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Local & National

McGurk bar owner dies

Monday, December 17, 2007

By Claire McNeilly

The family of the owner of the pub involved in one of the biggest atrocities of the Troubles today paid tribute to their father's capacity for forgiveness.

Patrick McGurk (86), from Belfast, who died on Saturday, lost his wife Philomena and 14-year-old daughter Maria when a loyalist bomb went off in the family bar in December 1971.

The explosion at the Tramore Bar at North Queen Street - which was better known as McGurk's - claimed 15 lives in total and left dozens injured.

Shortly after the atrocity, Mr McGurk appeared on television calling for no retaliation.

"It doesn't matter who planted the bomb," he said.

"What's done can't be undone. I've been trying to keep bitterness out of it."






Mr McGurk's family today said they believed he would be remembered as a quiet man who forgave those who took his loved ones prematurely from him.

Sunday Life journalist John McGurk - who was just 10 years old when he was injured in the bomb - was in the sitting room above the pub, playing table football with his brother, Gerard, and his friends when it went off.

"My father never seemed to dwell on what happened - he just got on with life," he said.

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