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Our Papers

Film reignites interest in hunger strike

Andersonstown News Monday

Around 200 people gathered in Conway Mill on Friday night for a discussion on the historic events of the 1981 hunger strike.

The republican group éirigí have organised a series of public meetings across Ireland throughout November to coincide with the renewed popular interest in the events of this period in Irish history created by the release of the film Hunger.

The audience listened to personal accounts and experiences from three men who played key roles in securing political status for the prisoners in the H-Blocks and Armagh.

West Belfast man Jake Mac Siacais took part in both the blanket and no-wash protests. As a former cellmate and close friend of Bobby Sands, Jake had a unique insight into not only the 1981 hunger strike but also the period before and following.

Fergus Ó hÍr was a prominent member of the Relatives' Action Committee and a founding member of the National H-Block Armagh Committee. A one-time member of People's Democracy, Fergus went on to be elected to Belfast City Council whilst standing in support of the prisoners of the H-Blocks and Armagh.

Bernard Fox took part in both the blanket and no-wash protests before joining the 1981 hunger strike. Bernard remained on hunger strike for 32 days before premature medical complications caused his protest to be ended.

Speaking after Friday's very successful even, éirigí spokesperson Seán Mac Brádaigh said: "Tonight, republicans from all generations gathered for what was an emotional and inspiring discussion on the events in 1981 that shook both Ireland and the world.

"The attendance tonight is testament to the reignited interest in this period of recent Irish history.

"The film Hunger is introducing a new generation to the prison struggle and to the events that sent shockwaves across the world with the deaths of ten men.

"These discussions are giving that generation the opportunity to hear first-

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Aisling Awards

Recipients announced for 2008 Aisling Awards



hand accounts of what was going on both in the jails and on the streets.”

Seán thanked the speakers for sharing their personal experiences.

“I would also like to commend all those who attended this evening,” he said.

“It is important that we remember and learn from the sacrifice of the hunger strikers and continue to discuss and debate events that changed the course of our history.” he added.

Fr Aidan Troy was presented with the person of the year award at the Aisling Awards gala. Nine others also received awards at the 'Belfast Oscars'. [Click here](#) to see this year's magazine or [here](#) to see the final list of recipients and our special photo gallery and video footage.



Love and Marriage

The Wedding Planner

Something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue... well, it may not be all that, but it is the premier guide to getting married this year. Click on the front page (right) to read more.

