

THE IRISH NEWS

online 

Thursday, 24 July 2008

- HOME
- NEWS
- SPORT
- BUSINESS
- LIVING
- AN TEOLAS
- SEARCH
- SUBSCRIBE
- LOGIN

POLITICS | EDUCATION | COLUMNISTS | LETTERS | RSS FEEDS

Most PopularMost Emailed

BreakingSportBusinessWorldGossip



Issue Changer:



NEWS >

Family's disappointment as murder-victim search ends

EXCLUSIVE

By Diana Rusk and Barry McCaffrey

22/07/08

Image: of 2

A FRESH search for a Co Down man murdered and 'disappeared' by a paramilitary group has ended in bitter disappointment for his family.

Forensic teams spent last week searching a forest in Normandy, France, for the body of Seamus Ruddy (31), an

English teacher killed and secretly buried by the INLA in May 1985.

His family say they were told that there was a 97 per cent chance his body would be found after information was given to the Independent Commission for the Location of Victims' Remains (ICLVR).

A man involved in the killing is understood to have travelled to France within the last six weeks to pinpoint where the body was buried.

However, despite the use of sophisticated forensic equipment and

sniffer dogs, nothing was found during the seven-day search which concluded on Sunday.

It is the third time the area in a forest outside Ruane in Normandy has been searched after digs in 1999 and 2000 ended in failure.

The forensic teams are thought to have gone further than the previous investigations and searched a second site.

Anne Morgan, a sister of Mr Ruddy, said she had dared to hope she would eventually be able to bury her brother but now believed that a key witness has been lying about the whereabouts of the body.

"We were very hopeful because the key witness in our case had directed them to this place in 2000 and again in 2008," she said.

"The team over the weekend told us they were 97 per cent sure Seamus would have been found.

"We feel that this person, a former member of the INLA, has been giving the wrong information.

"We believe this man has been telling lies."

Mrs Morgan, who travelled to France with her sister to witness the search, said she believed someone was holding back the truth.

"We were very emotional when we went to the forest. We thought we were so close to getting him," she said.

"We thought it was a matter of hours – [that] he was going to be coming home and we were going to bury him. We built ourselves up.

"At the moment I do still have hope. I feel there is a very good group of people supporting us and that the forensic team will try their best but they cannot do this unless the information they receive is truthful."

Willie Gallagher, of the Irish Republican Socialist Party, which is linked to the INLA, refuted allegations that false information was being given.

"We were confident they were going to find the body this time and we were deeply disappointed when the body did not appear," he said.

"It wouldn't make any sense to

lead that family up the garden path and we would appeal for any member or past member of the INLA to come forward to the IRSP with any information.

"The shooting should never have happened but disappearing someone is even worse. It's like punishing the

family.”

Meanwhile, an empty grave still lies waiting in a Newry cemetery where the family of Seamus Ruddy plan to bury him alongside his mother and father.

“I took some soil from the forest and I'll put it on the grave,” said Mrs Morgan.

“Even though I don't know where he is, the forest is the only place we have and we've got to hold onto that.”

Information about the remains of the Disappeared can be passed in confidence to the Independent Commission for the Location of Victims' Remains on 00800 5558 5500.

Related Stories

- [Family's disappointment as murder-victim search ends](#)



Print



back to top

Bookmark: [Delicious](#) [Digg](#) [Reddit](#) [Facebook](#) [StumbleUpon](#)



Email this story