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IRA murder victim Danny McIlhone will finally be laid to rest today, almost 30 years after he was killed, bringing to an end his family's anguish.

The funeral of the 19-year-old — one of the so-called Disappeared who was abducted, murdered and secretly buried in 1981 — was being

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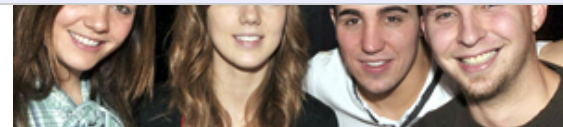
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The Christmas Party Gallery

held at St Teresa's Church in west Belfast.

What are these?

Following the service he was due to be laid to rest alongside his parents, Dan and Lily, in Milltown Cemetery.

The family have waited 27 years to give Mr McIlhone a Christian burial.

On Friday, DNA tests carried out on remains which were dug up from a remote hillside in Co Wicklow, in the Republic, confirmed it was the teenager.

In a moving tribute, a family spokesperson said: "Danny was born a twin on the 09.06.60. He was brought home to Bearnagh Drive by proud parents Dan and Lily. Danny was full of mischief and lived life to the full.

"His big brown eyes and stammer melted many a heart and broke a few along the way. Danny belonged not only to the McIlhone family, but to all those he loved and knew him.

"It's a huge relief for us finally to have Danny back home and to be able to lay him to rest at peace with his beloved parents, Dan and Lily," the spokesperson told the Andersonstown News.

A funeral notice in a local newspaper from his daughter Sarah, brothers, sisters and family circle said: "We think about you every day and talk about you too, your memory lives within our hearts, but we wish we still had you.

"It's been a long time Danny and you were all alone, but finally you can rest in peace and we can bring you home."

Another message from his twin brother John said: "You were everything in life to me, my brother and my friend and although you had to leave me, our love will never end."

The names of the other Disappeared will be read out during the funeral service.

The IRA claimed he was being questioned about stealing weapons from an arms dump in 1981 when he was killed in a struggle with a gunman who was guarding him.

In 1999, almost two decades after Mr McIlhone vanished, the IRA admitted he had been shot in 1981.

But the 11 weeks of searches at the forest-surrounded bogland close to Blessington Lakes in 1999 and 2000, proved fruitless. However last month, on November 10, investigators using new techniques made the breakthrough.

His family said they were 'now at peace' that their 27-year wait had finally come to a close.

Sinn Fein President and West Belfast MP Gerry Adams said: "The return of the remains of Danny McIlhone to his family in this Christmas season is a result of the great resilience of "It is right and proper that they will now have a burial service and some closure hopefully in the time ahead."

Mr Adams said Sinn Fein will continue to support the other families and to work diligently on this important issue.

"It is imperative that efforts continue to find the remains of those still missing," he said.

"This must be true also in those instances where the IRA was not involved.



Danny McIlhone: The 19-year-old who was abducted, murdered and secretly buried by the IRA in 1981 was laid to rest

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Christmas greetings gallery



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"The disappearances of Seamus Ruddy, Charlie Armstrong, Gerard Evans and Lisa Dorrian are as much a source of trauma and grief for their families as is that endured by the other families."

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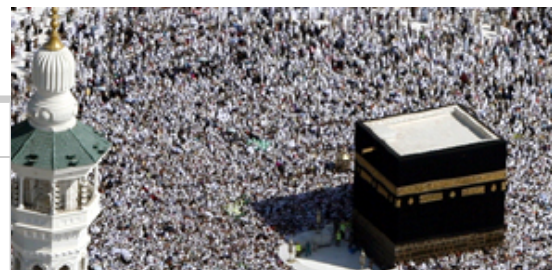
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From The Belfast Telegraph Archives

Gerry Adams knows all about "right and proper" doesnt he!! NOT!

Posted by Wotsit | 22.12.08, 11:48 GMT

Why are Gerry Adams' comments given such prominence by the media when the organisation he "was never a member of" killed Mr McIlhone, buried his body and remained silent for years and years about what they had done. It certainly was not "right and proper" that Mr McIlhone was killed in the first place. The words of Mr Adams must ring hollow in the ears of every reasonable person. He is certainly in no position to pontificate on loyalist murders. Not one person should have died in the years since 1969 - not one. Either by republican or loyalist hands. No weasle-worded statement from can ever take away from that.

Posted by lumina | 22.12.08, 11:22 GMT

It's awful nice of Gerry Adams to come out and comment on this. After all the IRA has put this family through hell.

The IRA has killed more Catholics than any other organisation put together, yet they garnish a majority vote on the nationalist/republican side.

I still cannot understand this, all I can come up with is people of the republican/nationalist community are unable to think for themselves and are in actual fact brainwashed.

Posted by Steve | 22.12.08, 11:17 GMT

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