

JO BERRY, England
Daughter of Sir Anthony Berry,
killed in England in 1984

Jo Berry's father was a member of Parliament when he was blown up by a bomb planted by the IRA. He left 6 children ranging from 28 to 12 and a wife, Lady Sarah Berry. The man responsible, Pat Magee, received eight life sentences; the judge branded him "a man of exceptional cruelty and inhumanity." He was released in 1999 as a condition of the Good Friday Peace Process.

In 2000, Jo met Pat Magee in order to hear his story. Since then, they have met many times, and Jo has begun to understand the reasons that led him to choose violence. They now work together for peace, nationally and internationally. Jo has set up the organization Building Bridges for Peace, and has presented workshops at prisons, schools, universities, and victims' groups. Jo and Pat were featured in a BBC documentary in which Jo talks about her abhorrence of the death penalty and how it cannot bring closure; the film has been used by U.S. anti-death penalty groups.

"I am passionate about abolishing the death penalty worldwide as I do not believe killing the perpetrators helps anyone. It does not assist the healing of the victim, but actually creates more pain and violence and delays the healing. Of course I felt huge rage and pain when my father was killed, but I wanted to end the cycle of violence and revenge in me. Hurting another human being would only hurt me and keep me as a victim. Instead I wanted to find a way to transform my trauma into action for peace. For me the benefits of putting a human face on the enemy have been profound."



Jo Berry



Sir Anthony Berry with his children

Links to more information:

<http://www.theforgivenessproject.com/stories/jo-berry-pat-magee>

<http://www.buildingbridgesforpeace.org>

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