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- 13:22 Man charged with cannabis smuggling
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- 11:15 Man held over Jean Quigley murder
- 10:55 Reformed burglar can study to be a
- 09:46 Hillary Clinton's slur unearthed
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- 08:14 Omagh families to boycott memorial
- 00:44 I can't prove it, but I'm sure
- 00:44 That others might live
- 00:44 Environment: Intense rainfall due
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- 00:44 Nasty surprise for children as
- 00:44 Rome's mayor forced to rethink ban
- 00:07 Smoke alarm and window leap save
- 00:03 Whatever the result, Sharif is
- 00:03 Credit crunch: live the crisis,
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YESTERDAY

- 11:33 Ivan Little: Afghan blog
- 11:13 Service to be held for Keady man
- 11:11 US military convicts Bin Laden
- 11:11 Gun control lobby 'infiltrated by
- 11:11 Public tiring of Obama, says poll
- 11:11 Secret EU security draft risks
- 11:11 US seeks tougher action in Iran
- 11:11 Paradise and razor wire: luxury

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11:10 Purnell orders review into
11:10 'Digger' Dowling, hero of the
11:10 NHS hospitals to forge £2bn
11:10 Roguish, charming but ruthless to
11:10 After 20 years, five police forces
11:10 Climate change: Prepare for global
09:30 Man killed in County Limerick crash
09:27 More flooding in County Limerick
09:03 Loyalist murder: Two men charged
07:32 Teenager`s bail revoked
07:32 Different ball for Thomond Park
00:06 Death by filthy floodwater,
00:06 Troops hold Mauritanian president

YOUR COMMENTS

-  Ivan Little: Afghan blog
128 comments
-  Sinn Fein MLA attacked in Ballymena
23 comments
-  Olympics committee bans NI flag
55 comments

LOCAL NEWS



Town devastated in attack

Friday 08 August 2008 08:14

Omagh families to boycott memorial

The families of some Omagh bomb victims are to boycott a ceremony to mark the 10th anniversary of the atrocity.

A memorial garden will be dedicated during a remembrance service organised by the local council next Friday.

Many relatives of those who died in the 1998 attack are angry with the way Omagh District Council has organised the official anniversary event planned for next week.

They are also unhappy at how the council handled the contentious issue of the wording for new memorials erected at the bomb site on the town`s Market Street and at a nearby garden of remembrance.

It is understood the families of at least ten of the 29 victims of the bombing will not attend the service next Friday.

Instead the relatives, the majority of whom belong to the Omagh Support and Self Help Group, are holding their own memorial event on Sunday.

Kevin Skelton, who lost his wife, Philomena, said he would have no part of the council event.

"There`s a whole range of issues I`ve got problems with," he said.

"The whole wording issue and some of the politicians that are going to be there - I think they have made a real mess of it altogether."

"They certainly didn`t consult with us about the event."

"There are more than ten families who won`t be there."

"I have no objection with a family going, it`s their choice, but I certainly won`t be part of it."

Members of the support group had demanded the retention of a phrase engraved on an original tribute stone, which has since been removed from the garden of remembrance, stating that the victims were *"murdered by a dissident republican terrorist car bomb"*.

A total of 29 people and two unborn children were killed in the Real IRA attack on the County Tyrone town on 15 August 1998.

Josephine Deehan, Vice-Chair of Omagh District Council told u.tv: *"I very much respect the decision of individual family members not to attend."*

"We regret it because we`ve always sought to approach these issues with sensitivity because we want to mark the terrible tragedy and we want to be a positive force, a force for hope and reconciliation."

"So we are disappointed but very much respectful of the decision of individual family members."

"It was always going to be very difficult to get 100% consensus around what the council should or shouldn`t do."

"But nevertheless we consulted widely and we took the best decision that we could."

"Those events from August 1998 really ripped our community apart and because the council represents the people we felt we had to mark the event in a very special way."

• **Your thoughts, ten years on: OMAGH : NOW AND THEN**

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On 8 Aug at 10:48 - lorna from limavady said:

the omagh bomb has split many families with the murder of the victims its such a pity there can not be solidarity with the families. the fact that there IS a memorial is a record of the life and death of the victims. many other victims of the troubles will never get a memorial erected to them

On 8 Aug at 11:15 - Stephen Williamson from Fermanagh said:

I was very disappointed to hear that a number of Omagh relatives intend to boycott the 10th anniversary of the outrage, especially when £1000's of tax payers money has just been spent on the new memorial. Sometimes it appears that this vocal group thinks that they were they the only ones to loose family during the troubles and not have the perpetrators not brought to justice. I feel its time that they tried to move on a bit and not to act as if the whole world is conspiring against them.

On 8 Aug at 12:01 - Phyllis from Belfast said:

This memorial day should be a private family affair. Not made into a political circus. Politicians should show some sensitivity and stay home.

On 8 Aug at 12:50 - OldSod from Fermanagh said:

I think Phyllis has hit the nail on the head. So much has been warped and twisted in the last decade. Even our definition of "victim" has been warped to include criminals and terrorists. In some ways it seems that those that shout loudest get to decide whats "the truth". In this country the "truth" is simply what has been agreed between politicians and lawyers, not the actual "truth". Let the memorial be a private matter for the families. Let them have their day, then those with agendas can come in afterwards and make it a political and media circus and spout nonsense like "lessons learned" and other platitudes. Lorna, you are right also, all "Real" victims should have memorials worthy of them, but we live in a flawed world sadly, not a fair one. I'd rather mourn alone than having politicians spouting nonsense and fawning over me to get their name in the papers and face on the TV.

VOTING POLL

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