

Annie Laurie Hearin

Missing since July 26, 1988 from Jackson, Mississippi

Classification: Involuntary

Vital Statistics

- **Age at Time of Disappearance:** 73 years old
 - **Height and Weight at Time of Disappearance:** 5'4"; 120 lbs.
 - **Distinguishing Characteristics:** White female. Auburn hair; brown eyes.
 - **Marks, Scars:** Pierced ears.
 - **Medical Conditions:** Annie Laurie was diagnosed with ileitis, an intestinal disorder. She was required to take medications to regulate her condition, which could be fatal if not treated. Stopped by scoliosis and arthritis.
 - **Clothing:** Light colored blouse, khaki linen skirt.
 - **Other:** Her maiden name is "Swaim."
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Circumstances of Disappearance

Annie Laurie Hearin disappeared after she had played bridge with club members at her Woodland Hills home. When Robert Hearin Sr. arrived home about 16.30 that day, he thought she was out visiting friends. But by 19.30 he became worried and before 22.00 the police had been called.

Police found drops of blood on the carpet and a smudge of blood on the front door. Analysts determined that the blood matched Annie Laurie's type. A ransom note was also found near the door, which was typewritten and contained numerous grammatical and spelling errors. The note stated in part:

Mr. Robert Herrin, Put these people back in the shape they was in before they got mixed up with School Pictures. Pay them whatever damages they want and tell them all this so then can no what you are doing but dont tell them why you are doing it. Do this before ten days pass. Don't call police.

The ransom note referred to *School Pictures*, a company that had been taken over by Robert in the late 1980's. The letter listed 12 franchisees of the the nationwide business, all of whom Robert was supposed to pay ransom for the return of his wife.

Authorities stated that they were searching for Newton Alfred Winn in early August 1988. Winn was a civil attorney from St. Petersburg, Florida and held a Florida School Pictures franchise in the early 1980s.

Winn was ordered to pay the company over \$153,000 after a court battle in 1984, four years before Annie Laurie's abduction. Winn's name was also listed on the ransom note as one of the 12 franchisees.

Investigators also searched for a white van with Florida license plates that had been seen near the Hearins' residence on July 26. Neighbors said that the vehicle's driver matched Winn's description.

Robert made a public appeal for his wife's return in September 1988. He received a letter several days later that was determined to feature Annie Laurie's signature. The note stated:

Bob, If you don't do what these people want you to do, they are going to seal me up in the cellar of this house with only a few jugs of water. Please save me, Annie Laurie

The letter was postmarked from Atlanta, Georgia. Robert mailed one million dollars in ransom money to the 12 franchisees listed in the first note. Winn, who had been apprehended by that time, apparently returned his portion of the funds to Robert.

Winn was convicted of conspiracy in Annie Laurie's case. He received a prison sentence of 19 years and 7 months in prison without parole. Winn attempted to appeal his conviction in 1996.

Winn was released from federal prison in April 2006, after serving 16 years for extortion, lying to a federal grand jury and conspiracy to kidnap Annie Laurie Hearin. He maintains his innocence.

Annie Laurie was declared legally deceased in in August 1991. The couple has two children.

Investigators

If you have any information concerning this case, please contact:

Federal Bureau Of Investigation

Jackson, Mississippi Division

601-948-5000

Source Information:

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[The Tuscaloosa News](#)

[The Sun Herald](#)

[The Clarion Ledger](#)

[Unsolved Mysteries](#)