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## News



## INLA killers free to roam Strabane- inquest told

A SENIOR police officer has told an inquest the killers of a former loyalist prisoner, shot dead outside his girlfriend's Strabane home, are still walking the streets.

A coroner's court held yesterday heard how Charles Christopher Folliard, (30), of Douglas Bridge was gunned down outside Nicola McAneny's house in Oakland Park on the evening of October 29, 2001. Detective Inspector Robin McKernan said police were confident the INLA were behind the sectarian murder, carried out with a stolen Heckler and Koch MP5.

The gun, taken from the back of a police van in May 2000, along with ammunition used by the gunman has yet to be recovered.

Media reports have suggested the same gun was used at a hunger strike event in Dungiven this year. Det Insp. McKernan said that despite having identified two suspects there was no "forensic link" linking them to the crime.

When asked by coroner John Lecky if Mr. Folliard's killers were still walking about the streets of Strabane the Det Insp. replied "yes".

Mr. Folliard served seven years of a 14 year sentence for the attempted bombing of a lorry belonging to a Catholic colleague at the quarry where he worked.

A family member, who spoke at the inquest, said: "Republicans have a free reign of this town. The police know who are responsible. No-one has the right to take a life. We hope that they will meet their maker one day."

The court heard how Mr. Folliard had told his family that he was being followed back to his home by three men in a car in the weeks leading up to his death.

Mr. Folliard's family said he thought he was being followed because he was visiting a Catholic girl in a Catholic area.

A tearful Nicole McAneny's, who was 16 at the time of the shooting, described how she was thrown to the ground during the attack.

Ms McAneny said "Charlie" was about to check his mobile phone when he looked up and saw a masked man who began to shout at him.

The "heavily-built" gunman, who was accompanied by a slim accomplice, is said to have fired through the passenger window, walked round and shot through the rear of the car before shooting through the drivers' side.

The two men, who were both armed, were dressed in black with one of the gunmen wearing a yellow and orange badge.

The two men fled down a nearby alleyway.

Family members and friends of the deceased struggled to contain their emotions as neighbour Carmel Barr told the court how she ran to help the victim.

She said: "I tried to comfort him and we tried to stop the bleeding, he seemed to come around at bit but was too weak to talk.

"He had wounds to the back of his head and his right leg."

Det Insp. McKernan said the case is still active and in the hands of the Serious Crime Unit although it will soon be handed to the Historical Enquiry Team, set up to deal with Northern Ireland's unsolved murders.

Coroner John Lecky, in recording that the Mr. Folliard was killed by a bullet to the head, said: "I can share the frustration of the family. It's disgraceful that murderers are walking the streets especially when the police know who they are."

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