

First of all on behalf of Bessbrook Development group I would like to welcome you to the hall this afternoon and to welcome Lycia and her Linen Memorial to Bessbrook. A great deal of effort goes in to organising such a day and members of the Group have done a tremendous amount of work for this afternoon. A special word of thanks to all those involved in today: the choirs, the readers, the children, the schools and all the volunteers and helpers for today. I would like to thank the select vestry for the use of this hall.

Christmas is a time for celebration but it also a time for reflection. When you see the names of all those killed in our troubles over the last 40 years it makes you realise what we have come through. For a lot of families the pain and the loss is still there and it will never go away. Bessbrook itself has had some terrible times, but through it all there was and still is a belief that we should live in harmony side by side with respect for our differences.

So when we heard about the Linen Memorial we decided to try and bring it to Bessbrook on this special day. A tremendous amount of work has gone into it and I know Lycia is extremely passionate about it. I would encourage people to examine the memorial and to make comments in the book beside me. The hall will remain open for a time today and tomorrow morning from 10am to lunchtime and we hope that others will be encouraged to view the Memorial.

Once again thank you all for your efforts and attendance today. Richard Black, Chair. December 14 2014.