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Sister calls for IRA apology 10 years after fatal shooting

By Allison Morris

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GRIEF: Eleanor King holds a picture of her mother Maureen at the graveside of Ms King's brother Andrew

Kearney PICTURE: Gerard Black

Ten years ago today Andrew Kearney died following an IRA punishment shooting in the lift of a block of flats in the New Lodge area of north Belfast.

The 33-year-old's death came after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement and one year after the IRA had declared its second ceasefire.

At the time his death threatened to derail the fledgling peace process.

Mr Kearney had been involved in a bar fight with an IRA man from Ardoyne shortly before his death.

His family believe it was this incident that sparked a chain of events that led to his violent death in a blood-splattered lift.

They say he was dragged from the flat on the eighth floor of the tower block by a group of IRA members to the nearby lift, where he was shot once in each leg.

The lift door was jammed and the phone ripped from the wall to delay any 999 call.

The bullets pierced Mr Kearney's main arteries and by the time help came he had already bled to death.

No-one has ever been charged over the shooting.

A decade on, his sister Eleanor King said her brother's killing had been glossed over in the interest of the

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She is now calling on the IRA to apologise for the shooting.

"My mum died a year after Andrew's murder of a broken heart," Mrs King said.

"At the start she campaigned tirelessly but she could see his murder was in danger of being used for political gain so instead she took to privately writing to people she thought could help.

"A few years ago I meet with Gerry Adams and also had a meeting with the IRA.

"They admitted to me that Andrew's murder should never have happened.

"I was told that my brother's killing was sanctioned by the then OC of the Belfast brigade of the IRA.

"We now want that publicly recognised and for the IRA to issue a statement saying as much.

"Andrew's daughters are up now. At the time they were too young to understand what was going on but now they do and they are really hurting.

"As a family we can't move on until the truth about Andrew's murder is put out there.


"We have heard a lot of talk recently about victims and dealing with the legacy of the past but I feel my brother is a forgotten victim.

"Ten years on and I would call on the IRA to finally admit publicly they killed Andrew and on Gerry Adams to publicly apologise and state my brother's death was wrong and should never have happened."

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