

Qnotes

Racist Acquitted in Shelby Murders

Douglas Lawrence Sheets, a former member of a white supremacist group, was found not guilty of three murder charges in connection with a gay-related shooting and firebombing. He was also acquitted of an arson charge and assault with intent to kill.

The jury in Sheets' trial deliberated for over five hours on May 26 before returning to Cleveland County Superior Court and announcing their verdict in the incident at a Shelby, N.C. adult bookstore more than two years ago which left three men dead and two injured.

Sheets was originally charged with 16 counts. In the trial he faced five charges: three counts of first-degree murder, one count of arson and one count of assault with a deadly weapon.

As jurors returned to the courtroom, according to an Associated Press report (*News & Observer*, 5/27/89), several were crying. The families of the victims ran from the courtroom crying.

"This is a hard case to lose, but I thought the jury could have gone either way," said Mab Segrest, former executive director of North Carolinians Against Racist and Religious Violence. "The

from prison and not a lot of physical evidence to back up all their testimony.

"It's not as though this jury let him off in the face of incontrovertible evidence," she said. "There had been a stronger case, but homophobia played in the jury's decision to acquit."

The lack of a witness who could place Sheets on that night hurt the state prosecutor's case. Those who testified learned of Sheets' role from Sheets himself while he was in jail with him.

"I would have preferred having teachers as witnesses," District Attorney Young said.

Sheets, who admitted his former membership with the Ku Klux Klan and the National Socialist Party, went on trial for the slaying of three men on May 5.

Another man, Robert Jackson, was arrested for a June trial on the same charges. He would re-evaluate whether he would testify against Sheets.

Travis Melton, 19, Kenneth Melton, 20, and Kenneth Melton, 21, were the victims.

died after three masked men entered the store on May 5, 1987, ordered them to the floor and

the clerk by the shirt and said, "you're a faggot and a queer," Watts said. "The man shoved Melton and said, 'Faggot, I'll be back for your ass.'" Watts testified, according to the *Star* (5/13/89), that he saw the clerk being dragged into the bookstore clerk's office by the clerk.

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Front Page

What Actually Happened In The Shelby Shooting?

As investigation into an execution-style triple murder at a Shelby, N.C., adult bookstore continues, N.C. Governor Jim Martin has added to the case. As much as the governor for details of those responsible for the murders, the bookstore operators have

- Anyone with information about a person or person possessing commercially-prepared fuses similar to those used with model rockets or black gunpowder, and
 - Anyone who can help to trace a white car and a full-size Ford Bronco or Chevrolet Blazer parked at or near the bookstore that night.
- People may contact the sheriff's department by calling (704) 484-4888 or the SBI by calling 1-800-662-7610 from North Carolina or 1-800-662-7610 from South Carolina.



Was it anti-gay violence?

White Supremacist Group Investigated In Bookstore Massacre

Startling new evidence is coming to light concerning some brutal murders last January at an adult bookstore near Shelby. Three men were shot and killed, and two were wounded, when

The informant was subpoenaed by federal authorities to testify before a secret grand jury meeting in Asheville in July. The informant told the newspaper that the raid on the bookstore was committed by white supremacists.



Kansas shootings revive 1987 Shelby murder mystery

Alleged synagogue shooter Frazier Glenn Miller has ties to unsolved triple slaying at bookstore

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