


[HOME](#)
[History](#)
[NewsoftheIrish](#)
[Book Reviews
& Book Forum](#)
[Search / Archive](#)
[Back to 10/96](#)
[Papers](#)
[Reference](#)
[About](#)
[Contact](#)

Fair's games won't include hideous truth of Glenanne

(Susan McKay, [Irish News](#))

So Families Acting for Innocent Relatives (Fair) is to take tourists around the real terror spots of south Armagh in the back of an ex-British army Saracen. The tour is to include Glenanne and its environs and guides are currently being trained to explain what has been going on.

Presumably Fair's director, Willie Frazer, will not be explaining the activities of the Glenanne gang, which included RUC and UDR members as well as the UVF and the UDA, and was linked to more than 120 sectarian murders in the area and elsewhere.

It is unlikely the Saracen will pull up at Altnamackin for the guide to explain that here men in UDR uniforms stopped a car at an unofficial checkpoint in 1975 and shot dead two men on their way home from a GAA match.

It is unlikely the Saracen will visit Silverbridge, to point out the scene where at least one RUC officer, along with at least one UDR man, slaughtered two men and a 14-year-old boy.

Or at Keady, where on-duty RUC members of the gang shot up a bar in 1976 and then made their getaway in a police car before returning to take responsibility for the investigation of the crime.

It will hardly stop on the road above ex-RUC reservist James Mitchell's farm to talk about the UVF guns that were hidden there.

When it stops in Whitecross, will it be to say that this is where Eugene Reavey comes from, the man who supposedly planned the massacre of nine Protestant workmen in 1976 just up the road at Kingsmills?

It was First Minister Ian Paisley who put about this outrageous lie using privilege in the House of Commons in 1999. Fair has since repeated on its website that the Reaveys were an IRA family.

The Historical Enquiries Team and successive chief constables have stated that there is no evidence whatsoever to link anyone in the family to the IRA. There has been no apology from Paisley or

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Fair.

The Fair tour guide is unlikely to tell the tourists that Whitecross is where, the night before the Kingsmills atrocity, the Glenanne gang massacred three of Eugene Reavey's brothers, that later that evening it shot dead three members of the O'Dowd family at Gilford, and that all of these people were killed simply because they were Catholics.

Frazer says his late father and other UDR men helped the SAS but denies they were involved with loyalist paramilitaries. However, he has admitted he understands why local security force members, frustrated by restrictive laws, did assist loyalists in killing those they knew to be in the IRA. He has defended the reputations of several of those implicated in the Glenanne gang. Frazer's father and other local UDR men were murdered by the IRA.

Last week the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) ruled that the RUC had failed to investigate allegations of security force collusion into the deaths of eight men known to have been killed by Glenanne gang members in these and other atrocities. The allegations were made in 1999 by a member of the gang, former RUC man John Weir, in a shocking affidavit.

The ECHR found that Weir's evidence was serious and plausible.

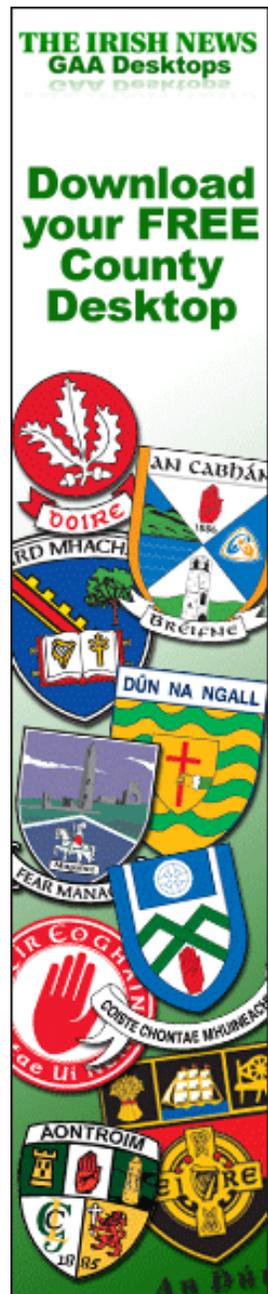
Weir, along with other former RUC men, had been convicted of involvement in loyalist activities including murder. His evidence was also found to be credible by Mr Justice Henry Barron and by a distinguished independent international team of investigators. A web of irrefutable ballistic evidence exists.

There is then, hard evidence of collusion. There are confessions, boasts, ballistics and convictions. There is also evidence that the collusion extended into the prosecution service and the judiciary. Some paramilitaries in the gang were security force agents who appeared to be protected. Evidence is also emerging that the British government at least knew about the activities of the gang and that its role may have been more sinister. There is an ongoing refusal by the British to cooperate with inquiries into these events.

The only way we will know what has been going on is through an independent inquiry. There is no political will for this in the Dail, at Stormont, or at Westminster.

So big boys from one side of the community with Saracens will conduct foolish one-sided tours and big boys on

the other side will produce silly calendars with photos of their mates posing with guns. And the families of the murdered dead



will be told that the past is better left well alone.

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[BACK TO TOP](#)

[About](#)

[Home](#)

[History](#)

[News of the Irish](#)

[Books](#)

[Bookstore](#)

[Contact](#)