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Shooting similar to Donaldson killing in 2006

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By Anita Guidera
Thursday February 14 2008

The brutal killing of Andrew Burns in a remote area of Donegal is the second paramilitary-style murder to happen in the county in the past two years.

On April 3, 2006, high profile Sinn Fein member Denis Donaldson (56) was hit by four shotgun blasts at his remote cottage at Classey, five miles from Glenties in west Donegal on the back road to Doochary.

Republican involvement has been linked with both murders but has been denied.

Mr Donaldson had been Sinn Fein's head of administration at Stormont

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before his 2002 arrest over alleged spying led to its collapse.

However, Mr Donaldson and two others were acquitted of charges in December 2005 "in the public interest".

He was expelled from Sinn Fein the following week after admitting he was a paid British spy for 20 years. Shortly afterwards, he moved out of his Belfast home, and had been living in the run-down cottage which had neither electricity nor running water.

At the inquest into his death last November, Mr Donaldson's family expressed serious concerns over the garda investigation in to his murder.

They confirmed they have made formal complaints to both the Garda Ombudsman and the Garda Complaints Board as their confidence in the investigation has been "seriously undermined".

A raft of theories ranging from the involvement of dissident republican groups, loyalists and the British security services, have also been put forward.

But gardai said inquiries carried out jointly by themselves and the PSNI have so far uncovered no evidence to substantiate any of the theories.

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