This Week in Indiana History: The Death of Carol Jenkins

September 17th, 1968

In a mid September evening, Rushville resident Carol Jenkins was selling encyclopedias door to door when she noticed someone following her in an automobile. She quickly took shelter at a nearby house, who's residents reported the suspicious vehicle to the police. After stating that they did not finding anyone fitting the description of the suspects, they left. Although the neighbors offered to let Jenkins stay with them, she decided to leave as well. Shortly thereafter, she was attacked and killed by an unknown assailant. The killing went unsolved for over thirty years, until Ku Klux Klan member Kenneth Richmond was turned in for the crime.

Headline from Carol Jenkins' hometown, September 17th, 1968

Rushville Woman Killed In Attack At Martinsville

A 22-year-old Rushville girl, working with an encyclopedia sales crew, was stabbed to death last night in Martinsville.

Victim of a savage attack on the street in the Morgan County city was Carol Marie Davis Jenkins, who resided at 606 East Eighth Street here.

It was Miss Jenkins' first day at work with the sales crew after completion of a three-day training period at Indianapolis. She was regularly employed in the assembly department at the Philco factory in Connersville and had accepted the sales crew position because of a strike at the Connersville firm.

The sales crew was en route to Vincennes and stopped over in Martinsville, arriving there at 4:30 p.m. Others in the group were Paula Bradley, 19, also of Rushville; John Burton, 20, and Stan Julian, 20, the crew manager.

Miss Jenkins was assigned to the east part of Martinsville.

Martinsville police said that at 7:30 they were summoned to the Don Neal residence on East Columbus Street where Miss Jenkins had asked to use the telephone. She told Patrolman Clarence Richards that she was being followed and harassed by two men in a car. The patrolman talked with her for about five minutes then left the Neal home to seek the car which was described as a black 1965 Comet, four-door. The officer said that Miss Jenkins could give few details about the men.

MISS JENKINS

Miss Jenkins continued on her selling tour a short time later and walked west on Morgan Street. The fatal attack occurred several blocks from the Neal home.

Police Chief Jack H. Stanley said that Miss Jenkins had dropped her notebook on East Morgan Street about 125 feet from where the attack occurred.

Police said that it is believed that the assailant jumped out at the victim from behind a big evergreen tree. The attack occurred at about 9 p.m. and Miss Jenkins was pronounced dead at 9:25 at Morgan County Hospital with a knife wound in the heart. The murder weapon has not been found.

Chief Stanley reported that no one was at home in front of the residence where the attack occurred but that a man was watching television upstairs in a residence across the street. He told officers that he heard a thud, believed to have been when she dropped the notebook. Police said that Miss Jenkins staggered 15 feet before falling after the attack.

Miss Jenkins was graduated from Rushville High School in 1965 and had been employed in the assembly department at the Philco Corporation at Connersville, until the recent strike, and was temporarily employed by Collier Encyclopedia.

She was born April 21, 1947 in Franklin, the daughter of Carl and Elizabeth Gooden Jenkins. She was a member of the Rushville Wesley Methodist Church and was a Past Grand Matron of the Youth Fraternity of the Eastern Star. She had spent most of her life here with her stepfather Paul W. Davis.

Other survivors are her father, Carl Jenkins, Columbus; her mother, Mrs. Jean P. Scott, Indianapolis; two brothers, Larry E. Davis, Rushville and Robert W. Davis, Indianapolis; three sisters, Paulette, Patricia Ann and Laura Mae Davis, Indianapolis and two grandparents, Harry Gooden, Franklin and Mrs. Jenkins, Columbus.

Funeral service will be held at 2 p.m. Thursday at Moster and Sons Mortuary in charge of the Rev. Shelley Davis and Rev. Kenneth Holdskom. Burial will be in East Hill Cemetery.

Friends may call at the mortuary after 3 p.m. Wednesday

Rain To Continue

By The Associated Press

A low pressure system moving slowly eastward from the Central Plains probably will produce rainy weather in Indiana for about 48 hours, the Weather Bureau said today.

The rainy period probably will end with cooler weather Thursday.

Rains may total as much as one inch, although the rainfall today was expected to be light.

Highest temperatures Wednesday were forecast in the mid-70s.

The Weather Bureau reported torrential rains in some southern Indiana areas in the 24 hours ending at 7 a.m. EST today. Spencer reported 1.88 inches of rain, Shoals 1.74, Williams 1.70, Bloomington 1.48 and Bedford 1.05.

Bus Inspection To Be Thursday

The annual school bus inspection for all school buses of Rush County will be held on Thursday starting at 8:30. The school bus inspection will conform to the standards and specifications as set forth in the bulletins approved by the State School Bus Committee. The inspection will be conducted at the county fairgrounds.

There will be school buses for the Rushville Consolidated Schools inspected. The inspection will be under the supervision of Sergeant Clarence Cleaver of the Connersville Post of the Indiana State Police. Ripley Township school buses also will be included in the inspection.

Headline from the May 9th, 2002 edition of the Indianapolis Star

From the charges

Statements to police by Shirley Richmond McQueen, daughter of Kenneth Richmond, suspect in the 1968 slaying of Carol Jenkins.

The stabbing: The passenger grabbed Jenkins from behind and McQueen's father, Kenneth Richmond, stabbed Jenkins once in the front chest area with the screwdriver. They returned to the car and were laughing, stating, **"She got what she deserved."**

The secret: Once home, he gave McQueen $7 not to tell her mother what had happened. She recalled him saying, **"It was our secret."**

Carol Jenkins was selling encyclopedias door-to-door.

Woman implicates father in '68 slaying

She says she saw him stab woman in Martinsville

By Bruce E. Smith
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MARTINSVILLE, Ind. — A long-held childhood secret might have finally solved the mystery that troubled this community for 34 years.

Police say they found the man who killed Carol Jenkins living in an Indianapolis nursing home, implicated by a daughter who described seeing the crime as a 7-year-old from the back seat of a car.

Kenneth C. Richmond, now 70, looked frail and said nothing Wednesday afternoon as he was arrested and then taken in shackles into the Morgan County Courthouse. A plea of not guilty to one count of murder was entered on his behalf. He was held without bond.

Leaders of the Morgan County city, haunted for decades by charges of racism and foot-dragging in the investigation of Jenkins' slaying, saw vindication in Richmond's arrest.

"I'm so glad that the guy who did this is not from Martinsville," said Martinsville City Councilman Harold Stanger. "We've had kind of a bad reputation with black people. ... I'm so glad this is over with."

Investigators say the story began as Richmond — who was living on a Hendricks County farm, according to his daughter — was driving through Martinsville on the night of Sept. 16, 1968.

His daughter, Shirley Richmond McQueen, said her father and another man were drunk and filled with racial hatred.

After a silence of more than three decades, she told police that she saw her father plunge a screw-

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Moment of relief: Paul Davis, Carol Jenkins' stepfather, hugs daughter Pat Howard after a news conference announcing an arrest in the slaying.

Inside

"I said to (Jenkins') stepfather, 'Not only have your prayers been answered, but ours have been, too.'"

Pastor Larry Kuntz, First Christian Church of Martinsville

More reaction, Page A10

In print: A look at stories about the case from The Star and The News through the years/B1

In brief: Carol Jenkins' dreams were cut short on the streets of Martinsville in 1968/B8

In fact: Sociology: Victim's family played a key role in not allowing the case to be forgotten/B9

Mike Fisher / staff photo

Accused: Kenneth C. Richmond, who lives in an indianapolis nursing home, is led into the Morgan County Courthouse for his initial court appearance on a murder charge. His daughter says Richmond stabbed Carol Jenkins with a screwdriver in downtown Martinsville in 1968.

Questions? Comments? Email us at judavis1@library.in.gov