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# Hamill suspect's parents deny cover-up

By Lesley-Anne Henry Friday, 13 February 2009

The parents of a man suspected of killing Robert Hamill denied covering up for their son yesterday.

Kenneth and Elizabeth Hanvey, whose son Allister was among six men suspected of involvement in the 1997 attack, refuted allegations they had destroyed clothing after allegedly receiving a tip off from an RUC reserve constable the morning after the

The couple also disputed suggestions they had only attended the inquiry to say they remembered nothing of events related to the murder of Robert Hamill.

Yesterday's sitting at the Interpoint Centre in Belfast heard Kenneth Hanvey, who declined to provide police officers with a written statement, dismiss a suggestion that he received a

phone call from Robert Atkinson, one of four police officers in a Land Rover parked close to the scene of the beating.

"That's totally untrue," he told the inquiry.

Mr Hanvey, a former Northern Ireland Electricity employee, had played football with Robert Atkinson and was a work colleague of his wife Eleanor Atkinson.

He also denied claims he had destroyed a jacket belonging to his son.

Mr Hanvey described the suggestions put forward by Ashley Underwood QC, counsel for the inquiry, as "absolute nonsense"

Meanwhile Mrs Elizabeth Hanvey said she "couldn't remember" any phone call to her house on the morning after the attack on Robert Hamill.

She too denied getting rid of clothes belonging to her son who had been living at home at the

Mrs Hanvey also told the hearing how she had banned all talk of the events of April 27 after her son was arrested for murder.

She said: "After they (RUC) took him out of the house I went to pieces. I can't remember when I realised what it was all about. My husband dealt with everything for me. My mind was just everywhere.

Catholic Robert Hamill (25) died from his injuries days after he received a beating from a loyalist mob in the centre of Portadown on April 27, 1999.

Murder charges against Allister Hanvey and five others were eventually dropped.

A charge of perverting the course of justice against Robert Atkinson was also dropped.

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