Title: Police revisit 1981 killings Authors: Reinitz, Jeff Source: Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier (IA). 05/09/2012. Document Type: Article Accession Number: 2W62800864537 Database: Newspaper Source Plus

Police revisit 1981 killings

~~~~~ Jeff Reinitz

May 09--WATERLOO, Iowa -- Waterloo police are revisiting an unsolved double homicide from 31 years ago.

The bodies of Robert and Goldie Huntbach were found in their home at 311 W. 10th St. on Jan. 12, 1981. The husband was 85 and the wife 77. They were shot to death.

Authorities hit a dead end early in the case, and it has remained cold.

This morning, Capt. Tim Pillack of the Waterloo Police Department confirmed that detectives are talking with a person who has information about the case.

According to Courier archives, a family friend summoned police after getting no response at the couple's two-story home. Officers found the elderly couple bound and gagged. They each had been shot in the head.

The husband was found in the dining room, blindfolded with a dish towel in his mouth. In addition to being shot, he had been hit with a blunt object, possibly indicating a struggle.

The wife was in an upstairs hallway, also blindfolded with a clothespin on her nose.

An electric cattle prod was discovered in the master bedroom, and Robert Huntbach had injuries on his chest and wrists that may have been inflicted by the device.

At the time of the slayings, the Huntbachs were in the process of moving to Independence to be closer to their children.

Their West 10th Street home was in the path of to-be-widened U.S. Highway 218 and was slated to be torn down in 1984, but the couple had asked the lowa Department of Transportation for an advance on the buyout to start the relocation.

The hunt for the killer included a \$5,000 reward. A police detective at the time said authorities believed they were dealing with one killer.

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