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## New appeal to recover bodies of Disappeared

By Marie Louise McCrory

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SEEKING CLOSURE: Actor James Nesbitt, right, with Oliver McVeigh, brother of Columba McVeigh, as a fresh appeal

is launched to recover the bodies of the Disappeared PICTURE: Mal McCann

THE families of the Disappeared have today issued a fresh appeal for information about the location of their loved ones' remains in an emotional letter which they have sent for publication to newspapers in Ireland, England and the US.

The 10 families, whose loved ones were abducted, killed and secretly buried by the IRA and INLA during the Troubles, have appealed for information which they say will "end their suffering".

In the letter, the families appeal for anyone with information to contact the Independent Commission for the Location of Victims' Remains (ICLVR).

In the letter, the families say they believe "there are people out there who have yet to speak to the commission and who, through the confidential telephone number, can provide vital new information, safe in the knowledge that this can only be used to recover the remains of our loved ones.

"We believe that time is running out for us," the letter says.

The families also say they are "encouraged" by a dig in Co Wicklow last month which uncovered remains - believed to be those of one of the Disappeared - Danny McIhone, from west Belfast.

The 19-year-old was abducted and killed by the IRA in 1981 and his body buried in a secret grave.

Tests are being carried out on the remains - found in the Ballynultagh area of the Wicklow Mountains - to

confirm if it is Mr McIhone.

The dig was the third such search carried out in the area since 1999 on behalf of the ICLVR.

The remains of three other

people – Jean McConville, Brian McKinney and Eamon Molloy – who were among those described as the Disappeared, have been recovered.

In their letter, the families of those still missing describe themselves as the “forgotten victims of the Troubles”.

“We don’t want revenge or retribution – all we want is closure,” they say.

“If you believe in justice and human rights then do the honourable thing and tell the commission what you know so that we can give our loved ones a Christian burial and let us have a grave to visit and grieve.”

Meanwhile, Co Derry actor James Nesbitt has today added his voice to the campaign of support for the families of the Disappeared.

The Cold Feet star said he had “nothing but admiration and respect for the families of the Disappeared.

“Theirs is a story of unimaginable pain and suffering and this will continue until the remains of their loved ones are returned,” he said.

“The families have always said that they don’t want revenge or retribution but closure and every time I meet them the dignity they show in the face of their suffering is humbling.

“I would ask anyone who knows anything about where the bodies are buried, to look into their hearts, listen to their conscience and speak to the commission.”

- Information can be passed confidentially to the commission on 00800-55585500 or by writing to ICLVR, PO Box, 10827, Dublin 2.

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