

- Skip
- Skip
- Skip
- Skip
- Skip



- HAVE YOUR SAY
Send us your stories, pictures and comments

Hotels.com wake up happy

Click here

News

- Jobs
- Cars
- Property
- Other Titles
- Services

- Local & National
- World News
- Politics
- Property
- Health
- Education
- Business
- Environment
- Technology
- Belfast Telegraph Television
- Family Notices

archive

Saturday, 9 August 2008

The schoolboy's exuberant scribble is a typical 12-year-old's, the pen dashed cross the page. "Viva Espana", he wrote after his signature, a clue to his identity.

The name is Fernando Blasco Baselga, signed into the visitors' book at the Ulster American Folk Park. An hour or so later, he was dead -- one of 29 victims of the Omagh bomb.

Among the wealth of material in the Omagh bomb archive, it is this easily missed item which librarian Evelyn Johns finds particularly touching.

"To me, this is the most poignant," Evelyn says of the signature of a carefree young boy on the brink of death.

Print Email

Search



Bookmark & Share

Digg It

del.icio.us

Facebook

Stumbleupon

nibusinessinfo.co.uk is provided by Invest NI and part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund.

NIBUSINESS INFO.CO.UK

Practical Advice for Business

Fernando, from Madrid, was part of a group of exchange students staying in Buncrana, Co Donegal. They had made a day trip to the folk park just outside Omagh, and afterwards gone into the town.

What are these?

Evelyn has lived with the archive for most of the past decade, as the librarian responsible for collating it and putting it in order.

In the aftermath of the 1998 explosion, a flood of sympathy cards, gifts, hand-painted posters, emails, poems and books of condolences arrived from around the world.

Nobody quite knew what to do with them all until she took on the job of forming them into a unique archive stored in Omagh library. The collection is wide-ranging: a peace candle from Warrington, UK; handmade garlands; patchworks quilts and cushions; an invitation to families to visit his Highgrove home from Prince Charles; cards from all over the globe, including from the Irish Army in Lebanon and the North's Baha'i community; a Japanese newspaper article about the bomb.

Ms Johns unfurled a peace poster decorated with fingerprints, a reminder of how many of the victims met such horrific deaths they could only be identified by their fingerprints.

A living carpet of flowers was delivered by well-wishers and their cards have been kept. One reads: "Remembered by the staff of Wexford Hospital". "Shouldn't be," reads another, the signature blurred.

"There was no previous work done on an archive like the Omagh bomb's," Ms Johns said. "This was something we had no expertise in. No library had ever had anything like this before."

The archive is open to the public by appointment. Donations are welcome.

Post a comment

Limit: 500 characters

[View all comments](#) that have been posted about this article

* Name (only this field displayed)

* Email

* Town/City

* Country/State

Offensive or abusive comments will be removed and your IP address logged and may be used to prevent further submissions. In submitting a comment to the site, you agree to be bound by BelfastTelegraph.co.uk's [Terms of Use](#)

* Required field

Remember Me

 I continue to pray for peace in NI. What a wonderful thing this library has done for the victims of the Omagh bombing.

Posted by Susan | 09.08.08, 17:24 GMT

Also in this section

- [Belfast branding was plan 'B'](#)

