousin Ernest Johnston, 36 was shot dead, by the IRA September 1980. He was on RUC in Rosslea. We got the news marking our 25th wedding anniversary. We consoled my aunt and uncle. Ernest was their only child and they had him late in life and his mother always said he was a gift from God, but she wasn't allowed to keep him.

We had lived in England in the 1950's and thought of going back again, but George said to me why should I leave my farm, why should I run away, I have done nothing wrong. We stayed on and are still there 51 years later.

George suffered stomach trouble which his doctor said was from stress and he suffers back ache and leg pain now and that was because he came in most mornings blue with cold from the knees standing about on roads. He thought he was doing some good to help somebody else.

George went to help at the scene when a friend William Trotter, a farmer, was killed in an explosion. To this day George would really think about that. It seemed to leave a black spot in his memory.

Every morning you just got up and were thankful that you were alive for another day. Listening to the trauma of all the things that happened and wasted lives that have gone and what for – really?

I have memories of the army coming around and making them mugs of tea. One of the soldiers from England was worried as his wife living in Londonderry was due to give birth to their first child. I said use our phone and find out how she is. Next day, that chap was blown up at Lisnaskea. I thought how sad it was that he had never lived to see his own child.

Anne Morrow

The first raid on Rosslea created a lasting childhood memory for Anne Morrow. What she could not have known at the time, is that she was eyewitness to the start of the troubles in her border village, an episode that would create over 30 years of community angst and trauma.

In 1955 when the first raid took place in Rosslea, I was living there with my aunt and uncle, for my mother had died when I was a baby and the youngest girls were raised by my aunt and uncle. In November 1955 about 5:30am we heard this awful explosion, we hadn't a clue what it was, my sister and I because we were only children and we would not have know what to call it. The ceilings came in on us and there was rubble falling down and my aunt Molly came running into the room and said they are at the barrack! She would have known what was happening, because she came through 1921 episode, from the times of the Irish war of Independence to partition when Northern Ireland and the Republic emerged.

We went down stairs, and at that time we made our own electricity because we had storage batteries, so we were able to switch on our lights, we went out onto the street and switched on the street light, me, my aunt and my sister. We went out onto the street and we were fired on, and the shots, they definitely were shooting down at us, I don't know what they though we were going to do, but I know the spent bullets were found on the street after it.

But we got back indoors anyhow and we were a religious family, we were brought up with church and Sunday school with my aunt. We got down on our knees and we prayed for safety and that nothing would happen to us. When daylight broke, my sister and I could not understand all these army wagons and activity, and that was the start of the troubles in Northern Ireland.

In our childhood and youth, we were scared to go out on our own, all our friends were living away outside the town and would be cycling to socials and dances and badminton and everything. But we were scared stiff because we had to come back home to just 100 yards from the police station.

In 1970 my husband Wilfred and I got married. My husband had an outlying farm at Newtownbutler and we had two children one was just a year and five months old and the other was six months old.

My husband went into the disused farm house and an explosion went off and his clothes went on fire. Paddy his workman was outside. Wilfred went in for the oil drums and Paddy trailed him out, he was in it shock and he battered the flames out. Wilfred got into the car and Paddy and him went to Newtownbutler police station and police got the doctor and ambulance and he was in Erne Hospital for four weeks. His eyebrows and hair round his cap and his face was burned and his hands were burn marked. My friends and family babysat to let me get to hospital visits. Nobody came with any money to help out and there were no benefits then, there was simply nothing. Whenever compensation was talked about Wilfred went to Enniskillen Court and he got £350 for the house £350 for his injuries. After this he had his problems, but he worked until he could stand it no longer. We sold everything and went to Scotland. We stuck it for a over a year. We had four children. We came home again. He built a new house to live at Ashbrooke but he died in 2004 before we moved into it. So I just managed on my own and fortunately he saw the children settled. Our decision to live in Scotland was definitely influenced by the Troubles and by what was happening on the border.

Wilfred was on the B Force and was commended by the headman for being out on Ballagh Cross 15 minutes after the

Brookeborough Raid. He and his brother were in the farm byre and dropped everything and got on their uniforms went down the field and stopped cars, I think it was a Mr Trotter who came along and said you are the first men I have seen out and you have done so well. Wilfred didn't join the next force because he felt he had done his bit and he was married with children.

We didn't feel that the explosion in the farm outhouse which injured Wilfred was set for him. We feel it was set for the army for it was a disused farm house on the side of the road all the army had to do was push the door over and go in and lie down. I lived with my in-laws after we got married, and the army would be out in the byre and we would bring them out tea and toast. They sat in the byre because the cattle were so warm there in the winter.

Tanya Harron

A life time growing up on the border at Magheraveely, with a parent in the security forces holds many memories for Tanya Harron (nee Forster). Today as an adult she looks back at difficult times with knowledge and insight, looking to a brighter shared future.

My Dad was on the UDR for as long as I can remember. We lived outside Magheraveely village not far from Donagh which was always talked about as being very Republican and a no-go area. We just went through it as fast as possible. Looking back over the years I have forgotten how that feels. We had army guys dug in around the farm because Daddy was considered a soft target being so close to the border. Uncle Wesley, Daddy's brother also UDR lived down the road in the next farm. There were four of us and we always knew where the emergency flares were and what to do. It all was very normal. It was just our way of life, we didn't know any thing else.

When Daddy went away for days to the UDR, Mum went on the farm and milked the cows and she carried on and we all chipped in, I went for the cattle and helped.

We had always the fear that we never were allowed to say what Daddy did for a living, especially on the bus to school. We were never allowed to speak to the Catholic children, not even if we had a netball match.

Times have really changed and I'm really glad because I have three sons and I just would be horrified if I had to say the same things or have the same things taught to them or that they would have any sort of fear or know about religion in the same way that we did during the Troubles.

Tanya spent a lot of her parenting days making sure her boys did not learn or use sectarian–type language about the Protestant or Catholic or any community, and ensuring they had friendships with children from other schools and communities.

So they have come through and have gone to University and are able to live their lives without bigotry, which I am really glad of. My last boy at home is only six and I'm aware of not pushing religion on him. I hope he doesn't have bigotry, and can make friends with whoever he wants. I would have been into my teens before I felt that I could have a conversation with a Catholic, because of the way things were.

I used to play the pipes and one time coming home from band practice uncle Wesley dropped me off home. As I walked up our lane, a cigarette butt was thrown out into my path and I scurried home because I was scared. Afterwards Daddy said it was probably army blokes trying to be funny with a teenage girl. It's amusing and yet there is something abnormal about it.

I married a policeman when I was quite young, and left home. Albeit that marriage ended and I remarried. Looking back, I never really got away from it because I married a policeman who wasn't allowed to come out to my parent's house near the border because of the high threat.

I remember checking under my car, even if I went to Fermanagh Lakeland Forum for a swim with my baby, I had to get down and check under the car winter and summer in case there was a bomb, before I would put my baby into the car. There was a really bad bomb at the forum and it was dreadful.

I had my two boys with my policeman husband who was based in border stations and worked at the riots in 80's and 90's and was away for three days at times, which had an impact on family life.

I personally would hate to go back to being scared all the time. I watched my Mum terrified of losing Daddy and wondering will he come home after three days duty.

There we were, his four wee girls getting on the school bus saying bye-bye Daddy and never really knowing if he would come home. It was actually horrible. Now that I think of it, I feel emotional.

I had a happy childhood and we knew Daddy was doing something worthwhile, and we didn't question him, ever. We were immensely proud of Dad. He is one of those rare ordinary Fermanagh men who did what he thought he had to do and yet lost people and he would have put his life on the line for his job.

My sons love to listen to Daddy tell stories, they want to know about the past, but they just don't want to live it the same way. They are interested in what their grandfather did and why and they understand him, but they would not go to war they would not do the modern equivalent.

Sonya Smith

Growing up on the border in the Troubles, and having a parent working in the security forces, created a fairly unique lifestyle. Sonya recalls times when there was an air of caution about whom you spoke to in the local community.

I grew up on a farm in Magheraveely near the border. My father the late Samuel John Wesley Foster, was a sergeant on the UDR, and served for 20 years. I am one of four children. I was born 1970, he retired in 1983. Through my primary school years, during the Troubles memories that stick out include checking that the house wasn't being watched.

Dad's friend Harry Creighton was murdered outside his house in 1972 and from that day, until he died, my father never got over that. Dad would have talked about that as being a big serious thing that happened. He was coming off night duty, and Dad took over night duty from him, he handed dad the duty sheet at Newtownbutler Barracks (which we still have a copy). But the IRA were waiting for Harry and he was shot as he got out of his car when he got home. He was to be married the next month.

My Mum's cousin Ernest Johnston was murdered in 1980, shot and killed outside his house. It was traumatic to know someone so near hand to you, can be killed.

While I was a child, when the Troubles were high we had the British Army sleeping in our shed. It was the first time I had seen a black person ever in my life and my Mum said that I sat and stared at this soldier.

My mum used to bring them in at night when Dad went off on duty, for soup. A few times when Dad was told of a heightened threat, they moved into the house. Dad seemed to never come home. Night after night he was out and they were there to protect us and whoever was round us. We were always told not to tell Roman Catholics anything. Once a RC neighbour's child asked about an extension cable lying across our lane. It was to give electricity to the army. I said I did not know what it was for.

We shared the school bus, we went to Aghadrumsee Primary School and Roman Catholics went to Cornagague Primary School and you never told a Roman Catholic what your dad did for a living, in their eyes my Dad was a farmer.

I'm glad today's children don't have that to deal with.

I think Protestants sat at one side of the bus and Roman Catholics sat on the other side. I don't remember having a conversation with any of them on the bus.

Another memory is going out as a family in the car my dad would have check under the car for car bombs.

We had emergency flares fitted into our house and I remember dad teaching us how to press the button.

I am so glad our children now don't have to do that because it's absolute madness that you can't trust a person living beside you. We lived through it and it's what you grew up with, you didn't know any different.

When I went to Collegiate Grammar School, I got to talk to girls who were at Mount Lourdes, convent, on the school bus. I remember thinking I'm not telling my mother I talked to a Catholic today. That seems really bad now.

Today, my children would just think that was crazy. I'm glad in a way they don't have anything like that to deal with. I never saw my Dad at night time as he was on duty. He is dead now but UDR was his life and when he retired he never sat at home and it took him a long time to get used to the word 'Peace'. Before he died over five years ago there was Peace and he thought it's great, there is a generation going to grow up differently. It takes a long time to give in to saying I want to talk to Roman Catholics or I want to go to Dublin on my holidays. It didn't come naturally to us that we were allowed to do those sort of things.

My husband and I when we were going out together in the late 1980's, Alan had a motor bike and we went touring down south. His parents were both on the police and until he met me, he had never been across the border. We would have gone in and out of Clones.

My oldest child is now 12 and learning about the history of the Troubles. It seems so surreal. That was my life time.

I have brought the boys up to know no difference in the community, they know absolutely nothing about religion, they go to Twelfth of July and play in the pipe band. They are empowered to talk to anybody they want to, despite contact with other children who have raised issues about not being allowed to talk to children from the Catholic community and those who have used sectarian terms such as 'fenians'.

I suppose some families do sit down and explain to their children about the troubles. I don't want my boys to know about it. I suppose all of us who lived through the 1970's you do block out a lot of it and I suppose I have too.

William John Henry

Looking back at the Troubles, and a career in the security forces, William John Henry recalls several incidents of IRA terror and loss of life in the Fermanagh and border areas.

I am William John Henry, aged 76 years, from Millwood, Lisbellaw. I served with the Ulster Special Constabulary and immediately after that with UDR.

One morning coming off duty in Lisnaskea at 7.00am, we came to Austin Patterson's shop and there was a parked car with lights on, so we stopped looked at it and asked police to check it. They said there was a suitcase in the car and that it was ticking. We blocked the street off at both ends. We let nobody down it. We stood at the old Cinema, myself and Corporal Moore of Cornafanogue. After ten minutes there was a big flash and a lump of the car lit at our feet. A hole was blown in the road and the whole shop just went up in flames.

Another night we were on patrol out at Carrybridge and got word to go to Aghalane on the border to Thomas Bullock and his wife Emily. The wife was lying in the doorway and he was sitting in the chair dead. I would not like to witness a sight like it again. Some of the harrowing scenes I attended, they worked on my nerves a bit, you would not be well when you would see the like of those things. That poor Mr and Mrs Bullock, they got a sad doing.

On patrol at Moorlough one night we were told to go to Corranny or Forfey that there had been an explosion. We heard an explosion but did not know where it was. When we went up, two soldiers were lying dead on the road and there was a black soldier, he was in a daze staggering about and there was blood coming out of his nose, eyes and ears and everywhere and Derek Graham, of Killycloghy a comrade of mine, put his arms around him and he died in Derek's arms - he was a big man. He was supposed to be an expert bomb disposal man, now I don't know if that is true. But the Landrover was lying in the hole in the road and the water mains were burst, it was an awful sight to see. And the corporal was shouting to watch ourselves, he thought we would be ambushed behind the ditch but I never thought about that.

Then one other night we were at Enniskillen checking an electricity substation and on our way out to it, we met a patrol coming in off duty. We spoke to Alfred Johnston and James Eames. A short time after, I was getting over the fence to get check the sub station and there as this unmerciful flash and a bang. The corporal said get out on the road and stop all cars, - County Cars premises has been blown up. We went in the Landrover and the sight we saw was desperate, one man's leg was off and his body was on the road and the other man's remains were up in the hedge. The UDR patrol had pulled in at a car in on the roadside to see what was in it and up she went; the bomb killed the two of them.

I have seen some terrible things.

The UDR career affected my legs, they are all aching and I'm getting therapy at SEFF all the time with the muscles but my hearing is a big problem.

We guarded all police barracks at Rosslea, Newtownbuter, Derrylin, Lisnaskea and Kinawley, Lisbellaw, Tempo. We went to Rosslea, we started at Enniskillen at 7.00pm and landed at Rosslea at 8.00pm and we did guard until 6.00am and travelled back to Enniskillen, so I was not home until 8.00am. I think it was a bad job doing away with the police barracks and taking security forces out of Northern Ireland, I don't agree with it. They think the trouble is over but it is far from it, in my opinion.

I recall another bad day in 1972 when Private John Fletcher was shot. The IRA hijacked him at the end of his own lane and told him if he gave over his submachine gun they would not harm him. They drove up to the house and he said to his wife give me out the gun. She gave them the gun and magazines and she said I hope you are not going to harm him- and they said - it is only the gun we want. Minutes after it she heard the shooting and they put him down between two stones beside a hen house and shot him. We were at the funeral, we did guard of honour, and the roof slates were flying off the houses in bad weather. We were ducking down, I was afraid for my life with the slates. Some boys said - Ah the devil is let loose now all right.

I resigned off the UDR in 1979. My service did not help my wife because worried every night that something terrible would happen.

My patrol was hit by a driver who failed to stop for a red light. I was not on duty that night. I had said to my father, an old man, I have a notion something is going to happen tonight and he said if you think that, take the uniform off and stay at home – which I did. One patrol fellow ended up in hospital unconscious with broken legs and arms. A Greenfinch Hillary Graham had her back injured, but died later, as a result of injuries. Her brothers Ronnie and Jimmy Graham were shot.

You had to cope; I went on from day to day and hoped for the best.

**Alfred Johnston 32, UDR, was killed by IRA on 26th August 1972 by a remote controlled car bomb, at Cherrymount, near Enniskillen.*
**James Eames 33, UDR was killed by IRA on 26th August 1972 in the same explosion.*
**John Fletcher, 43, UDR was killed by UDR on 1st March 1972. Shot outside his home, near Garrison, Fermanagh*

Rodney Noble

Memories of friends lost at the trigger happy hands of terrorists during the troubles, still prove difficult for Roderick (Rodney) Noble. Rodney recalls good and bad times.

My name is Roderick (Rodney) Noble. I was a UDR soldier. I joined at 18 and left when they disbanded the Royal Irish. In the time I served, it was enjoyable and there were good times and bad times.

While I served part time UDR, I also worked factory shifts. Often I had to stop people I knew on the roads at night while on patrol. Come break-time at the factory, people listened to the news and would hear that some one had been shot or blown up and maybe it was someone close to you and that is where hassle started. If I was seen on road patrols some would disapprovingly say - I saw you. I just gave as good back, I replied well I'm there and I'm not scared to show my face, there is no balaclava or anything going on over me.

On road stops I treated everybody the same, as my father used to always say, if you have a little bit of manners it goes a long way. So I always kept to that. My father served five years in UDR and then went over to the police.

I had been out training with a UDR colleague and he left me home afterwards. The next morning there word came that he had been ambushed and shot and that was Ronnie Graham. Coming home the night before, we had a great night's crack and I mind it well, he left me off at the house and he left my kit out of the car and I went to pick it up and he hit me a kick on the backside and said there you are young Noble, you go away home. The next morning he was out doing a delivery for the shop he worked with in Lisnaskea and was shot taking supplies out of the vehicle. That was a sad occasion.

Then his brother Jimmy Graham was shot. We were on patrol the night before as well and we had good 'auld craic and the next day he was shot. Jimmy was a school bus driver and he was delivering or dropping off children at Derrylin school but they went in under the bus and shot him too. That was very sad. But that is what we had to try to live with. How did we cope, it is sad to say, but life had to go on. You had to take one day at a time and hope that your day never came. We always had to check the car or vary our routes.

Saying that, you always had to come home and always had to leave the house. There was nothing you could do about that. It was hard at times, I can't say there was really much support there at the time, you had to work with it yourself and count yourself very lucky. I am talking about it now but it is hard to keep the tears away.

As for support, well working in the factory they gave as much support as they could. For security, the police were there in the mornings when you were going out and they followed you home or usually there might have been a patrol earlier in the morning for you, to give you a bit of a self-motivation or morale, you liked to see somebody about there.

At the time I joined UDR my father had already left and gone over to the police but we were both still wearing a uniform. It was good because we both could talk things over about what we would do if anything happened to us.

At that time then I found the perfect woman and I got married and she wondered why did I not give it up, but I told her I went through all the training and I wasn't going to leave. It was rough times and it was very hard on my wife. I had to think of that too, as she was at home with the children and maybe they were thinking this man will not come home. I have four

children three girls and a boy and they were young at the time and my wife more or less reared them, for if I wasn't in the factory on a shift I was away on duty.

I'm a grandfather now and as my wife said I will be looking at the children growing up now through my grandchildren. Well I see more of them too, now that I have a minute for myself.

We had a good time of it and I'm sorry that it did come to an end because at that time things were starting to ease off and I suppose like whenever they got what they wanted in terms of peace, there was no need for us to be there. I suppose it was less of a bill for the Ministry of Defence to have to worry about.

No I would not do it again, for starters I'm getting too old and if I was the same age again, no I don't think I would do it again no. It is not worth it. I think if I became a politician it might be better because they seem to be making more money than we ever did, and they have less hassle.

Robert Liddle

The callous murder of postal worker Gordon Liddle on July 17th 1976 will never be forgotten by his brother Robert (Bertie) Liddle. At 4.00am that morning Bertie and his younger brother heard gun shots outside their home at Drumgole near Lisnaskea. They decided it was too dangerous to go out even if armed. At 7.00am they heard an explosion on the laneway outside. Gordon Liddle, Bertie's brother lived in the neighbouring bungalow with his wife Hazel and 18 month old baby Cyril. Gordon had tripped a wire across the lane and detonated a landmine bomb, on his way to work.

Gordon Liddle

After the bomb went off, a neighbour jumped the river and came up and was holding Hazel back from going down with Cyril in her arms. I went to see what I could do for Gordon, for I knew a bomb had gone off and I saw the blood squirting out of his leg and then the vet was going up the road and he saw ambulances and came to see if he could do anything. He got a length of an orange rope and bit of a stick out of the hedge and tied it around Gordon's thigh because the blood was pumping out about three foot onto the dash board of the car from his right leg and his right arm was hanging off and three ribs were sticking out of the tunic of his heavy uniform and I carried his leg into the ambulance and the shoe and part of the trousers were pulled off. I stayed in the ambulance and went with him to the hospital theatre and all the blood in Ireland wouldn't have kept him alive the doctors told me, because his liver was perforated. The stones had gone through the car and went through his liver and he was riddled with stones and that is what killed him. About half way to Enniskillen in the ambulance he stopped talking. His last words to me were to be good to wee Cyril. That was Gordon's first born child. At 3.50pm the police told us that Gordon had passed away in the Erne Hospital theatre.

My Father and mother were visiting friends near Belfast and they got a police escort back to Fermanagh. The lane was part of the murder scene, so they crossed a field, waded a river and were carried in a tractor link box to our house. My father seemed to get over it eventually – he was a giant of a man but it broke my mother's heart you would see her crying every day. Gordon was her first born.

The memories of that day will never leave me they will be with me for the rest of my life.

Every Sunday when I walk to Church I read his name on his grave headstone. It is now 30 years since it happened and it is still fresh in my mind. He was my brother and best friend. Unfortunately Gordon started work at 7.00am and I started the RUC Reserve at 8.00am and he got the bomb instead of me.

Gordon was a Church of Ireland Christian and was church warden before his death. My father took over church warden duty that my late brother was taken away from.

I had no counselling and the Government offered me only a small three figure sum for the loss of my brother. I took a week off work and had to go back to building boats.

No one was apprehended for Gordon's murder. There were no arrests that I am aware of. Nobody was charged so I cannot

say whether it was IRA or UDA. My brother was eldest of four and it was one of Fermanagh's border attacks, whether it was being a post man or being the local RUC reserve member, we both wore the crown. My father and Gordon were B Special's and we never thought that anything like this would come to our family.

After the bomb my younger brother and I never did another hour of duty. I have no regrets never doing any more police duty. The job that I was doing was not worth the loss of my brother.

Stephen Gault

The 1987 IRA Remembrance Day bomb in Enniskillen claimed the life of Samuel Gault, who was a dear father to teenager Stephen Gault and loving husband to Gladys Gault. Stephen looks back at that fateful day and his eyewitness account shares only a snap shot of the great depth of trauma and pain suffered.

My Dad was gone in a heartbeat and with that so were the plans that he and Mum had made for their future together as Dad was beginning to enjoy his retirement. He had retired almost two years from the police before he was murdered by the IRA in the Enniskillen Remembrance Day bomb. He took early retirement from the job he loved so much after he suffered a heart attack in 1985.

It was 8th November 1987, Remembrance Sunday. Mum Gladys, a UDR sergeant was doing usher at the cathedral in Enniskillen. I remember it as if it were yesterday. I remember Dad and myself leaving her to the cathedral and parking the car at the library, we walked along Queen Elizabeth Road to the Cenotaph to see the parade which we did so every year together. It was the same people standing around the Cenotaph every year, we might not have seen them since the last Remembrance service, but we always knew we would bump into them that Sunday.

Enniskillen Bomb, photo by Raymond Humphreys

I remember standing in the crowd in front of the Reading Rooms next to my Dad. To the other side of me was Ted Armstrong along with his son Clive. Dad was enjoying having the chit-chat and banter as Dad would have known Ted from working in RUC. I remember a policeman walking past us, he acknowledged us and as he passed by, I asked my Dad who was he as I hadn't recognised the policeman - but I never got the answer.

It was just like wakening up in the middle of a horror movie, the eerie silence after the explosion, the dust filling my mouth. There was rubble lying over the top of me, I was buried to my knees. I had been knocked unconscious, not for long though, maybe for a minute or so. Initially when I came round I could hardly see in front of me because of the dust and I still remember that choking sensation from all the dust and rubble. I clearly remember looking to my side where my Dad had been standing next to me. He was lying at my feet but I knew straight away that he was dead.

From the wounds that he suffered to his head, I knew that he could not have survived. I remember someone grabbing me and pulling me out of the rubble and over the top of the railings. I had minor injuries at the time in comparison to others - I suffered head injuries, concussion, cuts and bruising. It was a miracle that I survived at all as Ted Armstrong was killed also. I was one of the lucky ones. I was then put into a police mini-bus which had arrived to take the injured to hospital. I remember sitting in that bus in a daze, I did not know what was going on, I did not know what to think. There were people running around everywhere, shouting and screaming. Then the next thing my brother located me on the bus – he was to meet Dad and myself at the Cenotaph that morning, but was held up, and fortunately he was not there at the time of the bomb.

The late Samuel Gault

For about a week or so after it I was in a daze. Mum was fantastic the way she handled herself with dignity and how she was able to help us through these tragic and traumatic circumstances.

One minute she had a husband and the next thing, she had nobody, she was on her own. My brother was married. I had just turned 18 so I was still living at home in the middle of the hardest part of the Troubles. I remember she sat me down and said, 'look – this is the way it is, you have to live your life, you can't get drawn into any sort of trouble or with any bad people in retaliation after what happened.' Thankfully she put me on the right road. I was still at College and yes she raised me good.

Afterwards without my father it was very tough. Growing on into adulthood, I had no father figure and was devastated because since his retirement we had grown very close and not having him around was very hard emotionally. My Dad was a true gentleman. He had not a bad word to say about anybody. People who knew him would say he was dignified in the way he handled his job and he always dressed immaculately and looked after himself. Dad got me into playing golf and was taking it up himself, but unfortunately he never got the chance to follow this interest.

It was very tough on Mum after the bomb. She had to work full-time to ensure we had a standard of living. She worked all the hours that were going. Mum became the bread winner of the family.

Every year since the Enniskillen bomb, I go to the Cenotaph and pay my respects to my late father along with the other innocent victims and those people who lost their lives in world wars and conflicts.

After the Enniskillen bomb I did not go to counselling there was very little offered if any, and everything I experienced that day, I bottled it up inside and never spoke for 20 years. I did however make scrapbooks shortly after the bomb. They were filled with every newspaper cutting I could find relating to my Dad and the bomb. I even have the poppy that he was wearing that day along with a few sentimental photographs of the two of us together.

After the bomb I became a recluse. It wasn't until 2007, shortly before the 20th anniversary that I saw a psychotherapist. This was the first time that I spoke of what I had seen and witnessed that day. At my first therapy session I was described as being like a champagne bottle that had been shaken for 20 years and how, finally the cork has been popped. My therapist was amazed at how I retold the events of that day leading up to the bomb and the carnage afterwards with no emotion. I had become 'emotionally numb'.

Two weeks after the bomb I developed psoriasis which has since progressed to psoriatic arthritis. During the past 24 years since the bomb I have undergone every treatment available for both conditions. More recently I have started a new treatment

The late Gladys and Samuel Gault

and my wife injects me twice a week. This drug cannot cure my condition or undo any arthritic disfiguration, but it has eased my pain and given my joints a bit more freedom to move. Before I started this drug in 2006 my condition was so severe that I was bed ridden and my wife had to feed and dress me. I couldn't drive or walk. It was a dark and depressing time for me. I was in a state of panic as my consultant told me back in 1999 I would be wheelchair-bound by the time I was 40. I also underwent surgery to my hand. I still suffer with depression, sleep deprivation and anxiety today. I believe my illnesses are as a direct result of what I went through on 8th November 1987 in the Enniskillen bomb.

Prior to the 20th anniversary of the Enniskillen bomb we learned through the press that a framed photographic montage tribute to those murdered in the Enniskillen bomb was removed from Enniskillen fire station. This tribute was put up by fire personnel who helped those injured and searched rubble for victims on that fatal day. I have campaigned for nearly four years to have the tribute montage reinstated. At the time this montage was removed my mum was dying from cancer, she passed away shortly after the 20th anniversary and she took to her grave the hurt that anyone could possibly find a photograph of her late husband offensive.

To date since the Enniskillen bomb nobody has been brought to justice for their actions. That has caused a lot of hurt and pain. I live with a daily reminder, both physically and mentally of what happened that fatal day. I know that the Historical Enquiries Team (HET) is carrying out an investigation into the bomb and I believe there should be a public enquiry into the Enniskillen bomb.

Charlie McClinock

On the day of the Enniskillen bomb, Charlie McClintock was ready for TA Cenotaph duty, for Poppy Day and he recalls how it all went badly wrong, and how he helped in the aftermath.

As I stepped down from the minibus, there was a penny lying on the ground. I lifted the penny and I flicked it up and I caught it and I said to my mate there is luck in that, so I spat on it and put it in my pocket. Little did I know what was in front of us.

I served in the TA and we had done Cenotaph duty for a number of years before the day of the bomb and it was nearly always the same men on the duty. We came into town, along with the guard commander, to the church hall on the Queen Elizabeth Road and had a cup of tea there before heading up to the Cenotaph to form up there. I was on the front on the right hand side, opposite the wall. Policeman Evans came over to us and was chatting. This was about ten minutes to 11.00am and I remember seeing my Missus standing at the Cenoptaph taking a photograph. It was nearly time to march to the Cenotaph and policeman Evans said to us I'll give you a nod boys, meaning it was time to march, and just then he turned and that was it. I was blown across the road and the railings on the river side of the street stopped me going over. When I got myself up off the ground, policeman Evans was lying beside me injured and he was not good, and I had not a mark on me.

On the buckle of my belt there is score on it where something went across my belt, I still have it at home and the pistol grip of the rifle was broken and yet and all there was absolutely nothing touched on me nor any of the Cenotaph guard. It was unbelievable.

With the dust we could see nothing and some of the things that we did see were not good.

We started in to try to clear some of the stuff away and one lad said there was a digger at the car park at the back of Belmore Street and we went to see if we could get the digger started, which we did and brought it up to the scene.
We went back then and helped for a while and our TA section commander told us to make our way back to the TA centre to make the garages ready for a morgue.

We got the garage cleared out and then they started bringing in the bodies. I was on the gate letting people in and out to identify bodies and the section commander in the camp Sam Blair, was with me, and he did not know at the time, that his mother and father-in-law Billy and Nessie Mullan were already in the morgue.

My wife Kathleen was far enough back and was not hurt, she had just put her camera up to her eye to take a photograph and the bomb went off. In the confusion I forgot about my wife being there. Then when I questioned where she was and got her, I had an awful panic. She came to the TA centre with us, and along with Leslie Carson's wife got into the kitchen and made tea and sandwiches for anyone who needed them.

Then I went home for a while. I carried the standard for Fivemiletown British Legion remembrance parade that evening. It wasn't until I came back home that I actually realised what happened. For years afterwards I was still taking nightmares and leaping out of bed at night and it brought back memories of when I was in the army. This last couple of years it has settled down. I just got on with my life and tried to put it behind me as best I could. My wife Kathleen and my children stuck by me. But then my son joined up and he ended up in Iraq during the first Gulf war so instead of worrying about myself I worried about him.

I do feel let down because I put my life on the line both in regular army and in the TA and at the end of the day we were not offered counselling of any kind, not even after the bomb. I sort of went against the Government for failing us. Anything that came up I did not want to know anything about it. This is the first time that I have spoken about the Enniskillen bomb, I have not even spoken with my army mates about it - I have never brought it up. I met up with one of the lads who was on cenotaph guard two years ago at the Royal British Legion and we never spoke about it, we just said it was nice to be here.

I feel bad that no one was brought to justice. The Enniskillen bomb was forgotten about. The only people who ever stood along that wall were civilians. That morning before we left the TA centre we were told that the town had been cleared and when we got to the church hall there was a boy standing with a dog and he said the town has been cleared so it was the last thing on your mind, what actually happened.

I would see myself as a survivor not a victim. I have no regrets in anything that I have done. If I had to do it all again, I would do everything I have already done.

Iain Lendrum

Growing up as a child of the Troubles in Northern Ireland influenced Iain Lendrum's career choice, and led him to witness the immediate aftermath of a number of IRA attacks including the Enniskillen Remembrance Day bombing atrocity.

I was born in 1968 so I am a child of the Troubles, it is all I knew all of my life. I lived in Fivemiletown. My earliest memories are of my father Austin Lendrum serving in the UDR. When he came home from work at 6.00pm, he got straight into uniform and away to UDR patrols. Until I was aged 10, I did not see much of my father as most of his time was taken up carrying out patrols at night and at weekends. At a young age all our family was taught the basic rules of personal security. We were not allowed to open the house door unless the caller had arranged a visit, we would not walk into a room and turn lights on without first closing curtains and we never discussed what my father worked at outside the home. By the time I was 12; I could strip and assemble my father's rifle, and fire it if required. We were trained to defend him in case of attack. When we got our driving licences, we were taught to always check the car before going near it because of the threat of UVBT. To anybody else it may seem abnormal, but this was the normal daily life of the child of a UDR soldier in the early days of the Troubles.

I admired my father and loved the thought of a soldier's life and so at 18 it was the natural thing to do join the UDR. I am very proud to have served in the same Regiment, Battalion and Company as my father when I first joined C Coy Clogher, 6th County Tyrone Battalion, and The Ulster Defence Regiment. I was even lucky enough to go out on patrol with him before he retired.

On completion of nine weeks full-time training I moved to 4th County Fermanagh Battalion, The Ulster Defence Regiment based in St Angelo outside Enniskillen. And it was then the rude awakening to the reality of serving on the Fermanagh border in the UDR came to life. At the start of January 1987, one of my first duties was being sent on the quick reaction force to a bombing in Enniskillen. A police officer had been murdered outside Hanna's toy shop. It was only after we were there a while and set up the cordon and saw the body that I realised it was the father of a very close friend of mine. Constable Ivan Crawford had been murdered.

I was very proud to be on parade for Remembrance Sunday in Enniskillen in 1987. We formed at the back of McCartney's Bar, Quay Lane. Coming up to 10:50 am we were running behind time as a member of the band was running late and held us back. The Sergeant Major roared at us to fall in and gave the command right turn. As we turned right and drove in our foot about to start marching to the Cenotaph, bang - off went the bomb.

We ran up the side of the river beside the Cenotaph and were met with a scene of utter carnage. There was dust, people screaming, children crying with bodies everywhere both living and dead. The first thing I saw was a woman and her head had been pushed straight through blue railings and it had caved completely in. I remember stopping and staring at her for a split second and the world around me seemed to stop. Somebody through a blanket over her body and all of a sudden the training kicked in as we began to help the dying and injured. It brings home to you the insignificance of life and just how quickly it can be snapped away.

Probably one of the worst memories I have is of a woman, I don't know who she was to this day, but there was a large concrete slab two or three metre square from the wall behind and she was trapped between two dead men, and she was

alive but she was crushed in between their faces for a couple of hours. Trying to get this slab off her was our main effort, as we moved all the rest of the bodies. How someone gets through that and copes with that for the rest of their lives, I don't know. We helped and we eventually got that slab removed and I think she lived thankfully. To be honest we carried so many bodies out of the rubble covered in dust and totally unrecognisable I could not tell you anybodies name who we helped and if they lived or died.

As the day progressed my mind was blank, a lot of it was shut off, I don't want to remember it to be honest. That is obviously the way you cope with it. I do suffer from post traumatic stress but I have learned to cope and deal with it.

That day, there was no such thing as being treated yourself, getting debriefed or counselling. We were back on patrol that evening, after the Enniskillen bomb as there was a large device at Tullyhommon and follow-up searches in Enniskillen had to be completed.

When I was younger, I worked in a filling station in Fivemiletown and a local part-time RUC Constable Cullen Stephenson who worked in the creamery beside the filling station used to sit and chat to me on his breaks. He reminded me of my grandfather, kind, considerate, one of those people in the community every body liked. Again I was on QRF duty at St Angelo. Cullen was coming home that night and they assassinated him, murdered him outside his home. Unfortunately we were one of the first on the scene and were sent to the follow-up to the murder of this man I knew all my life. As he had pulled into his street, the terrorists had riddled his car with bullets. He never stood a chance. It really was terrible. His wife was there to see that. To see that done to a decent human being, and how cowardly it was to do that, to a man unable to defend himself, really shows how insignificant life is to these people who murdered.

We set up cordon positions and cleared the area as much as we could in darkness. Next morning, we found we had set our position up beside a claymore mine, a steel bucket packed with explosives and shipyard confetti, nuts and bolts designed to have maximum effect killing whoever was in the vicinity. It was only by the grace of God that the device timer malfunctioned and never went off killing all of our 4 man team.

We got no help until towards the end of my career dealing with physiological problems. With the army you just don't do it and it was just the way we were. I had seen numerous friends who you think are ok and then years after the event they start to suffer flash-backs etc. I said to myself I had better go and talk to somebody. In my view it helps talking to other soldiers and people who were there. That is probably the best therapy. Things like this project, help, but it is the frustration of people not understanding what you experienced and by recording this, we are telling our story, so people will know.

I have spoken about incidents and hardships we went through serving in UDR but I would not change one minute of what I did. The people I met are true friends. It is hard to explain that comradeship, band of brothers, and fellowship we had, you don't experience that until you have been in the middle of a bomb or a shooting and that is where it comes to the forefront.

Geoffrey McMaster

Life in a rural community during times of trouble and strife gave Geoffrey McMaster some difficult childhood experiences, and influenced his decision to join the Territorial Army. Geoffrey shares his memories, and of his experience during the 1987 Enniskillen bomb.

My earliest memories of the Troubles would have been about 1973 – my father bought a farm up at Lisnagole, Lisnaskea and the family moved there. My mother worked with the hens and when I came home from school, she worked outside and Daddy came home after 5.00pm from his Ministry of Agriculture job. Two men came to the house, around tea time and I was in the house on my own. They knocked the door and I let them in. I was nine years old and they asked for my father by name. I said he was not there and so they came on in looking around the house as if they did not believe me. They did not harm me. They left and I gave a description of the car to my mother. Daddy phoned Lisnaskea police barracks and told them what happened and it turned out that the car had already been spotted going through Lisnaskea to Rosslea direction and so obviously they were bad people.

I went to high school in 1976, but used to skip the bus home because I got picked on by bigger Catholic lads who took my school bag, spit at me and hurled sectarian abuse. Instead, in the evenings I would walk to where my father worked at Lisnaskea Ministry of Agriculture office. I used to wait until he finished his drainage reports around 5.00pm to get a lift home in the car.

One day, in 1976 -77, Daddy had parked his car at the back of Lisnaskea but and he noticed something suspicious underneath the car. He was very thorough and always checked under his car. This day, he did not let me get into the car. He phoned police and army technical officers came out – with this robot and fired it into the car side door but it was declared an elaborate hoax. But it was enough for to warn him. I remember a lot of hardship at home after that. There was a lot of obscene phone calls, to tell him there would not be a hoax the next time and that they would get him. That put pressure on my father and mother. My mother suffered a lot with depression and was in and out of the clinic after that with her nerves. So it really affected my childhood, because my father drunk a lot then because of the pressures and both my eldest brothers joined the UDR.

I joined the TA in 1980. My mum was glad that I joined the TA because of my elder brothers and my father being on the UDR there was enough pressure on her, so I thought I would see a bit of the world and we went on some great trips to Germany & Cyprus on our Annual Camps.

My biggest recollection of the Territorial Army was in 1987 on 8th November I was asked to do escort for the Remembrance Sunday Cenotaph guard.

That morning, we collected the weapons from Grosvenor barracks. We headed to the Cenotaph, at 10:30am and parked off Queen Elizabeth Road at the church hall. The boys went for a cup of tea and I went ahead to see who was about, on up the hill, past the blue railings. I just got my bearings and looked around. Looking across the street towards Elliott's carpet shop a friend, ex tankie Davy Williamson, who was there to watch the parade he shouted at me and waved me over. I had not got the length of Davy when there was this mightyful explosion. Initially I did not grasp what had happened, but my ears started to ring, and I mind this dust cloud coming down and an eerie silence, then the wail of shop alarms going off.

I turned round and saw utter carnage but it was quite dusty and then with people's screams and it was really horrific sight. I made my way over and I remember people's limbs sticking out of the rubble. The first person I came to was a young boy, he seemed to be in school uniform but was all dust and partially covered by rubble and his face was crushed and there was blood at his ear and sides of his face. I dug at the rubble round him and lifted him out and he was crying in pain. I was thinking of procedures worrying would I do more damage, so I carried him to the road side, for medics to deal with. I think he was on TV afterwards.

The mini bus came up and down and bodies started to line up on the path. The TA centre was used as a temporary mortuary for the bodies, because there were so many people injured that the hospital was swamped. I remember these guys jumping about and putting drips in people's arms I think they must have been army medics, they must have been brought up from Grosvenor or St Angelo and they were really super. I would say a lot more people would have died only for these people that day.

I remember going back to the TA Centre. Young lads in a nearby housing estate shouted obscene slogans at us like - we got a pile of you the day and it was just really sad, because they were very young. That was one of my saddest days ever in the TA. That one was very traumatic.

But only for seeing that man Davy Williamson, I owe him my life.

I would like to think that someone could be brought to book for the Enniskillen bomb, but you can't really hold out for the historical team getting anyone to book for that atrocity. But the perpetrators will be judged in a higher place for it.

David Grimsley

One of the worst experiences David Grimsley ever had to face during his 22 year career as a soldier was the 1987 Enniskillen bomb. David recounts how helping at the scene in the aftermath was one of the hardest things he ever did. He served with the UDR and Royal Irish from 1980, having joined as a young lad at age 18.

That morning we were part of the number one guard waiting to go on parade. We were late that morning for some particular reason, I don't know why. But we were standing there where Quay Lane car park is now, getting our tunics and berets on and straightening up our poppies. When the bomb went off, the first thing we felt was the ground trembling first before we heard the blast and the ground shook down at the back of McCartney's bar.

I thought to myself, the terrorists would not be bad enough to put a bomb in the town; it is probably at Coles Monument just to scare everybody.

The smoke and dust came down the streets and we understood then, that the bomb was in the street and I ran up, because I was deadly scared for my wife and two children, they usually stood at the chemist shop beside the Cenotaph. My brother was there that day too.

This big black cloud or fog was howling down the street, but there was awful noise with alarms going off. The first thing I encountered was this railing fence that was down and a woman was lying on the railing and her head was embedded half way into it, yet I noticed her hair was pure white. I did not know who she was, until after it, in the next couple of weeks. I saw her in a newspaper. Another soldier and I pulled her from the fence and lifted her body and put her on the ground. The medical officer who was very good that day, he said there is no need to do this or that, let us go to somebody else.

After that I ran to Queen Elizabeth Road and met some of my own guys. We tried to help people over to one side, taking them to the footpaths and then this other woman we helped, we revived her. We found out later she was Mrs Armstrong and we got her round and held her head and tried to give her some water but she actually passed away. The medical officer put a blanket out over her.

I continued to lift rock and stones and carrying out bodies hearing all the screaming and shouting. Another soldier and myself used planks of wood to prise the wall up but we heard the screaming of a trapped man underneath.

We did not know what to do and we just started digging with our hands. We just kept digging and digging until we got nearly everybody out. Then we regrouped everybody making sure none of our guys were badly injured.

We never left until anybody was out. I know a lot of people got recognition, but the guys who were on parade that day never quit until their hands were bleeding, lifting rock and metal and taking walls off people and helping people out onto the road mainly because we knew that medical officer was there.

All my guys were rightly shocked to be treating civilians, older men, older woman who had lived their lives, done nothing wrong and were blown up for nothing in particular.

That day a lot of us said afterwards, that sadly those people would have protected us from the bomb anyway, if we had

been on parade at that particular time, between the metal railing fence, which I think did most of the damage, and the wall coming down. People always stood there, because you had this howling wind coming up the Queen Elizabeth Road, and every body trying to huddle behind this wall. Whoever planted the bomb did not think about all these people standing there.

I went home, changed out of my tunic and got my uniform on, my jacket, and built up my rifle and went back to St Angelo and most of my section were there – they were back in and we were patrolling Enniskillen streets until 4.00am- down Mill Street up Coles Monument, making sure the whole area stayed secure until forensics finished.

It was all go, go, go, until a couple of days afterwards and then I was thinking to myself who was the woman who was on the railing fence and who was that woman on the main road who died in front of me.

I later found out who the woman was that I helped- she was laying at the top of Queen Elizabeth Road, we brought her round and she was actually coughing but the next minute she was dead.

Luckily whatever happened at my home, my wife was late coming up and when the bomb went off and they were not anywhere near it, but I did not know at the time.

Some of the hardened people from Enniskillen, some that we would have had code words for, came up through Mill Street because they wanted to get in close and see what was happening, they were swarming the place like flies.

They were saying old smart things and not actually knowing exactly what they had actually gone and done. They wanted to kill security forces, not civilians who had lived their lives and were just there to enjoy the parade. There were some bitter people I thought that particular day. Especially when you went back out on the streets – that was the best thing I could have done, but it has hard seeing that bitterness still there knowing how many people were killed and how many were ex-security forces members. And they did not actually hit the people they wanted to target – because we were late.

I never will forget it.

I sit and think and that is why I keep myself active most of the time, you don't want to sit and think about it – that was the hardest thing I ever did.

Sometimes I think Enniskillen is just forgotten about, and people were killed there for no particular reason.

Bill Strong

The tragic death of Eva Martin, RUC Greenfinch and the IRA raid on the Deanery at Clogher is well remembered to this day. Bill Strong now aged 69, recalls what happened on that fateful night on 2nd May 1974. Bill joined the UDR at the start of the troubles in 1969 and was the first instructor at the Deanery with C Company 6th Batt. UDR. He also served with army police for four years.

On the night of the attack of the Deanery, I was in the Sergeant's Mess which was on first floor of the Deanery at Clogher. Along with me was Richard Martin who was company clerk and his wife Eva Martin who was a Greenfinch in my company. Also there was Charlie McKeown who was Deanery guard commander and a good friend of mine. Last person I recall being there was Allan Anderson who was a part time platoon commander. We were just having a chat and Eva Martin and I were having a laugh about an earlier conversation we had with Charlie McKeown, when I distinctly heard a slam, like a Shoreland armoured vehicle lid closing outside and that is what I thought it was, but a second or two later I heard a louder distinctive bang and after that all hell broke lose. It was clear to me that the Deanery was under very heavy attack. There was the sound of mortars and rockets going off and heavy machine gun fire. As the second bang went off I got to my feet and I made my way through the door of the Sgt mess and down the corridor and turned left down the stair way and glancing behind me I could see Charlie McKeown coming and the rest of them following in line. As I turned the corner of the stairway there was a little window like a port hole and as I passed it, I went on ahead down the stairs, that port hole literally disintegrated.
There was a tremendous bang and I could hear masonry and glass breaking and falling. I tore on down the stairs and made my way to a very large empty room which was opposite the bottom of the stairs. I got down on one knee and I could hear this noise of things exploding and I could see lights flashing and we clearly were under very heavy attack. After about a minute or maybe 30 seconds, I thought I have to see what is going on here. As I got back into the main corridor I could see guard members running to their stand-to positions, this tremendous din carried on.

Looking back up stairs to my left and in front of me I could see and hear Richie Martin about three or four steps up, and I thought he had gone berserk – he was shouting – 'they have killed my Eva'- they have shot my Eva, they have killed her.

I went up to him, but as I grabbed him, I looked down and there was Eva Martin curled up at his feet, and the top of her head had been gouged right back and she was clearly dead. Richard Martin continued to scream and next thing I recall was somehow he had got hold of a Sterling sub machine gun and he made his way back up amongst all this debris to where this port-hole in the wall was, and he was firing out through the whole out into the darkness outside with the sub machine gun. I clambered my way up through the rubble and glass and I wrestled with him to get him away from the window. I took the sub machine gun off him, and I unloaded the gun, and took him back up stairs to the sergeant's mess and I got him down and he was inconsolable – they have killed my Eva - he kept sobbing.

I got him down on his knees and can't remember whether it was his idea or mine but I got him a bottle of vodka, and he unscrewed it and he kept taking great glugs of it down his throat, and sobbing and screaming and there was a continuous roar out of him, and he was shouting away and I put my arm round him and consoled him.

I remember at some stage going into the operations room and the phone was ringing and I answered it and it was operations officer in Omagh. Meantime this tremendous din of machine gun fire and rocket fire and mortars continued and I did not stay on the phone, I came back to Richard Martin and there were other people milling about. The attack lasted about 20 minutes but it seemed much longer.

At this stage somebody put a blanket over Eva Martin and I recall also that Allan Anderson who had been part of the original group and had followed me down the stairs he was injured and was lying underneath the stairs and he had been hit in the groin and two greenfinches Jean McDowell and Doreen Neilly were treating him.

I recall after the attack when things quietened down, it really got difficult because people were phoning up the Deanery demanding to know was their loved one okay and the phone never stopped.

As the attack petered out, the Omagh patrol came in and there were people milling about.

Eva was a Greenfinch- and they concentrated on first aid and searching women on patrols. A military funeral was held in Lisbellaw. We rehearsed carefully and practiced for it as we knew it would be in the public eye and on TV. On the actual day, there was a slope down towards the grave and I was one of the taller people carrying the coffin which had a Union Jack on, but as we approached the grave as a result of the slope we started to accelerate rapidly towards this open grave and were quite lucky that we did not all finish up in a heap actually in the grave itself- we stopped short.

I have no regrets about my service and any loss of life is a very sad thing. I served regular army police and UDR. Over all It was very satisfying and in many ways I was very lucky.

Allan Anderson

Having survived injuries sustained in the IRA rocket and mortar attack at Clogher Deanery in May 1974, Allan Anderson shares his memories of that night of terror. Looking back, he recounts how his colleague Greenfinch Eva Martin became the first woman member of the security forces to be killed in a terrorist attack.

I remember Eva distinctly saying to me, "I'm scared". I said "don't be scared Eva, I'll see you downstairs all right". So I took her hand as the lights had gone out at that stage and there was a flight of stairs and then there was a landing and a turn and then down another flight of stairs. So we got to the bottom of the first flight on the landing, then there was gunfire and she was hit in the head just above the left eye and I was also hit. Eva fell on the landing and I was quite badly injured at that time, so I proceeded to get down the second set of stairs. I lay down on the floor down there. Eva actually died very shortly after being hit on the head.

The late Eva Martin

I was lieutenant of C Company on 6th Battalion UDR based in Clogher. I originally served in Royal Marines and joined UDR in April 1st 1970 when it was formed.

On the night of May 2nd, I was in preparing a brief for a patrol the following night and Eva Martin who was one of our female members was there to have her photograph taken for her ID card. The previous Sunday we had done a signals competition for our company in Omagh with our HQ of 6th Battalion and whenever all the business was done we were sitting in the officers mess having a chat about how we nearly had won it. At approximately 11.00pm some bangs started, which we thought was probably at the police station. But the company commander came in and said, we are under attack, get those girls down below, because Eva Martin, Doreen Neilly and Jean McDowell were there. We proceeded, we had to get out onto the stairs to get down below and as it turned out it was a bad move.

Richard, Eva's husband was there that night and he got the Sterling sub machine gun and he came down and due to no lights being on at the time he tripped over Eva lying down on the landing and he blazed off a round or two out through that window. Also one of the military army regiments was there – the Ferrets and they opened up with the Browning machine guns and I was attended to by thankfully Alan Alcorn – who was a chemist in Fivemiletown and Alan always had carried his own first aid kit with him, and thank God he did.

I also was attended by one of the medics from the Lancers who were there at the time, then I was whisked off to Tyrone County Hospital, Omagh by helicopter – they reckoned I would not have enough time to get to Musgrave Park Hospital because of the blood loss. At the hospital, I was under police guard, I had a bullet in my bowel and a bullet in the right leg and I was plastered with shrapnel from a rocket which exploded outside the window. That night they used mortars and machine gun and rockets RPG's and unfortunately for us, Eva and I were both hit at the same time. I also feel it is worthy of a mention to the local GP Dr Rutledge who attended us prior to being evacuated to hospital, due to her care and attention I may have been worse off today.

I lost the sight of one eye through that attack.

After a few days I was moved to the military wing of Musgrave Park Hospital. I remember that journey in the ambulance and

it was a nightmare, uncomfortable and I thought I was not going to make it. Then I had eight major operations in seven weeks and eventually got back to work. I worked for the post office and went back to the UDR in a lesser capacity. Then on 10th December 1976, my wife was leaving me out to work one morning and there was a trip wire at the end of our lane – so we were both quite badly injured in that explosion. Again I remember, I was wheeled into Tyrone County Hospital and this nurse who had dealt with me the first time, a girl called Kathleen Armstrong from Beragh, she looked at me and she said, are you back again?

I thought I could be back under happier circumstances. I was badly injured it really smashed up the left side that time and the wife she was injured as well. That was December and I was in plaster up until the following September and at stage there was not much future for us in that part of the world, so we bought a house in Portstewart and eventually we started a B&B guest house there and that is over 30 years ago, so we have been there since.

After those incidents we never got any counselling, and I know we could well have done with it because I would have been quite aggressive at times after that, which I know would not have been in my nature. I remember we had a dining out night in the officers mess in Omagh myself and Officer Lieutenant Alan Alcorn, we were both leaving at that time. I remember wakening up the next morning in bed and crying in bed for no apparent reason. Certainly I would have felt that counselling would have been good and would have been a bonus at that time.

Every year in November at Remembrance time I go and lay a wreath on Eva's grave at the Presbyterian Church in Lisbellaw. I have done that religiously now for over 30 years, and will continue to do so as long as I can.

Richard, Eva's husband has since died. After Eva died he moved to Germany and then he came back again and his father had a flat at Portstewart and he lived there and I visited him several times when he was there.

Victor Wilson

Being one of the first men to join the UDR in County Tyrone means Victor Wilson from Fivemiletown made a little bit of history, but despite attending incidents where there was tragic loss of life, Victor says he generally enjoyed his career and the time he served.

I joined the UDR and I got a certificate for being one of the first to join in Tyrone. At that time I was in C Company Clogher. I was in the B-men first and transferred over to the UDR Also during my time as a soldier, I was a pallbearer and helped to carry the coffin at Eva Martin's funeral. It was a very emotional day. Back then in 1974 and I knew Richard well and I knew Eva, many's a night she came out with us on patrol. I went on then a few years after that, there was the bomb on the Omagh to Ballygawley Road. A Landrover was blown up and four fellows were killed, blown up in it including Tommy Harron, Roger Neilly, John Rossborough, and Ronnie Alexander. We were taken that night to do guard on it for the scene was not cleared. One of my mates found a wedding ring and he gave it to one of the officers and he took it back to Omagh. Being a married man, I thought about it afterwards, it could have been any one of us that night, you never know, you never know your luck just.

Another man who was good to us was Major Roy Weir, the night he was shot I was doing guard in Clogher. I was off my stag and I saw him going out and next thing I heard the shooting and I did not know where it was coming from. Five minutes later a car drove in – and we all stood too, but it was Roy Weir - he was injured. He opened the car door and a big black Labrador dog jumped out and ran like hell. The dog wasn't seen again for three or four days. We brought Roy down to the Deanery base and got him sorted out as a couple of the fellows did first aid. The army fellows were there and we carried him to the helicopter and took him to hospital. I did have a really good enjoyable time when I was in the UDR. There were happy days, good days and some bad.

I was in UDR from the start to they disbanded it and I stayed for another year with Royal Irish.

My wife nor the children did not see too much of me. When you came home from work, you got your dinner and changed and back out to UDR for signing on at 7.30- 8.00pm and you were not home until 3.00am or 4.00am and generally it was a day's work and you were always watching yourself from morning till night – no matter where you went to – you were always looking over your shoulder.

Yes I would do it all again, I don't regret it and I did enjoy it especially the camps. We got away for the week and a bit of craic you had a bit of ease when you did go away, you were free to go and free to go to a pub with no worries looking over your shoulder at who came in through the door.

Charlie Hackett

The IRA raid at the Deanery UDR base at Clogher, was classed as one of the biggest raids during the Troubles, according to Charlie Hackett. Charlie recalls his experience of that night May 2nd, 1974, and being pallbearer at the funeral of Eva Martin who was killed in the attack.

On that particular night the raid commenced, I had gone in to the Deanery and we were having photographs taken for Identity passes. Eva Martin was in for the same thing and I had been speaking to her that night. I had gone home and was working in the Post Office in those days as we used to start at 6.00am or earlier indeed. I was just getting into bed when all hell broke lose, there was one explosion and then there was more explosions, small arms fire, rockets, mortars and the sky lit up.

I pulled on my uniform and I made my way straight to the Deanery, the thing was going full blast. Actually six of us went in to help, I was the first up the lane followed by Eddy Boyd, Andy Moore two bothers Jack and Jim Potter and Bob McKeown and Dr Rutledge, a lady doctor and I think it was very brave of her to drive up with all that going on. By the time we got in, unfortunately Eva Martin was dead and Allan Anderson had been very severely injured in the guts and Dr Rutledge did a great job there, and even when he was being carried out to the helicopter, she carried out the drip that he was on and handed it in to the helicopter. They took Allan off to hospital.

Eva Martin was a school teacher and her maiden name had been Eva Beacom and she had been married to a fellow named Richard Martin. He was actually a former pupil of hers and he worked in the Deanery office as company clerk, it was a terrible blow for him, as that happened when he was there, and he was with her.

Following that then we had to set about arranging what would have been one of the first military funerals that we were experienced. There came a man called Willie Sides from Omagh and he trained six of us as pallbearers. We carried her coffin at the funeral. There was a man called RSM Jack Pedden and he trained the firing party. The pall bearers were looking at the photograph front from left Sgt Maj Wills Owens; Col William Strong; Pvt Victor Wilson; Lace Corporal Albert Brown and rear row fro left : Sgt David Trimble; Sgt Wm Sides, Corporal Will Cowan ; Pvt Robert Brant and myself Charlie Hackett. The six on extreme right were pall bearers and others were involved in funeral.

I served several years in the UDR, some part time and some full time service. Many incidents happened over those years and one in particular which I will always remember.

Following that then, the six of us, who went in that night to give assistance, each got a letter to thank us very much for having gone in and helped out. Unfortunately I have lost that letter, but I would love to have it today. Three of these people have passed away since that day, including Andy Moore, Jack Potter and Robert McKeown. We have just got Eddy Boyd, Jim Potter and myself still and whether they have any of those letters I don't know. It would be a thing worth having today, when I look back retrospectively at this incident.

Abbreviations

UDR	Ulster Defence Regiment
PSNI	Police Service Northern Ireland
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
'B' Specials	Ulster Special Constabulary
'B' Men	Ulster Special Constabulary
TA	Territorial Army
IRA	Irish Republican Army
Provos	Provisional Irish Republican Army
INLA	Irish National Liberation Army
USC	Ulster Special Constabulary
QRF	Quick Response Force
SEFF	South East Fermanagh Foundation