

Former sheriff recalls Patton murder case

By Tom Betz
The Goodland Star-News
Former Sherman County Sheriff Jack Armstrong remembers the murder of Wallace Patton in 1970 and the 10-year investigation before he was able to arrest William Frank Schlicher in 1980.

Armstrong was surprised to hear the Kansas Parole Board has granted Schlicher parole after over 23 years. He is not surprised that Schlicher has not come up with a parole plan, though, and thinks he might like prison better than going back to the outside world.

Armstrong said an accomplice, Marvin Dale Seigrist, confessed to a Kansas Bureau of Investigation agent 10 years after the killing. He told officers he knew who had killed Patton, and the sheriff recalled going to a session with Seigrist and KBI agents in Wichita in 1980.

"Without putting any words in his mouth," Armstrong recalled, "he (Seigrist) told us details about the crime that no one else could have known and put all the pieces together for us.

"I can remember it like it was yesterday. I always will remember it because it was a tough investigation."

He said Seigrist had the details, like the pop cans found near an irrigation engine, to convince the jury he was telling the truth.

"I found the pop cans near an irrigation engine about a week after the murder," Armstrong said, "and during the interview in Wichita, Seigrist said they had thrown the pop cans out at that location."

The ex-sheriff said he held on to the cans for several years, but eventually threw them away.

"It was in my report," Armstrong said, "and the farmer testified about the cans at the trial."

Armstrong said the arrest was handled by Louisiana State Police

at Pointe a Lal Hache, southeast of New Orleans where Schlicher was working on an oil rig.

"He was in custody when I went to pick him up," Armstrong said, "after he refused extradition twice before he was transferred to our custody.

"He claimed he had never been in Kansas, and the judge asked me to point him out in the courtroom. When I pointed him out, the judge said to 'take him away.'

"I took him from the courtroom and immediately to the airport and flew out of there."

Armstrong said he had suspected Schlicher was the main man in the murder of Patton nearly from the first.

"I had interviewed him several times over a three-year period," Armstrong said, "and had suspected him about a week into the investigation."

Going back to the murder scene, Armstrong recalls how the murder was done.

"Schlicher was the first one that shot Patton," Armstrong said. "As Patton was walking away from the car, Schlicher called his name and when Patton turned around, Schlicher shot him twice.

"Schlicher said 'I am not going down alone, at which time Kauffman took the gun and shot Patton twice in the neck, with both of the bullets going into the brain..

Armstrong said any one of the four bullets would have killed Patton.

"I knew that Schlicher, Kauffman and Seigrist were all good buddies and chummed together," Armstrong said. "I arrested Schlicher in 1973 on 32 counts of burglary. It all stemmed from stealing 10 gallons of gas in two five-gallon cans.

"As I came through the door, he pointed a gun in my face and cocked it back. He held it like that for about

Killer to be paroled after 23 years in prison

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point by Schlicher, Charles Kauffman and Marvin Dale Seigrist. They loaded Patton into Schlicher's car and drove around with him for most of the night before taking him out to a field and shooting him four times.

Seigrist turned himself in 1980 because he was afraid Schlicher would kill him.

He received immunity for his testimony and Schlicher and Kauffman were charged with first-degree murder.

Doctors decided, however, that Kauffman was not sane enough to stand trial.

Schlicher was found guilty by a jury and sentenced to life in prison. In 1980, "life" in Kansas meant 15 years before a murderer was eligible for parole. He was sent to prison on Dec. 18, 1980.

He has been before the parole board six times in the eight years, but the board denied his petitions until this year.

At the time of his conviction, Schlicher allegedly told those in the courtroom that if he was ever released, he would come back and kill the people who put him in prison.

Goodland lawyer Perry Warren, who prosecuted the case, said he does not remember Schlicher making a threat, but said it was an interesting trial.

Warren said he was surprised that Schlicher has been granted parole. He said he expected him to die in prison.

Noting that Schlicher has not submitted a parole plan in the 45 days since he was told he could be released, Warren said it's possible the killer does not believe he can handle life outside out of the prison environment.

Looking back at the case, Warren recalled that Alvin Dewey, a KBI agent from Garden City, was one of the investigators.

Dewey told him this was a more interesting case than the Clutter murder case, which he had worked on and which Truman Capote immortalized in his book "In Cold Blood."

"When I got it, the case was cold," Warren said. "I got it when I became county attorney in 1974.

"I didn't know much about it when I became county attorney, but Sheriff Jack Armstrong, Dewey and Jock Murray, KBI agent from Colby, came to see me. They asked me if we had enough evidence to arrest Schlicher.

"I said we only get one crack at this once he is arrested, and I did not think we had enough evidence at that time, so we waited.

"I was surprised when Seigrist stepped forward down in Hutchinson and gave us enough evidence to charge Schlicher.

"It was like fate lent a hand, be-

cause Seigrist said that at the time of the murder, Schlicher turned the gun on him and said 'I know one day you will give me up, and I should shoot you now, but if I did, they would know I did it. Some-day, I am going to come looking for you.'

"In 1980, Seigrist was living in Wichita and his mother was living on the other side of the city. A man came to her door and said he was looking for Marvin Dale.

"His mother said she didn't know where he was and then called her son to let him know. Based on her description, Seigrist thought it was Schlicher out looking for him and he went to Hutchinson to tell KBI agent Tom Lyons that he knew who had killed Patton.

"It turned out that the man who had come to the door was an off-duty policeman who was trying to serve Seigrist with a ticket on one of the Doberman pincers he had in his yard.

"It was fascinating, and I remember having to go down to Baton Rouge to attend a governor's extradition hearing. I know that Sheriff Jack Armstrong went down to arrest Schlicher on an oil rig."

Warren said that while preparing for trial, he and Jerry Fairbanks, who was helping with the case, took Seigrist for a ride to retrace the places they had taken Patton before he was killed.

He said Seigrist told them about several places they stopped and that one of them was near an irrigation engine a few miles from where the body was found.

"We asked Seigrist if anything happened while they were parked near the irrigation engine," Warren said. "He said he had finished two bottles of soda pop — one was a Pepsi and the other a Nesbitt Orange — and had thrown the bottles out.

"We found out who owned the irrigation engine and called him to ask if he remembered anything about it.

"This was 10 years later, but the man said he remembered it because he had wanted to go down to the engine to do some work on it, but that it had rained and he had to let it dry out for a few days.

"I asked him if he remembered anything strange when he got down there.

"He told me he did not see any car tracks, but that he had found two pop bottles.

"I asked him if he remembered what kind of pop bottles, and he said one was a Pepsi and the other a Nesbitt Orange.

"That was the kind of evidence that helped with the credibility of Seigrist's story."

Seigrist was released for testifying against Schlicher, and Warren said he heard he moved to the Tribune area.

Brewster man enters guilty plea to murder, kidnapping

PLEA, from Page 1

Bevington chose to plead guilty, saying simple "yes" or "no" questions posed to him from Judge Burr.

"The understanding that you need to have is that if you enter a plea of guilty, you agree with the

state as to what you have done," said Judge Burr.

"Yes sir," said Bevington.

"Do you wish to plead guilty because you are guilty?" asked Judge Burr.

"Yes sir," said Bevington.

Judge Burr asked Bevington if he

five minutes until I talked him into dropping it.

"He went to prison for two years, and when he go out, he came back to Goodland and came to my house and pointed a gun at me again. I had some stern words for him, and told him I didn't want to see him around.

That was the last time I had seen him until I arrested him in 1980."

Armstrong said he had a tip that Schlicher was coming back to get him in 1975.

"Agent Lyons had called to say he had information from an informant that Schlicher was on his way to

Goodland to kill the sheriff," Armstrong said.

Schlicher was married to a woman in Louisiana, Linda, and she had two children by a previous marriage. It was reported she was a Louisiana state senator's daughter, and she attended the trial in Good-

land. Jury members and Warren remember that she sat in the front row behind Schlicher and across the aisle from the Patton family members.

Armstrong said he had heard rumors that she had divorced Schlicher, but does not know that for sure.

License renewal notices to change

The next reminder you get to renew your vehicle registration will have an updated look.

The state Department of Revenue's Division of Vehicles is switching from a pre-printed form that would only fit three vehicles to a regular-size page that will accommodate up to five vehicles per page.

The new notice will be mailed in business-sized envelopes.

The new notices are printed with software that groups vehicle own-

ers with their name and address. For example, a vehicle registered to someone named Robert Smith will be matched to one labeled Bob Smith with the same address. Instead of printing and sending two notices, the division can now print just one and place more vehicles per page.

The grouping of similar names also reduces the amount of paper and postage used for registration reminders.

The new notices will be printed in state, while the old ones used an outside vendor.

Last names that begin with an M, N or O could see the new notices as soon as July 15 to remind drivers who have expirations on Aug. 31.

"We are pleased to take advantage of new technology that improves the product while making government work more efficient," Secretary of Revenue Joan Wagon said.

Goodland native elected to convention

Christopher Hansen, son of Wallace and Patricia Hansen of Goodland, has been elected as one of 11 delegates abroad to the Democratic National Convention July 29-Aug. 2 in Boston.

Hansen is working toward a doctorate in economic geography and energy studies at Oxford University in England, concentrating on electricity.

He graduated from Goodland

High School in 1993, from Kansas State University in 1998 with a degree in nuclear engineering, and from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge in 2002 with a master's degree in technology policy.

His father said Chris has been interested in politics since high school, was student body president at Kansas State and has

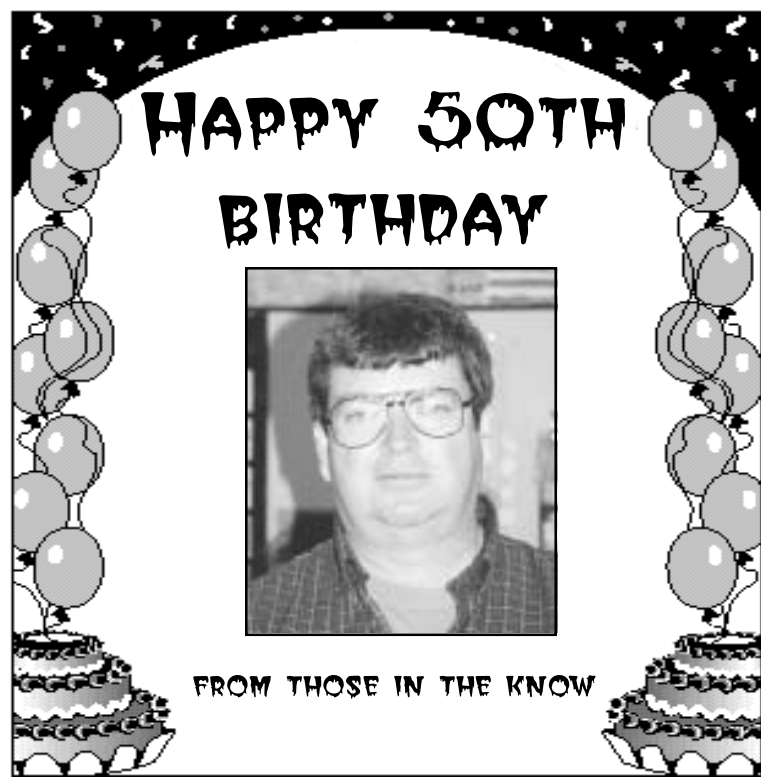
worked for the Department of Commerce in Washington. He has studied in Johannesburg, South Africa, and has traveled to India.

"A good thing about his being abroad," Wallace said, "is it's given me a chance to expand my travels."


Chris and his wife Ulcca planned to be in Goodland on Monday to visit with family. Ulcca is studying for a doctorate in education at Oxford. After graduating, the Hansens plan to return to the United States. Ulcca is planning to go to law school.



Hansen



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		August Consultant Schedule
Allergist	Jeffrey Rumblyrt, M.D.	August 12
Audiologist	Sherri M. Beck, M.A., CCC-A	August 13 & 27
Cardiologist	Barry Smith, M.D.	August 11 & 25
Cardiologist	Vijay Sabbarao, M.D.	August 12
Dermatologist	Charles Ruggles, M.D.	August 5 & 19
Ears, Nose, Throat	Alfred N. Carr, M.D.	August 13, 19 & 27
Endocrinologist	Gerald Poticha, M.D.	August 12 & 13
Gastroenterologist	Jeffrey D. Huston, M.D.	August 9
Gynecology	Laura Rokosz, M.D.	August 26
Neurologist	Steven J. Gulevich, M.D.	August 4, 6 & 25
Obstetrics/Gynecology	David Forschner, M.D.	September 15
Oncology/Hematology	Martin Rubinowitz, M.D.	August 3 & 31
Ophthalmologist	Kent Bashford, M.D.	August 13
Ophthalmologist	Brian Joondeph, M.D.	August 20
Ophthalmologist	David Pfoff, M.D.	August 2, 9 & 16
Orthopedist	Theodore J. Clarke, M.D.	August 2 & 30
Orthopedist	Tim Birney, M.D.	August 9
Orthopedist	Armond Hatzidakis, M.D.	August 9
Orthopedist	James Holmes, M.D.	August 16
Orthopedist	Edward Parks, M.D.	August 23
Pediatrician	Raymond Ketting, M.D.	August 24
Pediatric Cardiologist	Warren Toews, M.D.	August 4
Psychiatrist	John C. Faul, M.D.	August 4, 6 & 20
Podiatrist	Erik Ouderkirk, D.P.M.	August 11 & 25
Pulmonologist	Ken Weisiger, M.D.	August 12
Pulmonologist	Tim Clark, M.D.	August 18
Pulmonologist	Val Linquist, M.D.	August 27
Radiologists	Professional Radiology Services	Week Days
Rheumatologist	Karl Chambers, M.D.	August 19
Speech Therapy	Lisa Paxton	Thursdays
Substance Abuse Dir	Fred Waters, CADC III	Mondays
Urologist	Darrell D. Werth, M.D.	August 3
Urologist	Carl T. Newman, M.D.	August 17
Urologist	Kevin R. McDonald, M.D.	September 14
Urologist	Wallace Michael Curry, M.D.	August 31

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