

Ladies & Gentlemen on behalf of East Belfast Historical & Cultural Society I welcome you to our memorial parade and service.

I know this event is much appreciated by the families of Jimmy McCurrie, Bobby Neill, Tommy Reid, Sandy Gould, Danny Loughins and Bobby Kincaid and on their behalf I thank those who faithfully organise it each year and those who support it and attend it.

The focus of the Society has always been to ensure the wishes of the families are honoured as we share with them in remembering their loved ones.

I suspect the families have come to terms that they will not see justice in respect of having the Provisional IRA gunmen who murdered these innocent men ever facing a court. A fact confirmed by a meeting with the Historical Enquiry Team who stated there was no new evidence on which to proceed. However, one day those who perpetrated these evil deeds will have to face a higher court when they stand before their maker.

Not only will the Lord judge – but the Lord also supports and sustains and we pray that he will continue to surround these families with His care; His compassion and His love.

Only the families know the hurt and heartache they have faced since that fateful night 27th June 1970 – 38 years ago today. It is they who 365 days of the year cling to the memories, recall the personalities and live with the loss.

Tonight we again share with the families as we come to ensure the death of those who were loved as husbands, fathers, son, brothers, cousins, nephews will not be forgotten by this community.

Yes - as a community it is important we never forget what happen, not because we seek revenge; not because we want to perpetuate division; but because we want no family, from any community to suffer what these families have suffered.

Remembrance ensures we strive for a better future, sadly the death of these men was the prelude to 35 years of murder and mayhem – when many families suffered.

We thank God that the worst of those days are in the past, however we must remain vigilant to ensure the naked sectarianism that caused republican gunmen to murder their Protestant neighbours is challenged in whatever way it manifests itself. We owe it to the memory of these men.

Our cry in 1970 was and will always be No Surrender.

Ladies and Gentlemen – No Surrender.