

Report more than 70 unsolved murders in Iowa

By NICK LAMBERTO

An 84-year-old widow at Maquoketa, a 21-year-old Dubuque waitress and a 32-year-old member of the Hell's Angels motorcycle gang all have one thing in common:

They are all victims of unsolved murders in Iowa during 1975.

Over the years, the number of unsolved murders in Iowa has grown to well over 70 since the Villisca ax murders of 1912, in which eight persons were slain.

Jackie Shireman, the Dubuque waitress, was stabbed some 20 times with scissors and her body left in a walk-in cooler Jan. 4, at the cafe where she worked. What happened? Did she surprise an intruder?

Craig Beek, director of the Iowa Bureau of Criminal Investigation, calls the Shireman murder "one of our most baffling, frustrating cases."

Stab wounds

At least one other 1975 murder in eastern Iowa, also with stabbing involved, is unsolved.

On Feb. 25, 1975, Mrs. Hulda Fischer, 84, a widow, was found stabbed to death in her home at Maquoketa.

Is a madman armed with a knife roaming the counties adjacent to the Mississippi River?

BCI Director Beek discounts such a theory but adds, "An unsolved murder means there is a killer loose on the streets, a person who has nothing to lose by killing again . . ."

"The BCI started using a saturation approach by sending in a number of agents and lab crews to the scene of a crime . . . I think the approach is working."

"We only go into communities to help with investigation of crimes when we are asked, but maybe we should develop within the BCI a complete homicide unit made up of agents, a criminal analyst and a secretary that would go into the field so as to provide better assistance to local law enforcement when we are requested."

Director Beek and Warren Stump, assistant BCI director, are convinced that on several of Iowa's unsolved murders investigators "are reasonably sure who committed the crime, but can't come up with adequate evidence to go to court."

State witness

Such is the case with the Downtown Holiday Inn slayings here Aug. 22, 1974, in which two men were killed and two wounded.

An investigation culminated in the murder trial of Terrance Duane Hollowell, with Kenneth Hunter, granted immunity, as the key state witness.

Hollowell was acquitted by a Polk County district court jury.

But the crime itself has been moved from the "unsolved" category in the Des Moines police files.

Lt. Ed Harlan of the Des Moines Police Department said the Holiday Inn murder file now is inactive, meaning "we think the case was solved, but we weren't able to convince a jury."

The Des Moines area saw another of 1974's "unsolved" crimes solved with the first-degree murder conviction of Daniel Sneathen of Des Moines for the Sept. 2, 1974, slaying of Timothy Hawbaker, 18, of Adel.

Harlan said in 1975 Des Moines had 17 murders and only three of them were listed as unsolved: The strangulation death of Diane Marie Schofield last July 7, the gunshot death of Gerald Jean Kean last July 29 and the fatal shooting of Thomas Lee McConkey, 38, of Altoona in a parking lot at 2929 E. University Ave. last Aug. 27.

Schofield, a free-lance masseuse and one-time undercover informant for Des Moines drug investigators, was found in a car trunk in a parking lot near the Municipal Airport here July 10. Her hands and feet were bound.

Unconfirmed rumors tried to link her death with her work as an informant, her free-lance massage work and with a little black book of names of favorite customers.

Harlan calls the Schofield murder "one of the most baffling in Des Moines."

D.M. student

Another is the murder of Mrs. Kean, 17, a high school student whose nude body was found on a waterbed at her home at 446 S.E. Hart St. last July 27. She had been shot five times.

Again there were unconfirmed reports that the deaths of Schofield and Kean were "drug related."

The same reports surfaced when Travis Jerome Fowler, Jr., 32, of 115 Eighteenth St., was shot to death Aug. 13 at close range. His body was found in the 1300 block of University Avenue.

Harlan said a fugitive warrant has been issued for Joe Carson, 21, formerly of Des Moines, charging him with murder in the death of Fowler.

"None of the unsolved ones are dormant," Harlan said. "We're actively investigating all of them."

Another baffler was the death of James M. Bailey, 32, of Mentor, Ohio, fatally wounded by a shot in the neck last Aug. 14 as he drove his motorcycle on Interstate 80 west of Colfax. He and two other members of the Hell's Angels gang were en route to a rally in South Dakota.

Investigators believe the fatal shot came from a highway overpass. Was it fired by a vengeful ambusher? A prankster? Someone who hated motorcyclists?

How about the death of Gregory Neil Dickey, 23, of Davenport? His body was found Aug. 8 in a van parked alongside Interstate 80 near Altoona. He had left Davenport Feb. 11.

There was a cord around his neck. His death at first was called a "possible suicide" and later listed as "murder by strangulation."

Triple slaying

Sioux City police believe the triple slaying in a home in the Morningside section was "drug related," but have run into a blank wall in their investigation, according to Detective Capt. Robert Widener.

The bodies of Ernest William Isom, II, 27; his wife, Freta Fawn Isom, 24, and a friend, Jessie James Hanni, 26, were found shot to death in execution style Dec. 3, 1974.

Isom was shot five times with two different handguns; Mrs. Isom was shot once in the back; Hanni was shot through the back and behind the left ear.

All three had moved to Sioux City earlier in the year. Isom and Hanni were employed on a power plant project south of Sioux City.

The triple slaying currently ranks as the top unsolved crime of the past year in Sioux City, said Police Chief William Hansen.

Orientation on local government

An orientation program to provide information to new members of local governmental units will be held on Jan. 27 from 3 to 9 p.m. at the Ida Grove Country Club.

A \$3.75 registration fee includes the evening meal.

Cooperating in the program are the Iowa League of Municipalities and the University of Iowa's Institute of Public Affairs.

Clarksville man cuts plenty of wood for furnace

By JACK HOVELSON

PHOTO BY LARRY HEISBERGALL



Howard Clark (lower right corner of picture) stands in front of one of the "mountains" of firewood he has cut.

He and his wife have used a wood-burning furnace at their rural Clarksville farm home for 48 years.

CLARKSVILLE, IA. — A shortage of home heating fuel? It will never happen to Mr. and Mrs. Howard Clark of rural Clarksville.

Behind their house, the Clarks have a many-year stockpile of the fuel that has kept them cozy for all 48 of their married years.

"I'll never live long enough to burn it all," Clark said, gesturing toward a half-dozen "mountains" of neatly stacked firewood. Some of the wood deep inside the 30-foot-high stacks date back a dozen years, he estimated.

Wood-coal furnace

The Clarks were married on New Year's Day in 1928, and they immediately moved into their new farm home built that winter. The seven-room house was outfitted with a wood-coal furnace in the basement.

Except for one brief period in the past 48 years, the furnace never has seen a lump of coal.

"In February of 1928, two months after we were married, my leg was smashed by a falling tree. I was laid up for two years — they even wanted to amputate — and we ran out of wood, so I had to buy a ton of coal for the furnace to tide us over," Clark said.

Clark, 73, retired last fall as an active farmer. But he continues to cut wood — obviously one of his lifelong favorite pastimes — with a chain saw to add to his vast supply.

Uses grain elevator

He uses a 50-foot-long grain elevator to carry newly cut firewood to the tops of the circular piles.

Most of the wood comes from a pasture area on the Clarks' 104-acre farm west of Clarksville. The town was named after Clark's great-great-grandfather, Jeremiah Clark, who homesteaded the site where Clarksville is located.

"I've got three of four types of elm, two willows, white ash, black ash, bass-

wood, four types of oak, cottonwood and maples in the woodpiles," Clark said.

Red elm, he said, is the "best burning wood."

"Heat from a wood fire in the furnace is cleaner than oil heat, said Clark, and it leaves very few ashes, compared to coal fires.

'Too hot'

Although there is no blower on the Clarks' furnace to force the warm air through their house, the building is always warm, they said.

The original furnace that was installed 48 years ago continues to heat the Clarks' home, although it has developed a crack. The Clarks' have wanted to replace it, but they have been unable to find a new wood-burning furnace, and they are not about to switch to some other form of fuel after all these years.

"A man in a hardware store told me one day that if he could get hold of some wood furnaces he could sell 20 of them a day," Clark said.

List persons who passed Iowa bar examination

The Iowa State Bar Association has announced the names of persons who passed the bar examinations administered earlier this month.

The newly admitted members are:

Dale Adams, Des Moines; Anthony James Albert, Cedar Rapids; Notre Dame; Allan Anderson, Ankeny, Drake; Daniel Anderson, Iowa City, University of Iowa; Martin Anderson, Three Rivers, Mich., Drake; William Anderson, Des Moines; Georgetown; George Ash, Romulus, Mich., U of I; Denver; John Avers, Des Moines, Drake; William Bartram, Dubuque, Drake; Corlis Baty, Des Moines, Drake; John Beemer, Wheaton, Ill., DePaul; Timothy Bellows, Sioux City, U of Minnesota; Timothy Bell, Iowa City, U of I; Carter Bishop, Des Moines, Drake; Dale Blank, Chicago, Ill., DePaul; Chester-Dale-Talvo Blue Sky, Salt Lake City, Utah, U of Utah; Byard Bower, Sear, Guttenberg, David Brown, Des Moines, Drake; Thomas Buresch, Cedar Rapids, U of Minnesota; William Callaghan, Des Moines, Creighton; Kirsten Cannon, Maple Grove, Minn., U of I; Robert Chase, Davenport, Drake; William Clark, Jr., Des Moines, Drake; Garwin Clapper, Cedar Rapids, U of Illinois; Edgar Coolson, III, Northbrook, Ill., John Marshall; Bruce Coyer, Excelsior Springs, Mo., U of Missouri; Richard Connolly, Jr., Des Moines, Drake; Frank Coppola, Des Moines, Drake; Steven Cordes, Des Moines, Drake; John Courtenay, Iowa City, Drake; Richard Curry, Bay City, Mich., U of Denver; John Daniel, Sioux City, U of I; William Dave, Baltimore, Md., Drake; Philip Davis, Iowa Falls, U of Nebraska; Lloida DeGallo, Des Moines, Drake; Gerald Denning, West Point, U of I; Harold Dettie, Jr., Indianapolis, George Washington; Susan Dign, Des Moines, Drake; Amanda Dorr, Des Moines, Drake; Fred Dorr, Des Moines, Drake; William Dowell, Des Moines, Drake; James Dower, Cedar Rapids, U of I; Dennis Downing, Des Moines, Drake; Vincent Elna, Perre, S.O., U of South Dakota; James Elser, Naperville, Ill., Drake; Richard Fitz, Des Moines, Drake; Sheldon Flock, Des Moines, Drake; Roger Forman, Des Moines, Anlioch; John Fortin, Coralville, U of I; William Geiger, Dubuque, U of Wisconsin; Frank Gibson, III, Dubuque; Alanta Bernard Giesler, J. Lincoln, Neb., Nebraska; Craig Graziano, Des Moines, Drake; Jerrod Hrossaker, Radcliffe, Drake; Michael

Hansen, Des Moines, Drake; Richard Harrison, Coralville, U of I; Robert Hayes, Des Moines, Harvard; Marcia Helum, Coralville, U of I; James Herrig, Dubuque, U of I; Harold Hinderger, III, St. Louis, Mo., U of Missouri; John Hoff, Des Moines, Southwestern; Sandra Holien, St. Paul, Minn., U of Minnesota; Charles Hornum, Sioux City, Creighton; Paul Horvath, Des Moines, Washington; Lee Jackwin, West Des Moines, DePaul; Murray Kobardant, Osage, U of I; Lawrence Kauchl, Des Moines, Drake; Theodore Kron, Iowa City, U of I; Marilyn Lentz, Des Moines, Drake; Victor Lathrop, Des Moines, Drake; Lawrence Leese, Jr., Des Moines, Drake; Linzy Martin, Altoona, Drake; Nicole Martino, Cicero, Ill., Drake; Mary Matthews, Bethesda, Md., Drake; Loraine May, Des Moines, Drake; Curtis McCormick, Des Moines, Drake; Thomas McCurrin, Des Moines, Drake; Stephen Meyer, Charleston, U of I; Robert Miller, Bettendorf, Yale; Dan Morrison, Sigourney, Drake; Hugh Neary, Emmetsburg, Drake; Gerard Neupen, Des Moines, Drake; Nan Nolan, Des Moines, DePaul; William Nolte, Dumont, U of Tulsa; James Norman, Adel, Drake; James O'Donnell, Clinton, St. Mary's; James O'Malley, Waukon, St. Mary's; Willard Oleson, Greenfield, U of I; Byron Orion, Des Moines, U of Nebraska; George Parke, III, LaCrosse, Wis., Drake; Paul Peggler, Bonne Terre, Mo., Drake; Donald Polten, Des Moines, Indiana; Kirke Quinn, Newton, Drake;

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Deadline for tuition grants is Jan. 31

Deadline for Iowa college students applying for Iowa Tuition Grants is Jan. 31.

The Iowa Tuition Grant program applies to Iowa college students attend-

ing private colleges or universities in Iowa. Grants this year could amount to \$1,300.

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