

Our Loved Ones

Jim McCann – 19 year old Jim was the youngest of eight children and an upholsterer. Jim had survived a murder attempt only a few months earlier by a British army sniper when he was shot in the back and left for dead.

Jim Sloan - Jim was the second oldest of 7 children and was 19 years old when killed. He was a cooking apprentice. Like his friend Jim McCann, he had also been a victim of conflict related assaults. Married to Winnie only five weeks earlier Jim never knew his new bride was pregnant and was to have a son born later in 1973.

Tony 'TC' Campbell – TC was murdered on the night of his 19th birthday. He was one of five children. He was a keen footballer, good looking and very popular. TC was murdered on his way home after a night out celebrating his birthday in Newington youth club's disco. His body received 17 bullet wounds.

Brendan 'Fat' Maguire - 32 year old Brendan was the youngest of seven children. He worked on Belfast Docks and was well liked by his work colleagues. He lost his life trying to assist the injured.

John Loughran - An Asphalter by trade 33 year old John was one of seven children. Married to Anne they had three children and were expecting their fourth. On the night of his murder John was a hero who was murdered when he left the safety of his home and family to rescue the injured.

Ambrose Hardy - A twin, Ambrose was fourth in a family of 12. Still living at home with his parents Ambrose was also an asphalter. The Hardy family was devastated by the conflict with his eldest brother John also murdered by loyalists in 1979. Ambrose was killed waving a white cloth as he attempted to get home.

Challenging the 'Official' British State Narrative

The British government constructed a conflict frame that dominated for 40 years and so to present the conflict in 'a politically strategic way'. This in effect becomes the 'official interpretation of the conflict'. This in no way acknowledged their own combatant status in the conflict. It is this official conflict frame that bereaved families were forced to unpick, challenge and expose through the community inquiry in 2002.

Propaganda, Lies and Cover-up

The British army version of events was that the men were involved in a gun battle. This was a lie. The British army claimed falsely that, "tests have been carried out to determine if the dead had been carrying guns and all proved positive". Families of the deceased and the wider New Lodge community always challenged such statements as a complete fabrication. Indeed all forensic evidence contradict this disinformation.

Indeed it is these versions of events - presented as the 'official' truth - that families and the local community have challenged and in so doing highlighted the perfunctory nature of investigations into the killings at the time. The Community Inquiry sought to raise questions around truth, accountability and immunity, using local testimonies of numerous eyewitnesses who were never interviewed as part of a RUC investigation.

Community Inquiry Findings

After two days of deliberation the Inquiry Panel concluded was that there had been a clear breach of Article 2 of the ECHR - the Right to Life. A closer examination of the Preliminary Findings raises further questions which focus on British state actions: "who planned the killings?"; "who ordered the killings?"; "who covered them up?".

The Inquiry Panel were deeply shocked by the state's failure to investigate the killings and the wounding. The Inquiry Panel further highlighted that serious questions still remain around collusion in the killings of Jim Sloan and Jim McCann, asserting that there is evidence that the occupants of the car were military personnel.

What becomes clear in the New Lodge Six killings is a pattern of state cover-up. In that sense the Community Inquiry highlighted wider questions about the nature of the conflict and the extent of state criminality.

The full report can be accessed at <http://www.thenewlodge.com/history/newlodgesix.html>. This report contains the truth.

What Now?

Our society needs a comprehensive truth recovery mechanism which supports families to recover the truth of what happened to their loved ones.

In the absence of any such truth process, and a lack of will from the British government to engage seriously in the debate the six families affected by this egregious crime and the perpetuation of the lies that surround it are left with only questions. The PSNI Historic Inquiries Team are not independent and have refused to engage the six killings as one incident.

The families having placed their report and the findings of the community inquiry in the public domain for ten years and having received no acknowledgement whatsoever will now seek recourse through the domestic legal system. This is an imperfect way forward. However no other recourse is available.

Thank You

The families would like to thank the New Lodge Memorial Committee and the original New Lodge 6 Time for Truth Committee and David Baker for hosting www.thenewlodge.com

NEW LODGE KILLINGS

40th YEAR ANNIVERSARY
40

SATURDAY 3, SUNDAY 4 FEBRUARY 1973



James McCann
James Sloan
Tony Campbell
Brendan Maguire
John Loughran
Ambrose Hardy

RELATIVES FOR
JUSTICE

THE UNTOLD STORIES OF
RELATIVES, VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS

NEW LODGE KILLINGS

On the night and early morning of the 3rd and 4th of February 1973, six men were shot dead in New Lodge area of North Belfast and one man gravely wounded. Two of these men - Jim Sloan and Jim McCann - were killed in a "drive-by" shooting at the top of the New Lodge Road at around 11pm. ①

Within minutes of this British forces opened fire on the junction of New Lodge Road and Edlingham Street ② from both the direction of Duncairn Gardens ③ and from the British military observation posts on top of the flats in the New Lodge Road. ④ Tony 'TC' Campbell, Brendan 'Fat' Maguire, John Loughran and Ambrose Hardy were killed in these attacks with Charlie Carson severely wounded.

At the time, the British army stated that six gunmen had been killed and one wounded in a "gunbattle" with their troops in the New Lodge area of North Belfast. Witness statements from the local community and the families of the six men directly contradict this account of events. Eyewitnesses maintain that all of these men were unarmed and were attacked without provocation. Indeed, these eyewitnesses maintain that all of the six men were either out for a Saturday night or while assisting the injured. These events were never properly investigated. There has never been a full accounting of this tragedy.

One in ten of those killed during the years of conflict in the North of Ireland was killed by the state. Very few British army, RUC or other state actors were ever charged with murder, punished or



JAMES MCCANN



JAMES SLOAN



TONY CAMPBELL



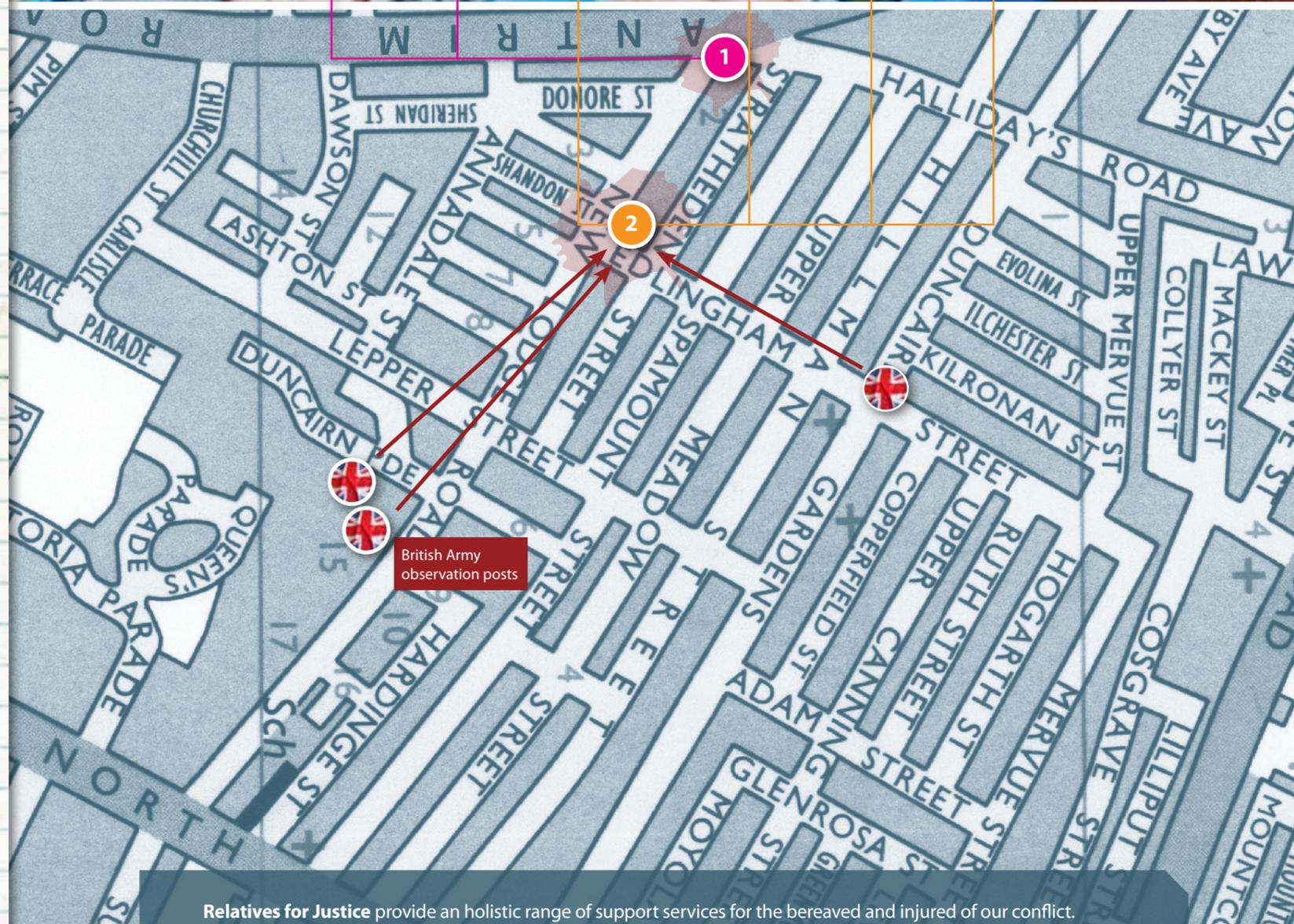
BRENDAN MAGUIRE



JOHN LOUGHRAN



AMBROSE HARDY



disciplined for what they did. The killings were carried out with impunity.

It is equally true that many others from the neighbouring Unionist and Protestant communities lost their lives during the conflict - these losses too bring a painful sense of loss that must be acknowledged.

With over 100 lives lost by a combination of loyalist and British state forces - the Greater New Lodge community experience speaks to a story of state execution, collusion and naked sectarian killings over a 35 year period. This started with the death of Patrick Corry who died four months after being hit on the head with batons by a Royal Ulster Constabulary patrol in 1969, through to the McGurk's Bar Bombing in December 1971, when 15 people were killed, and the killing of 18 year old Peter McBride by the British army on 4 September 1992. The New Lodge community has a particular conflict narrative that remains to be told - this includes lives lost, imprisonment and discrimination

It is extremely difficult to accurately convey the enormity of the devastation and pain of lives lost in the conflict. The New Lodge community takes inspiration from families in Ballymurphy, Derry, the Ormeau Road and Loughinisland who also campaign to expose state murder. We are bound in common pursuit of truth and justice.

The New Lodge conflict narrative is not of passive victimhood, but of a community who survived the most difficult circumstances and who remain steadfast in their determination to pursue truth and justice for their loved ones.

Relatives for Justice provide an holistic range of support services for the bereaved and injured of our conflict. This includes legal/advocacy and emotional/wellbeing support. Please contact us if you need advice or someone to talk to about any issue this leaflet might raise for you.

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