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EXHUMATION OF THE BODY OF KEITH W. WARREN (left) Wednesday morning, May 25, at Harris Grove Cemetery,

Rougemont. In the center photo are Mrs. Elizabeth Bass, great-aunt, of Durham and Mrs. Mary E. Harris Couey, mother of Keith, of Sil-

ver Spring, Md. At right, tombstone of grave where reinterment is scheduled for Saturday. (Photos by Ray Trent)

Mother Won't Give Up

Was Son's Death Suicide or Homicide?

The body of Keith Waddell Warren was exhumed early Wednesday morning, May 25, from its burial place in Harris Grove Cemetery, Rougemont, in northern Durham County. It had been interred there since August 3, 1986. It was then prepared by Fisher Funeral Parlor for flight to Pennsylvania where an autopsy will be performed by Isadore Chalkias to try to determine if death was by suicide or homicide.

On July 31, 1986, Keith's body was found hanging from a small tree in a wooded area less than 200 yards from what was then the family's residence in the Aspen Hill area of Montgomery County, Md. Death was sudden and violent, according to reports of the time.

Family reports say that after five minutes at the scene, police ruled Keith's death a suicide.

Keith had been reared in Durham during his elementary school years, and had numerous relatives in this area. He had just graduated from Kennedy High School in Silver Spring, Md. and was headed to college at North Carolina Central University in Durham.

Keith's father, Cleo Warren, who was a 21-year police officer in Durham, offered a \$5,000 reward for information about his son's death.

A Maryland state medical examiner ruled the death a suicide at the time of the following discovery of Keith's body at about 2:10 in the afternoon. He did not order an autopsy. Police sent the body to a white funeral home where it was immediately "processed".

One of this took place five hours before his mother was notified of his death, even though a neighbor had furnished police with the mother's telephone number at work about 2:30 p.m.

Officer L. Leverette's report states he went to Walter Reed Army Medical Center, arriving there at 7:15 p.m., met Mrs. Couey and she asked if they found her son...dead or alive...did he hang himself? Leverette asked why her son would take his own life. He reported that Mrs. Couey related a story of family problems.

Mrs. Couey's version of what happened then is that Police Officer Leverette asked to talk with her alone, showed her Keith's driver's license and, when he told her Keith was dead, she went into hysterics. Leverette summoned a physician and a psychiatrist who sedated her and Leverette continued to question her for 45 minutes...

Mrs. Couey was driven home by her supervisor and they called her brother in North Carolina who drove immediately to Maryland. At 12:30 a.m., August 1, he, Robert Harris, Mrs. Couey's brother, tried to get information from the police; they told him the body was at Collins Funeral Home.

The funeral home was contacted at 2 a.m. and the night guard stated it was closed, come at 9 a.m. At that time, Robert and his wife arrived at Collins and were not allowed to see the body; they were told the mother would have to appear. The three returned to the funeral home at 11 a.m. Again they were told they could not see the body; that it was being processed; it was grossly decomposed. The mother was requested to give permission to destroy Keith's clothes, which she gave; then she was presented a contract to sign and was requested to pay \$1,000 as a deposit. Robert Harris asked for the rope and was told it was held by the police.

On the way back home, they stopped at the police station and asked for the rope and were shown it, but the noose was missing and the police did not know where it was. The uncle was given Keith's cap, duffel bag, jacket, and was handed a pair of boots separately.

At noon, August 1, Robert Harris returned for the fourth time to Collins Funeral Home with the requested clothes Keith was to be buried in. Again he was refused access to the body, with the explanation that it was still being processed. Robert Harris threatened trouble if he was not allowed to see his nephew's body. He was escorted to see briefly, not physically examine, the body. He saw no decomposition.

Late in the afternoon of August 1, Keith's sister, Sherri, Mrs. Couey's sister and aunt arrived from New Jersey and asked about an autopsy. Detective Beasley told Mrs. Turner, Mrs. Couey's sister, that the case had been closed the day of discovery, July 31, 1986 and no autopsy was necessary. When told that the family requested an autopsy, Beasley reportedly said that the morgue in Baltimore was closed for the weekend.

Keith carried identification which directed that, in the case of emergency, he be sent to Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

Mrs. Mary E. Harris Couey, Keith's mother, worked in the pathology department of Walter Reed Medical Center. She questioned the police investigation almost immediately. "They never treated my son's death as a crime scene," she said. "They treated it as a sideshow."

Mrs. Couey said one of the investigating officers suggested to her that race may have played a role in her son's death, because the family lived

(Continued On Page 3)

Institute Releases State of Study of Minorities In State

The North Carolina Institute of Minority Economic Development recently released "the alarming findings" of an award-winning, nationally recognized study entitled, "A Profile of North Carolina's African American and Native American Populations."

"...the disparities that exist between North Carolina's white population and the minority population are both discouraging and disheartening. As the state with the seventh largest African American population, North Carolina should be doing better than it is," said a noted economist at UNC-Chapel Hill.

The study, winner of an Excellence Award from the American Economic Development Council, reveals the existing inequities and disparities between the white, African American and Native American populations in the state. It also contains an analysis of these disparities, highlighting information in numbers and percentages by county and in the state.

The report has been released to selected persons in state government, related organizations and other interested persons across the state in the public and private sectors.

Persons desirous of receiving a copy of the study may write to: N.C. Institute of Minority Economic Development, PO Box 1307, Durham, NC 27702 or call: 919/682-1894.

Federal Judge Complains About Slow Pace of State Desegregation Case

OXFORD, Miss. (AP) - U.S. District Judge Neal Biggers Jr. said last Friday that plaintiffs in Mississippi's college desegregation trial are taking too long to present their case.

"So far, it is not going as counsel advised me," Biggers said at the close of the trial's second week. "It's going a lot slower, and it's lasting a lot longer." Plaintiffs and defendants were ordered to submit a list of their witnesses and estimation on how long they will testify. Both sides were also told to give their estimates of how much longer the case will last.

Black plaintiffs claim historically black universities have suffered years of neglect while the state has continued to pump money into predominantly white colleges. Biggers will decide how the state will remove remnants of segregation from the college system.

When attorneys said they probably could not complete the case in two more weeks, Biggers said "I think you might have to. That's too long to present a case on remand." Biggers said he hadn't put a time limit on witnesses yet, but would probably have to if the case continued to move so slowly.

Testimony continued last Friday with a University of Mississippi professor saying Ole Miss had a "piecemeal, troubleshooting, crisis-oriented policy" for dealing with race relations.

Bruce Williams, associate professor of sociology, said at one time problems got so bad that he was afraid there would be violence on the campus.

(Continued On Page 4)



STATE RELEASE (left to right) are: Ms. Andrea Harris, president of the N.C. Institute of Minority Economic Development; Benjamin Ruffin, board chair; and Ms. Nicole Curbeam, principle investigator.