



Imeachtaí • Events



My grandfather once said that the imprisonment of the lark is a crime of the greatest cruelty because the lark is one of the greatest symbols of freedom and happiness. He often spoke of the spirit of the lark relating to a story of a man who incarcerated one of his loved friends in a small cage.

The lark, having suffered the loss of her liberty, no longer sung her little heart out, she no longer had anything to be happy about. The man who had committed the atrocity, as my grandfather called it, demanded that the lark should do as he wished: that was to sing her heart out, to comply to his wishes and change herself to suit his pleasure or benefit.

The lark refused, and the man became angry and violent. He began to pressurise the lark to sing, but inevitably he received no result. so, he took more drastic steps. He covered the cage with a black cloth, depriving the bird of sunlight. He starved it and left it to rot in a dirty cage, but the bird still refused to yield. The man murdered it.

As my grandfather rightly stated, the lark had spirit - the spirit of freedom and resistance. It longed to be free, and died before it would conform to the tyrant who tried to change it with torture and imprisonment. I feel I have something in common with that bird and her torture, imprisonment and final murder. She had a spirit which is not commonly found, even among us so-called superior beings, humans.

Extract from "The Lark and the Freedom Fighter" by Bobby Sands
Originally published in An Phoblacht/Republican News, February 3rd, 1979



I ndilchuimhne



Michael Gaughan
Parkhurst Prison
64 days
Died 3rd June 1974
Aged 24



Frank Stagg
Wakefield Prison
62 days
Died 12th February 1976
Aged 34



Bobby Sands
Long Kesh
66 days
Died 5th May 1981
Aged 27



Francis Hughes
Long Kesh
59 days
Died 12th May 1981
Aged 25



Raymond McCreesh
Long Kesh
61 days
Died 21st May 1981
Aged 24



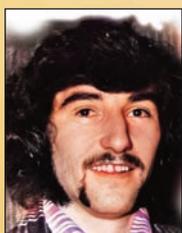
Patsy O'Hara
Long Kesh
61 days
Died 21st May 1981
Aged 23



Joe McDonnell
Long Kesh
61 days
Died 8th July 1981
Aged 29



Martin Hurson
Long Kesh
46 days
Died 13th July 1981
Aged 24



Kevin Lynch
Long Kesh
71 days
Died 1st August 1981
Aged 25



Kieran Doherty
Long Kesh
73 days
Died 2nd August 1981
Aged 25



Thomas McElwee
Long Kesh
62 days
Died 8th August 1981
Aged 23



Michael Devine
Long Kesh
60 days
Died 20th August 1981
Aged 27



Foreword

The Hunger Strike of 1981 was a watershed in the long struggle for Irish freedom and a seminal moment in Irish history. Forty years ago, the Hunger Strikers were in the hell hole that was Long Kesh. Imprisoned in tiny cells. Tortured and convicted. Surrounded by brutality. Naked, but for a blanket. They refused to be bound by any prison. They looked beyond the immediate, past the cell door and barbed wire. They looked to the possibilities. When the system tried to break republican prisoners, Bobby Sands' reply captured the spirit and the vision of the Hunger Strikers. He said "our revenge will be the laughter of our children".



Much like Thomas Ashe, Terence MacSwiney, Micheal Gaughan and Frank Stagg who went before them, the Hunger Strikers of 1981 were change-makers. Their defiant stand drew the eyes of the world to the brutal injustices of Britain's occupation of Ireland. The Hunger Strikers took their stand not only for political status but because they were motivated by a belief in an equal and united Ireland, free from foreign oppression. A country united not just in territory but in the fellowship and togetherness of its people. An Ireland true to Tone's vision of Catholic, Protestant and Dissenter, united in the common purpose of equality. The dream of the 1981 Hunger Strikers burns brightly today as republicans continue to work to bring about the Ireland for which they gave their lives.

Am cinniúnach i stair na hÉireann an stailc ocrais.

Is le bród mór a chuimhníonn poblachtánaigh ar an chrógacht agus an íobairt a léirigh siad uilig.

In these times of great challenge, it is more important than ever that we remember our patriot dead. The more than fifty events contained in this commemorative programme are innovative, engaging and reflect the nature of life during this pandemic. The programme is a fitting tribute to the Hunger Strikers. Their legacy is not only part of history. It is a living inspiration for the road that lies ahead at the end of which lies an Ireland, united, free and equal.

MARY LOU MCDONALD

Uachtarán Shinn Féin





*‘I am standing on
the threshold of another
trembling world.
May God have mercy
on my soul’*

Bobby Sands





T-SHIRTS
 SWEAT SHIRTS
 PLAQUES
 PICTURES
 STATUES
 CALLENDARS
 BADGES
 BOOKS
 AND MUCH MORE

Call in or have a look online on Facebook/Twitter or just give us a call to place an order.

Open Monday-Saturday 9.00am-4.30pm

Call us on 02890 243371

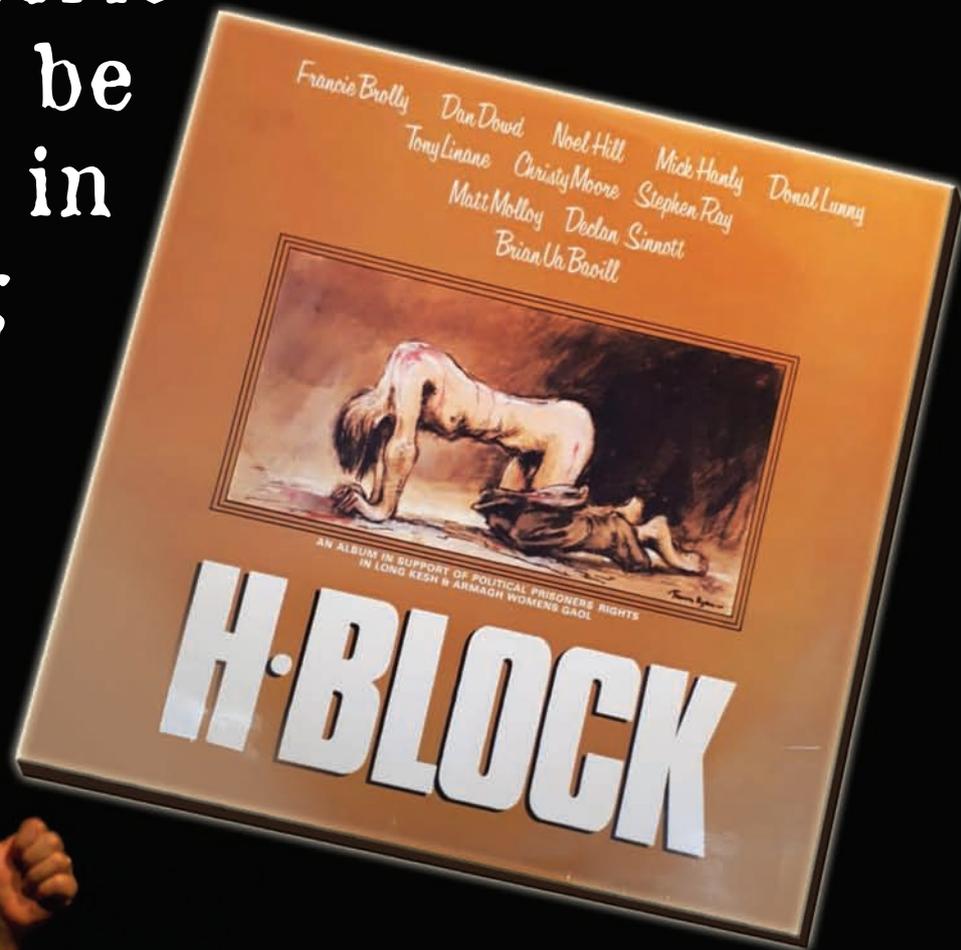
An Fhuisseog/The Lark

@AnFhuisseog

An Fhuisseog, 55 Falls Road, Belfast, County Antrim, BT12 4PD



A limited number of remastered copies of this historic album will be relaunched in the coming months



Originally Produced in 1978 by the legendary Christy Moore to support the prisoners

A virtual commemoration
will be broadcast on the anniversary
of all the Hunger Strikers who died in 1981
across all our digital platforms

Bobby Sands

Died 5th May 1981 after 66 days

Francis Hughes

Died 12th May 1981 after 59 days

Raymond McCreech

Died 21st May 1981 after 61 days

Patsy O'Hara

Died 21st May 1981 after 61 days

Joe McDonnell

Died 8th July 1981 after 61 days

Martin Hurson

Died 13th July 1981 after 46 days

Kevin Lynch

Died 1st August 1981 after 71 days

Kieran Doherty

Died 2nd August 1981 73 days

Thomas McElwee

Died 8th August 1981 after 62 days

Michael Devine

Died 20th August 1981 after 60 days



National Hunger Strike Commemoration

The 40th National Hunger Strike Commemoration was due to take place in Derry City on Saturday 7th August.

Due to Covid restrictions this will now take the form of a special virtual tribute.

Further details will be announced in due course.

**YOU
ARE NOW
ENTERING
FREE DERRY**

Commemorative Events March - April

Bobby Sands Diary

Monday March 1st - 17th March 7pm Daily

Bobby Sands kept a diary for the first 17 days of his Hunger Strike in 1981, from Sunday 1st March until St Patrick's day, 17th March. It is now widely recognized as a classic piece of prison literature. Beginning on February 28th, Gerry Adams will talk about the significance of Bobby's diary and put it into its historical context. He will inform people that over the following 17 days, 17 people will each read a day from Bobby's diary. Bobby's friend and comrade Séanna Walsh will recite the last diary entry in Irish on 17th March.

Organised By: Falls Commemoration Committee

Derry Fundraising Run

Monday March 1st

Runners due to restrictions will do runs separately and at time of own choosing

22 runners representing the 22 republicans who died on hunger strike will take part in two runs, 10k and 12K to raise funds for the refurbishment of the Hunger Strike Monument in Rossville Street.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

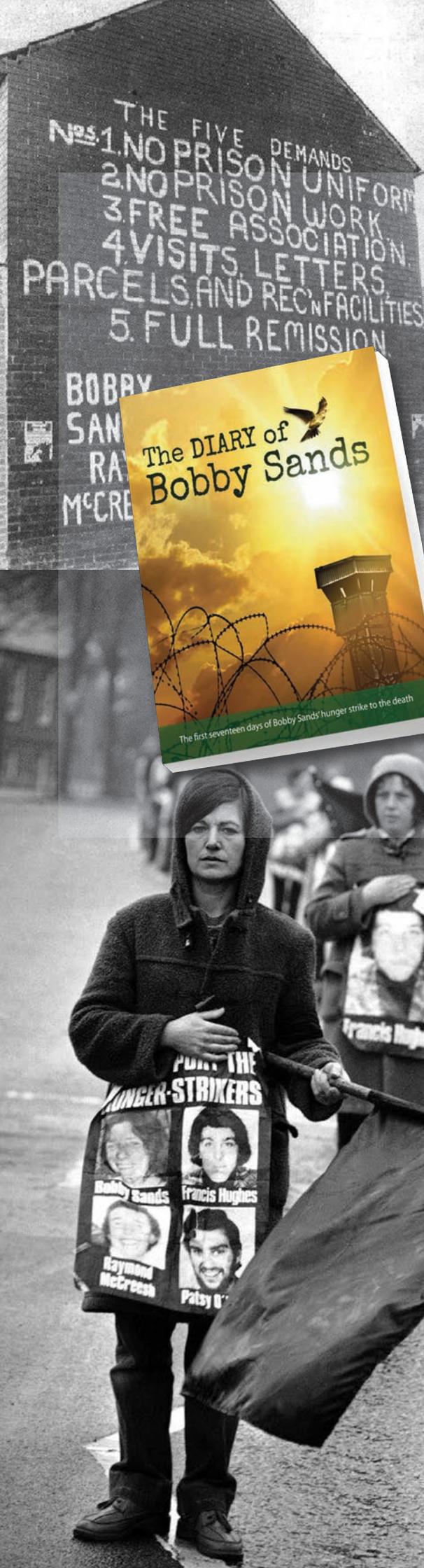
Re Launch of Upper Falls Hunger Strike Memorial

Monday March 1st

5pm

Upper Falls Hunger Strike Memorial Relaunch. Sinead Walsh will lay a wreath at the commemorative stone on the Andersonstown Road and read the names of the 22 Hunger Strikers. Sinead will be the only person taking part in the event and will be joined exclusively by the person filming.

Organised By: Upper Falls Sinn Féin



Reflections

Monday March 1st

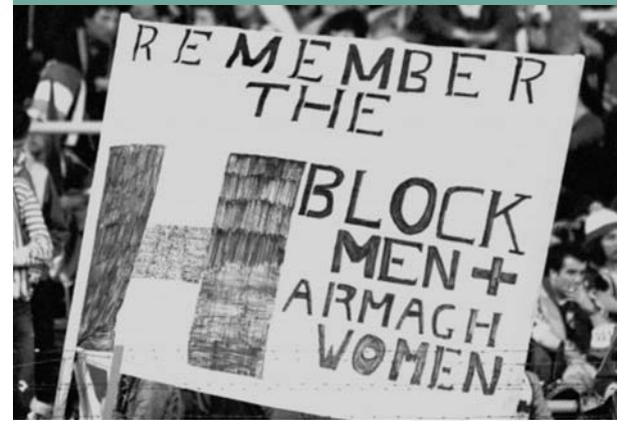
7pm

Chaired by: Tiarnán Heaney

Speakers: Mary Nelis, Archie Fleming

Reflections is a series of panel discussions reflecting on 40 Years on from the Hunger Strikes. The Panels will consist of former protesting prisoners, activists, and with the view of young people included.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee



Andersonstown Barrack Site Memorial Relaunch

Date and time to be confirmed

The memorial at the former barrack site on the Andersonstown road is presently being restructured. The works should be completed soon, along with a larger poster being erected across the site. There will be no formal launch to comply with Covid regulations. There will be a recording of the new memorial for social media with a 1-person wreath laying ceremony.

Organised By: Belfast Sinn Féin

Event to Mark 40 Years since the 1981 Hunger Strike and 50 Years of Internment

Monday March 1st

7.30pm

This is a zoom meeting for members in Cavan, Monaghan, Meath, Louth, Longford and Westmeath. Chaired by Matt Carthy TD. Speakers: Ruairi Ó Murchú TD, Laurence McKeown, Former Hunger Striker and Síle Darragh, Former OC of Armagh Women's Jail.

Organised By: North Leinster-Cavan / Monaghan Cúige

To register for the link contact rachel.coyle@sinnfein.ie



Hunger Strike Posters

Monday March 1st

Hunger Strike Posters will be put up across the County.

Organised By: Tyrone Commemoration Committee

Programme of Events: The 40th Anniversary of the Hunger Strikes

Monday March 1st

8pm

A launch of the upcoming events to mark the anniversary of the 1981 Hunger Strikes. The brief description of the historical events that unfolded and the events that are upcoming to mark the untimely death of Frank Maguire MP, the election of Bobby Sands MP, the Hunger Strikes and the election of Owen Carron MP. This was a historical year for not only Fermanagh and South Tyrone but also in Irish history.

Organised By: Fermanagh and South Tyrone Sinn Fein



The '81 Hunger Strike 40 years on Prisoners and Activists in Belfast and Dublin - via zoom

Wednesday March 3rd

7.30pm

Chaired by Mícheál Mac Donncha

Guest Speakers:

Belfast – Pat Sheehan MLA (former Hunger Striker),

Síle Darragh (former Armagh political prisoner),

Dublin – Seán Crowe TD (Republican activist in 1981),

Noreen Byrne (Dublin H-Block / Armagh Committee 1981).

Organised By: Dublin and Belfast Sinn Féin



'74 - '81

Different Hunger Strikes, Same Aims

Wednesday March 31st 7pm

Gerry Kelly MLA, Mary Clarke (Doyle) & Bik McFarlane will talk about their different experiences and share anecdotal stories. Gerry Kelly was force-fed in England on hunger strike, while Mary Clarke was one of 3 women who took part in the 1980 Hunger Strike in Armagh. Bik McFarlane was OC in Long Kesh during the 1981 strike. All 3 will share their experiences of that period of struggle.

Organised By: North Belfast Sinn Féin CC

Bobby's Election

Friday April 9th 7pm

Reflections is a series of panel discussions reflecting on 40 Years from the Hunger Strikes. The Panels will consist of former protesting prisoners, activists, and with the view of young people included.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

Frank Maguire MP and Bobby Sands MP

Friday April 9th 8pm

This year marks the historical 40th Anniversary of Bobby Sands' election in Fermanagh and South Tyrone. The untimely death of Frank Maguire MP forced a by-election which subsequently Bobby won.

The current Fermanagh and South Tyrone MP, Michelle Gildernew as well as Danny Morrison who had a leading role in Bobby's election campaign, discuss the life of Frank Maguire MP and the election of Bobby Sands MP.

Organised By: Fermanagh and South Tyrone Sinn Fein



HIS LIFE IN YOUR HANDS VOTE SANDS



SANDS	X
WEST	

Published by Owen Corcoran, 7 Market Street, Enniskillen, County Fermanagh. Printed by An t-Éireann Campaign, Fermanagh & South Tyrone No. 10, 1981.

An Phoblacht
REPUBLICAN NEWS

20 pages
25 pence

Annual Bodenstown Commemoration Assemble Sallins 2.15 pm.

TWO IRA PRISONERS ELECTED

Criminalisation continues to crumble

NATIONAL HUNGER-STRIKE MARCH & RALLY Sunday 28th June BELFAST



Commemorative Events May - June

Vigil for Bobby Sands H-Block Monument Rossville St

Wednesday May 5th

1.17am

A simple candlelight-type vigil at the time Bobby died.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

Tribute to Bobby Sands

Wednesday May 5th

8pm

Bobby's most famous poem, 'The Rhythm Of Time', recited by 13 people from the constituency of Fermanagh and South Tyrone accompanied with music and historical photos.

Organised By: Fermanagh and South Tyrone Sinn Fein

The Laughter of Our Children

Wednesday May 5th

8.30pm – 9.30pm

Local children from across South Down, including local Comhaltas / musical groups, will perform music, songs / ballads on the Hunger Strike. The children will sing songs in both Irish and English. Each song will seek to incorporate imagery on the men and woman that were on hunger strike at the time. The use of young people in the event will act as an educational tool for them and others around our history and the sacrifices that were made. The recording will begin with how and why the Hunger Strike began along with key events during the period.

Organised By: South Down National Hunger Strike Commemoration Group



Annual Bobby Sands Lecture

Friday May 7th

7pm

Séanna Walsh, Jim Gibney, Jennifer McCann and Mary McGinn will be interviewed on the life and legacy of Bobby Sands. This will go out via Facebook and YouTube.

Organised By: Colin / Belfast Sinn Féin

Vigil for Francis Hughes Waterside Monument

Wednesday May 12th

5.43am

A simple candlelight-type vigil at the time Frank died.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

Commemoration for Óglach Francis Hughes

Wednesday May 12th

7pm

An online commemoration will be held to remember and reflect on the life and sacrifice of Óglach Francis Hughes. Additional information will follow.

Organised By: Hughes/Connolly/McElwee Sinn Féin Cumann, Bellaghy





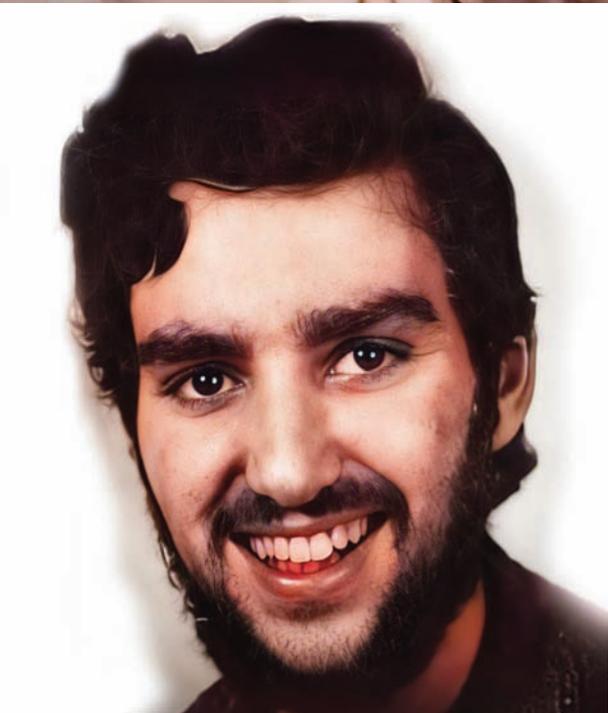
Vigil for Raymond McCreesh Creggan Monument

Friday May 21st

2.11am

A simple candlelight-type vigil at the time Raymond died.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee



Vigil for Patsy O'Hara Brandywell Monument

Friday May 21st

11.29pm

A simple candlelight-type vigil at the time Patsy died.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

The Belfast Funerals

Saturday May 22nd

7pm

Joe Austin in Conversation with Paddy Adams, Richard McAuley and Geraldine Crawford on the organizing of Bobby Sands', Joe McDonnell's and Kieran Doherty's funerals.

Organised By: Belfast Sinn Féin

Reflections

Sunday May 30th

7pm

Reflections is a series of panel discussions reflecting on 40 Years on from the Hunger Strikes. The Panels will consist of former protesting prisoners, activists, and with the view of young people included.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee



Reflections

Sunday June 6th 7pm

Reflections is a series of panel discussions reflecting on 40 Years on from the Hunger Strikes. The Panels will consist of former protesting prisoners, activists, and with the view of young people included. .

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

Black Mountain Remembers (Weekend)

Saturday & Sunday June 26th & 27th

1. A Revamp & Relaunch of the large H at top of the Monagh Road, Turf Lodge, by former Hunger Striker Pat Sheehan MLA.
2. Reflecting on 40 years with Pat Sheehan MLA and local comrades.
3. GAA underage Tournament at Gort na Móna GAC with GAA clubs from all clubs / areas of the 1981 Hunger strikers.

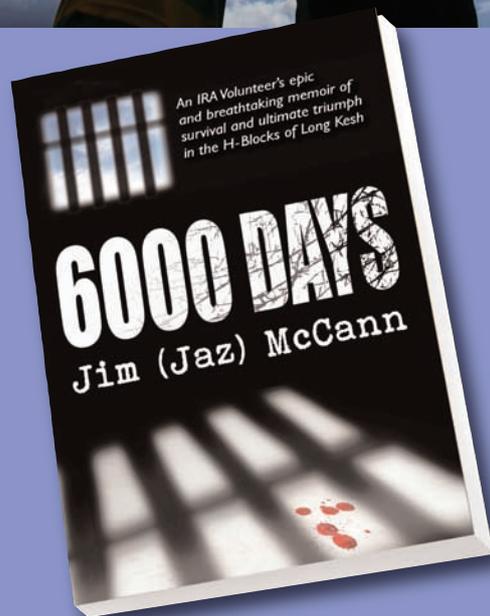
Organised By: Black Mountain Comhairle Cheantair

View from “Over the Bridge”

Sunday June 27th 6pm

Séanna Walsh will chair a bi-lingual South & East Belfast event that will include poetry, music and stories from key people in the area about their experiences during the Hunger Strike. This will coincide with a special reading of Jaz McCann's new book “6,000 days” which is due to be released in the coming months. Youth will be very much a part of this event

Organised By: Belfast Sinn Féin





Commemorative Events July - August

The Laughter of our Children - An t-aos óg...Dearcaidh na ndaoine óga ar an Stailc Ocráis 40 bliain ó shin

Thursday July 1st 7pm

Bi-lingual event recording the perspective of the 1981 Hunger Strikes and the legacy, from a number of young republicans.

Organised By: Belfast Sinn Féin

Vigil for Joe McDonnell Shantallow Monument

Thursday July 8th 5.15am

A simple candlelight-type vigil at the time Joe died.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

Unveiling of Commemorative 1981 Hunger Strikers Plaque Bobby Sands Centre, Enniskillen

Thursday July 8th 8pm

The Bobby Sands centre is based in Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh. This plaque will commemorate all of the Hunger Strikers who died in 1981.

Organised By: Fermanagh and South Tyrone Sinn Fein



Memorial Tree Planting

Sunday July 11th 12pm

10 people to plant 10 trees at a selected area(s) of Strabane yet to be confirmed.

Organised By: Strabane Comhairle Cheantair

Vigil for Martin Hurson H-Block Monument Rossville St.

Thursday July 13th 4.30am

A simple candlelight-type vigil at the time Martin died.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

Online Commemoration & "Hurson Boy" Book Launch

Thursday July 13th 8pm

The Tyrone Commemoration Committee is producing an online commemorative tribute to Óglach Martin Hurson. They committee has produced a booklet in his honour 'Hurson boy', a reflection on his life with contributions from his family, friends and comrades in the cages and H Blocks of Long Kesh.

Organised By: Tyrone Commemoration Committee





South Down Remembers the '81 Hunger Strike in Music

Saturday July 17th

8.30pm – 10.30pm

Local and national musicians will play a selection of music on and around the Hunger Strike. Each artist will perform 2 or 3 songs, with some then reading a poem or piece of literature on the events in 1981. Each artist will then introduce the next artist to come on to play their set. Local traditional pipe bands will perform as part of this event.

Organised By: South Down National Hunger Strike
Commemoration Group

Reflections

Sunday July 25th

7pm

Reflections is a series of panel discussions reflecting on 40 Years on from the Hunger Strikes. The Panels will consist of former protesting prisoners, activists, and with the view of young people included.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee



Vigil for Kevin Lynch Waterside Monument

Sunday August 1st

1am

A simple candlelight-type vigil at the time Kevin died.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

Vigil for Kieran Doherty Brandywell Monument

Monday August 2nd

7.15pm

A simple candlelight-type vigil at the time Kieran died.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

Vigil for Tom McElwee Shantallow Monument

Sunday August 8th

11am

A simple candlelight-type vigil at the time Tom died.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

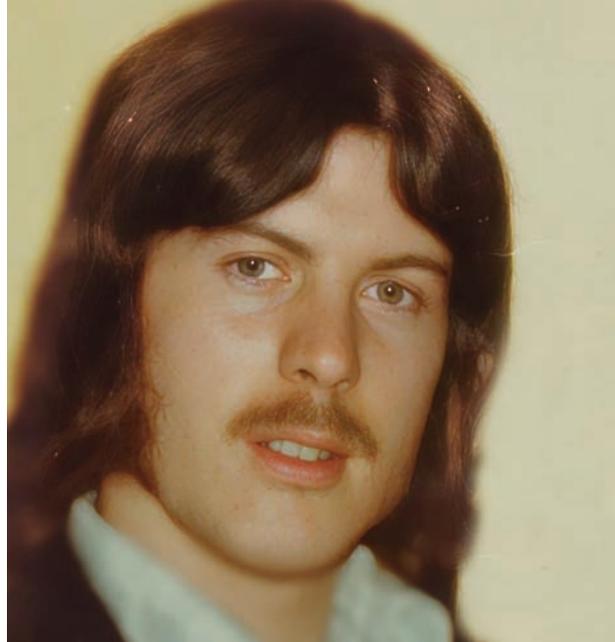
Óglach Thomas McElwee Online Commemoration

Sunday August 8th

7pm

An online commemoration will be held to remember and reflect on the life and sacrifice of Óglach Thomas McElwee.

Organised By: Hughes/Connolly/McElwee Sinn Féin Cumann,
Bellaghy





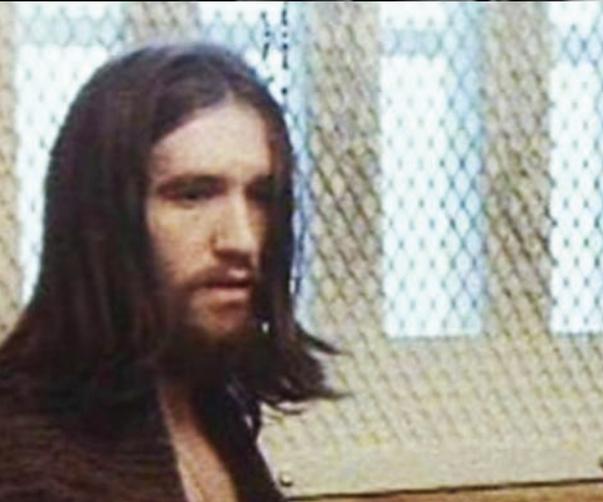
Showing of a film - A kind of Sisterhood

Monday August 9th

3pm

This film is the story of women political prisoners in Armagh and Maghaberry jails as told in their own words. It is a complex and compelling story spanning a 25-year period covering the first women internees in the 70's to the eventual closure of Armagh and transfer to Maghaberry in 1986.

Organised By: Belfast Sinn Féin



Talk by local men and woman who were on the Blanket and involved in the Hunger Strike

Saturday August 14th

8.30pm - 9.30pm

Local ex-prisoners will take part in a talk and debate around the events in Long Kesh and Armagh Gaol in the lead up to, during and after the 1981 Hunger Strike. The panel will give their own accounts of their experiences at the time, and the relationships they had with the volunteers who died.

Organised By: South Down National Hunger Strike
Commemoration Group



Vigil for Michael Devine Creggan Monument

Friday August 20th

7.50am

A simple candlelight-type vigil at the time Michael's died.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

Rededication of Hunger Strike Monument, Donagh, Co Fermanagh

Friday August 20th 8pm

Refurbishment of the present monument, which was originally erected for the 20th Anniversary of the Hunger Strike.

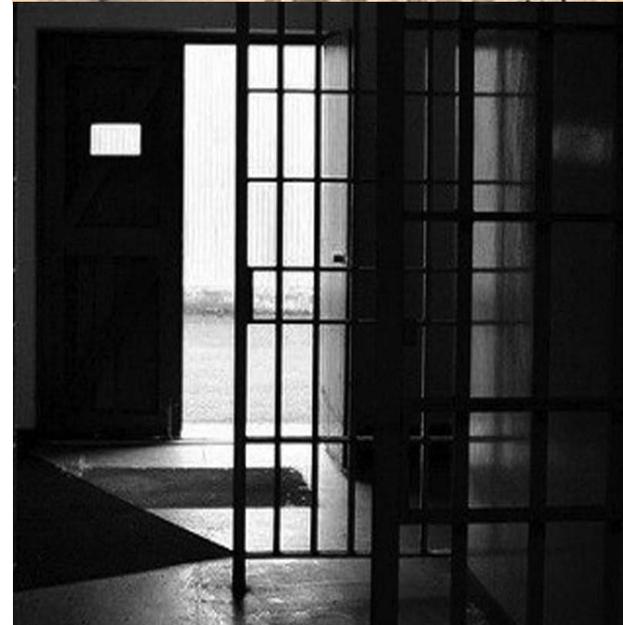
Organised By: Fermanagh and South Tyrone Sinn Fein

Reflections

Saturday August 28th 7pm

Reflections is a series of panel discussions reflecting on 40 Years on from the Hunger Strikes. The Panels will consist of former protesting prisoners, activists, and with the view of young people included.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee





Commemorative Events September - October

The role of Women in 1981 in Armagh Gaol, on the streets and the anti H-Blocks Armagh Committee

Saturday September 18th

7pm

An online discussion with former women POWs on how they had endured the same conditions in Armagh prison as their male comrades in the H Blocks. This event will also look at the leading role women played in the anti H Blocks/Armagh committee.

Organised By: Fermanagh and South Tyrone Sinn Fein



South Down Barn Museum

Saturday September 25th

10am - 4pm

A visual display of items of memorabilia and artefacts from the Gaols in Long Kesh and Armagh around the 1981 period. Backing music, and visual descriptions for the items as they are shown in a visual walk through of the museum will be used.

Organised By: South Down National Hunger Strike
Commemoration Group



40 years - a night of reflection

Saturday September 25th 8pm

Armagh Republicans look back on the legacy of the prison protests and Hunger Strikes of 1980/1981. We will also look at the impact which this period of our history had on the local community and how it mobilized a new generation of activists into the resistance struggle. The tribute will also feature ballads and poetry performed by local activists and artists.

Organised By: Armagh Commemoration Committee

In Conversation: Bik McFarlane

Sunday September 26th

Millennium Forum Derry 7.30pm

Brendan Bik McFarlane will reflect on the Hunger Strike, his memories and its legacy – Millennium Forum Derry.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

Tony Devlin's 1981 Play

Wednesday Sept 29th - Sunday October 3rd

8pm

Tony Devlin's 1981 play focuses on the harrowing hunger strikes by ten Republican Prisoners in the H-Blocks. Tony says in bringing his play to the stage he "aims to humanise these men and explore their legacy that has allowed for change in the North".

Organised By: Belfast Sinn Féin





Derry Fundraising Run

Sunday October 3rd

6.30pm

22 runners representing the 22 republicans who died on hunger strike will take part in two runs, 10k and 12K to raise funds for the refurbishment of the Hunger Strike Monument in Rossville Street.

Organised By: Organised By: Derry 81 Committee



Candlelight Procession

Sunday October 3rd

6.30pm

Candlelight Procession to mark the end of the Hunger Strike. Starting at Rathkeele Way - from Michael Devine's House - passing Patsy O'Hara's house and on to the Hunger Strike Monument.

Organised By: Derry 81 Committee

Fr. Brendan Meagher in conversation with Danny Morrison

Thursday October 4th

8pm

Tipperary native, Fr. Brendan Meagher is an Irish Redemptorist priest working as a missionary in Fortaleza, Brazil. During the 1981 Hunger Strike he was code-named The Angel and was the go between the Republican Movement and the British Government. He has carried his story with him since then and has never spoken about his experiences until now. This frank and emotional exchange between two people who played pivotal roles in the 1981 Hunger Strike will leave an indelible impression on audiences from all political persuasions.

Organised By: Coiste Chuimhneachán an Cholláin



Song For Marcella

*It doesn't seem quite so long ago,
The last time that I saw you,
Ain't it funny how the memories grow,
Seems they always fold around you,
They tried to break you in a living hell,
But they couldn't find a way,
So they killed you in a H. block cell,
And hoped that all would turn away,
Thought that your spirit couldn't rise again
But it dared to prove them wrong,
And in death you tore away the chains,
And let the world hear freedom's song,*

(chorus)

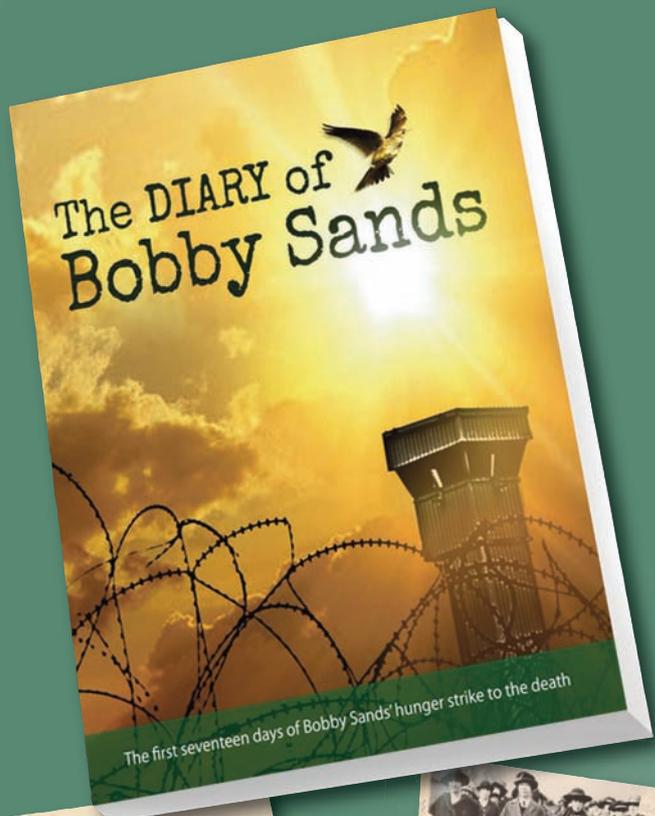
*Yet the heartache and pain linger on,
They're still here though it's so long since you've gone,
But we're stronger now you showed us how,
Freedom's fight can be won*

*I wish there was an easy road to choose,
To bring the heartache to an end,
But easy roads are always sure to lose,
I've seen that time and time again,
If you can stand by me like yesterday,
I'll find the strength to carry on,
So let your spirit shine along the way,
And our day will surely come,*

(chorus)

*Yet the heartache and pain linger on,
They're still here though its so long since you've gone,
But we're stronger now, you showed us how,
Freedom's fight can be won, if we all stand as one.*

Music and lyrics by Bic McFarlane



To read about the true stories of the Hunger Strike and the conflict you have to go to the best source



We have a massive range of publications available telling the full stories of what actually happened. From biographies, signed books, escape stories, many told in the words of those who took part. We have something for everyone who wants to learn about our troubled history both recent and not so long ago.

Call in or have a look online on Facebook/Twitter or just give us a call to place an order.

Open Monday-Saturday 9.00am-4.30pm

Call us on 02890 243371

 An Fhuisseog/The Lark

 @AnFhuisseog

An Fhuisseog, 55 Falls Road, Belfast, County Antrim, BT12 4PD





GUTHANNA 81 VOICES OF

THE IRISH REPUBLICAN COMMUNITY
REFLECT ON THE 1981 HUNGER STRIKE

**CAITHEANN AN POBAL POBLACHTÁNACH IN ÉIRINN
SÚIL SIAR AR STAILC OCRAIS 1981**

NEW PODCASTS

Every Sunday Morning at 11am

Listen at Guthanna81.buzzsprout.com

