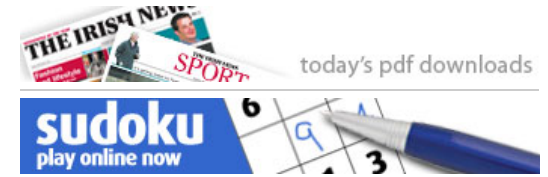


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## Work to begin on Omagh memorial

By Diana Rusk

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WORK is to begin next week on a memorial garden to remember the victims of the 1998 Omagh bomb.

The existing garden closed on Monday to make way for the Garden of Light – part of a £300,000 memorial project expected to be ready by the tenth anniversary of the atrocity in August.

Builders have already removed the existing memorial stone which stood in the garden and it is to be placed in storage until a decision is made on its future.

The lives of 29 people, including a woman pregnant with twins, were lost when the bomb tore through the Co Tyrone town's main shopping street on August 15 1998.

Families of those who died had visited the garden at Drumragh Avenue over the years, often placing personal items to their loved ones.

They were contacted this week and asked to remove anything placed in the temporary garden to make way for the building work.

While work has begun at the memorial, a row over the precise inscription on the memorial has still not been resolved between the families of the victims of the bomb and Omagh District Council.

The families claim the Sinn Fein-dominated council objected to having the words “dissident republican car bomb” on the memorial plaque.

However an independent team headed by peace facilitator Rev Dr John Dunlop is due to recommend wording for the memorial at the end of this month.

The memorial design was created by a Dublin team, artist Sean Hillen and architect Desmond Fitzgerald and its theme is “Constant Light”.

It includes a 4.5m tall glass obelisk with a heart inside marking the site of the explosion.

This site will be linked to the garden by a ‘pathway of sunlight’ created by 31 mirrors – each one mounted on top of a pole to represent the lives lost in the bomb.