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# Survivor identifies Carpenter as killer

By MATT SPEISER

LOS ANGELES — "It's that gentleman sitting right there."

Pointing at David Joseph Carpenter as he said those words, Steven Haertle brought to a climax 40 minutes of compelling testimony in Los Angeles County Superior Court and provided eyewitness identification of the man accused of being the Trailside killer.

Haertle, 23, is the only surviving victim of the man who killed as many as a dozen people in northern California between 1979 and 1981. Thursday he took the stand and recounted in excruciating detail how he and Ellen Marie Hansen were shot, she fatally, as they took a hike through Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park March 29, 1981.

Carpenter, 54, is charged not only with killing and attempting to rape Haertle's girlfriend, and attempting to murder Haertle, but also with the rape and murder of 21-year-old Heather Scaggs five weeks later.

Haertle took the stand Thursday in the first day of testimony in the trial which was moved from Santa Cruz to Los Angeles to avoid the effects of prejudicial publicity. (Carpenter is also awaiting trial for five other murders in Marin County.)

Haertle's painful recollections of that spring day were brought out under questioning by Santa Cruz District Attorney Art Danner, who is seeking the death penalty for Carpenter.

Wearing a gray suit, Haertle spoke in a calm tenor delivery, though his voice quivered slightly at times, a side effect from an injury suffered to his vocal cords during the attack.

He said he and Miss Hansen, both UC-Davis students, came to Santa Cruz to camp and visit the boardwalk. After a weekend of doing just that and taking a drive down to Monterey, the couple took a hike through the park where they were camping, Haertle said.

Following a visit to

the Cathedral Redwoods at Cowell, they hiked back towards the park's observation tower only to be confronted by a man they had passed earlier on the trail.

With frequent prodding from prosecutor Danner, Haertle continued with his narrative:

"(I recognized him) from when we previously came down the trail. He was walking out around the corner. He spoke first. He says, 'Ah, we've met again.'"

"Then he pulled out a gun from his jacket. He pointed it at Ellen and I. (And said) 'Do as I say... You won't get hurt.'"

"I said, 'Be careful, El. He's got a gun.'"

"He directed me to go down the trail. He pointed at me and told me to go down the trail. I took a step backwards."

"Ellen said, 'Don't listen to him, Steve. Don't do what he says.'"

"I said, 'Ellen, stay away from him, he's got a gun.' I pleaded with him to let us go. I said,

'Please let us go. We won't tell anyone.'

"He said, 'Now listen to me and do as I say...'

"He came closer... We all came closer... And he said he wanted to rape Ellen... He said, 'I want to rape you.'

"He was looking at Ellen."

"She said, 'No, I'm not going to let you.'

"After Ellen wouldn't let him rape her, he ordered us to move towards the bushes off the side of the trail... We both stayed away from the gun as the gun moved us over to the edge of the trail..."

"I looked over my shoulder to see where the edge of the trail was leading to... then I

started losing my footing, and then shots went off. I heard at least four."

"I heard two shots and didn't feel anything. And then I felt like somebody hit my neck with a sledgehammer at that point. And then I felt something hit my right hand."

"(Next) I remember waking up, lying on the ground. I saw Ellen. Ellen was lying face down on the ground and her head was in a pool of blood... I picked up Ellen's head to see if she was alive. She wasn't."

"Then I got up and I noticed that the man who had shot us was across the trail with his

back to me. And then I just got up and started heading up the trail as fast as I could."

Bleeding, Haertle said, he ran toward the observation deck several hundred yards away, and along the way encountered two people.

"I said I've been shot and I showed them my neck and I said my girlfriend had been shot... There was a man in a green cap and gold jacket had shot us."

"They stared at me for a moment or so."

The pair took him to the observation deck, where they ran into two other people, one of whom was a nurse who

began treating Haertle.

"Then the person who shot Ellen and I came back up the trail," Haertle said. "He came walking up the trail. I stood up on my feet and I pointed at him and said to the woman 'That's the man who shot me. Get out of here.'"

"I took off towards the campground."

From there Haertle was taken to the hospital, where he was treated for eight days. Haertle said the shot from the killer's gun entered at the back of his neck, traveled down to his collar bone, hit an artery to his right arm and wound up behind his sternum.

After recounting the experience, Haertle identified Carpenter as the man who had shot him and Miss Hansen. Danner then questioned him for another 50 minutes, mostly confirming details.

Carpenter was not arrested for another two months, on May 15, 1981. When a line-up was held following that arrest, Haertle testified, he picked Carpenter as his Cowell Park assailant.

After nearly 90 minutes of Haertle's testimony Thursday afternoon, the trial was recessed until Tuesday. Haertle is expected to take the stand again then.