

## Potter on People: Missing Person Crystal Sue Hunt

December 04, 2013 | By Doug Potter, Staff Writer

From *The Ottumwa Evening Post*

Her kin was drunk on sorrow.

On February 24, 1998, Crystal Hunt, 21, of Corydon, IA., was reported missing. About a year later, eight of Crystal's relatives came to the Ottumwa Courier (where I worked as a reporter) and asked me to write an article in hopes to jar law enforcement from their chairs.

Some relatives were from Ottumwa and the surrounding region and others from Centerville and the Corydon area. They said Crystal was last seen leaving her parent's home in Centerville with her boyfriend. Crystal's boyfriend told authorities that the couple argued and she got out of the vehicle and went her own way. She was 22 years-old and seven months pregnant.

The family blamed the boyfriend.



Missing Woman: Crystal Sue Hunt

"I'd like to drag the [expletive] behind my truck on a gravel road," an old man said. It's been fourteen years since I met with the family and I think he was an uncle or maybe a grandfather.

Relatives said the Wayne County Sheriff's Department wasn't doing anything on the case and the Iowa Department of Criminal Investigation was hard to contact.

I called the Wayne County Sheriff's Department the next day and the sheriff said that his

department did all they can do and that there were no new leads. He was not nice on the phone. I called the Appanoose County Sheriff's Department. The sheriff was unavailable, but a woman I talked to on the phone said the case belonged to Wayne County. She was nice on the phone. A spokesman from the Iowa Department of Criminal Investigation (DCI) said they investigated, but nothing turned up. He was empathetic.

One agency said she'd probably never be found. Another jurisdiction said she is probably in a well or buried in Missouri where no one will find her. The DCI said that small sheriff's departments like those in Wayne and Appanoose counties do not have the money or employees to maintain the search for Crystal.

I talked to several people from Corydon in 1999 and they acted as if the disappearance was no surprise. They made it seem as if people from Wayne County were not unlike folks from depression era Appalachia—that they might wander over a hill and start a life somewhere else. I don't think they gave their people fair due.

The Courier's editor said an article wouldn't be of interest to readers because Crystal was from Wayne County. I wrote it anyway. And I've written others because I promised Crystal's family that I would.

If living, Crystal is 36 years-old now and her child nearly 15. Holidays come and go, and birthdays too. The heartache never goes away, and all the original questions remain unanswered.

Fourteen years ago Crystal's relatives didn't want her disappearance to be forgotten and for authorities to continue to look for her—I'd say they still want those same things.

If you have any information on the disappearance of Crystal Sue Hunt, please contact emergency officials. Any tips can help.

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#### **Reader Comments**

**By Martha Miller on 12/05/2013**

When I saw this on facebook I had a flood of memories come back to me. Sleepovers at her house and going to Rathbun to swim. She lived just outside my small town of Millerton. I miss her and just wish there was info for the family to have some sort of closure. Crystal I miss you and love ya wherever u may be.

**By Brianna Williams on 12/04/2013**

Thank you so much for this article. I'm Crystal's cousin. She's always in our thoughts and prayers. Thanks for not giving up on her, lord knows we haven't.

**By George Nichols on 12/04/2013**

Doug thank you for remembering Crystal I am one of her uncles your right law enforcement just kind of blew this case off I was very angry at that time and still am they came across as they didn't care. Again thanks for remembering.