

Trailside Killings

Tipster Kept Eye on Suspect For 26 Years

By Kevin Leary and Robert Popp

Roberta Patterson, a 69-year-old horsewoman from Ben Lomond in Santa Cruz County, was the first person to tip the Santa Cruz Sheriff's Department that David Carpenter might be the trailside killer, according to the district attorney's office.

Ray Belgarde, the DA's chief investigator, said Patterson telephoned

homicide investigators April 4 and said she recognized the composite picture of a man she had met 26 years ago when he was the purser on a Pacific Far East Line freighter bound for Japan.

Belgarde said Patterson may be in line for a \$30,000 reward from Marin County, if Carpenter is eventually convicted of any of the trailside slayings on Mount Tamalpais in Marin County.

He said it was her phone call that started investigators to focus on Carpenter. It took six weeks before the arrest was made.

"Remember," Belgarde said, "we had about 400 reports that we had to check out. After we received her call, we started to compile information on him."

Then about 30 days later, San Jose police reported that they observed a resemblance between the composite and Carpenter, a suspect in the disappearance of 21-year-old Heather Scaggs.

"At that point," Belgarde said, "The pace of the investigation quickened, we looked more intensely at the suspect, then concentrated on him exclusively."

Patterson was sailing to Japan in 1955 with her 14-year-old daughter and 11-year-old son aboard the freighter Fleetwood.

She said yesterday that she remembers meeting the young David Carpenter when he was a purser aboard the Fleetwood, and took an immediate dislike to him.

Patterson said she sensed then that he had an unwholesome interest in her daughter, and reported his attentions to the ship's captain. The captain assured her that the young man was just trying to entertain the girl during the 18-day voyage.

There were only 12 passengers on the ship, and it was a very stormy crossing, she said. "We stayed inside most of the time at close quarters and got to know each other pretty well" during the voyage.

"Carpenter was the purser. He collected passports and that sort of thing," she said. "But I just didn't like him — the way he was overly friendly with my daughter. He didn't make any moves, but he'd put his arm around her shoulders and give her candy ... he was just too friendly."

Carpenter signed the girl's autograph book: "From me to you, David J. Carpenter, Purser, Fleetwood."

For some reason, she could not forget Carpenter. "Why would I remember him outside everyone else on the ship? I don't know," she said.

Five years later she saw his photo in the papers, charged with a knife and hammer attack on Lois

Why Cops Overlooked The Suspect

By Don Wegars

There was a growing suspicion yesterday that trailside killings suspect David Joseph Carpenter eluded a 21-month manhunt because he slipped through various bureaucratic cracks.

Marin County Sheriff's Captain Robert Gaddini said his department asked the state Department of Justice sometime early last year for a list of recently released prisoners who had a history of sex offenses or attacks on women.

Carpenter — who had served more than six years in state prison for rape and robbery — was not on the lengthy list the state provided, Gaddini said.

Gaddini said state officials told Marin County officials just recently that Carpenter's name did not show

Back Page Col. 1

Social Security Cuts Unite Angry Demos

Washington

Senate Democrats voted unanimously yesterday against President Reagan's proposed cuts in Social Security benefits, and the White House strongly indicated that it is willing to compromise.

Acting White House press secretary Larry Speakes was asked if there might be better ways to rescue the financially troubled Social Security System than the controversial proposal offered by the president last week.

"Sure," Speakes replied. While stating that the administration is not backing away from its plan to cut benefits, especially for people taking early retirement, Speakes said, "I'm sure there will be discussions, and we're certainly willing to discuss those changes."

Senate Democrats, united against President Reagan's administration for the first time, condemned the proposals as "precipitous ... severe ... a breach of faith" before voting unanimously against them in a Capitol Hill caucus.

Senate Democratic leader Robert Byrd promised to use "every rule in the Senate book" to defeat

Back Page Col. 4

Back Page Col. 2

WHY COPS OVERLOOKED THE TRAILSIDE SUSPECT

From Page 1

up in the search "because they (state investigators) thought he was in federal custody" and ruled him out as a suspect.

The state Department of Corrections, though, said Carpenter's name did not come up in the investigation. Even if he had not been in federal custody, he probably would not have been considered a prime suspect, the state official said.

"There are thousands of prisoners," the official said, "and the description we were given wasn't like Carpenter, and the composite we circulated through our system from Marin turned out not to look much like him."

Carpenter, who is charged with a wilderness murder in Santa Cruz and who is the prime suspect in seven slayings in Marin, was paroled to federal authorities in February 1977.

He then served time in federal prisons for violating the parole he was granted after serving nearly 10 years in the 1960s for a brutal knife and hammer attack on a woman in the Presidio.

Carpenter was released to a San Francisco halfway house on May 2, 1979 — three months before the first trailside murder occurred.

A state prison official said Carpenter "was off the state books when Marin's request was received" in the middle of last year.

A prisoner released from state custody into the community would still be on state records, he said, but one released to federal authorities would not.

But the state official said it is standard procedure for federal authorities to require that federal parolees meet any state parole standards when they are released.

Carpenter, it was learned, was not registered in San Francisco as a sex offender, although he was

WOMAN KNEW SUSPECT

From Page 1

DeAndrade, a San Francisco secretary. DeAndrade survived the attack. Carpenter was convicted and served nine years in prison.

"After that, whenever she saw her daughter's autograph album, I'd stop and look at that name," she said. "I just didn't like that guy."

Ten years later, she saw a composite drawing of the suspect in the Zodiac killings, and thought that looked like Carpenter. She reported her suspicion to Santa Cruz authorities, but they pointed out that Carpenter was behind bars

required to do so by law.

"If he had been under state jurisdiction," the state official said, "his parole agent would have advised him to register, and he would have been required to come back with a copy of his registration slip. What the feds require, I don't know..."

Local federal parole officials refused to comment on the case.

Audrey Kaslow, Regional Director of the U.S. Parole Commission, said Carpenter's federal parole agent would likely be a material witness in Carpenter's trial, and could not talk about his relationship with the suspect.

Further, she said, release of any information might violate Carpenter's rights to privacy.

The state official suggested that the requirement that Carpenter register as a sex offender may have been overlooked because he was still technically in federal prison when he was released to the halfway house.

Marin authorities also said they conducted a personal search of the Vacaville state prison archives to see if frames of eyeglasses found on

during the Zodiac murders.

Still, she could not erase the memory of Carpenter, and in April, 26 years after she had known Carpenter, she saw his likeness staring out from a newspaper in the composite of the Marin-Santa Cruz killer.

"It was like a flash," she said. "I knew it was him. I knew it was David Carpenter."

"I can't explain why I had this terrible compulsion about this man," she said. "I'm just glad he's in jail right now. At least there won't be any more killings by him."

Mt. Tamalpais near the body of Barbara Schwartz had been issued to a recently released prisoner. They were unable to match them to anyone, Gaddini said.

He said they didn't check the odd lens prescription because they had been told that trying to match prescriptions "was like trying to track down an individual Ford carburetor."

But the state official said such a search was attempted, with no results.

Gaddini said he was surprised that San Francisco optometrist Donald Wright failed to notice one of the 1500-2000 fliers Marin sent out listing the odd prescription on the glasses found near Schwartz's body — especially because, in an apparently bizarre coincidence, Schwartz and Carpenter were both his patients.

Gaddini said Marin authorities contacted Wright in person about the dead woman's prescription, but apparently didn't ask him about the prescription on the glasses they believed belonged to her killer.

"It's obvious someone should have dropped off a flyer to him," Gaddini said.

Santa Cruz deputies were also investigating Carpenter yesterday as a suspect in the 1970 murders of

strangled to death Thanksgiving Day in 1979, off a bridle path at the entrance to Henry Cowell State Park — not far from the spot where investigators say Carpenter killed Ellen Hansen, 20, and wounded her boyfriend, Steven Haertle, 21, March 29 this year.

Steffy, a student at the University of California at Santa Cruz, had telephoned friends at 3:30 p.m. from the campus that Thanksgiving Day and told them she would drive to their house after she ran an errand.

Her body was found an hour and a half later. Investigators said she had been seen picking up a hitchhiker.

Santa Cruz deputies said there was no clear link between Carpenter and these two victims yet, but that they were investigating reports that Carpenter told people he liked to hitchhike, as well as hike in the mountains.

San Francisco police were also investigating Carpenter for the slaying of 23-year-old Mary Bennett, who was stabbed two dozen times and left in a shallow grave near the Palace of the Legion of Honor in October 1979.

San Jose police were pursuing their investigation of the disappearance May 2 of Heather Scaggs, 20, who worked with Carpenter at a Hayward print shop.

Carpenter was also being investigated in the disappearance at Christmas of Anna Kelly Menjivar, a 17-year-old teller at the Glen Park savings and loan office he frequented.

Daly City police, where Menjivar lived with her mother and 14-year-old brother, issued their first printed missing persons flyer in that case Monday.

SOCIAL

From Page 1

the proposals.

Democrats generally agree that