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# McCabe killer walks free after nine years

powered  
By Tom Brady  
Security Editor  
Tuesday February 05  
2008  
Unison  
Two IRA men  
wanted by gardai  
for the murder of  
Det Garda Jerry  
McCabe more than  
11 years ago  
remained on the run  
last night as one of

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his killers was released from jail.

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Jeremiah Sheehy walked free from The Grove bungalow complex in Castlerea prison early yesterday morning after serving his sentence for the manslaughter of Garda McCabe.

He was one of four members of the Provisional IRA's so-called Munster unit who pleaded guilty to killing the detective following a controversial case in the Special Criminal Court.

What are these?

All four were charged with Garda McCabe's murder but the State was forced to accept a manslaughter plea when a number of key witnesses refused to co-operate as a result of IRA intimidation.



Jeremiah Sheehy leaves Castlerea Prison

Sheehy (43) was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment for his part in the fatal shooting during an abortive raid on an An Post van in the Co Limerick village of Adare, in June 1996.

As a result of the standard quarter remission for good behaviour, Sheehy was released from jail yesterday after serving nine years. The sentence had been imposed by the court in 1999.

Last May Michael O'Neill was freed after serving more than eight years of an 11-year sentence.

The remaining two men in prison, unit leader Kevin Walsh and Brixton prison jailbreaker, Pearse McAuley, were both sentenced to 14 years behind bars and, with normal remission, are due out in August next year.

A fifth IRA man, John Quinn was jailed for six years for conspiracy to commit a robbery of a post office van at Adare.

Det Garda McCabe (52) died when 15 bullets were fired from a Kalashnikov assault rifle after the IRA hold-up gang rammed an unmarked garda patrol car that was escorting a post office van delivering £80,000 (€102,000) to local offices. His colleague, Det Garda Ben O'Sullivan, was seriously injured in the shooting. Gardai are still trying to trace two other members of the gang, who fled overseas shortly after the murder.

One is a former member of the INLA, who switched to the Provisionals. He is from Dun Laoghaire but had been living in Shannon. He is thought to be living in Spain. The second man on the run is from north Cork and has been living in Managua, the capital of Nicaragua.

Senior garda anti-terrorist officers said last night the file on the case remained open.

Meanwhile, the Department of Justice denied claims it had not informed the McCabe family in advance of Sheehy's release.

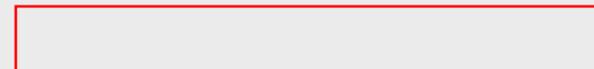
Officials said arrangements had been made for members of the McCabe and O'Sullivan families to be notified over the weekend and contact was made with a member of each family.

They said attempts had been made to get in touch with Garda McCabe's widow, Ann, since Friday, but failed. Their son, John, who is a garda, was told about the release on Sunday.

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of relevant prison releases.

Taoiseach Bertie Ahern said Jeremiah Sheehy was due, with statutory remission, to be released from jail yesterday as he had completed the sentence imposed by the court. He insisted there was an arrangement in place to inform the McCabe family about releases.

Sinn Fein attempted to include the early release of the McCabe killers as part of the conditions in the Good Friday peace deal in 1998 but this was rejected by the Irish Government.

Mrs McCabe was given a letter of assurance from the Government that the early release of any of the killers would only be considered in the context of achieving acts of completion by the Provisionals.

- *Tom Brady Security Editor*

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