



INSIDE: Jason and Molly's toxic love notes reveal pre-wedding split

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McGREGOR WITNESSES 'NOT LIVING ACROSS ROAD'

Gardaí investigating bombshell claim pair 'had moved'

GARDAÍ are investigating if a couple who claimed in court documents that they had seen Nikita Hand's ex-partner beat her up on the same night that she was raped by former MMA fighter Conor McGregor were not liv-

By **Debbie McCann**

CRIME CORRESPONDENT

ing at the property in which they said they were at the time.

Affidavits sworn by Steven Cummins

and Samantha O'Reilly, who were named as witnesses in Mr McGregor's failed civil court rape appeal, are currently being investigated by officers from the Garda National Bureau of

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'I love you Mum,' Liam says to Peggy before a kiss for Noel!

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Do you want to have a water fight because... I WANT A WATER FIGHT

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Criminal Investigation (NBCI) for suspected perjury.

The couple previously rented a house directly across the road from Ms Hand in Drimnagh on Dublin's southside.

However, it is understood one of the lines of inquiry being pursued by investigators is that Mr Cummins and Ms O'Reilly, who currently live in the Cherry Orchard area of the capital, were not actually living at the address when they claim they saw Ms Hand being assaulted by her former partner on the night of December 9, 2018.

When approached by the Irish Mail on Sunday this week and asked directly if they lived at the address at the time, and to confirm the couple's whereabouts on the night, Ms O'Reilly responded by throwing a basin of water at our reporter from the top window of her council-owned home.

Speaking through the window, she said: 'I do not want to be answering any questions and I do

'I'm giving you an opportunity to be safe'

not want to be harassed. I am politely asking you to leave my premises please. No comment.'

Asked again if she could confirm if the couple lived in the Drimnagh property on the night they claimed they saw Ms Hand being assaulted, she asked, 'Excuse me, what was the question?', before emptying a basin of water out the window.

She then loudly asked one of her children to get a 'kettle of water'.

Ms O'Reilly added: 'I'm giving you an opportunity to actually be safe. Do you want to have a water fight? Well, I want to have a water fight. It's a nice, sunny day.'

The owners of the Drimnagh house the couple previously rented said they could not comment when asked if the couple lived at the address at the time they claim they witnessed the alleged attack on Ms Hand, who has vehemently denied she was ever assaulted by her former partner.

Approached by the MoS, they said they had been



File photographs of Steven Cummins and Samantha O'Reilly and, (1 and 2) Ms O'Reilly tips a basin of water over our reporter before being heard (3) to ask for a kettle

'instructed by gardaí not to comment'.

Neighbours on the Drimnagh street where Mr Cummins and Ms O'Reilly temporarily lived across from Ms Hand said the couple lived there for a short time, and some struggled to remember what they looked like.

Mr Cummins and Ms O'Reilly were due to give evidence at Mr McGregor's appeal against a civil case verdict after a jury found him liable for assault and ordered him to pay Ms Hand damages.

Ms Hand, 35, accused Mr McGregor of raping her in a hotel penthouse in Dublin on December 9, 2018.

Mr McGregor, 36, denied the allegation, claiming they had consensual, 'vig-

orous' sex. He appealed the verdict. But on the morning the hearing was due to proceed last month, Mr Cummins and Ms O'Reilly's evidence was dramatically withdrawn at the last minute.

Ms Hand described the couple's statements as untrue and lies.

The Court of Appeal said the application to introduce the evidence was abandoned in 'some-what mysterious' circumstances with no plausible reason given and awarded Ms Hand costs at the highest possible level.

Judge Brian O'Moore noted the abandonment by Mr McGregor of the application could only be

APPEAL: Former fighter Conor McGregor and, left, Nikita Hand



viewed by the court as an acknowledgment that Ms Hand was correct. He also said her lawyers had not been exaggerating when they said this 'new evidence' had put Ms Hand through the wringer.

The judge said she had prevailed in one of the most hard-fought trials of recent years.

Speaking outside court, Ms Hand said: 'This appeal has retraumatised me over and over again, being forced to relive it. What happened has had a huge impact on me. To every survivor out there, I know how hard it is, but please don't be silenced. You deserve to be heard. You also deserve justice.'

Following the failed appeal, Mr Cummins and Ms O'Reilly's sworn statements were referred by the Court of Appeal

to the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) after Ms Hand's legal team raised concerns about suspected perjury, and the 'subornation of perjury' by McGregor.

The Garda National Bureau of Criminal Investigation (NBCI) later received correspondence from the DPP.

Last weekend, An Garda Síochána confirmed the NBCI was investigating allegations of perjury involving statements given by the couple named as witnesses in the failed appeal.

Lodging a false affidavit is an offence under the Perjury Act 2021. Anyone who makes a sworn statement that is false, and knows it to be, is committing an act of perjury – an offence that carries a minimum penalty of €4,000 and 12 months in prison, and a maximum penalty of 10 years and a €100,000 fine.

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Tragic Martha makes final journey to Carlow

THE designer found dead at a New York sailing club begins her final journey today, as members of Martha Nolan-O'Slatarra's family accompany the Carlow woman's remains on the journey

By Valerie Hanley

home to Ireland. Martha, 33, was found on a boat at Montauk Yacht Club shortly after midnight last

Tuesday week. The only other person with her on board was the vessel's registered owner, Christopher Durnan. Martha's family have hired high-profile American lawyer Arthur Aidala

to help unravel the mystery of her death; he vowed, 'no stone would be left unturned'.

Martha and her boyfriend, Nicholas De Rubio, had set up home in the Long Island enclave

of Montauk for the summer. The 34-year-old was not with Martha when she died, but a source close to the family said the couple spoke on the phone just before she was found unconscious.