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### From the Balcony



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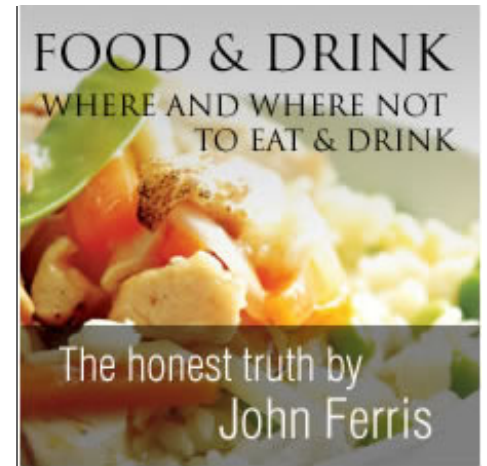
## Headlines

# Cops to look at Butcher link to woman's murder



By Áine McEntee

The North Belfast News can reveal exclusively that a 30-year-old murder case of a young woman is being re-opened by a police cold case team because her family believe the notorious Shankill Butchers were responsible. Rosaleen O'Kane's badly charred body was found beside her blazing bed at her first floor



flat in Cliftonpark Avenue on September 17 1976.

Her body had been stripped naked and set alight. The coroner said it seemed clear that she had already died before the fire broke out.

The Historical Enquiries Team (HET) set up to look at all unsolved murders connected to the Troubles from 1969 to 1998 has now confirmed that it will re-examine the case and begin its probe, ahead of time in the next few months.

Now the young woman's family want her body dug up and her skull examined by a head injury specialist to find out what exactly happened to her.

"It's still upsetting after all this time, even 30 years later," Rosaleen's youngest sister Kathleen Graham said.

"We're still in the dark about what exactly happened to her. All we want is the truth and we want the people who did it to serve their time."

It was reported by the RUC during her inquest a year later that a cry had been heard near the house four-and-a-half hours before the fire, but that they thought it was probably "not connected".

Kathleen said her sister, the eldest child in the family was like "a mother to her" as their mother Jean had passed away quite early in their lives.

"Because she was the eldest, she more or less brought us up you see."

In the day after her death police said foul play wasn't suspected. This was despite the Fire Brigade pointing out that two separate fires started deliberately in different rooms and floors in the building was suspicious.

According to Rosaleen's sister Kathleen Graham, the family always believed that the 33-year-old was murdered.

"We always knew something was wrong, that something wasn't right about her death. There was more to it.

"People told us afterwards they heard some fella say 'let's just torch the place'. My dad didn't want to make a fuss at the time, things were different then.

"My brothers were going mad about it but you knew you wouldn't get anywhere if you made a fuss, you had no faith in the RUC. They wouldn't have listened. And then there's this link to the Butchers. All we want is the truth."

The questions remain to this day - who exactly was to blame and how did Rosaleen die.

**13/07/2007**