

FIRE INVESTIGATION # 95/104

E. P. RICH  
FIRE INSPECTIONS CHIEF (501)

On October 9, 1995, I responded to a report of a house fire at 2104 Brandon Station Court in the Pleasant Garden Fire District.

Upon arriving on the scene I reported to Chief Jim Vickrey, officer in charge of fireground operation. After talking with Chief Vickrey I began an investigation into the origin and cause of the fire.

This was a one story frame dwelling, two bedrooms, study, kitchen, living room and two full baths. Attached to the east end of the dwelling was a two car open ended garage. Construction for this type dwelling was found to be normal. Furnishings for this dwelling was found to be normal. And note as follows, in the kitchen, living room, bathrooms and bedroom adjacent to the living room. Master bedroom and adjacent study on westward end appeared to be ramsacked. Master bedroom was totally upset, dresser drawers were pull out, contents strowed on flooring, bed mattress was laying on the foot and to the side of the bed. Kitchen door and jam showed sign of forced entry. (Firefighters stated door was not locked, all they did was turn the knob to open the door.) Steve Wilson (P.G.F.F.)

Fire had heavily damaged the dwelling, the entire interior charred with smoke and heat damage. Upon further examination of the interior, I found a fire pattern what was determined to be a liquid accelerant pour in the kitchen, into the living room floor onto an area rug, over the couch in the living room and down the hallway to an area of very deep charring in which a body was also located. The pour pattern stopped at this point. Fire damage in this area had destroyed the flooring and support structure, it had burned the body beyond recognition. The charred body was found face down laying on metal duct work located in the crawl space under the dwelling. Head was toward the master bedroom and feet were found toward the kitchen, in an east to west direction.

The amount of damage and spread of fire could only be caused by a large volume of an accelerant being poured around or onto the body located in the hallway.

Summary: This fire was not an accidental fire is was incendiary!

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Initial
<input type="checkbox"/>	Delete
<input type="checkbox"/>	Change

**GUILFORD COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES  
FIRE INVESTIGATION REPORT**

<u>Rich</u> Investigator	<u>10-09-95</u> Date	<u>21:31</u> Time	<u>95/094</u> Photo #	<u>95/104</u> Invest. #
<u>10-09-95</u> Date of Fire	<u>20:46</u> Time	<u>(02)</u> Day	<u>03</u> District	<u>07070</u> Alarm #
<u>Dwelling (01)</u> Type of Fire	<u>Hallway, Living Room. (09)</u> Area of Origin Kitchen		<u>Incendiary (09)</u> Cause of Fire	
<u>2104 Brandon Station Court, Pleasant Garden, N.C.</u> Address of Fire			<u>0</u> # Injuries	<u>1</u> # Deaths
<u>Patricia B. Kimble</u> <u>Theodore Kimble</u> Owner	<u>2104 Brandon Station Court</u> Address			<u>                    </u> Telephone #
<u>Patricia B. &amp; Theodore Kimble</u> Occupant	<u>2104 Brandon Station Court</u> Address			<u>                    </u> Telephone #

<u>90,000.00</u> Value of Property	<u>30,000.00</u> Value of Contents	<u>                    </u> Property Loss	<u>                    </u> Contents Loss
<u>                    </u> Amt. Ins. on Property	<u>                    </u> Amt. Ins. on Contents	<u>                    </u> Insurance Company	
<u>                    </u> Insurance Adjustor	<u>                    </u> Phone #	<u>                    </u> Policy Number	<u>                    </u> Issue Date
<u>                    </u> Insurance Company on Contents	<u>                    </u> Policy Number	<u>                    </u> Issue Date	<u>                    </u> Phone #

**MOBILE PROPERTY:**

<u>                    </u> Type	<u>                    </u> Make	<u>                    </u> Model	<u>                    </u> License No.	<u>                    </u> State
<u>                    </u> Registration Number	<u>                    </u> Size (MH)	<u>                    </u> Extent of Burn		

**FIXED PROPERTY:**

<u>Dwelling</u> Occupancy	<u>Frame Dwelling, Composition Roof</u> Type of Construction	<u>1</u> # of Stories
<u>Heavy to Living Room, Kitchen and Hallway</u> Extent of Burn		

**UTILITIES:**

<u>Electric</u> Power	<u>Gas Furnace</u> Heating	<u>Electric Stove</u> Cooking
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Ruben Blakely Fire Discovered By	Ruben Blakely Fire Reported By
Guilford County Sheriffs Department	
Outside Agencies Assisting with Investigation	
Was Evidence Removed from Scene: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No - If Yes, Complete Evidence Form	

Persons Interviewed:

Name	Sex	Race	DOB

Disposition of Investigation:      Was Arrest Made:       Yes       No       N/A

If yes, list all charges:

Date of Arrest: \_\_\_\_\_      Court Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Action taken by Courts:      Postponed Until: \_\_\_\_\_

Dismissed       Yes       No      Postponed Until: \_\_\_\_\_

Convicted       Yes       No

Plea Bargain       Yes       No

SPECIAL REMARKS:

10/10/1995 Tuesday  
17:35 approx.

I arrived at the shop to get command unit 2100. I filled it with gas and proceeded to the fire scene.

10/10/1995 Tuesday  
18:15 approx.

I arrived back on the fire scene with 2100. Several deputies were on the scene as well as Deputy Dir. Bryant and Fire Inspector Harris. We set up the command unit. Deputy Dir. Bryant took me back to the EMS shop to get my car. I went back to the scene to assist Inspector Harris.

Inspector Harris briefed me as to what needed to be done this evening. We started by locating areas to take some additional samples to send to the SBI lab. We collected one sample near the dining area in the living room where the carpet met the vinyl floor. Photos were taken prior the the taking of the sample. The carpet was cut and removed. We decided to take the padding in this area instead of the carpet. It was noted that the same type of accelerate could be smelled in the area where we took the sample. It smelled like gasoline. We placed the padding in a vinyl bag and sealed the bag with tape. G.C.S.O. I.D. Techs kept the evidence. We removed our gloves; placed them back on the site where we took the sample; and photographed the gloves and the evidence at the collection site.

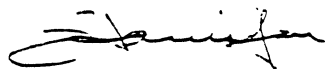
Inspector Harris and myself then moved to another site just outside of the kitchen near the hallway to take an additional sample for evidence. The collection site was photographed. We took a 6" x 6" sample from this location. The sample was placed in a nylon bag and sealed by G.C.S.O. I.D. Techs. We removed our rubber gloves and a photo was taken of the gloves and evidence at the site we took the sample from. Around 10:30 P.M., I assisted Guilford Co. Sheriff's Dept. I.D. Techs in collecting the rug in the living room for evidence. Approximately 23:15, I found some papers in the kitchen along with a calendar and bill statements. I turned these items over to Detective Jim Church for examination and they were placed in to evidence.

Approximately 23:30, we collected a fireplace ignitor or lighter from the living room floor. It was placed in a nylon bag by G.C.S.O. I.D. Techs and sealed.

Around 00:00, we took a break and decided to "dig out" the hole in the floor where the body was found to search for any evidence (specifically a shell casing for the weapon used in the homicide). Inspector Harris and I proceeded to dig in the hole. During the dig, I noticed a red hue on the carpet behind me. I lifted the carpet and looked at the padding area. Under the carpet in a large area, there appeared to be dried blood in the padding. This area was photographed by G.C.S.O. I.D. Techs. Around 00:30, we took a break to change to the light unit so Sta. #3's equipment could be released.

We proceeded with the digging of the hole area. Early the morning, I shoveled a layer of debris from the hole. We uncovered a large kitchen knife. We stopped digging

and G.C.S.O. I.D. Techs took the knife into evidence. Around 04:15 a.m., 10/11/1995, we decided to stop searching through the debris in the hole. We had not found the shell casing or any other evidence in the hole. We packed all of the equipment up and went home for the night.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Janis".

FIRE INVESTIGATION 95/104

E. B. HARRIS  
FIRE INSPECTOR (504)

October 10, 1995, at 06:30 hours I received a phone call from M. Gregson at Guilford County Emergency Communications advising Chief Inspector E. P. Rich requested I respond to a house fire with a fatality at Brandon Station Court, in the Pleasant Garden Fire District. I arrived on scene at 07:05 hours and met with Inspector Rich to be briefed on the fire and investigation to that point.

Chief Rich advised that shortly after knocking down the fire, the fire department discovered a body, possibly of a female, in the hallway of the house. He also said there was what appeared to be pour patterns on the floor of the hallway, kitchen and living room, indicating the presence of flammable or combustible liquids. He said a sample of carpet beneath an area rug had been taken as evidence, as had a plastic fuel can that had been in the kitchen. He said the bedrooms of the house had been ramsacked, drawers pulled out, etc.

He requested I continue the cause and origin investigation and coordinate efforts with the Sheriffs Department.

I walked around the exterior of the house in a clockwise direction from the driveway. I noted a grey Subaru vehicle in the driveway in front of the house. A set of keys were in the driver's seat and a woman's purse was unzipped and sitting in the passenger seat. Both front doors of the car were unlocked but closed and the windows were up.

I noted a garage addition to the house, 75% to 80% complete on the east side of the house. There was no garage door and I noted a dining room table and four chairs that had been removed from inside the house to facilitate overhaul and investigation. I noted lumber and other building materials, and upright storage cabinet, and a Huskvarna riding lawn mower in the garage. Continuing around the house I noted a deck at the rear behind the kitchen with no door from the house to the deck. I noted smoke stains on the "greenhouse" window in the kitchen, and smoke stains on the siding above the crawl space vents the length of the house. Two additional windows on the back of the house were also stained on the inside glass.

The house windows were double glass with an air space between them. The windows had been broken during or shortly after suppression efforts and smoke stained the siding above them.

Moving to the west side of the house I noted the door to the crawl space was open. According to several firefighters, the door was open upon their arrival. Again I noted smoke stains above the foundation vents and broken windows that were also smoke stained. There were no smoke stains above the crawl space door. Continuing around toward the front of the house I noted two 120 lb. L.P. Gas cylinders, the covers opened, presumably by fire department personnel to shut off the fuel supply. At the front of the house I noted smoke stained; broken windows and smoke stains above the foundation vents. Examining the windows, it appeared all of the windows were closed at the time of the fire. I noted the bottom panels of the wooden front door had been removed and pry marks on the exterior surface of the door near a dead bolt (single cylinder) lock. The damage described to the front door was caused by fire department personnel to gain secondary entry into the house. I noted smoke stains on the living room window as well.

Entering the house from the side door (from the garage) I noted distinct burn patterns on the linoleum floor of the kitchen. I noted burning around a relatively clean circular area, presumably where the plastic fuel can had been. I noted the deadbolt lock on the entry door was unlocked, and no damage (from forced entry) was evident. <sup>(A)</sup> I did note however damage to the door jamb and that the keeper to the door knob latch was missing. Continuing into the kitchen I noted the burn patterns on the floor led into the living room, across that floor and onto the couch cushion and back. Walking through the kitchen I noted the burn pattern continued into the hallway that led to the front door and to the end of the house toward the bedrooms. I noted moderate smoke and heat damage in the kitchen.

There were several pots, etc on the floor and counter tops. There were no drawers or cabinet doors open. I noted the telephone answering machine on the floor of the kitchen and requested Stormy Cross, Sheriff's Department I.D. Technician to take the machine as evidence. <sup>(B)</sup> I noted a large hole in the floor of the hallway between the bathroom and first bedroom. The hole measured approximately 4 feet X 6 to 8 feet. The body had been found in the hole, face down, with the head toward the



A. Fire inspections chief E.P. Rich said otherwise.

B. Anything on the answering machine?

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...two. There were no marks or damage to either door open.  
...noted the linoleum appeared wet on the floor of the  
...kitchen and continued toward the back of the house.  
...I noted the hole in the wall of the hallway between the  
...bedroom and living room. The hole measured  
...approximately 4 feet x 2 in x 2 in. The hole had been  
...found in the hole, from the wall toward the

bedrooms. The first bedroom did not appear to be in disarray. There were clothes in the closet and no dresser drawers were open. There were a few articles of clothing on the floor at the foot of the bed. Lifting the carpet from the area where the head of the body had had been I noted a large stain of what appeared to be blood.

Continuing down the hallway I entered the bedroom to the right. This room had a small couch, a desk and chair, and a tool chest, in addition to photo's etc on the walls and clothes in the closet. It appeared someone had gone through the desk drawers and closet, leaving them in disarray. (A)

Crossing into the master bedroom at the rear of the house I noted the mattress and boxspring overturned and clothing removed from dresser drawers strewn about the room. Several dresser drawers had been pulled out and (B) were thrown on the floor. I noted an automatic weapon on the floor, just inside the room to the left, and a shoulder holster nearby. I noted the body of a small white dog on the floor of the bathroom off of this bedroom.

I.D. Technician Sgt. Lindell showed me several footprints leading away from a storage building that was approximately 250 feet west of the house. The footprints led toward the roadway where Lindell showed me tiretracks just off the roadway. I noted at least two "burn-outs" made on the pavement of the cul-du-sac below the house. These burn-outs were made by a motorcycle.

Photographs were made of the interior of the house, of each room. Shortly after the photographs were made I talked with Lt. Grady Bryant of the Sheriffs Department. He said the Medical Examiner's Office report the victim died from a gunshot to the head, and that a search warrant was being drawn up. He requested we not re-enter the property until the warrant was executed. (C)

Around 17:30 the warrant was executed. I had requested from Joe Bryant, Deputy Director of Emergency Services to have the command unit brought to the scene. He called Inspector Garrett Stonesifer, who was returning from Raleigh where he had dropped off evidence taken from the scene earlier this date.

A. Detectives had said NO ONE had messed with the closets.

B. Detectives said they were staked up.

C. CAN we keep them from using ANY evidence obtained prior to the warrant or my permission

Inspector Stonesifer arrived in Unit 2100 at approximately 17:45 to 18:00 hours. I requested his assistance in further examination and evidence removal. Stonesifer and I, while accompanied by I.D. Tech's Cross and Lindell, took samples of the carpet padding in the living room area just off the kitchen. These samples of padding had a strong odor of gasoline about them. They were placed in nylon bags for analysis in the S.B.I. lab in Raleigh. I found a set of keys in the kitchen floor amongst debris. The keys were photographed and taken as evidence. The key had a Jeep key tab, and a "Beauty and the Beast" tab.

Detective David Debarry of the Sheriffs Department requested assistance from Stonesifer and me in trying to locate spent shell casing that may or may not exist. He said if an automatic weapon was used the casing could be in the hallway, bathroom, or in the burned out area. Inspector Stonesifer and I with assistance from volunteers from the Pleasant Garden Fire Department dug through and searched the areas the casing may have been. This search was overseen by Sgt. Lindell.

Around 23:00 hours, we requested the county light unit respond to the area so that fire department vehicles could be returned to service at approximately 03:00, Inspector Stonesifer found a large butcher knife in the hallway. The knife was found beneath debris of the burned out areas to the left side of where the body had been found.

The wood handle of the knife sustained slight damage. The blade was approximately 12 inches long. Sgt. Lindell took the knife as evidence. Inspector Stonesifer also found a bra or negligee in the burned area. It was taken by Sgt. Lindell. At approximately 04:00 the area had been searched and no shell casing or other evidence was located in the burned out area.

At Sgt. Lindell's request I removed a piece of carpet, soaked with what appeared to be blood, from where the victim had been discovered.

Inspector Stonesifer and I left the scene at 04:20 hours. Sgt. Steve Shaver replaced barrier tape at the entrance to the house after we left.

