

I'm not a bot





































The daughter of a loyalist murder victim has told Operation Kenova that unless they produce new information about the killing not to “waste her time”.Denise Mullen spoke out as it emerged Kenova investigators have arranged meetings with relatives of people killed by the notorious Glenanne Gang to provide the findings of a review into its activities.The group, which included members of the RUC, UDR and UVF, is believed to have been responsible for around 125 murders, the majority of which were innocent Catholics.The activities of the gang are currently being examined by the Kenova investigation team as part of Operation Denton, which is nearing completion. Denis Mullen was shot dead in 1975.Members of the Kenova team are currently briefing relatives of the dead ahead of publication of their final report. However, one family has now voiced an unwillingness to meet the high-profile investigation team unless fresh information is produced.Former SDLP and Aontú councillor Denise Mullen's father, Denis Mullen, was shot dead by the Glenanne Gang near Moy, Co Tyrone, in September 1975.Co Armagh man Garfield Beattie was later convicted of Mr Mullen's murder.As a result of various reports and other research Ms Mullen, who was recently approached by Kenova for a meeting, has already gathered a significant amount of information about her father's murder.The campaigning daughter has now put a marker down with the Kenova team.“Unless they are coming to tell me something new and specific to my father's murder and attempted murder of my mother, don't waste my time,” she said.“I am not prepared to make time for a box ticking exercise of meeting a victim and survivor to receive the same watered down, sweet talking information as I was told last year – I don't want to listen to it again.”Ms Mullen said she wants to know who ordered her father's murder.“I want hard facts, the names of those who gave the order to target my parents and the measures that are going to be taken to ensure their accountability,” she said.“My time is precious.”A spokesman for the Kenova investigation team said: “We are currently working through individual briefings with families affected by Operation Denton ahead of the final report of the review which is being prepared for publication later in the year. “We remain committed to providing all families with as much information as is possible in relation to what happened to their loved ones, however it would not be appropriate to comment while those briefings are taking place and ahead of publication of the final report.” Operation Kenova was set up in 2016 to investigate allegations of murder, kidnap and torture dating back to the 1970s. Across its four main investigative areas it's looking at more than 200 murders, including 120 carried out by the so-called Glenanne gang of loyalist terrorists, which included serving members of the security forces. Its principal investigative strand focuses on the role of a senior IRA man turned army agent given the codename Stakeknife. He's believed to have been Belfast republican Freddie Scappaticci, who died in April 2023 having fled Belfast after being outed as an informer. Scappaticci led an IRA unit charged with catching and killing informers. But he was possibly the most valuable agent of them all, referred to by a former senior British army officer as the “golden egg”. The allegation is that his police and military handlers may have sacrificed other informants to protect him. A team of up to 70 detectives worked on the inquiry which looked for evidence that Stakeknife carried out murders and whether his army and security service handlers colluded in them. In 2018 Jon Boucher, who was then head of the Operation Kenova team, began interviewing suspects including republicans and members of the security forces. Forty people were interviewed under criminal caution. The following year, the team began submitting evidential files to Northern Ireland's Public Prosecution Service (PPS). In June 2020, Jon Boucher told the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee that his team had submitted evidence to the PPS on criminal offences such as murder, kidnap, torture, misconduct in public office, perverting the course of justice and perjury. He said it covered alleged offences by terrorists and members of the security forces. On 10 August 2021, Mr Boucher provided a breakdown of the files already with the PPS - the bulk of which were linked to the Stakeknife investigation. He said 31 files related to 17 murders and 12 kidnaps had been submitted which contained 50,000 pages of evidence. These included files on four individuals the PPS had decided in October 2020 should not be prosecuted. They included two members of the security services and a former public prosecutor for offences including perjury and misconduct in a public office. Freddie Scappaticci died in April 2023 having fled Belfast after being outed as an informer.In June 2022, Mr Boucher told MPs on the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee that 33 files had been passed to the PPS. In April 2023, the PPS confirmed that 26 case files remained under active consideration. These included alleged paramilitaries, former police officers and former members of the intelligence and security services. The files were said to contain a range of potential offences including murder, false imprisonment, serious assaults and misconduct in public office. It said the files had been received in phases between October 2019 and February 2022 and contained vast amounts of information including 1,000 witness statements and 12,000 documents running to more than a million pages. The PPS said due to the cross-cutting nature of the evidence it was not practical to take decisions in isolation. The decision as to prosecution in all the outstanding cases would be taken following a consideration of the totality of the evidence. Margaret Campbell's husband Patrick was gunned down in an attack widely believed to have been carried out by loyalist agent Robin “The Jackal” Jackson.Mrs Campbell had taken a legal case against the PSNI and Ministry of Defence and was awarded what was described as a ‘significant’ pay out in 2022 over alleged security force collusion with the loyalist gunman she believed was responsible for her husband’s murder.Her story had featured in the 2018 documentary Unquiet Graves with her testimony regarded as the most telling contribution to the film. Although her claim over collusion was settled, she said afterwards that despite being relieved her legal battle was at an end, she was still left with “many unanswered questions”.Read moreShe died peacefully at home in Banbridge on Friday and is survived by her children Patrick, Donna and Stephen as well as son-in-law Paddy and grandchildren Stacey, Shea, Martin, Conor and Declan and great-grandchildren. Mrs Campbell was originally from Dromore and the daughter of the late John and Bridget Maginess. Requiem Mass for Mrs Campbell will take place in St Patrick’s Church at 2pm on Tuesday and her remains will be buried in St Patrick’s cemetery. Mrs Campbell’s late husband Patrick was murdered on October 29, 1973 by Robin Jackson, a former UDR man and UVF commander. Jackson was a member of the gang which included members of the RUC, UDR and UVF and is believed to have been responsible for killing up to 120 people.The activities of the killer gang are currently subject of a review by the Operation Kenova team, which was headed by former Bedfordshire chief constable Jon Boucher, now Chief Constable of the PSNI. The Kenova report is due to be published shortly.Margaret had opened the front door to their home at Cline Walk to two men believing they wanted to talk to her trade unionist husband about a work matter but who then shot the father-of-three nine times.One of the a guns used was later found to have been stolen from a British Army base in Lurgan the previous year.Mrs Campbell spoke movingly in Unquiet Graves, directed by Seán Murray, about how her then 10-year-old daughter, Donna, held her father's head as his life slipped away.An outspoken opponent of sectarianism, Mr Campbell was involved in a cross-community amateur boxing club in Banbridge and was president of the Northern Ireland branch of the National Union of Footwear, Leather and Allied Trades.He was an influential and well respected figure in the mainly Protestant town and the Glenanne Gang was known to target Catholics with social standing, most of whom had no republican connections.A few weeks after witnessing her husband's death, Mrs Campbell said two police officers knocked her door and told her she needed to go to Belfast for an identity parade.Mrs Campbell said she asked could someone go with her but was told “she'd be better alone”.When she arrived at the station she walked alone into a room where there was a line up of men - including Robin Jackson. She felt faint but said: “I was told to compose myself. I was told to go back in and ‘put your hand on him’. I went back in but I could not touch him, I could not put my hand on him.”Speaking after her civil case against the PSNI and the MoD, Mrs Campbell said: “I didn’t think there would be any other way to go because time is running out on my side.”But she said she felt she had been let down over many years by authorities and that questions remain about her husband’s murder.“There’s questions still in my head that I would love answered but unfortunately I won’t get (them).She said: “It did destroy me for a while, I was on tablets and I just was devastated,” she said. “I did my best to keep going.”Robin Jackson was charged with the murder of Mr Campbell but the charges were later dropped when it was decided there was insufficient evidence to secure a conviction.The former UDR soldier is thought to have been behind some of the worst atrocities of the Troubles including the Monaghan bombing in 1974 and the Miami Showband massacre in July 1975, died of cancer in June 1998.No-one has ever been convicted of Mr Campbell's murder. A notorious loyalist gang believed to have been responsible for around 120 murders failed in a bid to kill campaigning Catholic priest Fr Denis Faul.Loyalist sources say members of the Glenanne Gang tried to murder the popular priest, almost 50 years ago, in the winter of 1975.The Glenanne Gang, which included members of the RUC, UDR and UVF, was involved in a sectarian killing spree across Mid Ulster and beyond when plans to target the cleric, who died in 2006, were drawn up.At the time Fr Faul, who later held the title monsignor, was a teacher at St Patrick's Academy in Dungannon.The Triangle of Death, published by Fr Denis Faul and Fr Raymond Murray in 1975, highlighted sectarian killings in Mid Ulster.It is understood three-man hit-squad was involved in the murder bid, which failed when Fr Faul was not at the location the killer gang expected him to be.It is believed the murder gang had earlier assembled at a farm, which was used as a base by members of the Glenanne Gang, before setting off off to kill the priest.At the time of the failed attack Fr Faul, along with Monsignor Raymond Murray, were among the first to raise the possibility of security force collusion in a series of sectarian murders carried out across Mid Ulster and beyond.Their 1975 publication, Triangle of Death, highlighted killings in the Dungannon, Moy and Portadown areas, with their concerns also raised with the British and Irish governments.Both priests were heavily involved in exposing human rights abuses by the state, including the plight of those detained without trial during internment.The campaigning priests also promoted the plight of nationalists and republicans who were mistreated while in RUC custody and were involved in other prominent justice campaigns.It is now known that members of the Glenanne Gang, including serving police officers and British soldiers, colluded with the UVF in dozens of murders.Some members of the murder squad operated from a farm owned by RUC reserve officer John Mitchell, which was located in the Glenanne district of south Armagh.The activities of the gang are currently being examined separately by the Police Ombudsman and Operation Kenova. Date: March 21, 2024 - Affairs of the Nation Colin Wallace OPERATION KENOVA investigated a string of murders perpetrated by Freddie Scappaticci and his associates. It did not result in a single criminal prosecution. Scappaticci, a member of the IRA, worked for British intelligence. He died in April 2023. Operation Kenova was led by Jon Boucher, now chief constable of the PSNI. Boucher also led Operation Denton before his appointment to the top PSNI post. Operation Denton is looking at the actions of the Glenanne Gang, a group made up of UVF members with links to the UDR and RUC. The probe is examining the extent to which this network was controlled by the British state. Its report is due for release later this year. The key figure in the gang was ‘The Jackal’. Readers of The Phoenix were informed as long ago as May 25, 1984, that his “real name is [Robin] Jackson”, he possessed information about “the vehicles used in [the] Dublin bombings” of May 1974 and had “fled to foreign climes”, ie South Africa. He had, however, “returned to his native soil, unable to settle down” abroad. Jackson’s group had also “been linked with weapons in the possession of SAS Captain Robert Nairac”. In 2021, Colin Wallace, a psychological operations officer at British Army HQNI in the 1970s, spoke to officers from Operation Denton and provided them with records from the 1970s concerning members of the gang. The officers told Wallace twice, at the end of last year, that they fully intended to have a further meeting with him but, since then, they have not found the time to do this. Wallace knows what is written between the lines of these documents. He was central to the psychological operations launched against loyalist murder packs in the 1970s. Wallace also sought clearance to target members of the Glenanne Gang, only to be told to stand aside. The killers were allowed to continue their ghastly work for the next 20 years. A “secret” letter dated December 12, 1989, has emerged from Britain’s National archives (see The Phoenix 24/2/23). It was written by Tom King, a Conservative MP who served as secretary of state for NI (1985-89) and as defence secretary (1989-92). It assured UK prime minister Margaret Thatcher that a then forthcoming inquiry into false accusations against Colin Wallace would not examine “alleged assassinations”. For decades the UK has denied that British officials ran assassination programmes in collusion with loyalist paramilitaries. This myth has been demolished in recent years by the British government itself, which has handed over millions in compensation to victims of collusion. The survivors and relatives of the Miami Showband are the most high profile of those compensated thus far. Three band members were murdered in 1975 by Jackson’s crew. Colin Wallace is still available to talk to the investigators from Operation Denton. Tom King should also be in a position to comment on the “alleged assassinations” to which he referred in his “secret” letter to Thatcher. The scorching hot issue for Denton is whether it will reveal that Jackson and others in the gang were British agents. 15 February 2020PacemakerThe gang has been linked to killings such as the Miami Showband massacreThe families of those killed by the Glenanne Gang have a "right to the truth", the lead investigator into the killings has said.Former Bedfordshire Police chief Jon Boucher is heading a review into the activities of the Glenanne Gang.The loyalist paramilitary gang has been linked to up to 120 murders and include some serving members of the police and security services.The terms of reference for the review have now been agreed.Mr Boucher will lead the team tasked with identifying the make-up of the gang and establish whether the review of the cases as a whole suggest there were wider issues of collusion."The same structure of independence will be applied to the Glenanne Gang as with the other Kenova-related cases," said Mr Boucher."This includes key elements such as having independent legal counsel, no ex-members of the RUC/PSNI, MOD or intelligence agencies working within the team."Pacemaker pressVictims' families and their lawyers welcomed the latest ruling outside the Court of Appeal in July 2019Mr Boucher said the victims' families were "remarkable"."I have already met a number of families affected by these incredibly sad events and have been touched by their great strength and the honesty and integrity of their efforts to find the truth," he added."Their stories are incredibly moving and they have both a legal, and moral, right to the truth."Our aim is to find the truth for the families and be in a position to answer their previously unanswered questions."Who were the Glenanne gang?The Glenanne gang was based at a farm in Glenanne, County Armagh, in the 1970s.Its members are suspected of involvement in about 90 attacks during the Troubles, including the 1974 Dublin and Monaghan bombings, which killed 33 people, and the 1975 Miami Showband Massacre targeting one of Ireland's best known showbands.The gang was also implicated in fatal bombings at the Step Inn pub in Keady, County Armagh, and the Hillcrest Bar in Dungannon, County Tyrone. A farm in Glenanne was alleged to be the base for the gangAn investigation into alleged security force collaboration with the gang was started by the now defunct Historical Enquiries Team (HET).However, the HET was later abolished and the report, thought to be 80% complete, was shelved. Families argued they were promised an investigation.Initial legal proceedings against the PSNI were taken by Edward Barnard, whose 13-year-old brother, Patrick, was killed in the Hillcrest Bar bombing.The boy was one of four people to die in the no-warning explosion on St Patrick's Day, 1976.Five years later, Dungannon UVF member Garnet James Busby received a life sentence after admitting his role in the bombing and other terrorist offences.