



# Remembering: “Petals of Hope”

Artistic responses to the Omagh Bomb

**Conversations with Carole Kane and Malachi O’Doherty**

# Evelyn Johns

“It will be the next generation before we get the families into the Omagh Bomb Archive.”

Different people react in different ways. Researchers are very much matter of fact about it and they are delighted with the material in the archive. It will be the next generation before we get the families in. Some of the families have come and you can see it is very emotional for them. Groups are brought in by various organisations and you can see they are very touched by it. Everybody looks at it and thinks, why didn't we know this was here? They can't understand how so much material has been gathered and they didn't know about it.

Apart from the books of condolence, there's video material from RTE, UTV and the BBC, news reports, documentaries, things like the Late Late Show; they're all being put onto dvd at the moment.

Then there's emails. In 1998 the email was still in its infancy and it's impossible to say but I think on the home page we've something like fifteen thousand. I'm sure there's thirty thousand. One girl from a software company in County Cork sent an email to all her contacts on the Monday morning calling on Bertie Ahern, the Taoiseach, to declare a national day of mourning. About 8,000 emails followed from that one email.

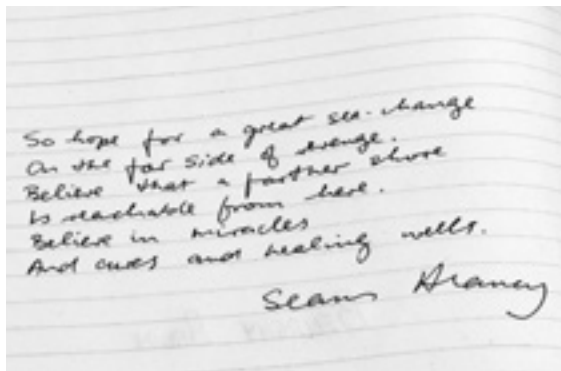
Apart from that, there are some from RTE and they are massive. It's hard to tell how many are there. That was a huge part of the collection.

Then there were poems. People wanted to respond in whatever way they could. Letters, sympathy cards, mass cards, absolutely huge. There's another wee collection of Christmas cards made by kids in primary schools.

Quilts. Quilters from around the world sent patches and quilters from Northern Ireland made them up.

There's also a lot of odd stuff.  
There's a crown of thorns.

I would just say it is a spontaneous collection and it is just put together by people who wanted to say how they felt. It hit so many people throughout the world and it was just their way of doing something, of sending their sympathy to us. That's what the archive grew out of.





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