

**crime** INTERACTIVE CRIME MAP OF NORTHERN IRELAND: EVERY CRIME IN YOUR AREA

**Disneyland Paris** [CLICK HERE](#) © Disney/Pixar

<a href="#">News</a>	<a href="#">Sport</a>	<a href="#">Business</a>	<a href="#">Opinion</a>	<a href="#">Life &amp; Style</a>	<a href="#">Entertainment</a>	<a href="#">Jobs</a>	<a href="#">Cars</a>	<a href="#">Homes</a>	<a href="#">Classified (new)</a>				
<a href="#">Local &amp; National</a>	<a href="#">World</a>	<a href="#">Politics</a>	<a href="#">Property</a>	<a href="#">Health</a>	<a href="#">Education</a>	<a href="#">Business</a>	<a href="#">Environment</a>	<a href="#">Technology</a>	<a href="#">Video</a>	<a href="#">Family Notices</a>	<a href="#">Crime Map</a>	<a href="#">Sunday Life</a>	<a href="#">The CT</a>

The digital gateway to Northern Ireland news, sport, business, entertainment and opinion

[Home](#) > [News](#) > [Local & National](#)

## Flanagan to give evidence at Nelson murder inquiry

Monday, 19 January 2009

Former RUC boss will be quizzed about threat to solicitor  
Murdered solicitor Rosemary Nelson and Sir Ronnie Flanagan, who headed the RUC when she died  
By Steven McCaffery

Former Northern Ireland Chief Constable Sir Ronnie Flanagan will today begin to give evidence at a public inquiry into the murder of solicitor Rosemary Nelson.

The inquiry is probing claims security force members played a role in her death in 1999, during which time Sir Ronnie headed the then Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC).

Sir Ronnie, who now heads Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary, led the RUC and oversaw its transformation into the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI).

Mrs Nelson (40) was killed in a loyalist bomb attack, but before her death she had accused RUC officers of making threats against her.

While the police deny wrongdoing in the case, the inquiry's public hearings started last April and have already heard evidence from security force members, human rights groups, as well as relatives and colleagues of the murdered solicitor.

Sir Ronnie is scheduled to give evidence for three days at the inquiry's hearings in the Interpoint building in central Belfast.

He is likely to be questioned on whether the RUC or other state agencies had any knowledge of a paramilitary threat to Mrs Nelson.

Queries have also been raised over the police handling of the allegation that RUC officers threatened the solicitor.

In a statement to the inquiry a former senior Northern Ireland civil servant David Watkins said of Mrs Nelson: "I knew the police to have a pretty dim view of her.

"I think Ronnie Flanagan probably did as well although I do not recall him ever commenting on her to me."

But when Mr Watkins was giving direct evidence to the inquiry he was asked how Sir Ronnie had described Mrs Nelson and said: "I think he used the term 'an immoral woman'."

The mother-of-three had driven only yards from her home in Lurgan, Co Armagh, when the device beneath her car exploded on March 15, 1999.

The attack was claimed by the Red Hand Defenders, which was seen as a cover name for larger loyalist paramilitary groups.

Only a few years before her death Mrs Nelson was unknown outside her home town of Lurgan.

She ran her own solicitors office in the area and gained a reputation as an effective lawyer.

But by the mid-1990s she had taken on three cases that brought her to wider attention.

Lurgan republican Colin Duffy was twice cleared of murder charges under her representation. In one case, the main prosecution witness was exposed as a loyalist paramilitary.

The inquiry has heard claims from some police witnesses that Mrs Nelson was involved in a relationship with Duffy, though this has been denied by those close to her who said the allegation was an attempt to discredit her.

Mrs Nelson also represented the Garvaghy Road Residents' Coalition and found herself drawn into the bitter Drumcree marching dispute.

Print Email

Search  [Go](#)

**Bookmark & Share**

Digg It del.icio.us

Facebook Stumbleupon

What are these?

Change font size: A A A

### Northern Ireland Troubles Gallery



Peter Robinson, Middle East visit, 1984

See how much money you could save with a more fuel efficient new car

Save Money Save Fuel

ACT ON CO<sub>2</sub>

click here to watch finding happiness

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

HAPPY

She later represented the family of Portadown Catholic Robert Hamill, who was killed by a loyalist mob while police were parked nearby.

As these cases raised Mrs Nelson's profile, she began to receive threats from loyalists. She also claimed that police officers interviewing clients accused of republican activities had issued threats against her.

Her allegations secured international attention when she addressed a committee of the US Congress months before she died.

The Rosemary Nelson Inquiry was announced by government in 2004 after retired Canadian judge Peter Cory reviewed controversial cases and recommended a series of inquiries into murders where he said there was evidence of security force collusion.

**Post a comment**

Limit: 500 characters, left: 1000

[View all comments](#) that have been posted about this article

\* Name (only this field displayed)

\* Email

\* Town/City

\* Country/State

\* Required field  
 Remember Me

Offensive or abusive comments will be removed and your IP address logged and may be used to prevent further submissions. In submitting a comment to the site, you agree to be bound by BelfastTelegraph.co.uk's [Terms of Use](#).

Posts submitted in UPPERCASE letters will be rejected.

**Also in this section**

- Cloughfin Bay beauty spot sewage fury
- Cut fast food hours to curb thugs, says PSNI chief
- Presbyterian church 'must make up cash shortfall'
- Nolan's business in good financial health
- Freak weather brings traffic chaos and major power cuts

Results by

[Precision Industrial Services](#)

Property Utility & Environmental Solutions  
[Cleaning - Commercial](#)

[Moygannon Nurseries](#)  
 Landscaping Any Size  
[Landscapers](#)

[Tiletec Ceramics](#)  
 Tile Suppliers, Distribution, Retail, Showroom, Adhesives, Accessories  
[Flooring Services](#)

[JOHN HUNTER GLAZING](#)  
 glaziers, Belfast, double, commercial, glazing, windows, john, hunter, glass, safety, specialists  
[Glaziers](#)

[ABC Locks NI](#)  
 24 Hour Emergency Local Locksmith, Reliable & Professional Service  
[Locksmiths](#)

**In Pictures: All Our Yesterdays**

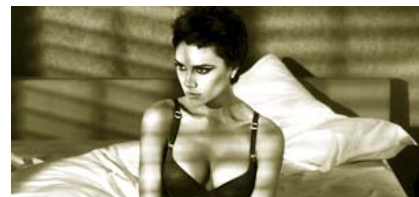


Ulster American Folk Park

**In Pictures: Northern Ireland Nightlife**



**In Pictures: Fashion & Showbiz**

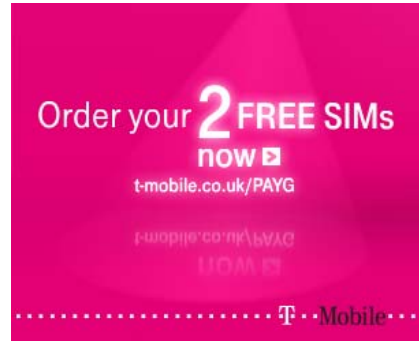



Victoria Beckham - Armani underwear

**Most popular**

1. Posh Spice Victoria Beckham 'does a David' in Armani undies strip
2. Mum-of-two killed by falling tree
3. Julian Simmons: I was spat at for being gay

4. Gunners thrive on extra pressure
5. Donaldson's cousin found dead in Mourne
6. Rafa: I asked for a table and they brought me a lampshade
7. Dancing Zoe gets off to an 'ice' start
8. Bus company warned over 'No God' signs
9. Paisley rebuked for wearing a shamrock by DUP members



Order your **2 FREE SIMs**  
**NOW**   
t-mobile.co.uk/PAYG

t-mobile.co.uk/PAYG  
t-mobile.co.uk/PAYG

..... T-Mobile .....

Results by

**Hollywood Glazing Ltd**

PVC Windows & Doors,  
Replacement Single &  
Double Glazing, Safety  
Glass, Mirrors.

**Glaziers**

**Bracken Blinds**

Specialist suppliers of  
Curtains and Blinds to all  
commercial premises,  
deigned and fitted

**Architects**

**CLARKE CONTRACTS**

Remmers Floors,  
Plastering & Dry Lining,  
Insulation Systems  
**Flooring Services**

**Ballykeel Pharmacy**

Local Free Delivery  
**Pharmacies**

**GLAMOUR**

Specialising In Ladies  
Shoes, Handbags, Hats &  
Accessories

**Shoe Shops**



Up to **20% off**  
your next  
French Summer  
holiday.  
Apartments  
from **£317**  
per week.

**BOOK NOW**



Apartments  
Villages  
Hotels  
All over France



Search  **Advanced Search** ▶