

Autopsy Shows Body Found In Town Creek Was Murder Victim

BY ERIC CARLSON

An autopsy has revealed that a body found floating in Town Creek recently was that of a 20-year-old Wilmington man who died as a result of having his throat slit, Brunswick County Sheriff John Carr Davis said Monday.

Brunswick detectives, State Bureau of Investigation agents and the Wilmington Police Department are looking into the murder of Brian Keith Smith, a graduate of South Brunswick High School, whose partially clothed body was discovered by fishermen on May 8.

Although Smith was found about 10 miles up the creek from the Cape Fear River, investigators are still unsure where the murder occurred and have not ruled out the possibility that the killing happened in New Hanover County, Detective Capt. Phil Perry said Monday.

They are also checking on the whereabouts of a British ship that recently left Wilmington en route to Norfolk, Va.

Smith was last seen at around midnight May 1 outside the Barbary Coast bar on Front Street in Wilmington, where he had been in the company of one or more crew members from the ship, Perry said.

"It's just one of the many things we're looking into," Perry said. "We're also interviewing his friends and family and people who he may have come in contact with. It's going to be a long process of elimination. We have no suspects yet."

"At this time we aren't sure where the murder took place," Perry said. "Considering the tides and the currents and the wind, it could have happened here or in Wilmington or on board a ship."

Police have been using boats, airplanes and ground crews to search areas along Town Creek and the Cape Fear River in hopes of finding some evidence of the murder site. They have had no luck so far, Perry said.

The investigation is continuing. Detectives have obtained a crew list from the British ship and may schedule interviews with some of its crew members, Perry said.

Anyone who saw Smith on the night he was killed or who has any other information about the case should call the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department at 1-800-672-6379.

Bolivia Man Charged With Shooting At Vehicle Sunday

A dispute over a woman allegedly led a Bolivia man to shoot at a car driven by a Winnabow man Sunday morning, according to a crime report on file at the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department Monday.

The victim, Timothy Hollins, 23, of Hollins Way, told deputy Richard Long that he was driving north on U.S. 17 at about 8 a.m. when he said he saw a man and heard a gunshot. Hollins said he sped off to elude the assailant, then turned around to return home, the report said.

Hollins told Long that as he drove down Cherry Tree Road, he met the man again and was run off the pavement into a ditch.

Hollins said the man shot at him through the front windshield glass of his own vehicle and into the right tail light of Hollins' 1981 Chevrolet Monte Carlo, causing an undetermined amount of damage.

Okey E. Palmore, 33, of Ocean Highway, Bolivia, has been charged with discharging a firearm into an occupied vehicle, according to a warrant on file at the Brunswick County Clerk of Court's office.

In other crime reports:

■ An 18-carat gold and diamond necklace was reported stolen by a woman who told Deputy Michael Weldrick that her daughter took it off while using a tanning bed at a local beauty shop. The young woman reportedly removed the necklace and put it on a shelf while using the tanning bed and returned a few hours later to find it missing.

■ Someone apparently crawled through the window of a home on

CRIME REPORT

Makatoka Road in Supply recently and stole a 12-gauge shotgun and a .243-caliber Remington rifle. The homeowner told Deputy Jerry Gray that the weapons were removed from her son's bedroom. They were valued at about \$800.

■ A color television, a microwave oven and a stereo system valued at about \$660 were stolen in a break-in at a home in Cypress Lakes, off Sunset Harbor Road, sometime in the past three weeks. The owner told Deputy Rebekah McDonald that he arrived at the residence Friday evening to find that the back door had been pried open. In addition to the stolen items, the man discovered that his refrigerator had been left open. There was about \$300 damage to the door and assorted food, the report said.

■ Deputy Malcolm Long investigated a break-in that occurred at a home on Bricklanding Road, Shalotte, Friday night. A woman who lives there said that she returned home at about 2:20 p.m. to find that someone had forced their way in through a rear door and disturbed things throughout the residence. Missing was a compact disc player, a cordless telephone, a gold necklace and four knives valued at a total of \$605. Damage was estimated to be about \$150.

■ About \$275 worth of fishing tackle was reported stolen from the bed of a pickup truck parked in the

front yard of a house on Buckeye Road in Leland Saturday night. The 27-year-old man who owns the truck told Deputy Richard Long that he parked the vehicle at about 10 p.m. and returned at about 3 p.m. the next day to find five rods and reels missing.

■ Someone apparently used a crowbar to open the back door of an 86-year-old woman's home on Shell Point Road last week. The thief or thieves made off with a television valued at about \$200, according to Deputy Lewis Ward. The break-in is believed to have occurred sometime between Thursday and Saturday.

■ The owner of a home on Piggott Road reported the theft of her son's bicycle from beneath her carport last weekend. The bike was described as a Murray 10-speed, fluorescent red in color with fluorescent yellow handlebars. Deputy Malcolm Long estimated its value at \$98.

South High PTSA To Meet May 26

The South Brunswick High School Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) will meet Thursday, May 26, at the high school at Boiling Spring Lakes starting at 6:30 p.m.

President Robert Creech said the PTSA will present academic achievement awards to students, hear a French class presentation, and elect officers for 1994-95.

For more information call Creech at 457-5633.

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