

# LAYING PAULINE READE TO REST

In October, Rowland Brothers Exhumation Services, a division of the Rowland Brothers business was tasked with returning items to the grave of Pauline Reade, the first victim of the Moors murders. Special projects manager Michael Gill explains how the company completed the important job, bringing Reade to peace 55 years after her murder



If one mentions the names Ian Brady or Myra Hindley, chances are the majority of people will know who is being spoken about and the events connected to them. The couple gained notoriety as two of the UK's most prolific serial killers, and with Hindley dubbed "the most evil woman in Britain", the Moors murders remain one of the most gruesome and tragic stories in Britain in the last century. Despite committing the murders of five children more than 20 years prior, it was only when Brady allegedly confessed to a journalist in 1985 that the true extent of their crimes started to come to light. Their first victim, 16 year old Pauline Reade, was discovered in 1987 some 24 years after her disappearance and subsequent murder on July 12, 1963. She, along with the other victims of Brady and Hindley, was buried on Saddleworth Moor, greater Manchester.

In May 2017, Brady passed away

in prison, and with both murderers deceased the Manchester police decided to officially close the file on the case. With the closure of the case, an audit was conducted and any pieces of evidence or artefacts in possession of the force were to be returned. During this audit, it was discovered the police still had some of the belongings and remains of Reade which had been held at Leeds University on behalf of the Greater Manchester Police for 30 years without her loved ones knowing. It was then that they contacted Jackie Reade, Pauline's niece and one of her two last living relatives, in order to return what rightfully belonged to the victim.

Rowland Brothers Exhumation Services (RBES) has been offering its services nationwide since 1971, and among the exhumation of war soldiers and the reburial of human remains, this was one of the projects the firm was approached to carry

out. Michael Gill, special projects manager, says: "The original contact came from her solicitors - the niece who wanted all this to happen was the nearest relative that was left."

Months after Brady's death, the solicitors returned to RBES having completed all of the necessary paperwork and permissions for the exhumation at Gorton Cemetery, where Reade had been laid to rest, and the project was set in motion. "The whole thing took well over six months which is probably normal for an exhumation." What was less common about this exhumation however, was the fact that it was a publicly known person meaning RBES had to make sufficient preparations for any potentially intruding members of the press or public. While the erection of a tent is commonplace during an exhumation to give the deceased respect and privacy, an especially large tent was used to exhum