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IRA victim can be laid to rest, 27 years on

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By Brian Hutton Saturday December 20 2008

MURDERED IRA victim Danny McIlhone will finally be laid to rest with his mother and father almost 30 years after his disappearance.

The remains of the west-Belfast teenager have been positively identified through DNA testing after they were dug up from a remote hillside in Co Wicklow.

His family said last night they were relieved and grateful that their 27-year wait to find his body had come to a close.

"We, as a family, are now at peace and now have the opportunity to give our brother Danny a Christian burial and to lay him to rest with our beloved mother and father," they said.

Mr McIlhone (19) was one of the so-called 'Disappeared' who were abducted, murdered and secretly buried during the Troubles. 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.

The Independent Commission for the Location of Victims Remains (ICLVR), set up by the Irish and British governments to find the Disappeared, was passed information that his body was buried at Ballynultagh, near the village of Lacken in the Wicklow Mountains.

The bogland near Blessington Lakes was searched in 1999 and 2000, but nothing was found. However, investigators made a breakthrough on November 10 using new techniques.

- Brian Hutton

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