

# THE NORTHERN IRELAND TROUBLES **KNEW NO** **BORDERS**







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# 'THE TROUBLES' WASN'T CURTAILED TO NORTHERN IRELAND

When you hear phrases coming from those directly impacted by Terrorism/'The Troubles' who are living outside of Northern Ireland such as;

"There is no acknowledgement or support for us".

"We are forgotten, our Government almost denies our very existence".

"We are needles in a big haystack and just aren't a priority".

"We feel second class victims because of our postcode or geographical location".

"Our views are not considered; our voice has been censored".

There is then a moral obligation to reach out and support such individuals, providing them with the necessary mentoring and

developmental support which will help empower them to feel more able to challenge Governmental policy around victims' issues and the visible inadequacies.

There is also a need for practical supports across the areas of health and well-being, advocacy, welfare and financial (including reparations and compensation packages) and wider social support. Over 3,700 lives were stolen/lost over the 'Troubles' years (1969-1998)

60% were murders committed republicans, 30% were murders by loyalists and 10% of deaths were attributable to the UK State and its' security forces with a small sub-section confirmed as being; criminal-based murder.

Approx 125 lives were taken/stolen across Great Britain as a result of Irish Republican terrorism.

Approx 85 innocents were murdered across the Republic of Ireland jurisdiction with circa 20 others murdered/killed who were involved in terror groupings.

In mainland Europe and across Belgium, Netherland and the then West Germany, 15 innocents were murdered as a consequence of The Provisional IRA's terrorist campaign.

Over 300,000 soldiers served in Northern Ireland over the course of Operation Banner (circa 30 years)

Circa 440 soldiers attached to British Army Regular Regiments and whose families came from Great Britain were murdered as a consequence of 'The Troubles,' and terrorist campaign.

Tens of thousands of others across Great Britain, Republic of Ireland and further afield have suffered physical and/or psychological injury, and their carers and families have also been impacted as have the first responders who were required to perform a role for which there was no previous blueprint.

The voices of these previously marginalised and overlooked victims must soar in the times ahead.

## A WORD FROM SEFF's DIRECTOR OF SERVICES - KENNY DONALDSON

The 'Northern Ireland Troubles Knew No Borders Project' has three component parts, the publication of a book incorporating the lived experiences of innocent victims/survivors, the production of a DVD and the construction of a Memorial Quilt.

These three sub-Projects culminate together in signalling our intent as an organisation to acknowledge, to honour and to support those innocents impacted by terrorism and other Northern Ireland Troubles related violence throughout the United Kingdom, The Republic of Ireland, mainland Europe and further afield.

As an organisation we want to put on record our thanks to those who worked tirelessly on this Project:

To Matthew Dawson and Lily Dane we say a heartfelt thanks for your work in carrying out the initial interviews and writing them up back in 2016, where individual victims and survivors entrusted you and in turn SEFF with their memories, hurts, fears and hopes. We do not underestimate how difficult in particular this process was for those sharing but also for those hearing.

I would also wish to recognise Ann Travers (RoI Advocate) and Gemma Canham (GB Advocate) for their efforts in 2022 in recording and writing up a further 20 testimonies providing the means for new people to share their lived experiences (in some cases for the first time in a public context)



Kenny Donaldson (SEFF's Director of Services with a SEFF Memorial Quilt in the background)

We also recognise Bob and Avril Lyons of Lyons Digital for their excellent work once again in constructing a DVD which does justice to all those who contributed to the Project and we thank all those involved in the construction of the new Memorial Quilt and their facilitator Sonia Johnston.

I also wish to recognise our Project Coordinator's role in overseeing delivery of the Terrorism knows No Borders Memorial Quilt Project (Joy Aiken). The Project also had two phases bringing us to the point where we now have a completed and beautiful quilt produced which honours those murdered/killed in Republic of Ireland and Great Britain and also others murdered in Northern Ireland and whose families are based in GB/Rol.

In addition, and subsequent to the production of this Memorial Quilt we also produced a quilt known as; Uniting Innocent Victims which brings together the 15 innocents of Provisional IRA terrorism inflicted across mainland Europe and which also contains patches remembering 16 innocents of ETA terrorism, perpetrated in Spain - this was a partnership Project with Spanish victims' group, COVITE. In this publication is also contained a number of mainland European cases.

Finally, I acknowledge all those who participated in the Project, who committed themselves to sharing their story and of having it represented in the various formats concerned. We do not underestimate how challenging this must have been for each and every one of you - we hope that the final product does justice to your departed loved ones and to those of you who continue to suffer physical or psychological injury as a result of Northern Ireland Troubles related events.

Within each of the sub-projects which comprise the overall Project



is hurt and a palpable feeling and sense of injustice. However there are also recurring themes of resilience, dogged determination, and humility and of dignified response.

Those remembered and/or who participated in the Project (wherever they came/come from) are not forgotten; their sacrifices are recognised and felt by all throughout the SEFF Family Network and beyond. Amongst participants were those born and bred in Republic of Ireland, Great Britain and mainland Europe but also Northern Ireland, and who were victimised here and subsequently then moved to other parts of the United Kingdom or the Republic of Ireland.

Innocent victims united we stand together. SEFF will continue its' programme of development aspiring to provide services and supports to victims and survivors of terrorism and other Northern Ireland Troubles violence, irrespective of borders. Geography should not determine access to necessary supports.

We have made good progress in recent years in developing this work and we have a number of personnel and services in place across peripheral areas, but much more remains to be done - and we are committed to this.

Yours,

Kenny Donaldson  
(Director of Services)

## REFLECTION FROM MATTHEW DAWSON

Working on this project for the South East Fermanagh Foundation (SEFF) has been an absolute privilege for me personally.

Being entrusted with conveying the stories of these brave people, who have found the strength to talk about the most appalling thing which has happened in their lives, is a great responsibility and one which I was pleased to have.

This is the first project on which I have worked with SEFF and, from speaking to the victims the group helps and hearing their testimonies, it is clear the work being carried out is most certainly not in vain.

Very often, the support provided by SEFF is the first they have been offered in 20, 30, sometimes over 40 years of pain and grief.

Their appreciation and gratitude for this help is evident, and the glittering appraisal from all the victims to whom I have spoken is a credit to all who work within SEFF.

I hope from reading these personal accounts of the people victimised by terrorist violence that you will gain an understanding of and insight to the far-reaching effects these incidents have had on these people's lives.

I also hope that sharing their stories will help them to heal their wounds, which are still very much there, very often lurking just beneath the surface and often exacerbated by the denial of justice being served on the perpetrators.

And I want to thank them for placing their trust in me by sharing

their story with me. Their stories are remarkable, and are tales of grace in the face of evil, bravery in the face of hardship, strength in the face of adversity and fearless pursuit of justice in the face of many hurdles and obstructions placed in front of them.

In the public sphere in Northern Ireland, there has been a great deal of talking and hand-wringing on the subject of what a victim is.

I can say with assurance that, from this project, there can be little doubt regarding who or what a victim is, and the people whose stories are told herein are true victims.

If anyone is in any doubt, they should read these people's accounts. Through no fault of their own, they had their loved ones taken away from them, were maimed or scarred by the actions of evil people, intent on causing misery.

This must not be forgotten. The stories of the people whose lives were irreversibly changed by forces outside their control must be heard and not pushed to the side.

Telling these stories is a small part of this.

These people have spoken out and it is incumbent upon all of us to speak up on their behalves as well.

**Matthew Dawson was employed as a Facilitator in 2016 and had a role in writing up the lived experiences of the first group of victims/survivors who participated in the Project. Lily Dane had also carried out some preliminary work.**

**For the second and most recent phase of the Project (2022) a further 20 contributions were added, facilitated by SEFF Advocates Gemma Canham (Great Britain) and Ann Travers (Republic of Ireland)**



Lord Norman Tebbit making his point

## FOREWORD FROM LORD NORMAN TEBBIT

At its heart terrorism is a confession by its perpetrators of the failure to achieve their aims by peaceable means.

It is the antithesis of benevolent or democratic effective government, whether it is the terrorism of Bader Meinhoff, the IRA or the often incoherent terrorism of ISIL.

The remarkable social and economic progress over the last thousand years or so by the various tribes and peoples of the British Isles has been achieved with little use of force in contrast to the experience of our fellow Europeans on the mainland, or indeed the peoples, races and cultures elsewhere in the world.

Certainly we have had the good fortune of having enjoyed the protection of a natural moat to define the boundaries of our compact national home. Nor should we underestimate the impact of the inability of King Henry The Eighth to sire a son, an inability which he wrongly blamed on his Queens. That precipitated his demands for an annulment or divorce, which was resisted by the Vatican and led to the great schism of the Christian Church. That led in turn to an English partnership of temporal and religious power which except in Ireland and for Cromwell's brief ascendancy saved us from religious wars in these islands.

The unhappy religious divide which remained in Ireland provided the cover for Sinn Fein/IRA to exploit violence in an effort to achieve what a political minority had failed to achieve by the democratic process.

Looking at the wider world we see the unhappy use of religion by political groups and dynasties to seize or hold political power often across ethnic boundaries. Much of the violence that has engendered is simply state sponsored terrorism some purposeful and successful in bending populations to the will of ruling families or dynasties, as in Syria.

The recent explosion of violent acts ascribed to devotees of ISIL particularly in France and Germany can hardly have been committed in the expectation of their perpetrators that they would bring down Christian society in favour of a particular cult of Islam. There is more there in common with the outer fringes of Irish Republican terrorism which was committed by the mentally deranged under the cover of political purpose.

It may be that we should cease to grant to those deranged beings used by ISIL the thrill of fame which is given by ascribing to their acts any motivation but insanity.

It was fortunate that Facebook and Twitter were not available as weapons at the height of the struggle against Sinn Fein/IRA.

Lord Norman Tebbit



## GB CONNECTED ATROCITIES / VICTIMS

# SIMON LENNOX

ROBERT LENNOX WAS A PART-TIME MEMBER OF THE UDR WHO WORKED AS A POSTMAN FOR HIS FULL-TIME JOB. HE WAS SHOT AND MURDERED BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA ON 2ND APRIL 1976 WHEN HE WAS DELIVERING LETTERS TO A SECLUDED HOUSE ON HIS POSTAL ROUTE. HIS SON SIMON SHARES HIS LIVED EXPERIENCES AND THE PAIN OF WHICH HE AND HIS FAMILY HAVE HAD TO NAVIGATE THROUGH.



A letter had been posted for the remote house to bring Robert out there. He was first shot with one bullet but his attackers then shot him 24 more times.

His son Simon was at primary school at the time, he was 8 years old. They were from a tiny village so the school was about 50m from their house.

He had gone to school in the morning. It was a normal day. He came back home for his lunch as usual. He got to the front door and the Reverend from their church was stood at the front door. He asked Simon if his mum was there as he had

been knocking. Simon said he would go and find her. She was doing the washing up. When Simon told her the Reverend was there, she said, "oh, what does that man want now?" She thought he was there to discuss her daughter's upcoming wedding.

They went into the living room. By this point Simon's mum had started to pick up that something wasn't right and she asked what had happened. The Reverend said, "Brace yourself Ina," and she just started wailing and collapsed into the sofa. She knew that something bad

had happened. Whatever Simon had heard, he somehow had some idea that his dad was going to be alright. He was hurt but he was going to be ok. This was not the case. He is not sure exactly when he knew his dad was dead.

The house was suddenly absolutely full of people, hoovering, making sandwiches, cups of tea. Simon was sent to stay with his godparents for several days. He remembers seeing his mum when he returned on the afternoon of the funeral. She was slumped in the chair and had clearly been crying for days.

She gathered her five children in the living room and, looking especially at Simon's brothers, age 18 and 20 at the time, said, "a bad thing has happened to us. Nothing bad is going to happen to anybody else, because that's not what your father would want." She took the lessons she had been taught at church very, very seriously, loving her neighbour, forgiveness and turning the other cheek. She was clear to her sons that if they did anything at all in the name of revenge that they would bring shame on their father's memory. On that day, Simon's mum set him on a very clear path for the rest of his life. A path of adhering to anything that he claimed to adhere to, as she did.

Simon's sister still got married at the end of April but it was far from the perfect day it should have been, with her dad not there to share the day

which should have been full of joy. She had picked her mum and dad's wedding anniversary. The wedding was not postponed as that was exactly the sort of thing those that killed Robert would have wanted.

Simon and his mum were the only ones left in the house. His brothers and sisters were studying and working away. They could have very easily become extremely co-dependent. She had to take on all roles of parenting and hold, not only her own grief but that of her children as well.

School, for Simon, was a distraction and became a routine that he could focus on to distract from his grief. Simon ended up going to a Masonic boarding school in Dublin for three years through a programme to support widows and orphans which allowed his relationship with his mum to remain close but not co-dependent. His world opened up.

On returning to live with his mum, Simon noticed that the joy that was in the house when his dad was alive, was much reduced. He had to become independent, learning to fix his bike by himself, something he would have done with his dad. Simon's sisters smothered him in kindness and care, stepping into a parenting role for him. One would drive his mum down to Dublin to visit him. The other taught him to drive.

When Simon moved to Manchester for university,

he was thrilled to be just Simon, not Simon defined by his religion, or Simon whose dad was murdered.

Robert had been a soldier in the Second World War serving in North Africa and Italy, knowing this, Simon finds it strange that he died three miles from his home. He should have lived his days out delivering letters and experiencing peace.

He was a member of the Masonic Lodge and was in the Orange Order and the Royal Black Institution, and was dedicated to his church, participating as a church warden. He was highly respected and trusted in the village. He was involved with running the bar at the UDR barracks. Like his wife, lived his life by the lessons he had learnt at church. He taught his children acceptance and love. He despised seeing injustice being done to anybody at all.

Robert's murder was never properly investigated. This still affects Simon's mum and is one of the only things that puts her into a negative mood, that no one has ever been held to account for killing her husband, and that no one was ever even charged, she does not feel as if she has closure. She knows that she could be walking around the shopping centre in Magherafelt on a Thursday and the man beside her could be the man who killed her husband.

# ALEX BLAIR

LANCE CORPORAL DONALD BLAIR WAS ONE OF 18 SOLDIERS WHO WAS MURDERED IN THE NARROW WATER MASSACRE, PERPETRATED BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA AND WHICH TOOK PLACE NEAR WARRENPOINT, COUNTY DOWN. HIS BROTHER ALEX SPEAKS OF THE IMPACT ON THE FAMILY AND HIS CONTINUED FIGHT FOR JUSTICE ON BEHALF OF HIS BROTHER.



Lance Corporal Donald Blair had wanted to join the army since he was a little boy. His uncles, mother and father had told him stories growing up of serving in the Second World War, Aden and Cyprus, and of his grandfathers who were killed in the First World War.

As soon as he could, he joined the army cadets in Kilsyth, Scotland, where he and his brother and sister grew up, and on turning 16, left school and travelled to Wales where he joined the Junior Leaders. He joined the Parachute Regiment at 18, having completed training. He served with A company 2nd Battalion in the USA with the Airborne Division and been stationed in

Singapore and Germany.

In 1979, Donald was on his fourth tour in Northern Ireland. On 27th August 1979, Donald, acting as radio operator for Major Peter Fursman, arrived on the scene at Warrenpoint in response to an initial explosion in which seven soldiers were killed. Approximately one minute after Donald arrived, there was a second explosion, killing eleven more soldiers, including Donald. The Provisional IRA had planted both bombs.

Two suspects were stopped by the Garda Síochána. A file was submitted to the Public Prosecution Service in relation to the two suspects but the PPS declined to prosecute. A



further file was submitted in 1995 in relation to one of the suspects, but once again, the PPS declined to prosecute. Until today, no one has been held accountable for the murder of Donald and his 17 colleagues.

A week before the massacre at Warrenpoint, Donald had been to visit his older brother Alex, as he always did when home on leave. Alex

found out about the massacre on the radio when he was on his way home from work, 18 soldiers had been killed in Northern Ireland. He knew one of them was Donald. That night his instinct was confirmed by the police who came to their home.

Their mother was completely broken by Donald's death and never recovered, she died almost three years to the day after Donald.

Alex dealt with the trauma by placing his energy into researching the IRA, what it was, what they were fighting for, what they were all about. He researched Irish History back to the 12th Century. In his eyes, Donald knew what his job entailed and knew the associated risks. He lived for his career in the military and was extremely dedicated to his family, taking any opportunity to visit them.

Alex's son and grandson have continued the military tradition in the family and every year Alex travels to Northern Ireland for the anniversary of his brother's murder. He has consistently searched for answers about the lack of investigation into the Warrenpoint Ambush, requesting meetings with the Irish Government and subsequent Scottish Justice Ministers. He does not believe he will ever get justice for his brother but he is still searching for answers.

# CAROLINE IRWIN

CORPORAL FRED (FREDRICK) IRWIN, A PART-TIME MEMBER OF THE UDR, WAS OFF DUTY WHEN HE WAS MURDERED BY THE IPROVISIONALRA ON 30TH OCTOBER 1979 AS HE DROVE TO HIS FULL-TIME JOB. FRED'S DAUGHTER CAROLINE WHO NOW LIVES IN SCOTLAND SHARES AN INTIMATE REFLECTION OF THE LEGACY SHE EXPERIENCES THROUGH HER DAD'S MURDER.



On the day Fred was killed, he prepared breakfast as usual for the family and then left for work. He had had to change his route to work due to threats to his life but always had to drive down Oaks Road before arriving. It was here he was shot. The coffin was closed at the funeral.

Fred had joined the UDR as money was tight but grew to love what he did. Caroline, his daughter remembers that, when her dad joined she thought that it couldn't be a good thing. One always heard stories of UDR soldiers being killed, and she feared the same for him. This fear increased day by day as she got older. She one day at work, her supervisor touched her on

the shoulder and it was like something freezing cold had touched her and she jumped up. She knew something had happened to her dad but no one told her exactly. She and her cousin were taken home and they ran into the house to the sound of her mother screaming and screaming. Caroline's mother was put on Valium, and other benzodiazepines for the rest of her life. Rather than receiving any proper help.

Fred left behind his wife and five children. He would take any opportunity in his limited free time to visit his family home, where his brother now lived, with the children. The village where Fred and his family lived was very mixed and

her dad was well liked by everyone. The sense of community, despite religious difference, was strong in the village. Even now, Caroline's catholic neighbours message her on Facebook when she posts about him. They remember that he was a great man who helped out those around him with building work and mechanics. Caroline's mum missed Fred every day and even when she remarried, she never stopped talking about him. She received only £5,000 in compensation for the loss. Money could never replace husband and this did not matter to her but to Caroline's eyes, the way this sum was broken down by the court meant that, because her dad didn't earn much, his life was worth



absolutely nothing.

After the funeral, Caroline turned to alcohol and partying to try to cope with the loss of her dad. She was full of hate for all Roman catholics. This hate has diminished greatly now but she was full of anger at the time. She became pregnant at 17 and when she had her daughter, she redirected her energy into giving her the best life possibly could. When her daughter was a year and a half, Caroline joined the UDR herself, as a form of tribute to her dad. She thinks she probably wouldn't have joined had he lived. Caroline's uncle Thomas became a father figure to her. He was her favourite uncle, but then tragedy struck the family again and he was also murdered by the IRA.

Fred's murder received very little investigation and to this day, his family has not received justice, Caroline still wants justice for her dad and does not let go of the hope that one day it might be realised. She can only picture her dad as how he was at the age he died, wearing his checked sports jacket. He was never allowed to grow old, with her mum, to be a grandfather, and even a great-grandfather. She cannot remember his voice.



# JOHN RADLEY

JOHN RADLEY JOINED THE IRISH GUARDS AND WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED AS A RESULT OF A PROVISIONAL IRA BOMB ATTACK ON CHELSEA BARRACKS CARRIED OUT IN 1981. JOHN CONTINUES TO BATTLE HARD ON VETERANS ISSUES AND THE NEED FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO PRIORITISE SUCH ISSUES.

John Radley was born in Birkenhead in 1959, in a deprived area. He had to take responsibility for himself to make it through school but by the time he was 17 he knew that there was nothing for him in that area so he made the decision to join the Merchant Navy. However, his dad wouldn't sign the papers to give him permission so he waited until he was 18 and joined the army. He

had wanted to join the Royal Military Police as he could see a route through to joining the civilian police when he left the army and was focused on building a career for himself and improving his chances in life. However, the Colour Sergeant convinced John to join the Irish Guards.

The basic training was both physically and mentally demanding, but John learnt discipline, respect and pride in himself and what he was achieving for himself. He was assigned to 2 Company, based at Chelsea Barracks, who were charged with public duties such as standing guard outside Buckingham Palace. John's dad was unhappy that he had joined the army, but though he would not say so, was proud of his son. His mum was also, and would show pictures to anyone that would look of John and his younger brother who also joined the Irish Guards.

On 9th October 1981, John was on light duties due to having been badly bitten by a spider during a training exercise. One of the men who was supposed to be on guard that day hadn't shown up so John was put on guard at the very last minute. The next day, when they came off guard, it was raining so all of the detachments were transported back to the barracks by coach. John could have sat anywhere. He sat next to the window with his hand against it, leaning on it. As the coach approached Chelsea Barracks, a nail bomb, packed full of Semtex was detonated by members of the Provisional

IRA. Some of the 6-inch nails had been bent in half, like boomerangs, so that when the bomb was detonated, they spun through the air to cause the maximum amount of damage. John's left hand on the window saved his life, stopping nails spinning towards his head. A piece of glass went into his left eye. One nail went through his neck and got stuck in his back. Another went into his head. His jaw was smashed to pieces and his eardrum was completely destroyed. Two civilians were killed.

John's brother had been due to meet him outside the barracks but luckily did not wait for him and had left. John's body went into self-preservation mode, his heart rate slowed down, and when rescuers entered the coach, he was presumed dead as his pulse could not be located. His last thought before he had lost consciousness was for his wife Pat and who would look after her.

He had been left on the coach due to the need to care for the injured but he finally came around and managed to sit up. Two comrades got him off the coach and he was taken in an ambulance to St Thomas's Hospital. He woke up in intensive care.

John's mum found out by accident that her son was in the hospital. His neighbour Steve had been on guard and Steve's mum asked her to call to find out if he was alright. They were assured that Steve was not badly hurt but on finding out

that she was Mrs Radley, she was told that John was seriously injured and that a car would be sent for her. She hadn't even known he was on guard. John remained in hospital for two and a half months. He struggled with losing his active lifestyle that he had lived during his time in the regiment.

When he was able to rejoin his regiment, John was no longer able to fulfill his usual duties as he could not see properly from his left eye. Therefore, he joined the regimental police. John felt, despite the issues he began to face, that he had come home. He put his energy into helping those colleagues who ended up in the prison to regain their life in the military and into setting a positive example for them.

However, at this point, John was seriously struggling with his mental health, he needed help,, but he didn't know what help he needed. There was no help available for him, no counselling, no readjustment, things were really difficult. If he wanted to leave in the morning and just go home, he was left to his own devices. This struggle manifested itself in strange behaviours such as randomly painting the steps of the guardroom one day, John reflects on this as a cry for help.

Not long after leaving hospital, John went to the pub with Pat, Steve, and his wife. While the others went to the bar, Steve's wife turned to

John and said, “if that had happened to Steve, I wouldn’t have stayed with him.” That was one of the worst things anyone could have said to him at this moment. It made him realise that not only was he not going to be the same, but people would not treat him the same. His face was scarred. Until this day, he hates looking at himself in the mirror. People didn’t, and still don’t, look at him in the same way as before the bombing.

John left the army in 1989. The decision was taken out of his hands. He had gone to Aldershot under the impression that he was going to be promoted again. The doctor had forgotten about him and was about to leave when he saw John and called him in. He sat down and the doctor immediately told him that he was applying for his discharge. He did not even examine him. John appealed to a Captain in the Irish Guards but was told that the only reason he was being discharged was that his surname begins with an R. He walked out of the Regimental Headquarters and just stood there and cried. He could not comprehend what was happening. His whole way of life was ripped from under his feet. John maintains that the IRA destroyed his life, but not only the IRA, the Ministry of Defence destroyed his life too.

When John first left the army, he could have very easily have gone completely off the legal path. He was tiptoeing along a very thin line between

staying within, and breaking the law. He felt like he was in a state of suspended animation. He tried to move forward but found this extremely difficult. John envisions being able to use what he has learned with his own struggle with his mental health to set up a helpline to assist other veterans in need. He feels he, and his fellow veterans, have been completely abandoned by the Ministry of Defence.

Pat has supported John and stuck by his side through the ups and downs of his life following the bombing, through thick and thin. John’s struggles with his mental health have affected his children. He, at times, considered taking his own life, but he could make his wife or his children suffer.

Three people were convicted of the Chelsea Barracks bombing in 1986. For John, this meant a semblance of closure for him. One of the bombers, Paul Kavanagh, was released following the Good Friday Agreement in 1999, John believes that this has validated his actions in carrying out the bombing. It said to him that what happened to him did not matter to those making the Good Friday Agreement. John still has days where he struggles to get out of bed, but he tries to treat every day as a blessing and to give his life value despite what was done to him.

# MINA JADEJA

MINA JADEJA SUFFERED SERIOUS PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL INJURIES AS A RESULT OF THE PROVISIONAL IRA BOMBING OF HARRODS IN LONDON ON 17TH DECEMBER, 1983.

Before that day when the bomb went off, I was very ambitious, a go-getter and lived life to the full. There were no barriers, nothing could stop me. I had been promising my nephews I'd take them to see Father Christmas at Harrods, but I had a really bad cold so my sister said she would come with me. The boys were really excited and we got into Harrods and they approached Father Christmas and let him know their lists.

After a while we decided to go and get something to eat. The main entrance was so chock-a-block that we decided to exit onto Hans Crescent, as it looked a little less crowded.

There was a big white stretch limousine out there and I teased the boys it was for me.

The chauffeur was waiting for the lady behind me and he heard me and, as he laughed, he turned, and just then the explosion happened.



Mina Jadeja standing next to the Memorial tablets recognising those impacted by the Harrods bomb of 17th December 1983.

All I remember at that time is everything went into another world. There was smoke, glass shattered, and it was deadly silent. Within seconds, I knew I was hurt but I instinctively covered up my younger nephew.

By the time I got up I realised I was cut everywhere, there was blood everywhere. Then panic set in because I couldn't see my sister or my older nephew and that feeling was worse than seeing all the blood around me.

After that I don't know what happened, I don't know how I got into hospital. When I woke up, I had vague memories of being taken into an operating theatre. Shrapnel had gone into my elbow and it was shattered, half of my arm was missing, there was shrapnel in my neck, so there were a lot of operations.

I knew I was on a ward with my sister and two nephews and we had a lot of visitors. I think that cheered us up.

Then I started trying to build my life again, so there was never a question of who was responsible, it was just build your life, get into a job again. That's all I was being told and I blanked a lot of the stuff and thought I was moving on.

I had no help when I checked out of the hospital; nobody looked in to see if we were still dead or alive. So we knew we were on our own. It was hard. There were a lot of restrictions with my neck movements, I had glass pieces coming out of my head and scalp for months so I'd wake up and my pillows would be red with blood. My sisters were picking pieces of glass out of my scalp for months.

For 15 years there were so many difficulties but I didn't see them as difficulties or obstacles, I saw them as challenges. I retrained as a teacher and I loved teaching, but it became problematic, so I decided to retrain again as a beautician but that fell through and I got different office jobs.

In 1999, I went to Euro Disney with my company, which was too much. I kept going for three days with a lot of difficulties but when I got back to London I just collapsed with pain. It had just taken over and that's the last time I worked.

So the 17 years since have been hard. I felt like I'd been in a prison whereas the perpetrators should have been in a cell by now. I didn't leave home, my social life finished, my career finished. I knew in the past, though, that it was me who sorted things out and that's what gave me the strength to break out of those walls and see if I could get some help.

I wrote to the Prime Minister but he passed my letter to the Foreign Office and meetings there were a waste of my time because I kept being told this was my problem. It felt like a kick in the teeth. I thought this is my government. If they don't help me, where do I go from here?

However, I then met a lady who connected me with SEFF and I feel I don't need to look back now. It's such a comfort; I don't feel alone anymore, which I once did.

I will talk to whomever, at whatever level and I want to get help. I know I've got battles to fight, I might win some, I might lose some, but there's no going back to that 17 years of self-imprisonment, because that was no life.

I will not let the terrorists win. They have taken away a chunk of my life, but they won't take away all of my life.

# CRAIG AGAR

CRAIG AGAR IS THE SON OF CPL THOMAS AGAR, 1ST BATTALION ROYAL REGIMENT OF FUSILIERS, WHO WAS MURDERED BY A PROVISIONAL IRA CAR BOMB NEAR TO THE LAKELAND FORUM IN ENNISKILLEN ON 18TH MAY, 1984

My memories of my dad are of a happy man who loved nature, loved life. His world was me, his family and the army. He loved rugby, he loved fishing. My memories are of us around a lake fishing and him teaching me about nature, about animals, respect for others, respect for the surroundings you live in.

He was a gentle man who stood by his principles and before he died he taught me a lot of stuff I still carry with me today. He was a good man - my hero.

I first realised my dad had been killed in the night time. It was just a normal day until a knock at the door in the early evening. My mum answered the door, there were two CID detectives and a couple of squaddies and she instantly knew why they were there. All they said was, 'Mrs Agar', and she dropped to the floor. She started crying and screaming.

I don't really know why but I just somehow sensed that my dad was dead.

The next few days were a bit of a blur. I didn't really understand what was going on. As a child, nothing is explained to you. You're forgotten and I think a lot of problems come from that fact.

At eight years old you don't understand everything you've known for those eight years has gone and you don't know why. Your dad's gone, now your mum has to be the breadwinner, and she struggled so much because the support wasn't there.

We were literally in an apartment and left to get on with it. My dad sacrificed the ultimate price and then you're forgotten.

She got my dad's pension but was taxed on it, so we didn't make ends meet. She couldn't afford to move on and find a new man that she could love and possibly remarry. My dad's pension would then disappear and it put so many constrictions on our life.

Mum was scared of the postman coming in case of letter bombs. From the age of eight I wasn't allowed to open the post in case you see a fat stain in the corner of the envelope, and the fear that puts in you as a child: you think, 'they're after me, they're after my mum.'



Craig Agar and his daughter Demi

My life would have been so different if my dad hadn't been killed when I was eight. We had plans to emigrate to Canada but that could no longer happen. My Mum did everything she could to provide for me, meaning she often went without herself.

It was tough. I went to school and the other children didn't really understand. I was bullied a lot and because of what had happened to me I couldn't make friends. I was and I still am a loner sort of person. I can't let anybody in.

Thirty one years on, I'm a forty year old man and still don't have justice or accountability.

I can't move on in my head until I get answers, until there is justice, until terrorists are not protected and are actively hunted down and imprisoned. If my dad had been walking down the street and been stabbed by a passer-by then

I would have answers and I'd probably have justice, but because my dad was a soldier, who was off duty, and who was murdered by PIRA it somehow seems to be justified, as if I don't need to have justice.

If I had justice then maybe I could find it easier to accept terrorists holding top positions in government.

Even the Chief Constable talks about murders in the past. Is there a timescale? Is there a cut off limit? If I murder someone and get away with it for 20 years, does it become irrelevant?

If you leave your house to go and murder someone you should have to accept that, if you're caught and punished, then you're going to spend the rest of your life in prison, not two years, not get off for St Patrick's Day to celebrate with your family. I can't celebrate Christmas Day with my dad, I can't celebrate his birthday, I can't celebrate anything. He's never seen his granddaughter; he's never seen his grandson.

All of those things have been robbed from me and my family.

It seems the people who've gone out of their house to murder, maim and destroy lives have not only got away with it but they've been rewarded for three decades of murder, violence and hatred. Until I get justice I can't move on.

# SHEILA AGAR

SHEILA AGAR'S HUSBAND, TOM, WAS MURDERED BY A PROVISIONAL IRA CAR BOMB NEAR THE LAKELAND FORUM IN ENNISKILLEN ON 18TH MAY, 1984. WHEN ATTACKED TOM WAS AN OFF DUTY SOLDIER ATTACHED TO THE 1ST ROYAL REGIMENT OF FUSILIERS

Tom was stationed in Ballykelly and he'd been on a fishing trip for a full week.

The Friday was the final day and they had just had the prizegivings for the competition, they went to get back into the van and the bomb went off.

My husband was in the front with Bob Huggins and they were killed instantly. Peter Gallimore died exactly five months later from his burns and Clive died a couple of years ago, but he lost both legs as a result of the explosion.

I was living in Newcastle and, before he'd gone to Ireland, he'd cleaned out this walk-in cupboard we had and put everything in place.

But while he was away, everything had just got shoved into this cupboard so I phoned my friend and asked if she'd help me clean this cupboard out before he got home.



Sheila Agar pictured in Enniskillen Royal British Legion in May 2016 where a special service was held and a plaque/photo montage unveiled to her husband Thomas and his 1RRF colleagues.

We'd gone out and then came back and we sat down and the news was on and they said that four off duty soldiers had been involved in a bombing incident, and they even said Enniskillen, and I never took any notice of it. I just said, that's where Tom is, and I never thought any more about it.

I was expecting my cousin down at the house and when the door went, I just opened the door and walked away, I didn't look to see who was there. Nobody followed me and I went back and there was an army officer and a Police woman on the doorstep and they just said there had been an incident and Tom had been killed.



Sheila and her husband Thomas Agar

What came next was just a big blur and then it was the funeral. Tom was from Coventry, so we had to travel down there. It was just a big military service, where they take over.

There wasn't a lot of support after the funeral. You had to phone them all the time, they didn't keep in touch with you. When Tom was in Ireland it was always in the back of your mind that something could happen, but you never thought it was going to happen to you, it always happens to someone else. He was going to come out of the army and I had moved back from Germany, but then we decided there was nothing out there for him so he signed up again and that's how he was still in Ireland.

At first, because he was away so often, that means an army wife makes the decisions and when it first happened I didn't miss him, I missed his phone call, because he'd phone us every single night. It was an even bigger loss for my son Craig because he's an only child and he was a daddy's boy.

Three years ago, the Historical Enquiries Team got in touch with Craig, and it's Craig who's been behind us coming back over because he wants to know who killed his dad and he wants to know the ins and outs of it, whereas I couldn't tell him, because I didn't know.

Because such a length of time had gone, it was 31 years since I came back here and by that time you've got on with your life. Before I came back the first time, I thought I was completely over losing him, but when I got here I realised I wasn't, and I'm still not.

As far as getting people brought to justice, I don't think it's ever going to happen. The inquiry has just stopped. Craig is now pushing with the help of SEFF and if it hadn't been for SEFF we wouldn't have known anything.

The first time we came over, we were brought down to the car park where it had happened and we laid a wreath. Two men out of the British Legion came over to us and they said they would look after the wreath for us and then they said they would work with SEFF to allow a plaque to be erected in memory of the four soldiers, and that's why I came over again, and I felt happier going over the second time.

I intend to keep on coming back. Enniskillen is just such a beautiful place. Now I know where he died, Enniskillen is a different place to me now.



# CHRISTINE HUGGINS

CHRISTINE HUGGINS' HUSBAND ROBERT, AN OFF DUTY MEMBER OF THE 1ST BATTALION ROYAL REGIMENT OF FUSILIERS WAS MURDERED BY A PROVISIONAL IRA CAR BOMB NEAR TO THE LAKELAND FORUM IN ENNISKILLEN ON 18TH MAY, 1984



I met my husband when I was 16, in 1974. I met him at the local disco and you can say it was a whirlwind romance.

We met in the February, got engaged in July and married in November. I had my first child within a year of being married and we moved to Northern Ireland for our first posting.

He was the doting dad, he loved the army, he lived for it, but he was also a good husband and

a good dad. We moved on to Cambridge then Germany and back to Northern Ireland, where the tragedy happened.

I'd been married 10 years by that time and had three children. I'd gone on an event with the battalion and I stood up and made a speech to the other wives saying how calm I'd found Northern Ireland. Little did I know that within four months my husband was going to be killed at a place I'm telling other wives is calm.



Robert proudly displaying his catch

The four lads had gone to the Forum and done a week's fishing and unfortunately they had a mercury tilt bomb put into the van by PIRA terrorists, which blew them up.

At 4 o'clock, we were in Limavady shopping with my son and my friend Lynn. It was a lovely day and you know when you say somebody's walked over your grave, I said 'I'm really cold, can we cross the road to get into the sun?'. She said, 'It's roasting', and I said 'I'm really cold'.

I got the bus home and sat the children down to tea and listened to the news and it said two off duty soldiers had been killed in a car bomb explosion and I heard Bob's voice say, 'Christine, that's me, you do understand?'.

I went to Annette's house, Peter Gallimore's wife, and we stood having this discussion on the doorstep and I was quite hysterical. Then the families' officer turned up, because they were looking for me. People don't understand the devastation that goes through your family after something like this happens and I know they sign up to be in the army but they don't sign up to be killed and they definitely don't sign up to be murdered.

Not only have I suffered and his children have suffered, it was his mother and his brothers and sisters, it's the ripple effect in the pond and it just goes on and on. Everybody's suffering and you want, I won't say justice because you don't think justice is going to do anything, but you want answers for peace of mind.

I just want answers to the questions of why were they murdered. They weren't even on duty, they were fishing. They were like anybody else, doing something they loved in their spare time.

If there is evidence, why have we not been told of who did it, just to put closure to it?  
That's what we need.

Life afterwards was very different. The army were very good, but once your feet are on the floor, you are left to your own devices, and I did find that very traumatic because it was like being put on a desert island. I was married at such a young age and I didn't know what to do.

I never remarried because I didn't want to risk going through all that pain again - what happens if there's another tragedy?

There's nothing, nobody comes to see if you would like counselling, you're just left to try and cope on your own. But then we met SEFF, and I can't say anything better than that really.



Robert with his Mum and Auntie

You come over here and there's so many people who understand your situation and if we were back in England, would people understand?

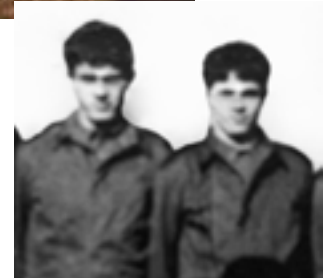
I spoke to people when I went back last time and they're like, 'oh right really, is that really still going on over there?'

So it would be nice to have something like SEFF on mainland Britain to help other people like me because there must be thousands of us out there that haven't had the help, that need the help, just to be told that somebody will listen to you and understand you and can help you.

# KEITH HUGGINS

KEITH HUGGINS, FROM CHESHIRE, LOST HIS BROTHER BOB HUGGINS IN A BOMB EXPLOSION IN ENNISKILLEN IN 1984. HE AND OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS PAID A FIRST VISIT TO THE LAKELAND TOWN OF ENNISKILLEN IN 2015 TO SEE WHERE HIS BROTHER WAS MURDERED.

Keith Huggins in training firing pose



Left to right, Robert and Keith Huggins

Bob, 27 and one on 10 siblings had been fishing in the Sealink Classic and was always very interested in fishing; we fished from the age of six or seven. It was just in our blood. At the time I knew Bob was fishing but I didn't know where. He fished all over the place - in different Countries.

I was absolutely devastated when my eldest brother came to the house and told me what had happened. At first I didn't really believe him but my brother said, turn on the telly then and you'll see. It was a massive shock when I saw and heard it what had happened.

I served in the Army in Northern Ireland twice (having done two tours). There was always a threat but you still don't believe it will happen to you or come to your door.

What has happened has happened, we can't change that now.

Nothing will ever change it but I don't blame the Irish for killing my brother.  
I don't know who killed him.

Whilst over this weekend\* (September 2015) I travelled by boat past the scene of the tragic

event. I thought that's the Forum; there's the carpark. I did not know what to expect.

Then on the day of the Remembrance Service laid on by SEFF, we as families laid a wreath and crosses facing the Royal British Legion. The emotions came flowing back. I felt very upset but took some comfort in hearing that the Legion were now going to look after that wreath for us. After Bob's death, I then lost his mum and sister, time has not made any difference.

Bob was not only my brother; he was also my best friend. His loss was huge for us all, none more so than his wife Christine and their sons. But we always stuck together, we have lost a lot. I do take some solace in knowing that Bob would've been happy prior to the explosion, he was doing what he loved best - that was fishing. I still fish to this day that was a special bond that we enjoyed together.

I have treasured memories of his brother, when we fished in Germany together, when we engaged in activities such as potholing and climbing. Everything a normal kiddy would do. All these memories are in my heart.

I do still want to know what happened. I know a bomb went off under his van. I would like to know who did it and why. If I don't get the answers now before I die I will ask God when I get up there. I want the peace process to continue in

Northern Ireland, for life to get better and for everyone involved.

We are overwhelmed by the welcome we have received when on our trip to Enniskillen, the way the people had spoken to us and welcomed us with 'an open heart'. You would think you had known them for years and years and not just over three days.

All the people we met had all lost somebody the same. They know exactly how we feel; you understand that you are not on your own in these tragedies or these murders.

The hospitality was just incredible and I am so glad that I came. I've got to take my hat off to everyone who helped us here. My family really appreciates the work SEFF has done.

It had been one of the things on my bucket list before I died - to come over to Enniskillen to see where my brother died.

The visit put a little bit in perspective as to what I wanted to know, but it's not yet the full picture.

*\*The families of the first regiment of Fusiliers murdered and injured were invited over for a Fermanagh remembers you themed weekend*

# KEVIN HUGGINS

KEVIN HUGGINS' BROTHER BOB, AN OFF DUTY SOLDIER STATIONED IN GERMANY, WAS MURDERED BY A PROVISIONAL IRA CAR BOMB NEAR THE LAKELAND FORUM IN ENNISKILLEN ON 18TH MAY, 1984.



Left to right:  
Lynn and Keith Huggins, Kevin with two sisters.

Bob was based in Bonn in Germany when he went over to Enniskillen on a simple fishing trip. He'd made all his family aware that he was going there solely for the fishing trip; there was nothing military about it. We were told he'd finished the fishing competition along with the others and when returning to the vehicle the IRA bomb placed under the sump of his vehicle went off. He was killed instantly.

I can remember the night his commanding officer called at my home and told my mum what happened, and that was the first time I'd ever seen my mum cry. Your mum's always the strongest person you know and she really was the strongest person, so when I saw my mum cry it brought home what had happened as she sat down and told us all individually that my brother Robert had been killed on a simple fishing trip.

I grew up without a big brother. My brothers grew up without a friend, my sisters grew up without a big brother, but most importantly my mum lost her son, which in itself is a tragedy.

We've had to watch his wife raise three kids, and she's done an excellent job, but our Bob hasn't been there to see any of it, which is a tragedy.

It was the 18th of May, 1984 when they murdered him. It's prominent in my life because it's my birthday on the 19th, the day after. And for a few years after his death, I felt cheated of my birthday.

On the night it happened, the following morning everybody got me a card, and this is my selfish feelings, but nobody wrote on it, because no one could write on it. No one could wish me a happy birthday, because I wasn't going to have one. Then for a few years after, everyone was wondering do they send Christine a card or do they send Kevin a birthday card, and it was horrible.

I was 22 at the time. I was at home, living with mum. Losing Bob like we did, it had an impact on all the family. He'd often write home and tell us where he was, what he was doing, the places that he'd visited, the countries that he'd served in, particularly Cyprus. She was very proud of him, not just as a son but as the man he turned into, the soldier that he'd become.

He was a good lad but I always feel cheated that I didn't have a brother that I could speak to about brother stuff. When he was home he had a lot of time for you. He'd say, 'ask me anything you want', about girls or whatever, but I never had that chance.

The night before we buried him he was brought home and he was left in our family parlour.

He stayed there overnight and the whole family came down and everyone said goodbye to him. There's always things you feel like you didn't say when he was alive and you can't say them when he's gone.

When they buried my brother, and the way they buried him, it was a very proud moment. There was a lot of military staff there, all his friends, they were all there to say goodbye to him, but we never got that chance. Christine never got the chance. It wasn't a natural death, he was murdered.

He was taken from us unnecessarily, for the wrong reasons. He wasn't there as a soldier, he was there as a fisherman. For a long, long time, I hated the Irish, but that's me being selfish and personal because it's not the Irish, it's the few mindless individuals who saw fit to take my brother away from me and the rest of his family, from his wife and his children.

It can make you bitter and angry but, as time goes on, you can learn to, not forgive, but forget for a little while.

It's now been 32 years and it still leaves a lot of damage. I realise that now I've got involved with SEFF, who are a Godsend for helping people who suffer in silence, because there's no one else to help them.

# LYNN HUGGINS

LINDA HUGGINS, FROM ENGLAND, THE WIFE OF KEITH AND SISTER-IN-LAW OF BOB, WHO TRAGICALLY LOST HIS LIFE IN A VAN BOMB IN ENNISKILLEN IN 1984, SAID SHE REMEMBERS VERY CLEARLY HER LATE BROTHER-IN-LAW, WHOM SHE DESCRIBED AS "A WONDERFUL PERSON".

I can remember being woken up in the early hours of the morning by Keith's brothers. I recall them saying "Bob's dead."

Keith just couldn't take it in. He put on the TV to know what had happened; he was watching the news to find out what had gone on. He was totally and utterly devastated.

I was gobsmacked; I could not believe what had happened and was so shocked. It was a dreadful blow. The Huggins are a very close family and we needed to draw on all of that over the difficult period that followed.

Keith's dad was killed when he was about six and then Bob's mother loses her son, it was terrible for her. It was devastating for the whole family.



Lynn and her husband Keith Huggins

For Chris and Bob's boys, it was unreal to think that they were going to grow up without their dad. He was very close to his sons, he idolised his lads.

Up until this weekend (September 2015) I had never been to Ireland before. I've always wanted to come, it was very, very emotional to go where it happened. You think you wouldn't get emotional now 31 years down the line, but you do.

I know Keith still misses his brother; you can see it in his eyes. My husband and Bob idolised the fishing, even before they were ever in the Army they went fishing as kids.

There was always a competition: Who could catch the most or the biggest?

When he 'is catching', he thinks of Bob.

It was comforting that Bob was fishing on the day that he was murdered. Keith was glad that he was doing something he loved when he was taken away. It made it a little bit more bearable for him.

I am extremely glad that I came to Enniskillen. It affected me emotionally because with Keith and Chris, I have been there to support the both of them this weekend.

Hopefully being here is helping Keith come to terms with it a bit more; and it enabled me to say 'a personal goodbye' to Bob. I did this at the church and when they laid a wreath.

I found the people of Enniskillen wonderful. No matter where we went or who we met, they were wonderful. I do feel bitter about what happened.

They have taken away one of my brother-in-laws, why?

My girls lost an uncle, I lost a brother-in-law and Keith had lost a brother. I would like to get answers and ask; why did they do it? Why pick on the British Army.



Lynn with her husband Keith and Christine  
(Robert Huggins' widow)

They were only doing their job at the end of the day. I feel that we would get some closure if we got answers: You can put the end at the end of it; you can move on; we would know why then.

There is that missing link and I want to know why? Why should they get away with murder? I believe they should be punished for what they have done.

When I think back I remember Bob laughing. When I last saw Bob he had a cup of tea in his hand and he was laughing and joking.

I have wonderful memories, Bob was a wonderful person. The boys are a credit to Chris and Bob. They are amazing.



# SHARON MAXWELL

SHARON MAXWELL, FROM MANCHESTER, A NIECE OF BOB HUGGINS, ONE OF THREE SOLDIERS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN A BOMB IN ENNISKILLEN IN 1984, REMEMBERS HIM FROM "BEING A LITTLE ONE.

I was 10 years old when it happened. I have never liked the terminology of murder. I would always say that my Uncle Bob "was taken".

Uncle Bob used to have an Aran cardigan and I recall as a child playing with the toggles on it. We were close as families and my mother was alive when the news first came through.

My mum's brother knocked on the door; he never came to visit, so I kind of knew something must be wrong; and he told my mum and I just remember it destroyed her.

It was like disbelief. She kept saying are you sure? It was all in the paper, my brother was a paper boy at the time and he had to deliver the newspapers with his uncle's death all over the front of it.

I can still see the paper shop, with all the newspapers lined up, and I could see the pictures, it's not a nice memory to have. That's not the memory I want of my Uncle Bob.

I was only a little one at the point my uncle was taken, he was very gentle natured.

I was ten years old so did understand what was happening; I knew he wasn't coming back.

My mum had told me obviously. My Mum then shipped me out. I went to stay with another family member. She just couldn't cope, which is fully understandable.

I was not allowed to go to the funeral and had to stay with family members who I did not really know. My uncle Bob missed out on too much.

He's missed out on his boys and he has missed out on everything.

I also saw what it did to Nan. A part of Nan and Christine did die when uncle Bob was taken.

Our visit to Fermanagh has been very overwhelming. You feel like part of the family.

It was 'a bit strange' being down there where it happened. And as much as it was not a nice place to be, I do not mean Enniskillen; I am referring to going to where it happened but it was 'nice to know where it was'.

I am very grateful to the people we have met. We honestly feel like we've known them forever. In meeting others who'd experienced similarly it did not feel like it just happened to you.

There are so many people whose lives have been destroyed - not just our family - it's so unfair.

We were robbed of uncle Bob and he was robbed of his children, of watching them grow into the fantastic boys that they are. His widow Christine is amazing and is so strong..

Nobody should have to go through life like that. No child should have to go through life without their dad or their mum. It's just wrong.

Every year on the anniversary, I don't phone Christine but instead send her a text message saying, 'thinking of you today.'

She knows she's not on her own but time never fully heals - especially in the way we lost uncle Bob. He was a right handsome fella. I often wonder what he would look like now?

It was important to come across to Northern Ireland with Christine; it was definitely important to be with her.

She has been there for me a lot and I will always be there for her, families must 'stick together.' When someone dies from natural causes, you have a little bit of time to prepare, we did not have that.

When you get that call - the knock on the door from my mum's brother, you can't take it in. It's a massive shock to your system. You do not think it is going to happen to your family.

We are not on our own, there are so many people, SEFF's Remembrance Service held in Enniskillen Presbyterian Church was attended by people who have all gone through similar experiences, and the Church was packed.

My uncle Bob in his uniform; he was going fishing; it shouldn't have happened.

# ANNETTE GALLIMORE

ANNETTE GALLIMORE'S HUSBAND PETER, A SOLDIER IN THE FIRST BATTALION OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF FUSILIERS, SUFFERED MAJOR BURNS AND OTHER SERIOUS INJURIES FOLLOWING A PROVISIONAL IRA CAR BOMBING NEAR THE LAKELAND FORUM IN ENNISKILLEN ON 18TH MAY, 1984. HE DIED EXACTLY FIVE MONTHS LATER OF HIS INJURIES.

Peter got up in the early hours of the Monday morning at the start of the week of the fishing competition, gave me a kiss, knelt at the side of my bed and said, 'if you don't want me to go, then I won't, you just have to say the word'.

He went to the competition, two days later he turned 27 years old and he rang me on the Thursday to say he'd won the biggest catch of the day and he said he'd see me tomorrow. On the Friday, I took our son, Sam, on his go-kart to the shops and, as I was on my way back, this awful feeling came over me and stopped me in my tracks, like something bad had happened.



Gallimore family, Annette, Peter and Sam

I just stood there in the street and started to cry. I didn't know why. I remember getting back in the house and everything being quiet, I was thinking something's not right, and I was sitting on the sofa and could hear the clock's pendulum ticking. Christine Huggins, the wife of Bob, who was on the trip with Peter, knocked on the door and said 'have you heard there's been an accident?'

She said two off duty soldiers had been killed.

I said I wouldn't worry about it, it won't be them and we'd be the first ones to know.

I started thinking then, maybe it is them and then I got a knock on the door and that was it.

They said Peter was alive but badly injured, so they took me to Musgrave Hospital. When I got there they said he'd been talking to the nurses and I thought at least he was alright.

Then they said they wanted to have a chat with me. They said he'd been in a car bomb and he'd suffered bad burns, and the engine had landed on his leg and it was too badly shattered to save and asked my permission to have it amputated.

They told me to be prepared for a shock when I saw him, that he wouldn't be as I remembered him. I walked through the door and it was horrible, but I had to pretend everything was alright and put a smile on my face and I said, 'are you alright love?'. And he went, 'yeah'. They'd slit him either side because the body expands, and his head was huge. My legs went from underneath me. When they stabilised him, they couldn't deal

with the burns, so he got taken to Woolwich in England and we followed.

We stayed within the hospital and it was just constant then for five months. He had his first heart attack a couple of months later.

He had another amputation; they took it off because it developed gangrene.

He had burns on his hands, because he had put out his face, but his face was ok once they cut all the black skin off. It was his torso which was worst affected and in them days there wasn't the artificial skin that there is now so they were patching what they could. The smell was horrendous.

When he was in Guy's Hospital, and this is a man who couldn't even bend his arms or eat properly and he was all wired up, he was in the ICU and I went in to see him and he just sat up, ripped the wires out and just shouted, 'the b\*\*\*\*\*ds have got me'. Then he lay back, eyes closed, motionless.

They resuscitated him and I just stood in the corridor screaming my head off like a girl. They brought him round, but he was very weak.

The doctors wanted to put a pacemaker in and I said, 'don't tell him, he's my husband, he's already been through enough', but this army officer was there and he said, 'ma'am, he's a soldier first, he has to be told'.

I said, 'he can't take any more', but he told him and Peter looked at me that night and I said, 'I'm really sorry, I've got to go home early tonight'.

And he said, 'I don't know why you bother coming, look at me, I'm a wreck'. I said, 'don't you dare speak like that, I love you, I'll see you tomorrow'. He looked at me and he said, 'will you?' Then he just turned his head and he wouldn't look at me.

And they woke me up early in the morning to say he'd passed away.

He came home and we had the funeral in Bolton and from the army it was a case of, 'we know your husband's dead but we need this flat as soon as possible'. That's it, no counselling, nothing, you're gone. I had to start again.

But SEFF has been brilliant, the first help I've had in 32 years. People sympathise, others don't understand, and they have their own lives to

lead and you're just left in a dark corner, grieving for a life you had and you'll never get back.

However, with SEFF, they have helped me to come to terms with what happened and I've finally been able to say what I really feel inside, without any recrimination.

I never thought I'd go to Enniskillen, the place where it all happened. I didn't think I'd get there but I did it and, without SEFF, I wouldn't have been able to do anything.



Samuel Gallimore in his Paramedics uniform

# SAMUEL GALLIMORE



Peter Gallimore on his wedding day (Sam's father)

**SAMUEL GALLIMORE IS THE SON OF PETER GALLIMORE, AN OFF DUTY SOLDIER ATTACHED TO THE 1ST ROYAL REGIMENT OF FUSILIERS MURDERED WHO WAS CRITICALLY INJURED AND SUBSEQUENTLY DIED AS A RESULT OF A PROVISIONAL IRA CAR BOMB ATTACK NEAR THE LAKELAND FORUM IN ENNISKILLEN ON 18<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 1984.**

At the time I was four years old. There's things I remember from the day, and maybe I've pieced other missing bits together from what people have told me as well.

I remember being on a go-kart and my mother being really on edge. I remember a knock on the door and being sent upstairs. Everything else is kind of blurred. My next clear memories were seeing my dad in the burns unit at the Elizabeth

Hospital in Woolwich. We were put up in a quarters on the ground floor. I'll never forget, my dad wanted a cuddle, and I didn't want to cuddle him because the smell was so bad.

When I think back about it now, that's horrible. Even to this day I can smell it. I'm a paramedic now and when I go to a burns victim I instantly get a picture of my father in my head.

I remember back in the early 1980s the treatment for burns was a little more archaic than it is now and they'd have got salt baths and I used to hear the screams. It wasn't a nice thing.

When my dad passed away, I wasn't at the funeral; mum thought I was too young. But afterwards, I just remember him not being there.

I remember when he passed away, we were fired out of army quarters faster than we could move and we were living in a council house.

We'd got ourselves on our feet and tried to move on but I don't think my mum ever did. When I was growing up, I went to many different schools. The first was in Woolwich in London, where my dad was a burns patient, and my mum used to ride me to work on the back of a really rubbish mountain bike and I used to be plonked on the seat in the back. Then we moved to Bolton and it was different.

There was always an obvious difference with not having a father figure, so to speak. Mum was never offered any counselling at all. Once my dad had passed away, my mum was given a war widow's pension and she was cast aside.

I don't think any of the army wives got any bereavement counselling at all - nothing. It's only been after SEFF got in contact with my mum that she's receiving counselling.

Over the years I'd ask my mum what had happened and she was very guarded about the facts that she gave me, particularly in my younger life. Obviously, it was very upsetting to her so when she'd talk about it she'd always get upset and you don't want to see your parents upset, especially your mum, so it wasn't until I was older

I got the full facts from her as to what had gone on. I'd always probed about how and why and the point of it and what people expected to achieve, right down the medical details of it, how he died and what went wrong.

Why did it happen? How did it happen?

Were the people ever caught?

If the people were caught now, I don't know what I'd think. Would I want revenge? No, there's no point to that. Should we get justice?

Yeah, absolutely, they should pay for their crimes. They should be tried in front of a court and given a fair trial and if that's the case then fine, but there's no point in wishing them dead. It won't achieve anything.

It has been 32 years since I've been in Ireland and to come back to the spot where it happened was almost surreal.

Being in Enniskillen for the unveiling of the plaque to the four soldiers was huge and a positive step forward. There's a lot of history and a lot of water under the bridge and a lot of time has passed and there were far too many deaths, far too many innocent people caught up. As an outsider looking in, as a victim, it just seems pointless. Going to Enniskillen was the right thing to do, to move on and start looking towards the future.

Winning team - brothers Clive and John Aldridge were part of a successful British team in sailing championships for the disabled at Lake Geneva.

# JOHN ALDRIDGE

JOHN ALDRIDGE'S BROTHER CLIVE ALDRIDGE, A SOLDIER IN THE 1ST BATTALION OF THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF FUSILIERS, LOST BOTH HIS LEGS IN A BOMBING NEAR THE LAKELAND FORUM IN ENNISKILLEN ON 18TH MAY, 1984 WHILST OFF DUTY ATTENDING A FISHING COMPETITION.

On the day of the incident, I had seen on the news that soldiers had been blown up and they'd shown a picture of the van. I thought there was something familiar about that setting because Clive had always taken photos of where he was fishing and it came to us, 'it's Clive'.

Within an hour, we got a knock on the door from a captain to say Clive had been blown up and some of the men had been killed but he didn't know what had happened to Clive and wanted us to go over to Ireland, but I couldn't because I'd just come out of hospital after an operation.



When he was transferred over to London, I used to visit him every week. Clive was the only one to survive after Peter had passed on five months after the bomb from his critical injuries.

But Clive was a double amputee, losing both his legs. His face and chin were shredded, but the doctors rebuilt him.

Afterwards, he was very hurt that he was the sole survivor.

He tried to commit suicide three times when he got back to England. On the third time, he went somewhere where he thought no one could ever find him and this woman was walking her dog this day, she'd never been up there before and she found him, so it changed his outlook and after that he just wanted to help everybody.

## CLIVE ALDRIDGE

To see him progress from someone who was in ever such a bad mess, to watch him walk and see him build himself up again was just a great honour, and he carried on building his life from there. He was living in Newcastle and he'd had enough up there and moved down to Essex. We were always very close and he moved in with my family until he got his own place.

Clive lived with me quite a while and we lived our lives together. We went fishing together, sailing together, played darts together, did gardening together and when I had a stroke Clive was the one who helped me through it. He taught me to swim and we went sailing and we became British champions, UK champions and finished fourth in the world championships, but he never ever forgot his friends in the army and what happened to them.

He was such a respected person. In our home town, Maldon in Essex, he was the most respected person you could imagine. He really was, because they knew of his problem, but he was a man who'd do anything, he'd never give up. Nothing would ever phase him.

Clive never forgot what the people in Ireland did for him. He always stuck up for the Irish people. My mother always blamed the Irish; she did tend to hate them because of what happened her son. But the rest of our family listened to Clive.



Clive Aldridge dressed up with his medals

None of us blamed the Irish and still don't really blame anyone. I know there were people responsible but I don't know who I can blame. I can't say I hate them, because I suppose we were lucky to have Clive survive, where the others didn't. They can hate.

Craig Agar, the son of Tom Agar, who was killed in the bombing, contacted me and asked me about coming over to Enniskillen to an event where a memorial for Clive and his friends would be dedicated.

My sister Kay and I came over because we do need closure. It helps to have closure and I feel really honoured to be able to do this in Clive's name, and I feel so grateful that Clive is included, even though he died 30 years after.

It's a great honour to be able to represent Clive and I feel he was there with me because of the bond we had. We did everything together. Going over for the unveiling of a memorial to the four soldiers was the first time I'd ever been to Ireland.

I'd never ever thought about coming because I still had my brother, but to be here and see him represented is very uplifting and I am so grateful.

# JENNIE ANDERSON

LANCE CORPORAL STEPHEN ANDERSON FROM THE STAFFORDSHIRE REGIMENT WAS MURDERED ON 29TH MAY 1984 WHILST SERVING IN CROSSMAGLEN, SOUTH ARMAGH, THIS WAS THE DATE OF HIS SECOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARY. HIS WIFE JENNIE SHARES HER LIVED EXPERIENCES AS A WIDOW.



Steve had been deployed to Northern Ireland in February 1984. In his eyes, he was to be employed in a logistical role, working in the office but he ended up on patrols. Two weeks before he was killed, Steve had been hit on the ear by a bullet fired by a sniper that ricocheted while on patrol. At this point, his wife Jennie says that, he was shaken, felt betrayed by the army, felt that he had not received the same training as the other men, and wanted to join the RAF instead. It was something he told her the night before he was killed, when they were speaking on the phone. He just wanted to be home with his little girl, and the new baby due a few months later. Instead, his life was taken, in an explosion, officially recorded as a landmine, near Crossmaglen. His death was caused by the Provisional IRA.

Jennie was at her fathers' house in Cornwall when the local police came to tell her the news that her husband had been killed. She heard a knock on the door and she just knew that her husband was gone. Her eight-month old daughter started screaming, something she never did. Jennie was six months pregnant at the time. She was told not to watch the news or to read the papers.

The Families Officer came 10 days later and drove her back to the barracks but a week later, Jennie went to the phone box and heard, “that’s the woman whose husband was killed, what’s she still doing here?” She left the barracks and moved in with her parents-in-law. The funeral was held, with people lining the streets. Jennie never heard from the army again or got any further information about what happened to Stephen.

Jennie couldn’t talk to anyone, no one wanted to be brought down by Jennie’s sadness or to hear her sorrow, they just wanted to see her in black, grief-stricken, but not to listen to her.

Jennie and Stephen’s second daughter was born on 25th September 1984. Jennie put everything into her daughters from that day on, but she always made sure that Stephen was present in their lives, telling them all about him. Steve and Jennie shared their love of music. They would take any chance they could to spend time together, listen to music or play the guitar. Both of Jennie’s daughters remind her of her husband in different ways. One shares his love of poetry, the other has his long long eyelashes. When Jennie met her current partner, she faced cruel comments that she could not have loved Stephen.

Until January 2022, Jennie had not met anyone else whose life had been affected by the Troubles but she connected with SEFF on Facebook and attended a respite event.

Meeting people who had similar experiences felt like a weight being lifted. Her feelings, her nightmares, were something others experienced too, even after many years. Jennie sometimes feels that she lives two lives, a good life and a bad life. That sometimes the bad life can take over and remembering can be particularly hard. She still wishes for justice, and for information about what exactly happened to Stephen.

# LORD NORMAN TEBBIT

LORD NORMAN TEBBIT (FORMER GOVERNMENT MINISTER) AND SURVIVOR OF THE 1984 BRIGHTON CONSERVATIVE CONFERENCE BOMBING SHARES HIS EXPERIENCES OF THAT ATTACK INCLUDING HIS CARING ROLE FOR HIS WIFE WHO PASSED AWAY ON 19TH DECEMBER 2020.

My speech at the 1984 Conservative Conference at Brighton had gone well and I had little more to do than to be on the platform to support the Prime Minister the next day.

After a drink or two at Alistair McAlpine's party my wife and I were in bed and asleep soon after midnight.

We were woken by the sound of an explosion. Having grown up through the early 1940's I had no doubt that it was a bomb, as first the ceiling, and then the floor collapsed and we were tumbled out of bed under a hail of debris.

I had no idea how far we had fallen and still the bricks and lumps of concrete and wood rained down. Eventually there was nothing but pitch darkness and silence, broken only by the fading screams and groans of others buried somewhere in the ruins of the central block of the Grand Hotel.



Lord Norman Tebbit and his wife Margaret

Margaret answered my call to her and I realised that we were not far apart. I was unable to move my head, lower body or right arm, but reaching out with my left arm towards the sound of my wife's voice I was able to touch her hand as we lay, uncertain of how far we had fallen, or even which way up we were.

I began to explore around me and found that we were both still entangled in the duvet and sheets from our bed, then that my left side had become an agonising sticky mess of torn flesh and what I realised must be blood.

My mouth too seemed full of dust, blood and bits of teeth, my legs were trapped but I could at least feel they were still there, but I had no response from my right arm which I feared I might have lost. My wife seemed to be crumpled up into a ball but we could at least touch and speak to one another.

There was little sound as the other trapped

## LORD NORMAN TEBBIT



victims fell silent apart from that of water running from a severed pipe.

I realised that although rescuers would be on their way it might be a long wait, but my wife, unusually less patient than I, began to cry out for help.

"Don't waste your strength." I advised her.

"Wait until you hear the rescuers, it might be a long time."

We fell to talking, giving each other messages for our family lest only one of us survived. From time to time there were sounds as more of the wreckage collapsed, and I drifted in and out of consciousness wondering how many of our friends and colleagues had survived.

Suddenly there were voices calling out for survivors. We struggled to reply and they asked us who we were.

The rescuers were led by Fireman Fred

Bishop and with him was reservist fireman Ash. Tony Trafford, a doctor who had been at the Conference, joined them to assess our injuries and found an arm so battered and cold they thought it had been severed, but turned out to be mine. Slowly, delicately, in order not to cause another shift of the wreckage, they began to dig us out. I had to be shifted first and will never forget being strapped to a stretcher and eased out from the debris into the glare of floodlights and the sweetest night air I have ever breathed.

Then the cold sent me into great shivers as I was loaded into an ambulance and on my way to hospital and the sudden glare of the lights of an operating theatre and once again oblivion.

My broken bones and other wounds were repaired although I have hardly known a day without pain for the last thirty-odd years, but my wife though scarcely scarred has been largely paralysed from her neck down.'

We are but two of the casualties of the troubled years of the Sinn Féin/IRA insurrection. Nor was the ceiling of our room at The Grand Hotel the first I saw come down from the blast of a bomb, but the Luftwaffe I can forgive.

Those who far from repenting still glorify in their crimes, I cannot.

# STEVE CLEMENTS

STEVE CLEMENTS SERVED IN NORTHERN IRELAND AS A SOLDIER AND EXPERIENCED A NUMBER OF TRAUMATIC INCIDENTS WHICH HAVE STAYED WITH HIM THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE.

Steve Clements joined the army at the age of 17 in 1984 having grown up in Langley, raised mostly by his dad. After completing his basic training in Lichfield, he was posted to Canterbury and on returning to his regiment he was posted to the senior platoon of the battalion. Steve enjoyed his first few months in the army and his battalion were soon told they would be posted to Aldergrove in Northern Ireland. Steve had to undertake four months of specialist Northern Ireland training, including specialised First Aid on dealing with chest wounds, bomb injuries and the like. At this point Steve realised the severity of what he was about to face, though he felt in safe hands as some of his platoon had previous



been in Northern Ireland. The battalion arrived in Aldergrove in 1985.

Especially as the newest in the platoon, Steve was on edge at all times, aware that he was a permanent potential target. He did not want to be the weak link. Despite this, it was an adrenaline rush. As the largest man in the platoon, Steve was assigned to carry the General Purpose Machine Gun. Even when on leave, Steve was always on high alert, when out at night, looking around, watching everyone, walking along, talking with his friends, but looking for somewhere to hide, just in case. When out with family he would be looking around, checking there was nobody

behind them, watching the windows of houses, aware of sudden noises and cars backfiring.

The IRA began to target police stations, attempting to blow them up. Steve's platoon was patrolling in a village called Pomeroy in County Tyrone. His Platoon Sergeant, Gilly, said that he had a funny feeling about a roundabout near the police station, he told the patrol not to go down there, but instead to go around, through a field. However, the patrol leader decided that if they went into the field they would get wetter and colder than they already were so they would stick to the road. Steve was normally the 4th person, but on this day, he was 3rd. The patrol walked past a lamppost, just past the roundabout, Steve was due to be next but a civilian walked past. Upon the civilian reaching the lamppost, there was a massive flash and boom and the man flew through the air. Steve was blown off his feet, the bomb had exploded into the field that the patrol should have walked through.

A few days later, Steve was finally able to see a doctor, his knee was swollen with a large sack of fluid. Nothing was able to be done about it so Steve had to be taken to England to hospital. The injury took a year and a half to heal but has never fully healed up.

After a short further tour in Hong Kong, Steve's battalion was sent back to Northern Ireland, this time to South Armagh. The tension was higher in

South Armagh, Steve was consistently on edge, but here he was aged 24, older and wiser, with more experience in service.

While in South Armagh, Steve fell and injured his other knee. This could not be properly cared for as the battalion was undermanned and this caused him to put more pressure on the previously injured knee, making it worse. Eventually, a year later when back in England, Steve finally managed to undergo an operation to remove what grew into a calcium growth on his knee. He would now develop arthritis in both knees.

Steve later suffered a traumatic brain injury while serving back in England which ended his army career.

Steve found out about SEFF at a charity fundraiser in 2015. He still suffers with the arthritis in his knees and with PTSD triggered by his time in Northern Ireland but is humbled by the strength that other members of SEFF show whenever he hears about them or meets them.

# MIKE DREW

MIKE DREW FROM BRISTOL IS ONE OF THE SOLDIER SURVIVORS OF THE BALLYGAWLEY BUS BOMB ATTACK CARRIED OUT BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA ON 20TH AUGUST 1998; AN ATTACK WHICH STOLE THE LIVES OF EIGHT OF HIS COLLEAGUES.



Mike Drew was born and raised in Bristol. He was crazy about football, and sports in general. He left school at 16 and wanted to join the army but his parents would not sign the permission papers so he found a job. As soon as he was able, at 17 and a half, he enlisted. He completed his training in Winchester. In February 1988, he had his passing out parade and was told he would be joining the 1st Battalion of the Light Infantry. He knew his battalion was in Northern Ireland but this did not hold any fear for him at the time. He arrived in March 1988.

Mike's battalion was posted in Omagh but their area of responsibility was in Fermanagh and they

would assist in other areas when required. Mike found his unit to be an incredibly comforting and safe place, full of care for each other and comradeship.

In August 1988, Mike's company was volunteered to go down to South Armagh for one month. Prior to this, they were granted a special leave for 5 days which Mike made the most of and really enjoyed. As usual, the group from the South West flew from Heathrow, travelling down to the airport on the train together. They arrived in Belfast at around 5pm. A bus was waiting for them so they got on board, left their bags, and settled down in the bar to wait for others to fly in

from different airports.

Getting back on the bus, Mike saw that his friend Peter Bullock had sat in his seat so after playfully shouting at him, Mike moved his bags and sat on another seat further back and on the other side of the bus. He had not been sitting there long when he saw a man at the side of the bus, he had red hair, glasses, a mustache, was wearing a denim jacket and jeans, and was picking his nose. Mike pointed this out to the rest and they started to all stick their fingers up their noses too and laugh at the man. He looked up at them, looked Mike in the eye, and drew his finger across his throat and mouthed, you're fucking dead. But this sort of thing happened all the time, Mike didn't take much notice.

Once they were underway, they were told to settle in because it would be a long journey, as usual they couldn't take the direct route to the barracks, they had to change the route every single time. It was a running joke that as the bus had been going back and forth with soldiers on for so many years that it would be hit one day. You just had to hope that you weren't on it when it was. Most of the soldiers drifted off to sleep.

Mike doesn't know how long he had been sleeping but all he can remember is feeling something like an electric shock. Then it felt like his head was spinning. He then remembers hitting the floor with a thud, either having been

thrown out of the bus or having fallen out. He started to come to, and realised something serious had happened. He looked at the road, to the left was the hulk of the bus, he saw car headlights ahead of him, and someone saw him. He was carried up to the road where there was more light and Mike could see that he was very badly injured. His left foot was smashed to pieces, he was bleeding heavily from his legs, especially his left thigh, his hands were blue and full of glass which had ripped out all of his tendons, and blood was pouring from the side of his face and neck.

Mike started to go into shock, shivering and thinking it was cold, he was trying to go to sleep. Local women who had stopped to help gave him a jacket and tried to keep him awake, smacking his face and trying to make him smoke a cigarette. He couldn't see what was going on around him. Mike felt completely helpless and he thought he was going to die. Part of him didn't want to die but another part of him thought that if he were going to die then might as well get it over with. But the women wouldn't leave him alone.

It seemed like no one was going to come and help but eventually help began to arrive. An elderly couple came in a campervan to try and take some of the soldiers to hospital before the ambulances got there. The women ensured

that Mike was put in the campervan. He was taken to Tyrone County Hospital where he was rushed inside. He was put on life support and a ventilator. He had lost so much blood that if he had stayed another 5-10 minutes on the road, he likely would have died.

Mike came too a few days later. He started to gain consciousness before the drugs, given to paralyse him, had worn off, he could not even move his eyes. He thought he was dead and having an out of body experience and began to panic. He wanted to gasp for air and he couldn't. After a while, he began to be able to hear hospital equipment and to calm down a little.

Once he had been awake for a while, the nurses gave Mike a newspaper, to let him read what had happened. Eight of his comrades had been killed. One of them was Blair Bishop, Mike's roommate. Another was Peter Bullock.

All Mike could think about was getting over his injuries and getting back to the unit. This would never be the case. There was concern that Tyrone Country Hospital would be attacked by the IRA as there were so many soldiers there so after 5 days in intensive care and 1 day on the ward, Mike was evacuated by helicopter to Belfast Military Hospital where he remained for another three weeks. The more seriously injured, including Mike, were then evacuated again to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Woolwich.

Mike would be in and out of the hospital so often over the next 12 months that he refers to it as his home during that time. He was then sent to Headley Court Rehabilitation Centre so he could try to regain his fitness to return to the unit. It was during this time that Mike began to develop the symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, though he did not know it at the time. It was an incredibly difficult time. He knew something was wrong but he did not know what.

Mike had developed a fear of returning to the unit, not of going back to the army, but of going back and facing his mates after he had survived and so many of their comrades had been killed. He was full of guilt. He started to go absent without leave. Finally, he simply didn't go back. He spent 4 weeks staying at a friend's house, and would go out and drink all day to try to forget, would get into fights. Soon he was arrested for such a fight



and the regimental police came to collect him. He was sent back to Queen Elizabeth Hospital to the mental health ward, but they didn't know how to treat him. For example, he was told at the first session to draw his feelings. Eventually, Mike was medically discharged. But he never had any treatment for PTSD.

Mike struggled with readapting to civilian life, especially with his PTSD becoming worse day by day. His relationships suffered, including with his recently-married wife. He started to self-harm. His life felt like a whirlpool going down a plughole, never ending but getting worse and worse. He was experiencing suicidal thoughts. His two children suffered through what their dad was experiencing.

In 1986, Mike ended up in a situation where he felt under threat and lashed out leading to him being charged with GBH. He instantly regretted his actions but by this time it was too late. Mike's barrister asked him to have an assessment for PTSD, Mike didn't want to use this as an excuse for what he had done. The barrister said it wasn't an excuse, and asked him to at least do the assessment and see. Mike was almost sent to prison but the doctor who had done his PTSD assessment agreed to treat him. The army refused to assist with paying for the treatment saying he had already received compensation. This was another kick in the teeth.

Mike underwent the treatment, it was such a weight off his shoulders. He finally met people during his treatment who were going through similar experiences as him. Despite this, he continued to suffer, drinking too much, avoiding old comrades who tried to contact him, he was still full of guilt.

In 2018, Mike was contacted by a local comrade in Omagh, who was involved with SEFF, who told him that a memorial service was taking place for the 30th anniversary of the bombing. He was so nervous but knew he had to go. He stood there looking at the spot where he had laid, and everything came flooding back.

He met up with some of his friends that he had not seen for 30 years. He also had the chance to meet the women who saved his life that night.

This was a major turning point for Mike, he faced up to what had happened, and saw that what happened to them had not been forgotten. Since then, he has gone back as often as he could. His life has changed for the better.

The Provisional IRA planted the bomb that destroyed Mike's life and took the life of his comrades. To this day, no one has been held accountable for the Ballygawley bus bombing.

# JAMES LEATHERBARROW

JAMES LEATHERBARROW, A FORMER SOLDIER WITH 1ST BATTALION LIGHT INFANTRY, WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED IN THE 1988 BALLYGAWLEY BUS BOMB PERPETRATED BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA.



The Bus in the aftermath of the Ballygawley Road Bus bombing of 20th August 1988.

It was 25 years after the Ballygawley bus bomb explosion - which was horrendous - before I came back to Omagh. It was overwhelming and emotional but it has helped a hell of a lot.

Every 20th August I tend to go quiet - it'll never, ever go away. A lot of young lads died that day, and they shouldn't have.

I was only 21 years of age. We were given an extra-long weekend because we were going down to South Armagh for about a month without any communication at all to families. I went home, as normal, had the long weekend and got back to Belfast International and waited for the last flight to come in. This chap got on to the bus and asked if this was the Belfast bus and was told in squaddie fashion to get off, then he came back on and seemed to be looking towards the back of the bus and asked again, and was told to get off again.

## JAMES LEATHERBARROW



James Leatherbarrow, second from the left along with members of the 1st Light Infantry Regimental family, Ballygawley road residents and Dr Dominic Pimto and the late Dr Clifford McCord snr at special Reception event held in the Silver Birch Hotel, Omagh in November 2013.

We did have wives and children on the bus, but transport turned up and took them because we were going to be late back - after midnight. The last plane came in and, as we were leaving, this bloke - who we later found out was a terrorist - gave a death threat to the bus driver. He gave a throat slash gesture and the thumbs down, but we got that all the time so we just carried on.

Me and my mate noticed we were being followed by a car - it would hover around and then just disappear and come back again. We asked the driver which route we were taking back, and he said 'we're going Cookstown way', because we had set routes to take because different roads were out of bounds depending on what was going on.

We came off the M1 on to the A5 and were actually diverted from Cookstown and we all started cheering, because it meant we'd get back to camp earlier. We noticed this car again but thought nothing of it.

I was sat beside a little lad, Stevie Wilkinson who was killed, and just before the bomb went off I put my legs up on the seat in front. We saw the car again - it flashed its lights and disappeared - and that was it, up we went.

I was knocked unconscious. I came round and the way the bus was in the ditch - thrown 200 metres up the road - I was under the back with the bus laid across my chest. Lucky enough there was a couple of coaches behind us - one with the Omagh Protestant Boys flute band on board. At first all we heard was 'kill the bastards' and we thought that was the IRA coming to finish us off.

I reached up as far as I could to pull something over me and that was when one of the lads that was killed rolled on top of me.

Gordon Burnside of the Omagh Protestant Boys Flute Band found me at the back of the bus. About five of them lifted it up and pulled me out. I got taken up on the roadside and I lay in this young girl's lap and all I wanted to do was just fall asleep, and I remember her slapping me across the face telling me to stay awake. I remember saying 'please don't let me die'.

I woke up in the Tyrone County Hospital with Dr Pinto. I suffered a broken back, perforated eardrum, body scars and facial scars - I still have a big piece of glass behind my eye.

Apparently the car that followed us flashed its lights to tell the bomber that we were there. Then it turned left and was the getaway car for the bombers. They were cowards because they hit us in civilian order. Allegedly it was the Harte brothers and, about a week later, the SAS shot them because they were planning to ambush Fred the coalman, who delivered coal into the married quarters at Lisanelly.

In a way it's sad because it was a loss of life on both sides, which shouldn't happen.

They should have been caught and tried in a Court, but if they're going to play with fire they'll get burnt.

Anyway, after that everything went upside down. I tried to carry on, but it didn't work. PTSD set in really badly within my first year of marriage and everything went downhill from there. I got out in 1993 and civvy street was so, so hard.

The PTSD ruined my marriage. Our friends were scared of me, I was drinking a lot, I was on a lot of anti-depressants. I was screaming for help. I was diagnosed with PTSD and I thought, 'well that's my army career over'. And when I got out that was me brushed under the carpet - the army didn't want to know.

Nobody ever thought about the effect on my wife, on my mother and father, on my brother. But all the lads from 1 Light Infantry know and we support each other.

# JEFF LEATHERBARROW

JEFF LEATHERBARROW SERVED IN NORTHERN IRELAND WITH 2ND ROYAL GREEN JACKETS AND HIS BROTHER, JAMES, WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED IN THE BALLYGAWLEY BUS BOMB PERPETRATED BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA.

I decided to retire out of the army without telling my brother, who was in training. I told him I was coming out of the army at his passing out parade. He was quite shocked, because he wanted to come to the 2nd Battalion Green Jackets, so he decided to go with his friends instead and joined the 1st Battalion Light Infantry. So that's where my brother's army career started.

Of my own time in the Royal Green Jackets and in Northern Ireland, well we had some fantastic times, and we had some sad times and we had some really, really bad times.



Jeff Leatherbarrow with his Grandchild

The bad times were very bad. You were seeing civilians getting blown up and we were picking people up who planted bombs.

I couldn't understand why there were people doing that because, when I spoke to the Irish people they were excellent people - they didn't want this trouble and we didn't want to bring trouble to them.

We were sent here by the Government and I hope that we helped, just like today a lot of them are helping us to get over our problems.

After I left the army I lived in Plymouth and, when my brother came to Omagh on his first posting to Northern Ireland, he had a bit of leave so he came over to stay with us. The day before my brother got blown up on the bus we had a night out in Plymouth and he had to leave early the next morning. I used to work for a papermill and they had a big viaduct where the train used to go across and I used to get on top of the building. We used to wave goodbye to each other - he used to shout out of the train and I used to shout back, 'I'll see you next leave'.

The day after that I got a telephone call as I was just on my way to work to say that somebody was going to come around from the army and see me. I said 'don't bother sending anyone around, just tell me now'.

They told me that soldiers had been travelling back from the airport and a coach got blown up, and my brother was on it. It was a great shock, and I had to tell my mother and father who were elderly at the time. He was pretty injured and, in some ways, in his mind he still is to this day. That was one of the worst times I've ever known. To see my own kin get really hurt in Ireland - it didn't matter about me, because it was my job, but seeing your little brother get injured, it was absolutely terrible.



Jeff Leatherbarrow and Army dog

Being back to Omagh and being able to meet the members of the Omagh Protestant Boys who helped them that night, I can't thank them enough because they actually saved my brother's life.

What I would say is that we had some fantastic times here too - the Northern Irish people are lovely and would do anything for you. It was not all bad.



# MARCUS BARGERY

**MARCUS BARGERY SERVED WITH 1ST BATTALION LIGHT INFANTRY AND LOST ONE OF HIS BEST FRIENDS IN THE 1988 BALLYGAWLEY BUS BOMB PERPETRATED BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA.**

I served in Northern Ireland from 1986 to 1989. When I arrived I was the youngest soldier to come to Ireland - I was 17 at the time and, because I was so young, I wasn't allowed out on patrol. That was the reason I wasn't on the bus.

As soon as I was 18, literally the next day I was out on the streets. I've seen plenty of incidents, seen a lot happen - good things, bad things. I really enjoyed the tour and loved the people.

One of my best mates, who I joined up with, Blair Bishop, was on the bus and got blown up. I was on training with him from day one and he slept in the next bed to me. We were like brothers. We went through training and we wanted to join the same battalion. When he used to go on leave he'd come to my parents' house - my parents were like second parents to him.



Marcus Bargery and other members of the 1st Light Infantry Regimental family along with Cllr Allan Rainey visiting the Omagh Garden of Remembrance when over for the Ballygawley Bus Bomb Remembrance (November 2014)

I saw him literally the day he went on leave and that was the last time I spoke to him. It was hard to get over that. All I remember is being woken up and told. Everyone at camp was totally dumbstruck. No-one knew what was happening. I phoned up my parents and said, "look Blair was on the bus but I've heard nothing yet". They were heartbroken. Five or six hours later I found out Blair had lost his life. It was hard to overcome that.

Then when I was out on the streets, doing patrols, there was a lot of anger and a lot of tension. A lot of people were supporting us, but we'd be out on patrol in places like Strabane or Rosslea and they'd be coming out of the pubs and taunting us, "eight nil, eight nil". It was hard to deal with, but we got on with our jobs like professionals and got through it as a unit.

Despite what happened here it was the best posting I ever had. I loved it here. It's just a handful of idiots really that spoil it for everyone else.

# LINDA WILSON

LANCE CORPORAL STEVEN WILSON WAS MURDERED BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA ON 18TH NOVEMBER 1989 IN A COMMAND WIRE IMPROVED EXPLOSIVE DEVICE ATTACK ON THE LANDROVER HE AND THREE COMRADES WERE TRAVELLING IN. THE ATTACK TOOK PLACE NEAR MAYOBRIDGE IN CO. DOWN, TWO OF HIS COLLEAGUES ALSO LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE ATTACK.

On Friday 17th November, Steve was away and his wife, Linda, called him, crying. She now realises that she was suffering from post-natal depression, though she did not know this at the time. Steve was concerned for Linda and said she should speak to the Families Officer who could pull him back, but she did not want to impact his career.

The next day, at 4pm, Linda was opening up the bar at the NAAFI where she worked when a man



and two women walked in asking for her. Her first thought was that her son Matthew had been up to no good. They asked to speak in private and as she was letting them in, a thought came into her head and she said, “please tell me this isn’t about my husband.” The officer confirmed her fears.

All Linda could hear was a repetitive sound, she didn’t know where it was coming from, until she realised the sound was actually coming from

her. She was screaming and screaming. They told her there was one survivor and she begged them to tell her that this survivor was Steve. It wasn't. They said to her that, she wouldn't want Steve to be this survivor either. He had suffered extreme blast damage to his lungs. Linda told them that she wouldn't care, she would look after him forever, if it were her husband.

Linda had always vowed that she would never marry anyone in the military but love took over for her and Steven. She had signed up to join the navy but due to an 11-month waiting list ended up getting a job at the NAAFI in Aldershot in 1983, where she met Steven. The first time they met was on Valentine's Day. She saw him and said to her friend, "I'm going to marry him." They were married 13 months later. Linda had no idea what she was letting herself in for.

Steve didn't want Linda to come with him to Northern Ireland but she didn't want her children to be away from their dad for long periods of time, as she had been away from hers. She was pregnant with their second child. In Northern Ireland.

Linda had to adapt to a completely different way of life, constantly wary of not discussing anything to do with the military outside the barracks, worming into the children that their dad was a plasterer, definitely, definitely not a soldier.

Linda began to create a life for her family in Northern Ireland. She started working part-time at the NAAFI again and job sharing with her neighbour, babysitting each other's children.

She had to call Steve's mum and dad to tell them what had happened. His sister answered the phone, so Linda had to tell her first. Trying to explain what had happened to their son Matthew was the worst part.

She couldn't go to bed, it was their bed. If she went to bed it would be like admitting that he was never coming back. So, she would fall asleep on the sofa, after drinking a bottle or two of wine. She developed anorexia because that was the only thing she could control in her life. Alcohol took over. The worst thing about it was that nobody ever proved to Linda that he was dead. She was abandoned by the Parachute Regiment and sent to live with her mum and dad. She would have recurring dreams that Steve came back, he wasn't dead, and she was happy again. Linda saw Steve everywhere, in cars, walking in the street. When she was asked on a date for the first time, she felt as if she was having an affair. The next stage was desensitisation, if she didn't think about it, then it never happened. She was just waiting and waiting for Steve to come back. When it came to the first memorial service, no one at all told Linda that it was taking place.

When it came to the inquest in 1992, Linda

was told she could receive a copy of the documentation, but this never came. She was forgotten by everybody. She did not receive any support, financial or otherwise, from anyone. She had to scrape by on the Widows' Pension.

She tried to seek counselling but could not find a way to talk about Steve. Sometimes the kids were Linda's reason to get up in the morning but there were times when she wanted to be in a place where she didn't even have to think about that anymore. Linda and Steve's children suffered, and continue to suffer, with the loss of their dad and Linda wasn't able to talk about him with them.

In the early 2000s, Linda dated someone for 4 years but in her head and heart, she was still married.

When Matthew joined the army, it was like a smack in the face for Linda. She was terrified for her son when he was serving in Iraq, simply existing, waiting for a call.

In 2009, Matthew was serving in Afghanistan. When a call came through from an army officer asking to speak to Mrs Linda Wilson, her world imploded all over again. She begged him to tell her that her son was not dead. Matthew was extremely seriously injured; his leg had been amputated and his arm had been almost completely blown off. He was in critical care. He

recovered well however, but was later medically discharged from the army.

In 2011, Linda finally received the inquest documentation and photos that she had requested 21 years earlier. She sat in her living room with the brown envelope in front of her, unopened, for 3 days. She was terrified to look at the photos. When she looked at the photos, she could easily recognise Steve. It was a moment of liberation for Linda, she finally accepted, after so many years, that he was dead. She is convinced that had she known sooner, her life would have been completely different. Everything was put into context for her. Steve is still a part of her life, and always will be, but she wasn't waiting for him to come back anymore.

In 2019, Linda and the families of the other two soldiers killed travelled to Northern Ireland and placed a plaque in the place where the bomb went off. Steve's memory lives on.

# NEIL TATTERSALL

NEIL TATTERSALL WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED  
IN A MANCHESTER BOMBING CARRIED OUT  
BY PROVISIONAL IRA TERRORISTS ON 3RD  
DECEMBER, 1992.

Prior to the bombing, life was brilliant. I was engaged to be married and we had a baby on the way. I'd got a job at Argos over the Christmas period and things were brilliant.

I was into ju jitsu, five-a-side football, weightlifting, had quite a lot of friends around me and nothing could be better, I was getting ready to start my life with my family.

I went to bed happy on the 2nd of December, knowing what my future was looking like. On the 3rd of December, I got the bus into town to work. I had about half an hour before I started work so I went into the staff canteen and had a cup of tea and about 15 minutes later, all hell broke loose.

We were told to get out and get to the meeting point in St Ann's Square because there had been an explosion. We all got out but we didn't think much of it, we thought we'd be back at work in half an hour.



Neil with his daughter Sophie



Neil addressing the  
European Day for Victims  
of Terrorism event held in  
Stormont (March 2016)

Then another coded warning came through to say there was a bomb in St Ann's Square, where we were. The only possible way we could go was round to Cateaton Street and we were just having a laugh and a joke and didn't think much of it.

There was a wall there and I jumped up and sat on it. I remember that I then jumped down off the wall and there was a grass verge between the wall and the building. I stood up on the grass verge and literally as I turned round, that's when the bomb went off.

It started raining down shrapnel and glass and I just covered my head to stop the glass and debris getting on me, and then I felt a massive punch in my back.

Everybody got up and started running and I thought, 'well, I've got to run as well'.

So I remember getting to my feet and I got about two paces and that was it, I couldn't move. I just remember there was two girls, they came either side of me and started dragging me.

A police officer then came running and got me down to the bottom of the hill, outside Lloyd's Bank. It was obvious I wasn't going anywhere, I couldn't move.

Then this guy came up from the bomb squad and he told the police to get out of there, to leave me, and they said 'no'. His response was, 'leave him cos he's effing dying anyway'.

But they said 'no, we're not going to leave him'.

I remember looking down and saw a mass of blood around my feet, there was blood everywhere, and I must have started passing out because one of the police officers was slapping me, telling me to wake up.

When the guy from the bomb squad said what he did, I wasn't thinking about me dying. It was that I was never going to see my child. I was thinking, what was it going to do to my mum? What's it going to do to my fiancée? How are they going to cope?

I was in hospital for nearly three weeks, and I came home just before Christmas. In March my daughter was born. It should have been the happiest day of my life but I was a mess.

What it was doing to my dad I don't know but he'd seen somebody so fit and active then have all these injuries.

I remember my dad took me out in the car one day and he said:

'For your own sake, it would probably have been better if you were dead because I don't like seeing you like this'. A couple of months later my dad died of a broken heart.

From there on it was just downhill. I got asked to go on this post-traumatic stress disorder project. So I was going and then I got a phone call to say no more appointments were available because they'd run out of money. I was desperate because they'd really messed my mind up.

Basically the 3rd of December 1992 was the day I died. I lost my family, I became a Sunday dad and I was in limbo for 23 years, and then I was contacted by SEFF.

It's like I've been in a cocoon that has been taken away after 23 years and all that emotion is coming out and it's hard to handle, but I know I'm going to get through it and start getting some kind of life back.

I can't make it up to my daughter, I can't make it up to my ex-partner, I certainly can't make it up to my dad, but I can only try to make him proud of me.



# SYLVIA BLACK

**SYLVIA BLACK AND HER HUSBAND SAMUEL WERE BOTH RAISED IN COUNTY TYRONE BUT HAD TO LEAVE NORTHERN IRELAND DUE TO THREATS UPON SAMUEL'S LIFE, AND THAT OF THE WIDER FAMILY. SAMUEL HAD SERVED 26 YEARS IN THE RUC GC.**

Sylvia Black was born in 1948 in Omagh, Northern Ireland and moved with her family to Dungannon at the age of 8. She had a very happy childhood, filled with family all around her. She left school and worked in a bakery and then the courier's office for seven years. She loved to bake and still bakes the cakes that remind her of home. She met her husband Samuel in 1969 when she was helping her mum with the cloakroom at the dancehall and they got engaged later that year.

They were married on 6th August 1971, Sylvia's dad's birthday, and moved out to Samuel's family

farm near Cookstown. Sylvia worked, taking care of the house and the farm and the couple soon had children. They didn't have much but they got by and were happy. Samuel joined the UDR part-time in November 1971. A few years later he moved up to full-time. This was always a dangerous job, he was always out on the road, bombs going off. Two or three attempts were made on his life.

Samuel served in the UDR for 26 years and achieved the rank of corporal. Sylvia and Samuel had fostered three very young children, 6 months, 18 months and 3 years, after their own children were older. The danger got worse. One day, Sam's brother arrived at their home telling them that they needed to leave Northern Ireland urgently, that both his and Sam's lives were in danger. Sam's brother left soon after. He had been a policeman for 32 years so had also found himself a target. The army were planning to install bullet proof glass in the windows, add alarms, and other security measures. However Sam still had to go out to work. He could have moved out of the house and into a portacabin in Portadown. But Sam and Sylvia decided that they couldn't put their kids lives in danger any longer. They wanted to leave Northern Ireland too.

Tickets to Cyprus were arranged for the family. They had three weeks to pack up and leave. The army had to surround the house until they left to keep them safe. Sam and Sylvia's two sons already had jobs in Northern Ireland so they had to stay

behind, as did one of their daughters who was in her final year of school. So only their younger daughter went to Cyprus with them. Sylvia wanted to take the couple's three foster children with them but their dad would not allow it so she was told that she would have to leave them behind. She was completely devastated. Not only did she have to leave her entire life behind, she was also separated from the majority of her family. Giving up the foster children was the hardest thing she has ever had to do. They left on 11th June 1993.

They moved seven times in as many years and eventually found a place to settle again, in Scotland. All their children, but one, would eventually settle nearby. The family was back together.

One day, while Sylvia was at the doctors, the doctor noticed something was not right with Sam. Sam was referred to a psychiatrist, he was diagnosed with PTSD and spent a year going for weekly treatment which helped him a lot. Sam still becomes very agitated and stressed when he talks about the past which can affect Sylvia a lot also as she sees his mood deteriorating but can do nothing about it. She tries very hard to keep him focused on the positives in life but the affect that his memories have on him will never leave him. He can get depressed very easily and can become snappy. Despite this, Sylvia is grateful that Sam has survived to tell the tale and she stays strong for them both.

She learnt this trait from her father. Her belief in God and her love for her grandchildren keep her strong. They also attend a veterans' group in their town which allows them to socialise and has helped Sam greatly with his mental health.

Sylvia would never return to live in Northern Ireland, it wouldn't be the same. Everyone she knew is gone. She has very fond memories of life in Northern Ireland. She feels that life was good there and she felt a sense of community which she does not feel where she lives now. However, the stressful and scary life she and Sam lived during the Troubles has marked her. Many people they knew were killed. If she hears a bang then she will still jump and if she were to ever go into a bar, she would sit with her back to the wall, facing the door, always vigilant. This will never leave her. Sam is the same.

Sam wrote the song, "A Soldier's Thoughts" while living in Cyprus:



# GERALDINE FERGUSON

GERALDINE FERGUSON IS THE MOTHER OF  
SAPPER PATRICK AZIMKAR, MURDERED ALONG  
WITH MARK QUINSEY BY THE REAL IRA AT  
MASSEREENE BARRACKS, ANTRIM,  
ON 7TH MARCH 2009



Patrick Azimkar

We had just celebrated Patrick's 21st birthday a few weeks before and it was a very happy occasion.

He was about to be deployed to Afghanistan on the 7th of March 2009 and he came back on the 11th of February and we had a couple of weeks with him. We were so delighted with him. He was just lovely.

Patrick had a great energy, a great sense of fun, a quirky sense of humour and he was a very warm person. After we lost him we were astonished by the incredible love that people had for him.

We said goodbye to Patrick on the 21st of February, hearts in mouths because he was

going to Afghanistan on the 7th of March. But we had a strong sense that he was going to be alright. I dropped him off at the station and we gave each other a big hug and I got in the car and started to cry and I thought to myself 'just stop, he's going to be fine, you'll see him again in three or four months'.

On the 7th of March, the plane was delayed for two hours and the army said it was better to keep them in the barracks. Then somebody, we don't know who and we don't want to know, suggested getting a pizza to pass the time and help them with the nerves.

They went out to pick up the pizza and out of the blue these men came and shot them.

It was a very brutal attack. They shot 60 bullets in 40 seconds and Patrick bore the brunt of it. Even after they fell, they shot them on the ground. I think there were six other young men at the scene that day. By all accounts lots of people came out almost immediately from the barracks to try and save Patrick and Mark, but they couldn't, their injuries were far too much.

After this happened to Patrick, we had to find a way first of all to live. I didn't really mind if I survived or not in those early days, except that I had to survive for James, our older son, who was 25.

How do you go through something like this and survive? That isn't easy. It's a very difficult thing to lose your child like that.

Faith or religion hadn't been a part of my life but, because I had to find a way to live, and it was that, it wasn't any more simple than that, I said, 'if there is a God, I'm going to need help here'.

I didn't really expect anything to come back but, to my astonishment, an awful lot came back and I suddenly gained a huge amount of strength from nowhere.

I can only think it came from God.

Also, we did have a lot of support. We had a great army support man at the time who we're still very good friends with and he was around for six months.

My husband and I are a strong unit and we have managed but it hasn't been similar for James and he still struggles very much to this day.

We've come through a dreadful furnace and come out the other end different people, but Patrick would be proud of us, I believe. We're still hoping James will get some help because he's so angry and he was the most easy going person before.

Afterwards, Mark Quinsey's mother Pam and I met. It was very emotional for us to meet each other and we'd talk quite often on the phone. She was absolutely fuming and didn't want to speak to anybody but me. The problem was, because it was still early days, I couldn't take too much of that, I was struggling to cope myself.

She survived Mark's murder, but what she didn't survive was when Brian Shivers, who was

charged with Patrick and Mark's murders got off on Appeal. We'd had to cope with Colin Duffy's acquittal a year earlier.

It's bad enough having to face up to the murder but when the men you believe murdered your son get off and they go and talk to the press as if they're victims of a kind of crooked system, they turn everything on its' head.

Grief is one thing, it's overwhelming but injustice is another matter altogether and injustice can make you extremely bitter. When the murderers are not made to bear the burden of their crime, guess who it falls on to bear?

This was too much for Pam, it actually became unbearable and it wasn't the murder that she didn't survive, it was the injustice.

I said to my husband that whatever happens I don't want to get bitter because then not only will we have lost Patrick, not only will we have lost James temporarily, but we'll have lost ourselves.

What I want from the future I can't have, because what I want is the men who murdered Patrick and Mark to face justice, but I know I can't have

it. So, given that, I want to rebel against these despicable individuals and do the opposite of what they want us to, so I want to do positive things for the rest of my life in Patrick's memory.

I want to live a life which is loving.





## ROI CONNECTED ATROCITIES / VICTIMS

# RICHARD FALLON

GARDA RICHARD FALLON WAS THE FIRST PERSON TO BE MURDERED IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND AS A RESULT OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND TROUBLES, HE WAS MURDERED BY SAOR EIRE, HIS SON (ALSO RICHARD) SPEAKS OF THE HEAVY BURDEN LEFT FOR SURVIVING FAMILY MEMBERS TO CARRY.



The 3rd of April 1970 was a sunny Friday which followed Easter Sunday that we were all exploiting as children before school resumed. We were playing our hearts out and the sun was high in the sky.

Dad was a bit late coming home to lunch - Mum was still preparing it. So, I ran into the kitchen to tell her when I heard on the one o'clock radio news that a Garda had been shot during a raid in Dublin - no mention of a fatality had been made. We naively surmised that Dad was late home because he was out searching with colleagues for the culprits. We could hear the squeaking of wheels and hissing of air brakes from traffic on the Swords Road which ran parallel to the back of our house - there was obviously a roadblock.

The whole neighbourhood and half the country already knew that of which we were as yet unaware.

I answered the hall door, my mother pulling it further open behind me. There before us was a Garda Superintendent in full uniform, a chaplain in full habit and sandals and our local Doctor whom we had all attended. I remember thinking, you don't get a threesome like this unless someone has died. The Chaplain, who had been dispatched from his monastery on a Lambretta scooter, recalls my mother meeting them with three questions - "What's wrong? Is it Dick? Is he Dead?" She had a potato for the dinner in one hand and a peeling knife in the other.

Before we could grasp the situation the three

passed into the hall and pressed my mother into the depths of an armchair in the sitting room. I last glimpsed her with the corner of my eye as we, her five children, were gathered into a little flock and shepherded across the road to a kind neighbour's house. All the other neighbours were at their hall doors or in whispering huddles along the street, strangers with spiral notebooks and pens interviewing them.

Our sympathetic neighbours fed us biscuits and sandwiches and kept us occupied. I looked out of their boxroom window along with their son at the constant stream of callers and the Garda on duty at our hall door across the road. I eventually went down to the kitchen. They were as upset around the table as we were confused, some of them in tears. I told them, welling up myself, that I knew he was dead, and would somebody not just tell us and then we could go home.

At 5.30 that evening the five of us were put sitting in a row on our neighbour's sitting room couch, our feet from ages three to eleven dangling at various heights over the carpet. The local Parish Priest, visibly upset, pulled up a chair on front of




us. Opening his arms awkwardly and scanning us empathetically with his glazed eyes he told us, 'Daddy is gone to heaven!'. He'd already been there for six hours.

Our neighbour drove us up to the Coachman's Inn near the Airport for minerals and crisps – our first visit to a pub. We were stopped at a roadblock on the way and when he rolled down the car window, I heard him say, 'I know, sure I have his five kids in the back'.

Finally, we crossed the road to be reunited with our mother, the house full of comforting relatives. We stayed up till all hours talking and nattering excitedly in childish shock. We woke up the next day with one less setting on the breakfast table and old heads on our scrawny shoulders.

But there was one thing none of us knew on



that heavenly April day and could not even have contemplated. That there would be more that another three-and-a-half thousand people who would get the same knock on their door over the coming decades. Dad was but the first entry for 1970 and for southern Ireland in the poignant chronicle of 'Lost Lives'.

Our mother Deirdre and our two brothers, Joseph and Damien, are no longer with us, their lives foreshortened by the events of April 3rd 1970. We all followed our mother's example in never becoming vengeful. But like others impacted by violence, that day in April has made us yearn in truth ever since to ensure that nobody else will go through the same tribulations.

We played our little hearts out early that sunny morning of April 3rd 1970 but our hearts themselves have been played out ever since

# MICHAEL DONEGAN

INSPECTOR SAMUEL DONEGAN WAS MURDERED ON THE CAVAN-FERMANAGH BORDER (NORTHERN SIDE) IN 1972. HIS SON MICHAEL (ONE OF SIX CHILDREN) SPEAKS OF WHO HIS FATHER REALLY WAS AND THE VOID LEFT WITHIN THE FAMILY.

I was born in 1953. I was always the son of a policeman. My brother and my sisters were always a policeman's children. It meant we were burdened with duties other children didn't seem to have. Our father, Sam was the most correct man in the community and we must also be correct. He fixed our shoes and our bikes, carried us shoulder high when we were tired and taught us the names of birds and how to fish and sow seeds. He beamed with pride at our humble feats of success and we sensed his quiet disapproval when we transgressed.

My mother had been a nurse having gone to London to train and work at a very young age. They were country people, steeped in the ideas and values of the small rural communities from which they came. Sam, was the son of a small farmer from rural Longford. My mother's father



was a wheelwright and carpenter. Her mother ran a village shop.

My childhood was a rather nomadic one. Policemen moved from station to station in those days and any promotion was immediately followed by a move to another town. My father was ambitious to improve his prospects. He had entered the Garda in 1934 at the age of 23 with a rudimentary second level education. To augment his chances of promotion he took every opportunity to better his knowledge. He studied at home and availed of night classes and correspondence courses.

As children we were imbued with the idea that education was the key to advancement and security in life. Each move brought new schools and the challenges of meeting new friends. We are always blow-ins.



But our childhoods were happy ones in a time when neighbours' doors were always on the latch, w h e n the quiet streets and surrounding fields of little

western towns were our playgrounds and when everywhere else was strange and far away.

Each time we moved our mother stoically packed the precious bric-a-brac of our lives in tea-chests; icons of permanence and security as we faced into another unknown. She said tearful farewells to her few dear friends and waited for the removal van. Then it was another rented house, often outdated, obsolete, a place of damp sculleries and cold linoleum floors. She would valiantly make do and try again to fashion our bits and pieces into a home.

Our father's earliest priority was usually a shelf for the radio, to perch it high on the wall above the single kitchen socket, to beam down on us like a deity.

Whatever piece of overgrown ground came with each house was cleared and tilled and ridged with all the earnest digging skill of a farmer's son. These patches of earth would be the source of bounty in our often frugal lives. I can still see my mother, bearing down on our back door, her clasped arms an argosy of cabbages and rhubarb and lettuces and beets and carrots still wet with clay and dew and freshness. We would always have enough.

So this was the way of our lives and when in 1968 we made yet another move, this time to Cavan town, we thought no different than before. Things had improved for us. My father had achieved promotion again, this time to the rank of Inspector. He had managed to purchase a semi-detached house on Highfield Rd. With a back garden and pleasant neighbours either side. I was the youngest of six, two boys and four girls. Our mother quietly made friends with neighbours. Our father went to work as always.

This work was something we never really knew anything about. He wore his uniform with meticulous care and went to his Garda station place of work. Whatever he did there was never discussed at home, in our presence at any rate.

What would have been the natural progression of this pattern of living? That we would mature and find our dutiful positions in society? That my father would soon finish his final roster of

responsibility and with my mother savour at last the comfortable dividends of pensioned retirement? They had even purchased a small second hand caravan with an eye to idyllic sunsets over beaches in the west and lazy nostalgic trips to the many places and friends of past stationings. There would be rivers to be fished and time and leisure in abundance to dig his garden, tinker in the shed and expand his little empire of beehives. There would be long hours whistling his dry workshop tunes, selecting the proper tool, to fix up, to repair, to make and shape and leave things better than they were before. There would be days holding his little grandchildren by the hand or on his knee and in unimaginable conspiracies of love, feel overwhelming joy and closeness beyond words.

But these are all epiphanies my father would never have. On the 8th of June 1972 his life was ended brutally, needlessly, aimlessly and part of all our lives also died that day. The bomb that killed our father exploded in his face, and flung him into the sky. It stripped the flesh from his body and battered out his eyes. It tore him from the earth and from all the lives who loved him tenderly, who needed him to console and encourage and protect. It inflicted the maximum of pain and suffering on the most gentle of men. There are those who will find ways to justify



whatever cause and whatever heinous deed is done to further that cause. I cannot argue with every one of them. There was a time in my life that I wanted to. I wanted them, faceless as they have remained, to answer to my outrage, to have the backbone to answer to their murderous actions, to see my rage. It never happened. It is now 50 years since that awful event.

My poor gentle mother carried the loss of her dear husband to the grave. She never got over the catastrophe of his death. I was 18 years old and just about to sit down after the lunch-time break to continue with my Leaving Cert English paper when the boy came rushing in to tell me that my father had been injured in an explosion. I am 68 now, yet I can still feel the abject puzzlement of that moment and the

draining away of the colour from my world. I can experience in a moment the agonised despair of my mother in the hospital, the frantic anxiety-filled coming and going of Gardai, Doctors, clergy and family acquaintances, the urgent, whispered conversations in stairwells and hospital waiting areas.

I see and hear my brother, brave and resolute, sitting weeping aloud on the stairs, my dear sisters sobbing uncontrollably, my poor wounded father's head completely enwrapped in white elasticated bandaging, his strong left arm exposed and warm to my touch on the counterpane and his long breaths, whale-deep and echoing down the channel of fifty years. He died later that evening. To have somehow survived such awful mutilation would have been a Calvary beyond thinking.

And so the funeral with all its protocols and sober pomp, the Garda Band's relentless repetition of Saul's death march, the uniformed rows of



colleagues keeping their slow step on the trek to the graveyard, the sombre crowds lining the



route, the dark chasm of the open grave, my mother's brokenness. At eighteen my limited resources



were no match for the world of harrowing grief and loss she had been plunged into. The idea of counselling was unheard of in 1972. How could I save her when I couldn't save myself? I felt the guilt of not being good enough to do the job and raced metaphorically for the dark woods. I didn't leave those woods for another 12 years. Sometimes I feel I am still in there. I lived

and thought chaotically, ran from responsibility, suffered deep depression and drank too much. Somehow on the way I got married. It was as if the tears I had struggled to shed at the time of my father's death had solidified within me in a dark mass of recrimination and regret. I longed for my poor dead father, for what might have been had it been different, for all the love I could never retrieve from the carnage of his death.

Yet I have survived because of the love of my dear mother who lived another 36 years, the loyalty and love of my sisters, two of whom are now also deceased and my brother and the guardian angel who came into my life disguised as my wife Maria. We have three adult children Sam after my father, Diarmuid and Anna. It hasn't been easy for them either. Philip Larkin's often quoted lines come to mind when he said 'Man hands on misery to man...', and I have handed them some misery in my day.

The recent arrival of our two beautiful grandchildren, Emma and Sadie, has given me the chance to love again, this time, unconditionally. I will savour it!

My story is only one of thousands. The troubles, as they are now euphemistically referred to, left broken bodies and lives strewn everywhere. Some haven't even been found yet. There are people on every side in wheelchairs, without limbs, widowed, orphaned, mourning, suffering

addiction and emotional and physical pain.

I struggle to believe in any God but yet I pray that they be relieved of their pain. I feel powerless to do anything else. They are forgotten. Their children, even their grandchildren have inhaled their suffering and now must suffer also. I can't tell you how this issue can be resolved; I have struggled to resolve it in my own life. Who will come back to acknowledge those hurt and wounded by their actions, to offer unconditional compassion and seek forgiveness and admit their terrible mistakes; the crushing heinous futility of it all? Who has that courage?

It's one thing to relegate dates and events to the backwaters of history but those who glibly say 'it's time to move on' or 'best to leave the past behind' simply miss the point that pain is not an event, a deed perpetrated by one side or the other or a tragic date on a calendar. It is the terrible product of such events. Pain cannot be left conveniently behind or deleted like a text. Would that it were as easy to repair destroyed lives as it is to restore shattered buildings and lay fresh tarmac over cratered streets. To say that 'that was then and this is now' is to conveniently forget that the past with all its pain and loss for us will always be 'the Now'!



Geraldine pictured as bridesmaid at her sister Frances' wedding

# ANTHONY O'REILLY

**ANTHONY O'REILLY'S 15-YEAR-OLD SISTER GERALDINE WAS ONE OF TWO YOUNG PEOPLE MURDERED IN THE BELTURBET BOMBING ON 28TH DECEMBER, 1972 PERPETRATED BY LOYALIST TERRORISTS.**

There were eight of us and Geraldine was the youngest of the family. She was 15.

I left my sister and her husband out home that night and Geraldine came with me to get a bag of chips. There was a chipper at the top of the town and it wasn't open that night, so we came on down to the other chipper in the centre of the town and Geraldine got out and went in.



O'Reilly Family

I was sitting in the car, I was double parked, just waiting on her and next thing I didn't know what had happened. I thought I was after falling asleep and dreaming. When I came to I was half out of the car and the car in front of me was on fire and I think the car behind me was on fire. So I got out and ran down the street. I was staggering about, I didn't realise what had happened at all.

After a wee while, I went back up the street and I was calling Geraldine, I had realised that Geraldine was with me and I couldn't hear any sound of her at all.

The car was in bits, there must have been steel went in through it and out through the roof and I don't know how I came out of it because there wasn't a window left in the car or anything.

I didn't realise what had happened. I hadn't heard the bomb and I was only 10 feet away from it. I was even double-parked so I was nearer to it. It must have lifted the car up with the blast and that's what saved me probably.

Then the doctor and the guards came and brought me in to identify Geraldine, it was her that lay there murdered. It was something you weren't expecting, just a couple of days after Christmas. I was angry because you wondered who it was and people would have come to me and said, 'I know it was such a ones', but I couldn't be sure.

After the funeral, things settled down a bit and my father was glad we weren't all killed. But we started to kind of get on with our lives. It was very hard but my father and my mother just couldn't talk about it, they just kept it in the back of their minds.

There was no support really. I was always kind of depressed. My children had a big interest in Irish music and we were in Dundalk one weekend at a fleadh and there was supposed to be a bomb in the hotel, so that triggered it all off again.

It was about 10 years later and they evacuated us all out on the street and I started to panic in case there was a bomb in the car on the street instead of in the hotel. I didn't know where to turn and

I was thinking more about it than other people. I never drank at the time but after the bomb I started to take a drink and next thing I started to drink too much and I turned into an alcoholic for about 10 or 15 years.

Everything nearly went, and only for my wife Marie I probably would have sold everything and drank it but I quit, I went to AA and I've stopped drinking 15 years now. I was depressed and blamed myself and Frances was the same, she'd say, 'why did I go out that night?' or 'why did I get up at that time to go home?'

But when the monument in Belturbet went up, it did take a lot off Frances and myself because at least it was recognised.

It was an awful job even to get the monument. And only for Bertie Ahern and Fianna Fail, they got it up along with the Council in Belturbet. It was great to get that done.

It's a crime that's unanswered but at this stage there'll be nobody ever brought to justice.

You just wonder why it was never claimed. If you even got a bit of justice and they said somebody did it and why they never claimed it, but as for getting anyone for it, I don't think there'll be anyone ever got.

# MARIE O'REILLY

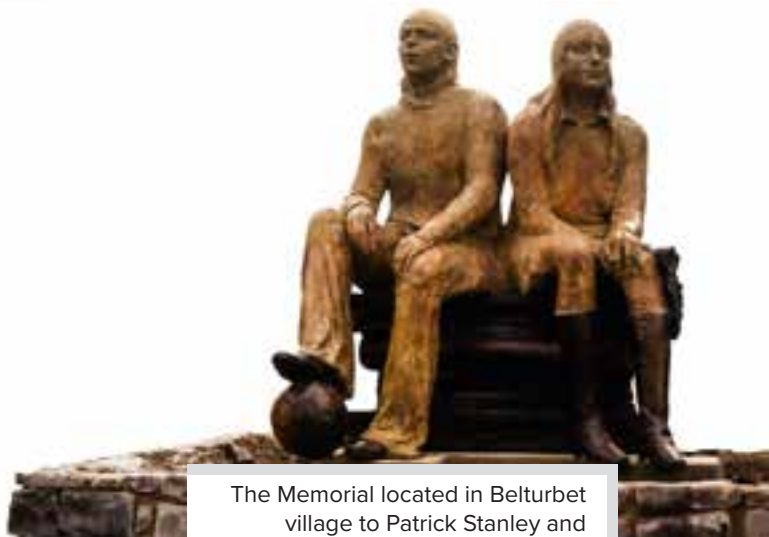
MARIE O'REILLY'S 15-YEAR-OLD SISTER-IN-LAW GERALDINE WAS ONE OF TWO YOUNG PEOPLE MURDERED IN THE BELTURBET BOMBING ON 28TH DECEMBER, 1972 PERPETRATED BY LOYALIST TERRORISTS.

Anthony and I were living with his parents and we'd just had our first child and things were going well for us, until that fatal night.

His sister and her husband were being brought home by Anthony, and Geraldine decided she would go with them.

The first thing Anthony's parents and I heard was this ferocious blast, and we immediately thought Aghalane Bridge had been blown up again, but then a lot of cars seemed to be going past and we went to the front of the house and could see the glow at Belturbet.

A car stopped and told us there'd been a bomb and we just looked at each other in shock. They were saying two people had been killed, and I just said, 'I have to go in to town.'



The Memorial located in Belturbet village to Patrick Stanley and Geraldine O'Reilly.

When we got there, the Diamond was cordoned off and soldiers were standing around and wouldn't let anyone past.

So we turned and walked back home and when we got there the priest and doctor were talking with Mary-Kate, Anthony's mother and we knew Geraldine had been killed.

Early next morning, neighbours drove me to the hospital to the ward and I saw Anthony. He was covered in cuts and looked shocked, but I was just so happy to see that he was alive, but of course there was shock that Geraldine had died.

I was 21 and she would have been 15, we were much the same height, the same size in clothes and she used to borrow my stuff when she went out to the little dances.

She was a lovely girl, very affectionate, and she went everywhere with Anthony, no matter where Anthony went Geraldine tagged along with him and always did. He was very fond of her.

Anthony came back from hospital a changed person, obviously. He was very nervous and agitated. If a car backfired he would jump. All that was very traumatic to him and we went on with our lives and had four more girls.

There was a big breach in the family, because nobody understood what had happened. Granted, we knew there were troubles in the north, but it was totally unexpected. Belturbet always had a good relationship with the people on the other side of the border because the people in the towns and businesses depended on each other.

It was a big shock to the community and the community seemed to stand still after that, it was never spoken about; no one talked about what happened. It's a pity no one was ever got for this. No one ever claimed it; it seemed to have come out of the blue. Usually, someone would own up when they do something.

Maybe it's because of who was killed, the two innocent young people, and my heart goes out to the Stanley family, because it was their eldest son, Paddy, who was killed, and I believe his body was burned with the blast because he was right beside where the bomb went off.

It took years before it was talked about again, and it was our own children, when they were at school at St Bricin's, when they decided they were going to do a project on the history of the town, and then they discovered there was a bomb in Belturbet and they didn't know their aunt was actually killed in that bomb.

When they came home to us to talk about it, Anthony and I looked at each other and realised we would have to explain all this to our children. They were gobsmacked. They knew they had an aunt Geraldine and she was killed, but it didn't have the same impact until they actually saw the pictures in the newspapers.

The memorial in the town now gives us a sense that Geraldine and Paddy aren't forgotten. It's there now for everybody to see. I see people even now going up to it and bending down and looking at it and saying, 'we never knew there was a bomb in Belturbet'.

Anthony and I and his family in Belturbet especially were really happy that there was recognition that this did happen to two young innocent people who had nothing to do with terrorism. It just goes to show that, where there is terrorism, it's not the guilty that suffer, it's always the innocent.

# EDWARD O'NEILL

EDWARD O'NEILL WAS MURDERED IN THE 1974 DUBLIN AND MONAGHAN BOMBINGS. HIS SON (ALSO EDWARD) WHO WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED SHARES HIS LIVED EXPERIENCES AND HIS CONTINUED PURSUANCE FOR JUSTICE AND ANSWERS

What do I remember about the day itself ?, God, probably more than I should. I have had people tell me there is no way I could as I was so young but there as memories of me that are so vivid, I can close my eyes and in an instant transport myself back there.

Does anyone remember that song by Terry Jacks, Seasons in the Sun ?, you know the lyrics "We had joy we had fun we had seasons in the sun." That was playing on a little transistor radio my dad liked to listen to in the mornings when he was having breakfast. I'm sitting here writing this now with the memories of the little boy version of me with my legs swinging over the side of the bench seat in the small galley type kitchen we had in Dominick Street watching my dad make breakfast for me. When I think that a family of 7, my mother and father and myself and my brothers and sisters all ate our meals out of that small kitchen.



Edward O'Neill Snr

The day itself was 17th May 1974. A big deal as it was First Communion for all the kids in the locality. I was still

too young but my brother and sister were making theirs so there were preparations aplenty. My mother had left me in the charge of my dad for the day while she was in the hairdressers with my sister. All the local barbers and hairdressers would have been packed to the rafters. I even remember what he made me for breakfast. Boiled egg, toast soldier, orange juice and an apple cut in quarters. I remember listening to my dad humming firstly. He was very happy. I loved him dearly. He was my hero. And yes, he remains my hero.

Then he started to sing "We had joy we had fun we had seasons in the sun ". That was probably all the words he knew but he was enjoying the song. I

felt happy and safe with him. He was my protector, the one that scared away all the monsters from under my bed and in the closet and made me safe. I remember him at the oven, the sides of his braces hanging over the edges of his trousers and the turn up of his shirt sleeves. He picked me up and put me standing on the table and I ruffled his hair. He laughed and kissed me on the cheek. I remember the smell of the soap from his shaving foam on my nostrils. He put my Yogi Berra shirt on with my shorts and my big red and white "Fonzie" jacket. The plan apparently was that he would look after my brother up to lunch time and my mother would come home and drop Billy off and he would take Billy to the barbers for his haircut as it was his first communication the next day and the barbers would be busy. There was also a major bus strike that day so the streets would be busy. That didn't go as plan. I was a Daddy's boy and wanted to go with him. I seem to remember kicking up a real fuss about the thoughts of being not able to. Eventually it was decided to take me with him but along the way my mums cousin Brian was picked up. By all accounts himself and my dad planned to go and have a pint of beer in the bar next door while the barbers took care of my haircut and that of my brother.

I remember walking into the barbers holding my dad's hand. He took me under the arms and put me sitting down and to be good for Liam (The

barber). I do remember his smile and he gave me another kiss and told me to be a good boy. How I loved him ! To my 4 yr. old self he was my everything. Brian and my dad had been taking turns to check us. Brian told me years later that it was his turn to check us but as my dad had finished his drink, he said he would come. As it happened, we were both finished. I remember my dad and Liam discussing a Bruce Lee poster that Liam had got from someone in Hong Kong. I had this memory for years and wasn't sure if it was real or not, but I remembered someone playing with me in the barbers, and something shiny flying through the air and me grabbing it. Many years later at the inquests a man by the name of Christy Shepherd was giving evidence and mentioned that he was playing with a little boy about 4 or 5 in the barbers. Then it was Liam the barber's evidence that after he shook hands with my dad,



Edward O'Neil

he flicked a small coin in the air, and I jumped up and grabbed it. I was literally stunned. I simply didn't know if those memories were real or not.

So, walking out of the barbers my dad had me on the left side swinging me and Billy on his right. Billy jumped up and grabbed a bottom off his lapel. The button seems to be rolling in slow motion along the side of the pavement. Then I seen a flash of light and a sound like a dry stick breaking and then a flash of flames coming towards me. I remember this distinctly and I don't care if people think its not a real memory. It was literally only a second or two in all likelihood, but I remember my dad's face as he tried to push me behind him while trying to grab Billy. I do believe at that very instant he knew he was going to die and was trying to save myself and Billy. I don't know how long it was, but I woke up in darkness, then a crack of light appeared, and I felt someone grabbing my feet. I do distinctly remember a voice saying "That child needs to go to hospital and someone saying "No that child is dead".

From my medical records I was able to ascertain that I was actually found under rubble from the side of a building which collapsed on Parnell Street. Fuel from a tank had ignited and burned me. I had a large piece of metal sticking out of my head which severed my carotid artery. My injuries were horrendous. Nearly every part of my body had some injury to it. I ended up spending

nearly 2 years in hospital with just small breaks at home. To this day I am still receiving medical treatment. My mother who was also heavily pregnant miscarried my baby sister. Her name is on the memorial on Talbot Street.

I feel cheated out of a relationship with her and to this day the guidance of my father.



The Dublin-Monaghan Memorial with the addition of Baby Martha O'Neill's name as added in June 2022.



# MARY CONAGHAN

**JUDGE RORY CONAGHAN WAS MURDERED ON 16TH SEPTEMBER 1974 BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA. HE WAS ONE OF SEVERAL JUDGES/BARRISTERS/SOLICITORS TO BE MURDERED THROUGH TERRORISM.**

I was 17 when my father Rory was murdered on Monday the 16/09/74 at around 8-35 am. I was in the house getting ready to go to school (final year A levels) I was hoping to do medicine.

I heard the doorbell and thought its the postman ,following an almighty bang, I ran screaming to the hall saying “watch your eyes “as I thought it was a letter bomb. My father was lying unresponsive. My nine-year-old sister Deirdre was beside him as he was shot. My mother and I arrived in the

hall at the same time. She had heard him say “I’ve been done. Get a priest.” She ran to neighbours while I held him. My aunt and I also rang emergency services. These arrived





targets. I knew that my father and indeed all of us were targets of both sides of the divide as my father had sent Ian Paisley to jail in 1969.

Apart from the day of my birth this was the most defining moment of my life.

fairly quickly, he died as the bullet went through his heart. I remember an older ambulance man shaking my hand and saying “I’m so sorry for your loss”

By lunchtime the Provisional Irish Republican Army had claimed responsibility for the death of my father who was the County Court Judge of Armagh and Fermanagh. At the same time Martin Mc Beirney a Resident Magistrate was also shot that morning at home. Both men were liberal judges and interested in social justice, the Provisional Irish Republican Army saw them as part of the British war machine and so legitimate

# JIM CANNON



**GARDA JIM CANNON WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED AS THE RESULT OF A BOMB ATTACK BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA UPON A HOUSE IN GARRYHINCHEAR PORTLAOISE TO WHICH FIVE MEMBERS OF AN GARDA SIOCHANA HAD BEEN LURED, GARDA MICHAEL CLERKIN WAS MURDERED IN THIS INCIDENT.**

I was born on a farm on the 16th October 1934 at Raherreen, Kiltulla. Athenry, Co. Galway. I went to Primary School in Kiltulla and Secondary school in De-Le Salle College Loughrea. My Mother's name was Delia and my father was Pat Cannon who died from a heart attack when I was five years old. After finishing school, I worked

with my aunt, Auntie Moloney in her grocery, bar, hardware, and drapery shop at Craughwell, Co Galway until 1955.

On the 11th of May 1955 I joined the Garda Siochana. After training at Garda HQ, my first station was Thurles in 1955. I was stationed in Puckaun in 1957, in Holycross 1957, in Kilmallock 1960, in Corrinshigo, Co.Monaghan 1965, in Clonsalee 1967 and finally, in Portarlinton in 1970. I also served at Castleblaney and Portlaoise, I was promoted to rank of Sergeant in 1965.

I married Mary Shanahan, a native of Drombane, Thurles on the 4th of August 1959. We had four children, Gerard R.I.P, Pdraig, Marie and Carmel. I played hurling with Kilconieron and Craughwell, Co. Galway and Thurles Sarsfields, Holycross and Kiladangan Co. Tipperary.

I retired from the Garda Siochana after 39 years of service on the 4th of August 1994. I performed duty at two notable events in Ireland, the visit of President John F. Kennedy in 1963, where I was on duty on a narrow roadway on the route of the President to New Ross town. Here, I was in an isolated area within 2 yards of the President when he saluted me and I (without permission) saluted him back. The other was the famous Pope John Paul 11 visit to Maynooth College, where my son was a student at the time in 1979.



I was Branch Secretary of the Association of Garda Sergeants and Inspectors for Laois/Offaly for 16 years. I was also a member of the St. Pauls Garda Medical Aid Society Board of

Management for 10 years. I was Secretary and founder member of the Portlaoise branch of the Garda Síochána retired members association and a member of the National Executive for 12 years. Secretary Portarlinton Golf Club for 7 years, Captain 1993, President 2001 and 2002. Founder of the Non-Alcohol Club for Teenagers in Portarlinton in 1980.

My hobbies before the bomb injuries were GAA, Golf, gardening and walking.

I was seriously injured in an IRA bomb explosion at Garryhinch, Portarlinton on the 16th of October, 1976.

On the night of the 15th of October 1976, I was on duty in the Portarlinton patrol car accompanied by Gardai Michael Clerkin and Gerry Bohan, when I received a call from Portlaoise Garda Station to say an anonymous female caller telephoned the Portlaoise station. The caller said armed men will be staying in Galvins vacant house tonight and they will attempt to murder Oliver J. Flanagan Minister of State. We got instructions to await armed detective branch members. Gardai Clerkin, Bohan, and I met up with two detectives, Tom Peters and Ben Thornton.

It was 12.30 am on Saturday 16th of October 1976 when all five of us set off in two patrol cars for the vacant house four miles away. We arrived at the vacant house at 12.40 am and cautiously approached the building. The house was down a quiet laneway beside Garryhinch State Forest. It was a two-storey house, partly slated and partly corrugated. It was in total darkness and had no sign of life. We first searched outside of the house with the help of torches and lights from the patrol cars. We shone lights through the ground floor windows and tried the front door which was locked. Detective Tom Peters remained at the front of the house.

Detective Ben Thornton continued to walk around the house and Gardai Clerkin, Bohan and myself went to open a rear window. Garda

Clerkin entered through the rear window and walked through the house with the aid of a flashlight, opening the front door to admit Detective Garda Thornton. Less than a minute later, while Detective Garda Thornton and Garda Michael Clerkin were searching through the house there was a tremendous explosion and the whole building blew up. Garda Michael Clerkin, was blown to pieces and died instantly.

Garda Gerry Bohan and myself were buried up to our necks in rocks and rubble at the rear of the house, while rocks and debris rained down on us. Garda Bohan was bruised and bloodied and his uniform in shreds. He was the first to extricate himself from the rubble, but he failed to get me out, as my legs and body were trapped and he went to a nearby house for assistance. I managed to free one of my arms and I removed rocks and rubble from my legs and body and pulled myself out, after a few minutes.

I heard moaning from under the bombed house. I rushed as quickly as my injuries would allow, to where I saw a shocking sight. A bloodied head sticking up from a mound of rocks and rubble, it was Detective Garda Tom Peters. I heaved rocks and rubble off him, but I was unable to free him. I heard further moans from the centre of the wreckage, under about six feet of rubble. I tried to claw my way towards the sound but being in severe pain, and blood oozing from my head,



hands and legs, I abandoned the effort. I went to the patrol car to radio for help but the radio was not working as the aerial had blown off in the blast. Both patrol cars were complete write offs.

I went in total darkness, across the fields, to a house a quarter of a mile away, stumbling and falling as I went. I had great difficulty in getting through a number of barbed wire fences, which tore at my legs and uniform, causing further bleeding to my hands, face, and legs. I roused the family, who saw me covered in dust and dirt, with my uniform in shreds. I used the family's telephone to call for help. I struggled to return to the scene, where I saw Garda Bohan and local men, only by the light of torches, trying to free the three Gardai who were still trapped in the rubble. Fortunately, I was able to point out the spot where I had heard moaning earlier and on clearing



six feet of rubble, they found the badly injured and dazed Ben Thornton. He was alive. He was face downwards and was saved by a beam that fell across his head and shoulders.

Ben was trapped under 6 feet of rocks and rubble for a full hour. The searchers then managed to pull out the badly injured Tom Peters. At this stage I knew that Michael Clerkin was dead. He was later identified from his signet ring. He was 24 years of age.

My uniform cap was found hanging off the top of a tree, one hundred feet away. A live grenade was later found in the wreckage. After Tom Peters and Ben Thornton were rescued, I was assisted to a waiting ambulance and collapsed. I now had lost the power in my legs and required the use of a wheelchair. I had little or no power in

my legs for 3 months. At times, I moved around the house on my knees, and I suffered lifelong injuries to both legs, head, back, eyes and hands. I continue to receive medical attention today. Tom Peters lost his sight and hearing and is now deceased, R.I.P. Ben Thornton and Gerry Bohan, also received lifelong injuries.

Michael Clerkin and the four survivors were not awarded the Scott Medal at the time of the bomb explosion. I had campaigned for years that the Scott Medal be awarded. At the time of the 40th anniversary mass for Michael Clerkin, I highlighted the fact, that the Scott Medals were not awarded to Michael Clerkin and the four survivors. It received massive publicity. I gave interviews to the national newspapers and Joe Duffy on Liveline, RTE 1 Radio.

On the 8th of December, 2017, at the Garda College, Templemore, Michael Clerkin was posthumously awarded the gold Scott medal and Jim Cannon, Tom Peters, Ben Thornton and Gerry Bohan, were also awarded the Gold Scott Medal for bravery.

It was one of the darkest days in the history of the Garda Síochána. It was a cold, dark dreary night on the 16th of October 1976, when we faced the house of horrors at Garryhinch. My family and I, have suffered grievously, and have the memories and scars to this day. We have paid a very heavy price.

# DES HANNA

BILLY HANNA WAS KILLED BY THE SAS ALONGSIDE THREE MEMBERS OF THE PROVISIONAL IRA IN THE BALLYSILLIAN AREA OF BELFAST, BILLY WAS A WHOLLY INNOCENT CIVILIAN. HIS BROTHER DES RECOUNTS A MUCH LOVED BROTHER.

My name is Des Hanna. I am a native of Belfast. I was born in Berwick Road in the Ardoyne. I come from a family of 11. My father was a lorry driver. He died in 1969. My mother looked after the house and family. Berwick Road was a protestant enclave in the mainly catholic Ardoyne area. We were all raised in the protestant/loyalist tradition. My father had been a member of the Orange Order and the Royal Black Preceptory.

Tragedy struck our family on June 21st 1978 when my brother Billy was killed in Ballysillian. Billy had been working in Scotland and had recently come back to Belfast to live with and care for my mother as the rest of the family had gone their various ways and she was living alone.

The tragic circumstances of Billy's death are as follows. On the day in question Billy had been socialising at a local club called 'The Pigeon

Club' in Ballysillian. Accompanied by his brother-in-law David, he was returning home to Alliance Road where my mother and he were then living. A detachment of the British Army in the form of the S.A.S. accompanied by members of the R.U.C. had laid a trap for a suspected I.R.A. unit who were imminently expected to firebomb a local Post Office Transport Depot on Ballysillian Road. As the four-man I.R.A unit were approaching from one direction Billy and David were coming the other way. There was no warning given and in the ensuing salvo of bullets of which it is estimated 200 were fired, Billy was shot dead as were three of the four I.R.A. members. A fourth escaped while David fell over a wall and was concussed thereby escaping the bullets. Some petrol bombs but no arms were subsequently found at the scene.

Initial reports stated that four I.R.A. members had been killed. Our family immediately pointed out that our brother Billy was in no way connected to the I.R.A. unit and that he had been shot as an innocent man. Subsequent enquiries proved that Billy had indeed been executed illegally. The families of the I.R.A. men fought to prove that they were unarmed when they had been shot dead.

My mother sought the assistance of a solicitor and brought a case of unlawful killing against the Crown. Although the case was defended by the State she was successful and received compensation. She was never the same afterward. Her health began to fail rapidly. She would be reminded of the tragedy daily for the rest of her life as she could see clearly the exact location of Billy's death from her flat window.

My siblings were all affected by the trauma of the event in various ways afterward. Although it is now more than 44 years ago the awful event is still a vivid memory for me. I suffer frequent flashbacks, nightmares, and disturbed sleep patterns and the many subsequent tragedies of the troubles have served to repeatedly awaken in me the horror of what happened to Billy and to us as family. I firmly believe one can never fully get over such tragedy. The best one can do is to survive it and somehow find a sad acceptance of the situation as it was and always is in one's life.

# HENRY BYRNE

**GARDA HENRY BYRNE WAS MURDERED ALONGSIDE HIS FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE GARDA JOHN MORLEY BY THE INLA ON 7TH JULY 1980. WE HEAR FROM THE MORLEY FAMILY.**



Henry Gerard Byrne, born on 24th March, 1951, came from Wingfield, Knock, Claremorris, Co. Mayo. He joined An Garda Síochána on 8th March, 1972. He served at Mullingar, Multyfarnham, Granard and Carlow. He was stationed at Castlerea, Co Roscommon.

He was married to Anne with three children. Anne was pregnant with their third child when he was killed.

Garda Henry Byrne, was posthumously awarded the Scott Gold Medal on 16th September, 1982.

Henry had served eight years in An Garda Síochána before he was killed by the INLA along with his colleague Garda Detective John Morley on the afternoon of the 7th July 1980.

The INLA gang had robbed the Bank of Ireland in Ballaghdeeren, Co Roscommon. The armed

gang burnt their getaway car and transferred to another, they were intercepted by a garda patrol car, containing, Garda Henry Byrne with colleagues Sergeant Michael O'Malley, D/Garda John Morley and Garda Derek O'Kelly. The raiders' vehicle collided with the patrol car. One of the raiders shot at the windscreen of the patrol car. The other two raiders then opened fire on the patrol car killing Garda Byrne. Having pursued the raiders Detective Garda Morley was shot dead a short distance away.

Three men were charged with the murders of Garda Henry Byrne and Detective Garda John Morley, they were found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging, however just before this date, in June 1981, their sentence was commuted to 40 years in prison with no chance of parole. One of the men, Peter Pringle, always denied



any involvement in the crime and his conviction was overturned by the high court in 1995 due to discrepancies in the evidence. In July 2013 the other two men Colm O'Shea and Patrick McCann were released early after 30 years, upsetting both the Byrne and Morley families. Authorities didn't publish that the men were released until October 2013.

On 7th July 2020, the 40th anniversary since the murders of Garda Henry Byrne and Detective Garda John Morley, their families attended a memorial service, along with friends and colleagues, including the Garda Commissioner.

Garda Commissioner Drew Harris said "the striking memorial to Garda Henry Byrne and Detective Garda John Morley serves as a daily

reminder to those who live in and visit the area, of the bravery and courage displayed by Henry and John on that fateful day. Their courage and bravery was to protect local communities, their colleagues and the State. Today is a commemoration of that courage and also of the courage of Henry and John's colleagues Sergeant Michael O'Malley and Garda Derek O'Kelly who were with them when they intercepted the bank raiders. Keeping people safe is what Gardaí do every day of the week but there are times when they put themselves at extraordinary risk in the exercise of their duty. They do so knowing what it means for them, their family, or their friends and colleagues. That is the definition of courage".

Henry and Anne's son Paul spoke on behalf of the Byrne family and thanked the local community for their efforts in providing the memorial which was unveiled three years previously, and for organising the 40th anniversary event.

# JOHN MORLEY

GARDA JOHN MORLEY WAS MURDERED ALONGSIDE HIS FRIEND AND COLLEAGUE GARDA HENRY BYRNE BY THE INLA ON 7TH JULY 1980. WE HEAR FROM THE MORLEY FAMILY.



John Morley, was born on the 6th October 1942, came from Faughill, Kiltimagh, Co Mayo. He Joined An Garda Síochána on 31st March, 1964. On 27th May, 1979, he was appointed to Detective Branch, based at Castlerea Garda Station. He previously served at Ballaghadreen. was married to Fances and they had three children, two sons, Shane and Gordan and their daughter Gillian. A family man who enjoyed playing GAA, and was a player of some note, considered one of the best centre backs in Connaught football. He played 112 league and championship games for Mayo between 1961 – 1974 and captained his native Mayo team.

On the afternoon of 7th July, 1980, the Bank of Ireland, Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon was robbed of £41,000 by two armed and masked men. Having made their escape, the raiders

(three of them in all) burned their getaway car and transferred to another a short distance away and headed towards Castlerea. D/Garda John Morley with colleagues Sergeant Michael O'Malley, Garda Henry Byrne and Garda Derek O'Kelly intercepted the raiders at Aghaderry, Shannon's Cross, some five miles from Ballaghaderreen, where the raiders' vehicle collided with the patrol car. One of the raiders shot at the windscreen of the patrol car. The other two then opened fire on the patrol car killing Garda Byrne. Having bravely pursued the raiders Detective Garda Morley was shot dead a short distance away.

Both men were posthumously awarded the Scott Gold Medal – a medal awarded for acts of bravery by the Irish police force – on September 16, 1982.



On the 7th July 2020, the 40th anniversary of these horrific murders, the Morley and Byrne families, friends and former colleagues along with the Garda Commissioner Drew Harris gathered to remember, both John and Henry, at a memorial sited at the avenue of the atrocity.

At that time Frances, John's widow released a statement through SEFF, saying:

"I never wanted to hold ugly thoughts of

bitterness or revenge, that will not bring John back and in fact would only further hurt my family and I."

"We have tried to live our lives well; my children and their children have brought many moments of joy – but yes of course those are moments which John should have experienced."

She added: "Today may be viewed a milestone anniversary by people outside of our families, it's a time when their focus comes on our situation but every day for me is an anniversary and I expect this is the same for others also."

John and Frances's son Shane, spoke on behalf of his family and paid a loving tribute to his mother Frances and the strength of character she has shown over the years since the tragedy. He also paid a warm tribute to the local community in Loughglynn and the local organising community for all their hard work over the years.

# AUSTIN STACK

AUSTIN STACK'S FATHER BRIAN STACK WAS CHIEF PRISON OFFICER IN PORTALAOISE PRISON. HE WAS SHOT BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA IN DUBLIN ON 25TH MARCH 1983 AND DIED JUST OVER A YEAR LATER. AUSTIN SPEAKS OF THE FAMILY TURMOIL INVOLVED.

My dad always told us not to tell anyone about his job and, if anyone asked, to just say he was a civil servant. He was very much involved in the local GAA club; he'd played for them and had refereed an All-Ireland football semi-final. He was also secretary of the boxing club, so he was very much involved in the local community.

Our lives were always very full with him. He'd bring us different places during the weekend, and it was always sporting related. In March 1983, my father went to the national boxing finals in the stadium in Dublin.



I wasn't sleeping easy that night and then I saw headlights coming down the driveway. I went to the front room and my mother, grandmother and my uncle were there. My mother was crying and my granny said 'go back to bed; your father's been in an accident'. I sat up in the bed the whole night. I waited for the six o'clock news on the radio, which told me my father had been shot and he was critically ill in hospital.

I went to my younger brothers' bedroom and woke them and told them what was happening. I was 14, Ciaran was 13 and Oliver was 12. They wouldn't believe me so I put on the radio and it came on again and at that stage we all got into the one bed and we were kind of hugging each other. Dad was in a coma for three months. They knew there was some form of brain damage because his spine had been severed by the bullet and they knew he had been paralysed from the neck down, but because he was in the coma they didn't know the extent of his brain injuries.



Brian Stack



When he did regain consciousness, he was very childlike, but he had a really good memory of stuff that had happened to him from his childhood, but if you were talking to him five minutes later he wouldn't remember.

There was nothing more the hospital could do for him and he was with us for about six months and one day he took a fit, he went back in the hospital for two weeks and he died, 18 months after the shooting.

At the time my mother thought the Gardai would do their job, find who was responsible and bring them to justice. She wouldn't have been the type of woman banging down doors. Six years after the funeral she wrote to the Gardai and asked about the progress. We'd had absolutely nothing in those six years, nobody had come near us. She got a one line letter back to say the case was still open and she followed it up 12 months later and the same response came back.

We didn't really have any understanding of the true facts around the case. What I found strange was that people were doing everything to say it wasn't the IRA.

In 2006, a reporter called Barry Cummins approached me, he was writing a book on unsolved murders. He got to see the original Garda file, and the stuff he came back with was earth shattering. There was a lot of hard physical evidence and we were told there was an eye witness. We wrote to the Garda Commissioner and the Gardai decided to review my father's case, but we felt very duped by that process.

In January 2012 the Garda liaison guy came to see me in work one day and said they were nearly at the end of their investigation and they didn't believe the IRA did it. I got quite irate with him and he left.

I called Gerry Adams out publicly to meet with me and he eventually agreed to a meeting, which took place in May 2013. He started to say 'we're all victims here' and I thumped the table and I pointed at him and I said: 'You're not the victim here. You didn't have to shave your father or get out of your bed in the middle of the night to scratch your father's nose because he couldn't do it for himself. That's what a victim is, don't you try to play the victim with us.'

## BRIAN STACK

Then I told him all I wanted was an admission from the IRA. He said he could work with me and we met him four or five times over the next two months. In the first week of August, they took me to a meeting where we met a senior IRA man who read out a prepared statement. They said it was carried out by IRA volunteers acting on the instruction of an IRA commander but it hadn't been sanctioned.

The main thing for us was that the IRA had admitted it. For us that was an extremely important moment for them to admit after 30 years that they did this. We've got 70 per cent of the truth. The Gardai, in 30 years, couldn't get that much for us.

The problem was they didn't admit they sanctioned it and that left a sour taste in our mouths, but at the time we were so happy with what we had got that we decided to let it sit for a while.

We realise we are not going to get any justice in the form of people coming before the courts. What we wanted more than anything else was the truth. We wanted the IRA to say they'd done it. We want them now to say they sanctioned it. We want them to take full accountability and responsibility for what they did to my father and our family.



Left to right:  
Austin, Sheila, Oliver and Kieran standing beside a  
Memorial to a husband and father, Brian Stack

To my family, it's not going to make one jot of difference whether someone serves a prison sentence but as long as Gerry Adams and people of that ilk continue to tell lies, continue to deny, continue to re-victimise us, continue to try and make themselves the victim, I'm going to keep getting under their skin and getting at them.

That's all we want, we just want the truth. We're not going to let up on it.

# ANDREW KELLY

ANDREW KELLY IS THE SON OF IRISH DEFENCE FORCES SOLDIER PATRICK KELLY, MURDERED ALONG WITH A NEW GARDA RECRUIT BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA. WHILST SEARCHING FOR KIDNAPPED BUSINESSMAN DON TIDEY IN BALLINAMORE, COUNTY LEITRIM, ON 16TH DECEMBER, 1983.

Being so young at the time, I was only 11 weeks old, I have no memories of my father, but I remember my brother David telling me stories from time to time, My mother was a lovely lady and quiet in nature.

She never told me about my father's death until I was 11 years of age. Up to this point she had had little confidence and been in an abusive relationship with another man, who I actually believed was my father.

I relied on my brothers, who I looked up to almost like father figures. They told me stories about my dad and that he was in the army and was killed. I found it hard to accept it all at the time as I was still just a boy with a monstrous past.



Patrick Kelly and Andrew Kelly in the uniform of the Irish Army - Oglagh Na Eireann

I also knew there was an awful but strange atmosphere in our home. We never spoke about our feelings. That elephant was always in the room but no one ever spoke about it. We hid in rooms a pure lack of communication it wasn't normal it was basically two family's living under one roof. We were living in a council estate with over 10,000 residents it had a very bad reputation.

We went to a local school where we lived in London but the IRA bombs were going off all over England at the time so the English people weren't too impressed with the Irish at the time. It was funny because they were calling me IRA, saying 'you're scum, go back to Ireland'.

I could tell my brothers weren't over our father's murder a deep void is still there to this day. They needed guidance and support, which wasn't there, and we were living in 1980's London where you weren't accepted socially at the time.

After I found out about my father I was so angry. I wondered, how could it be that we had a house in Ireland, we had a normal life, family, that we ended up in London? We had nothing we had nobody we were isolated hiding from our past. It was mind boggling my studies were effected over it. Having little money resulted in us having poor clothing the bullying was horrendous.

When I grew up, I decided to move back to Ireland and join the Defence Forces. I was posted to Chad in 2008 and while I was over there an officer told me there was a case on in Ireland at the time. It was in relation to the kidnapping of Don Tidey. The trial went on for a number of weeks but an individual was found not guilty.

Effectively with him being found not guilty of the kidnapping, he wouldn't be charged with the murders. It was a double whammy for us because we're still here suffering to this day.

My eldest brother David and my brother Michael were more affected because they were the eldest and they remembered what happened and it's hard for me to see that.

I have another brother, Patrick, who is very quiet. I believe he should have been better provided for. He didn't deserve it. You'd think the people who go through this type of stuff would be better cared for by the State, but there was nothing.

My mother suddenly passed away in 2010. A couple of days before she died, she was asked by the army if she'd like to come over. They were unveiling a cenotaph in Athlone for all deceased members of the Defence Forces. We found her dead in bed the next morning. My mother had such a hard life, it upsets and angers me very much when I look at all the suffering she endured in her 57 years.

In 2011, Martin McGuinness was running in the Presidential election. My brother was very upset and confronted him in Athlone. It was all over the news. I think my brother confronting him was massive. If my brother didn't do what he did I think McGuinness would have done a lot better in the election. People have short memories and they have to be reminded of the Troubles and the past.

We'll never get justice because of the peace process here but I live in hope. It's just a can of worms and no one wants to go near it. That upsets me and I know it upsets my brothers. I'd like to know who killed my father. I'd like to see some people owning up to it, but that's not the way it works. We are being denied Justice.

My childhood was severely affected from this crime, I want to do the best by my children and try to lead a normal life, but it's hard when you've all this in the background - a constant reminder every year on the 16th of December.



# DAVID KELLY

DAVID KELLY IS THE SON OF IRISH DEFENCE FORCES SOLDIER PATRICK KELLY, MURDERED ALONG WITH A NEW GARDA RECRUIT BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA WHILST SEARCHING FOR KIDNAPPED BUSINESSMAN DON TIDEY IN BALLINAMORE, COUNTY LEITRIM, ON 16TH DECEMBER, 1983.

My father was an ordinary working class man from County Longford. As a young man he joined the army and then married my mother in 1974. Life was very contented. We didn't see too much of him because he was very busy but he provided for us and he was a very gentle father, very loving and as far as I was concerned everything was just perfect in life.

In 1983, when Don Tidey was kidnapped it was part of a series of kidnappings by the IRA to raise funds for their campaign of violence.

They held him in isolated woodland in County Leitrim, not too far from the border with Fermanagh. Garda intelligence got word that this was where he was being held. After three weeks, it all came to a head on Friday, 16th December and my dad and a young Guard came across the Provisional IRA hideout and saw a figure, dressed like a soldier, crouching, cleaning a rifle. The Guard asked him who he was, but in these vital moments this man was preparing his rifle to use it.

The young Garda looked over his shoulder to my father and he said 'there's a soldier here and he will not speak to me'. My father came up over an embankment and at that moment the man opened up with a heavy machine gun.

He shot the Garda in the head and he used the machine gun to riddle my father from his ankles up to his neck and both men fell. They released Tidey but then made good their escape.

Little did I know how the events of that day were going to affect my life and my family's life. That evening I was sitting at home waiting for my father. I was looking out the window and I saw Guards, soldiers, a priest; I knew straightaway even as a nine-year-old something was up. Then my mother and us were told the terrible news that our father had been killed.

A great emptiness came into our lives. My father's presence was gone. He was the driving force of the family. My mother was a very shy person and totally depended on her husband. Little did I know things were going to get a lot worse. Unfortunately a man came on the scene making out that he would help her and he would take us to London, but he hadn't a property arranged for us and, on the third anniversary of my father's death, we ended up living in a squat in London.



Patrick Kelly

It was not helped by the fact that the man revealed his true nature. He was a bully and he was very violent towards my mother and violent towards us. I was trying to protect my mother and my brothers from this brute, but I was a 12-year-old boy against a 40-year-old man. All I remember is being consumed with anger and I had no way of expressing it. I remember saying to myself after an argument that I'll remember every wrong he does to us, and I'll record it mentally for the future when I can do something about it. But looking back now that was a terrible thing to do.

Over time, I think that affected me. Within a year I developed a chronic skin condition and it's something I've had to live with ever since.

I learned later my father received no bullet wounds to his heart and head and it took 20 minutes for him to slowly bleed to death. I wonder what he was thinking in those 20 minutes. I'd say he was thinking of his young family and what the future held for them, and to think how things would go in a few short years.

We grew up, we survived the whole experience, but I feel traumatised by it all. All four of us eventually moved back to Ireland. Adjusting to life back here has been a challenge. We were told in 2008 that a court case was coming up in Dublin of a man being accused of the kidnapping and firearm offences. He wasn't up for murder but we were still very interested in the case.

It was very strange on the first day of the trial when the accused walked past me; I got a chill all down my body. Unfortunately he was acquitted. It was hard to watch him walk free from the court that day.

Now we're in a situation where we're asking, is anyone ever going to take any responsibility for killing our father? Our father's killer is walking around a free man.

I worry that my father's murderer will never be brought to justice because of the peace process. It's very hard to think my father's murderer sleeps



David Kelly confronting the then Rol Presidential candidate Martin McGuinness concerning his father's murder.

soundly, he's probably got his own children and grandchildren, stuff my father's missed out on completely.

It was all brought up again in 2011 when Martin McGuinness decided to run for President of Ireland. It was so shocking to me that a man with his track record was in that position. During the campaign he was in a shopping centre and I went there with a photograph of my father. I approached him and asked him directly, 'You want to be the President of Ireland, can you assist me with finding the murderers of my father?'

He stretched out his hand to shake mine, but I wasn't having any of it so he walked away. It was only a five minute encounter but it made quite an impact. It turned the public mood against him. People were reminded of this man's shady past, to say the least. I have never received any information back from him.

MARY TRAVERS

# ANN TRAVERS

ANN TRAVERS IS THE SISTER OF MARY TRAVERS, WHO WAS MURDERED BY PROVISIONAL IRA TERRORISTS ON 8TH APRIL, 1984, DURING A GUN ATTACK ON HER FAMILY AS THEY WALKED HOME FROM MASS NEAR THEIR BELFAST HOME. ANN'S MUM AND DAD WERE BOTH PHYSICALLY AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY IMPACTED BY THE ATTACK.

The day before Mary was murdered; I went to see friends of mine. I was a typical teenager and should have had my homework done, but I hadn't. I came home and Mary said she would help me with my homework the next day after she came home from church, which I wasn't too grateful for, because I didn't want to be doing that. She was due to go to St Agnes' in Andersonstown, where she was taking three boys from the Primary School she taught to make their first confession. That Sunday, I went to 11 o'clock Mass and I came home and met Mary in the corridor.

She said 'good morning Ann', and I kind of grunted



Mary Travers as a young girl

at her because I knew I was going to have to do the homework with her later on. And that was the last time I ever spoke to Mary.

I went to my bedroom and at five to one my brother Paul came running down and said, 'quick, quick, mum, dad and Mary have been shot'.

I heard him start to speak on the police radio in mum and dad's bedroom, this direct link to the emergency services was the only form of security we had. I ran down past the kitchen and could hear another brother, Martin, on the phone to the ambulance.

I ran down our driveway on to Windsor Avenue and I should see a small crowd starting to gather. I saw mum leaning over dad, saying, 'please help my poor husband'. I looked beyond mum, and there was Mary lying on the gravel, and her head was turned awkwardly.

An unmarked police car came and next thing I

remember a UDR lady putting me into the back of the car. She was trying to calm me down, but the ambulance was there and I managed to get out the back of the car and into the ambulance which Mary was in and there was a lady cleaning her up. Paul was in the ambulance and he said, 'she's going to be alright, isn't she?' The lady shook her head and I stepped out and just ran back home.

Mary was a great big sister, she was very kind, she was very innocent, she was very gifted musically, and she could hear any piece of music and just play it. She was tiny, a very petite build. She loved teaching and she taught primary three boys in Holy Child Primary School and she just loved those little boys as if they were her own. She would come home at night and just talk about them and we all knew their names.

In May 2011, the only person who was ever convicted of Mary's murder, Mary McArdle, was appointed special adviser to the Sinn Fein Culture Minister. This came as a massive shock to me. We were getting on with our lives, grieving for everything that we had lost. I no longer had a sister, so to hear Mary McArdle got that position was like a thump in the stomach.

Although I knew she'd been released under the Good Friday Agreement, I didn't really have to think about her, but here she was in a position that was being paid for by taxpayers and I saw

that her role in my sister's murder had been rewarded.

One of the greatest hurts I have is that Sinn Fein have said how they regretted Mary's murder, Mary McArdle has said that she regrets Mary's murder, and yet they never mentioned dad. My dad went out to do a job every morning as a Magistrate, an honest job, contribute to society and support his family.

But Sinn Fein continues to justify attempted murders and murders like that of my father and mother, of Police, UDR and Prison Service personnel and I find that very difficult.

A human life is sacred. I would like Sinn Fein and those who support Sinn Fein to stop insulting my family and my father; I'd like them to stop justifying the attempt on his life. His life wasn't theirs to take away; they had no right to do it.

I would like to see those who planned Mary's murder and the attempted murder of my father and mother held accountable. I would like to know who the people were who made the decision to attempt to murder him. I would also like to know who the two gunmen were, or whether or not they ever served jail time.

Those people know me, but I don't know them, and I would like to know who they are.

# FRANK HAND

GARDA FRANK HAND WAS MURDERED BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA ON 10TH AUGUST 1984, THE GANG SHOT GARDA HAND WHILST HE AND DETECTIVE GARDA MICHAEL DOWD WERE ESCORTING A CASH DELIVERY TO A POST OFFICE IN CO MEATH. WE HEAR FROM HIS FAMILY.



Frank Hand, born on 29th August, 1957, and came from Ardmullen, Curraghboy, Athlone, Co. Roscommon, joining An Garda Síochána on 20th July, 1977. On completion of his training, he was allocated to Donnybrook Garda Station, Dublin, and then an appointment to the Central Detective Unit followed on 16th April 1982. Early in 1984 he was assigned to the Central Detective Unit at Harcourt Square

Frank married Breda Hogan, (also a member of the Garda Síochána) In July 1984 returning from their honeymoon in Venice at the start of August. They were only married 5 weeks and had just found out they were expecting their first

child when Detective Hand was murdered.

On the morning of the 10th of August 1984 Detective Garda Frank Hand and Detective Garda Michael Dowd were escorting a cash delivery to a post office in Co Meath. At Drumree Post Office they were attacked by the Provisional IRA, who opened fire on the Gardaí. Both were injured, Detective Hand subsequently dying of his wounds. Leaving his new young wife, a widow and his unborn daughter fatherless.

Three men were arrested for his murder. Patrick McPhilips, Thomas Eccles and Brian McShane were convicted and sentenced to death, which



was commuted to 40 years imprisonment. In 1998 they were released early. This caused huge hurt for his family and his brother Michael criticised the Irish government:

"I would accept that there has to be compromise and obviously Northern Ireland has been a very difficult problem. However, in my view the Republic of Ireland was a separate sovereign state; at the time Frank was shot the Republic of Ireland was not at war and I find it very hard to accept that Frank's killers, if you like, should be part of the agreement at all. It is a small comfort, but it is a comfort to know that people who were convicted were doing time ... that at least Frank's life and his work for the State had not been in vain.

We gradually have resigned ourselves to the fact that we are a pebble on the beach, so to speak. There are bigger political agendas at work and we feel that we have no way of influencing these.

We feel that the more we push, the more grief and hardship we're bringing on our individual family members and accordingly, I suppose, we have withdrawn, and we'd like to retain our dignity and not get involved in unseemly squabbles. ... one of our biggest gripes was the total lack of consultation and the minister and his officials did give us a firm commitment that there would be consultation and advice from here on out. However, that has not been the case."

In 2011, during the Presidential election, where Martin McGuinness was one of the candidates, Michael Hand, Frank's brother, told the Irish Independent that the idea of Mr McGuinness, a former IRA chief of staff and member of its army council, as commander in chief of the Defence Forces was "an abhorrence".

"I find that impossible to accept," he said. "As far as I'm concerned, he has my family's blood on his hands."

He went on to add, "It opens up everything, the fact that McGuinness has entered the race here. And the emotions stirred up has really upset a lot of my family as well. Both my parents are dead now but to my mind, it resulted in their early death. It broke their hearts and it caused difficulty in my family. There were seven of us, he was the middle brother. It was very traumatic."

As far as I'm concerned, he has my family's blood

on his hands. I have a great respect for the office of president.

"But I would find it very hard to respect an office held by someone like him. I feel it would demean the office.

"I can't accept how someone like that can lead the Army and get the loyalty of the Army and the police when his colleagues were the ones who shot down my brother in cold blood."

Michael Hand said the man who fired the bullet which killed his brother was never caught.

"Basically, the guy who shot my brother, as far as I know, was never found. They put in accomplices all right, but the guy who pulled the trigger was never got. So, McGuinness knows who he is, surely knows who he is, and he should out him."

Detective Garda Frank Hand is remembered by his loving, wife Breda, their daughter and family every day. He was awarded the gold Scott medal posthumously for bravery on the 4th of December 1986.

# BERNIE MORRISSEY

BERNADETTE MORRISSEY, (KNOWN AS BERNIE TO HER FRIENDS AND FAMILY) WAS MARRIED TO PATRICK, THEY HAD FOUR CHILDREN AND HAD A VERY FULL AND HAPPY FAMILY LIFE, UNTIL THE 27TH JUNE 1985. WHEN HE WAS MURDERED BY INLA TERRORISTS.

Patrick was a Garda Sergeant, based in Collon, Co Louth. On the day of the 27th June 1985, Gardai Peter Long and Brendan Flynn were on mobile patrol in Ardee Co Louth when they came across a robbery happening at the Labour Exchange. Two members of the INLA had stolen £25,000 in cash. When they saw the patrol car, they discharged their weapons towards the two Gardai and stole a car. Following in pursuit, the patrol car picked up Patrick on the way. The chase ended in Rathbrist Cross, when the two INLA men, now on motor-cycle, crashed into an oncoming car injuring the occupants. Brendan and Peter stayed with the injured, while Sergeant Morrissey continued on foot, giving chase and shouting at



Paddy in Garda uniform

the raiders to stop. As he caught up with them, a shot was fired and he was seriously injured. One of the gunmen then, calmly stood over him and at point plank range shot Patrick dead. RTE Security Correspondent at the time, Tom McCaughren, described it as “an execution”.

I joined Bernie in her kitchen and here she told me her story;

“My name is Bernie Morrissey and I was married to Patrick, known as Paddy who was a Garda Sergeant, we had 4 children, Martin (20), Brian (17), Mary (15) and Aideen (12). We lived in Drogheda. I was widowed on the 27th June 1985 when he was murdered while on duty by the INLA.



Paddy and Bernie on their Wedding day

Paddy was stationed at Collon, which is only about 10 miles from Drogheda. I was working at the time as an assistant manageress in a catering establishment. Life was normal, it was summertime and Martin had just celebrated his 20th birthday a few days previously on the 23rd of June. We were all going about our daily routine, the older children had summer jobs which they had gone to.

Paddy was from Cavan, so we use to holiday there and we had also lived in Dublin for 10 years before we moved to Drogheda in 1976. Paddy had been a founder member of the Garda Sub Aqua unit, known as the “under water unit” before we moved to Drogheda. He went all around the country to various tragedies, drownings or disasters. He attended the Whiddy Island disaster in 1979, when the oil tanker Betelgeuse exploded

in Bantry Bay, and when Lord Mountbatten was murdered at Mullaghmore, Co Sligo by the IRA in 1979. He would also be called out to drowning tragedies, so he was all over Ireland because of his diving expertise. He transferred from the diving so he could be more at home, because at very short notice he would have to just leave to go to where ever anyone needed help.

He settled into working in a rural village Garda Station, and was very happy there. We were also very happy to have him at home, he could share with the school runs, Aideen, our youngest was still at primary school and he use to drop her in in the morning and because he was home a lot more, so he could also drop Brian off to college where he was studying agriculture science and he did his practical year, so Paddy would bring him to and from there as well.

Martin at this stage was working and he was interested in agriculture as well. He had a few sheep; he was always interested in cattle and sheep.”

Bernie smiles as she remembers. “We had a very happy full family life and were so happy living in Drogheda. We had three teenagers at this time so life was very busy but really enjoyable. Paddy’s mother was still living in Belturbet. We would visit her regularly and also went on holidays around there. There were always trips to lakes and diving and finding little artefacts, it was always

very interesting. The children use to love going off with their dad when he went diving, they just loved it. My brother had a farm nearby and Martin, our eldest who was very into animals use to love going there to help. They were all so busy and happy. We had dogs and cats and all sorts of pets; we had a good life.

When Paddy gave up full time diving with the Garda Unit, he got involved with the local Drogheda River Rescue and Recovery Service, they were a voluntary organisation and they went on searches for people missing, boating tragedies or recovering bodies, just whatever was needed at the time. He took care of the training for the younger members of the team.

Aideen, our youngest daughter was involved with the Drogheda Brass band and Paddy use to bring her to practice in the evening and all part of the community life. I was involved with the church and the schools fund raising so we led a very busy life. He was a great father and husband. He loved rural Ireland and he loved the country people. He would have been strict enough with the children but very fair. He taught Martin how to drive and I ended up having to teach Brian, I never thought I would have to do that, just assumed that Paddy would still be here. All the things you end up having to do that you never imagined.

I was at the café where I worked the day Paddy was shot. That morning Paddy and Martin had

been up around 5am as Martin needed help moving some sheep. When Paddy returned home, he asked me “Do you want me to drop you down to work?” and I replied “No, it’s okay I will get the bus you hang on”, because he didn’t have to leave as early as I was going and he was having a rest on the couch when I left. Aideen was on holidays so she didn’t need a lift to school.

It was coming up to lunchtime and the restaurant was busy. I was at the till and the next thing my boss came around the counter, he put his arms around me and brought me to the back office. I didn’t understand what was happening. It was about half twelve and when I went into the office, Fr O’Reilly our Parish Priest and Sister Bosco, who had taught the girls in school were there. When I saw Sr Bosco, I thought something has happened to Aideen because Aideen and Mary



Last family pic of the Morrissey's together taken in 1964. Bernie and Paddy plus their four children, Martin, Brian, Mary and Aideen

were going to walk down town at some stage that day, so I thought something had happened to them along the road. I knew something was wrong, so I asked Sr Bosco, "It's Aileen isn't it? What has happened"? She replied "No" and then just immediately I said "It's Paddy". I don't know if she said anything or just looked but I said "He's dead isn't he"? I just knew there was something awful because they wouldn't have been there. I don't know who said "yes" and then I was brought up to the Garda Station and my sister-in-law, my brother Oliver's wife Brenda, who has since died, was there. I don't know how many other people were there.

I asked "What about the children, where are they? Do they know?" I knew the girls were going to be walking into town but I didn't know where they were. Somebody said it was okay and as it happened my neighbour who lived beside us, Leo Henry, who is since deceased also, had the girls because his daughter was with them also going into town and he had taken them over to my brother's house and he had phoned Brian who was working at a local farm and Martin who was working on another farm and his boss told him. I don't know what exactly they said to them when they were told. Brian didn't know for sure, because when I was in the Garda station Brian rang. He said "What is it Mum"? And I told him "It's very bad Brian" and he said "But what is it"? And I said "it's really bad", he asked again "But what

is it"? And I just froze. I couldn't say it "Your Dad is dead" I think somebody must have taken the phone from me because I remember Brenda, my sister-in-law put her hand on my shoulder, I just couldn't respond to him.

I kept asking if I could go to Paddy and I was told I couldn't as the scene had to be preserved and the search was still going on, but what I didn't know at that stage was that Paddy had died at about half past ten in the morning, the news had been on the radio and other people had heard. They were panicked to find me so I wouldn't hear from somebody coming into the restaurant and saying "Did you hear about the Sergeant at Ardee" My Mother-in-law heard it on the radio and Paddy's brother George heard the news on the radio in his truck, driving in England.

I wasn't allowed to go to the scene no matter how much I kept asking. If it was today, I would just go anyway, I wouldn't care, I would have gone through anything just to be with Paddy.

I was taken up to my sister Phyllis house, who lived nearby, probably after one O'clock and then shortly after that that same afternoon we had to start making arrangements for Paddy's funeral. I kept thinking to myself "This is indecent", I'd seen him at half nine and here I was arranging a funeral. I found that very hard".

I ask Bernie if she wants to stop, but tissue in hand, shakes her head and carries on.

“Paddy’s 70-year-old mother who was widowed arrived. Crowds of people arrived to Phyllis and Toms house. The girls were brought over to Brendas house, she looked after them. The boys came to Phyllis’. Brian was in a very bad way and we had to call the Doctor for him.

Some of the people who came said things like “They should be taken out and shot”. Bernie closes her eyes and sighs, “That was hatred, I couldn’t cope. I didn’t have the energy to hate. It takes energy to hate to think violently and I just didn’t have any energy. I didn’t want the children to hear that either. People however were saying what they felt and it was natural because they were outraged.

Paddy’s mother was shattered, she couldn’t believe she had lost her beautiful son. Paddy was so good to her. Naturally she was in a bad way.

Eventually around 5 O’clock we were allowed to go to the morgue. Paddy’s mother, his brother Marty (now deceased), the children, Brenda and myself. We went in and it was a terrible shock. I had been nagging all day to see Paddy but when we got in there was a large slab and a white sheet. I probably should have waited for Paddy to have been laid out. When we walked through the door and I saw the slab with the white sheet I just froze again. I started to pray “Sacred heart of Jesus” and when I came too everyone was crying, wailing, everyone was just heartbroken, it



was just awful, just too much sorrow for a family to go through.

At the removal, there was a Guard of Honour. State funeral and all that goes with that, dignitaries. Friends were more important than these people of course.

When Paddy was promoted in 1975, my mother asked him “What will that mean Paddy”, he replied, “well it will just mean there will be a Chief Superintendent at my funeral” Bernie smiles, as she remembers something which gave them a chuckle at the time.

“The Irony the State funeral, and he was a background person, he wouldn’t have been into all of this” she continued. “The Chief Superintendent at the time was extremely sensitive but I feel now I should have waited another day. I didn’t know what I should do at the time, I just followed what others suggested but on Thursday morning we lost Paddy and on Saturday he was buried.

Paddy was in Ardee because he was going to

court that day. On his way, he came across the armed robbery and flagged down the patrol car. He shouldn't really have been there.

This happened during the summer holidays, so we were altogether and my family were extremely good at supporting us. Paddy's family were far away, they were in Cavan, but my sister Phyllis, brother-in-law Tom and my brother Oliver and his wife Brenda, they were nearby and also my mother. They were a great support.

On the morning of the funeral, I woke and called the boys, and Martin sat up suddenly, "oh no" he said as the realisation dawned on him what day it was.

As the days went by, the realisation happened that all the decisions regarding the family fell upon "a committee of one". I was in charge of everything. To have three teenagers and a twenty-year-old with two parents is hard enough work but when you are on your own, along with the trauma of a violent death it was even more difficult. I had to support my children to ensure they didn't harbour any bitterness. Getting on with life, trying to forgive and separate the crime from the crime doer. It wasn't easy.

Our children were lucky



that they had had a good start in life with Paddy and I although they were heartbroken and missed their dad terribly. It was such a muddle that at times it is difficult to recall all that we dealt with; we were so close that that really helped us get through it. Supporting each other. Luckily, I could drive so I could bring them where they needed to go.

Mary wanted to learn how to play the harp so found someone to make her a harp and then arranged lessons. We managed to muddle through somehow. Friends and family were great along with our faith.

Time moved along and we attended a memorial in Belturbet. There is a Childrens park there, "Morrissey Park", it was named after Paddy. The children were pleased that their dad was so well appreciated.

Paddy taught me how to drive and how to change a tyre. He didn't like helpless women! Neither did I! I didn't have time to wait at the side of the road for a man to come and change my tyre. So, I taught the girls how to drive when their time came and how to change a tyre.

I miss Paddy all the time but especially at our children's weddings and grandchildren's births etc. It was all so different from how it should have been.

When I listen to the news today and hear about the people who have COVID-19 and are so ill,

unable to have their families with them and who have died alone, I find it extremely hard and identify with their families. Nobody should have to die alone and although different circumstances I think of Paddy dying alone. When someone dies at home in their own bed, although sad it is such a blessing to have family around. The saddest part of Paddy's death is that he was a much-loved person and the last face he saw in this world was filled with hatred and anger.

Paddy is with me every day and I talk to him. Forgiveness is a daily thing, it just doesn't happen with a stroke of a pen, it's ongoing, it's every day and if you don't it can affect your own self. There are those who find it impossible to forgive and this is sometimes reflected in their own countenance. It is a tragedy then when a tragedy changes oneself, to be full of hatred and unforgiveness. That is not to say forgiveness is easy. If you show forgiveness too readily then others may feel that the person who is gone didn't matter to you.

The release of prisoners was a very difficult period for us. \* It's not that we wanted anybody dead and Paddy certainly wouldn't have wanted that, he was not an eye for an eye type of person, we just felt a life was worth more than 10 or 15 years of somebody else's life and society needs to be protected from people who murder.

You have to forgive for your own self if nothing else, otherwise it destroys you if you don't.

Difficult enough as it is to try and distance the perpetrators from the event and hope that someday they will seek forgiveness and be better people as a result, otherwise it just destroys you and that is another tragedy.

The Killers of Garda Sergeant Paddy Morrissey were the last to be sentenced in the Republic of Ireland with Capital Murder, which was the usual sentence for the killers of Gardai. Capital Murder was abolished and changed to imprisonment for a minimum of 40 years in 2015 Noel Callan was released on 30th November 2015 and Michael McHugh on 1st December 2015 after serving 30 years on remission.



Drogheda Borough Council granting the posthumous Freedom of the Borough to Paddy, the first time this Award was made in Ireland 9th May 2013.

Left to right: George (Paddy's brother) Aideen, Martin, Mary, (Paddy and Bernie' children) Bernie (Paddy's wife and widow) Marty (Paddy's brother) and Mayor Paul Bell



## MAINLAND EUROPE ATROCITIES / VICTIMS

# CORPORAL STEPHEN SMITH

CORPORAL STEPHEN SMITH OF THE 1ST ROYAL TANK REGIMENT, WAS MURDERED BY PROVISIONAL IRA TERRORISTS, ON JULY 2ND, 1989. WE HEAR NOW FROM HIS FAMILY WHO WERE CAUGHT UP IN THE TERROR ATTACK.



Corporal Stephen Smith and Tina on their wedding day

Our Dad, Corporal Stephen Smith of the 1st Royal Tank Regiment, was murdered by Provisional IRA terrorists, on July 2nd, 1989. We are survivors of that heinous attack. Our mum Tina and four children, Louise, Lee, Leanna and Jade.

Our father was a happy man known to his friends as “Smudge”. The Army and his family were the pillars from which he drew strength and he was devoted to both institutions. Our Dad was a career soldier and dedicated family man. Louise and Lee remember spending hours with Dad, helping him to polish his boots to be as shiny as a mirror. It wasn’t a tedious task but a treasured time during which our Dad showed us his perseverance and commitment to his profession. As serious as he was about his duties, Dad had a playful and impish side and we well remember the playful pranks that he played on our Mum. We remember Dad loved to fish in his hometown of Cleckheaton when we visited from Germany. He liked to listen to Chris de Burgh and Rodger



One of the few photos of all the family together taken at Louise's wedding.  
From L-R Jade, Tina, Louise, Lee (in uniform), and Leanna in pink

Whittaker. He like steamed puddings and his brogues which he wore with everything. He loved his fish tanks.

Most importantly, we remember him loving us. He'd take us everywhere with him, to the mess hall for a paper cup full of sausages, to the storehouses for our favourite chocolates, and even the tattoo shop when he got his British Bulldog tattoo and Louise got her ears pierced for the first time. These many small moments were the taste, the sound and the soul of our Dad and they meant everything to us.

The terrorist attack upon our young family that evening completely changed the direction of life as we knew it. We were going out as a family to a local Fairground when the car exploded.

The terrorists knew full well we were a very soft target, a family with little children in an unpatrolled civilian neighbourhood. Our father was killed instantaneously by a booby trap bomb attached to his beloved car as he opened the driver's door, on a Friday afternoon on a quiet street in Hanover, West Germany.

Jade, at only 2 years old, Leanna age 7, Lee age 9 and Louise age 11. Tina did survive, however like the destructive nature of a bomb, the fabric of our life was torn apart by shrapnel, fractured and scattered, never to be made whole again. Our many serious physical injuries were only the introduction to our new life. We healed physically but we are left with our broken spirits and hearts which have yet to mend.

# MELANIE ANAN

HEIDI HAZELL WAS MURDERED BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA ON 7TH SEPTEMBER 1989. SOME YEARS AGO, HEIDI'S NIECE (MELANIE) AND NEPHEW BY MARRIAGE (JOE) CAME ACROSS TO STORMONT TO ADDRESS EUROPEAN DAY OF REMEMBRANCE OF VICTIMS OF TERRORISM



Heidi Hazell

The murder investigation into Heidi Hazell was reopened as of April 2015 due to the research and persistence of her surviving family.



Niece Melanie Anan who leads the Justice campaign for Heidi.

On September 7th 1989 my aunt Heidi Hazell was murdered in Dortmund, Germany. She was shot over a dozen times ripping her out of this life in an instance. The horror and pain to follow for my entire family cannot be phrased, our hearts are broken and she is; even 25 years after her murder, still so painfully missed. I am not capable of writing these few lines without tears in my eyes and an awkward pain in my heart. I will never forget her beautiful smile and her way of making us laugh and be joyous.

As far as we have been told, Heidi was murdered by a Provisional IRA Terrorist, shot with a Kalashnikov automatic weapon, while sitting in her vehicle. It was surreal and the most horrific feeling to know, that she was all alone, fearing and fighting for her life, that she became the target of a political war. Why Heidi? How could this be? Who was the shooter?

And why would such a person commit to such a

cowardice act? In 25 years we have no answers, in 25 years there has been no justice for Heidi.

She has been ripped out of this life away from her family, her dreams and aspirations at only 25 years of age.

Today there are reports of double agents and intriguing statements, such as the British Government actually knew about the attacks beforehand. The family doesn't know what to believe. Total strangers are writing about her as another statistic in the string of violence, the victim of a war, which I am only beginning to understand. Heidi was a civilian; she was a German citizen, married to a British Soldier.

I am trying to make sense of it all, but my true goal is to find out what really happened, who murdered my aunt, I want a face to it and I want for my family to be able to close this gaping wound, the most horrific chapter of our lives.

I was 16 years of age when my aunt Heidi was murdered; when I went to see her one last time... as her body laid there...motionless, as I was hoping and wishing that this is all a bad dream, which I will soon awake from, that what I was looking at was just a life-size wax doll and that the real aunt Heidi would soon come home. I had no understanding for the fact that someone would harm such a beautiful person, such a peace-loving woman...why?

I should soon be introduced to the massive security measures provided to high brass military, as they appeared at my aunts funeral and I wondered....what if my aunt was as well protected as these people attending her funeral... she would still be here, giving me advice and lifting me up when I am down, comforting her mother when her father and her nephew passed away and just there for me to hug and tell her that I love her.

Not possible, because someone took it upon themselves to end her life for political reasons, to make a statement, to satisfy their need and greed for their form of "justice". This brings me to a very important issue...Justice, where is it? Where is the justice for my aunt Heidi Hazell?

Why have we never received answers from neither the German Government nor the British Government? Did she deserve to die? Was her crime the association in marriage to a British Soldier? I am shocked as to the nonchalant behaviour, it is not enough to read or hear, that she was a casualty of a war, which we here in Germany don't know anything about and are not to the slightest degree involved in.

The murder investigation into Heidi Hazell was reopened as of April 2015 due to the research and persistence of her surviving family.

Contributed by Melanie Anan (Niece)

THE NORTHERN  
IRELAND TROUBLES  
**KNEW NO  
BORDERS**

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**SEFF**  
SOUTH EAST FERMANAGH  
FOUNDATION

Supporting Victims and Survivors,  
Strengthening Communities

**South East Fermanagh Foundation (SEFF)**

Formed in Fermanagh on 15th August 1998 (the day of the Omagh Bomb), SEFF is a charity working with and behalf of innocent victims and survivors of terrorism and other Troubles-related violence irrespective of their denomination or ethnicity across Northern Ireland, Great Britain, and the Republic of Ireland.

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SEFF Victims and Survivors



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