

Vidocq Society Annual Dinner Dedicated to Dr. Halbert Fillinger, MD, VSM

By Paul Plevakas



Commissioner Wiliam Fleisher, VSM and Mrs. Maggie Fillinger

Over one hundred Vidocq Society members along with their family and friends attended the 2006 annual Black Tie dinner. The dinner was held at a new venue, the Moshulu restaurant on the Delaware River. Guests were welcomed by the music of the Harvey Sister's String Quartette.

The most important event of this year's dinner was the presentation of a portrait painted by Molly Phifer of Dr. Halbert Fillinger, MD, VSM to his widow Maggie Fillinger. The presentation brought tears to the eyes of Mrs. Fillinger.

Dr. Fillinger a Vidocq Society member and renowned forensic pathologist for over 40 years, passed away on June 11, 2006 at the age of 79 after a long illness.

Dr. Fillinger was the Chief Deputy Coroner for Bucks County, the Assistant Medical Examiner for the City of Philadelphia for 28 years, and finished his career

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The Head in the Bucket: The Murder of Gregory May

By Frank Bender and Paul Plevakas

On August 27, 2001, sitting beneath a trailer at the Kearney Truck Plaza in Kearney, Missouri, a head was discovered encased in hardened concrete by the Plaza's owner, Steven Rhodes.

The police were notified and an autopsy was performed on the head. The medical examiner had hopes that the concrete retained the facial features of the victim. Upon careful removal of the concrete, the medical examiner was disappointed to find out that a hat had been placed over the head before the concrete was poured. This left no recognizable impression in the concrete.

The Kearney Police department posted information about the head on their website in hope of identifying the victim. The investigators knew the head was that of a 40-60 year old man with teeth in good condition and extensive dental work.

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Commissioner's Message

To my fellow Vidocqians:

For the Year 2007, I wish all of you and your loved ones a year of happiness, health and prosperity. In addition, I pray that everyone, in particular those who have lost someone to the violence that pervades our country, know peace.

As members of the Vidocq Society, we are blessed with being able to help in some way these people whose sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, or friends have been victims of unsolved murders.

On February 2007, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the discovery of the unknown child, known the world over as the "Boy in the Box." I am hoping that this will be the year we can put a name on his tombstone at Ivy Hill Cemetery. In association with this, I would mention that the longtime creator and Webmaster of the "America's Unknown Child" website, George Knowles passed away this December. May his soul rest in peace; and as I picture in my mind George in Heaven walking alongside of our unknown child, I know it is.

Have a great year.

Sincerely,
Bill Fleisher



Bookspan's Bullets

By Dr. Jolie Bookspan, Science Officer of the Vidocq Society

Not Nice Christmas Crimes

In Hamilton County, Ohio, two teens were arrested for stabbing an inflatable 12-foot-tall Frosty the Snowman with screwdrivers. The same Frosty had survived two previous stabbing attacks. In Anderson, South Carolina, David Allen Rodgers, 42, was arrested for driving while intoxicated at the wheel of a float during the annual Christmas parade. At his court hearing, Rodgers said, "I made a very bad judgment on my part." According to The Catholic League, which tracks nativity vandalism, "crush crimes" occurred in 35 cities from Fayetteville, North Carolina, to Mission Viejo, California. More seriously, John Michael Barton, 55, dressed as Santa Claus with a stuffed Rudolph in his motorcycle sidecar abducted an 8-year-old girl outside a South Carolina convenience store where the girl's family had also stopped. After a chase at speeds of up to 80 mph, Barton was apprehended and returned the little girl.

- CBS News Dec. 24, 2006

US Government Creates a Wikipedia for Spies

The office of U.S. Intelligence announced introduction of a "top-secret web system" to allow thousands of intelligence analysts and other officials to collaboratively add and edit content on the government's classified Intelink. The new system, called "Intellipedia," is available to the 16 agencies of the U.S. intelligence community, the Transportation Security Administration, and national laboratories. Less restrictive versions exist for "secret" and "sensitive but unclassified" material. Although there are concerns about media "leaks," officials hope proper use of Intellipedia will help avoid errors similar to those that led to the 2002 national intelligence estimate that Saddam Hussein possessed stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction. Intelligence officials plan to provide access to Britain, Canada, Australia, and possibly China. Senior intelligence analyst Fred Hassani said, "We'd hope to get down to the doctor in Shanghai who may have a useful contribution on avian flu."

- MSNBC by way of Reuters, Oct 31, 2006

Man Stopped for DUI Continues Drinking During Arrest

Manchester New Hampshire police pulled over Patrick Allain, 35, for driving drunk over the holidays. Allain continued to drink a 40-ounce bottle of beer, telling officers, "You can charge me with whatever you want it's not going to stop me from drinking and driving." Allain has been previously arrested four times for driving while intoxicated.

-WMUR-TV, December 28 2006

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P.O. Box 40285, Continental Station
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Commissioner
William L. Fleisher

Deputy Commissioners
Kenneth D. Freeman
Fred A. Bornhofen

Communications Office
Paul D. Plevakas, Editor
Voice: (215) 545-1450 — Fax: (215) 545-1773
paudav1@earthlink.net — www.vidocq.org

New FDA Test Detects Fake Bioterror Agents

Researchers at the Food and Drug Administration's National Center for Toxicological Research (NCTR) are developing a quick, cost-effective mass spectrometry test to distinguish real bioterror agents from hoax materials. The testing is similar to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's fingerprint library for criminals. A researcher can take patterns generated by a mass spectrometer's analysis of a substance, and compare them with a database of known substances for immediate recognition.

-http://www.fda.gov/fdac/features/2006/606_bioterror.html

Pennsylvania Man Arrested on a 23-Year-Old Bench Warrant

Merle Hulbert Jr. said he had no idea his driving-while-intoxicated charge was still open. Hulbert's former attorney has since died and McKean County Judge John Yoder noted that Ronald Reagan was president when the warrant for failing to appear at a hearing was issued. Judge Yoder ordered the case to be scheduled for a plea and told prosecutors he hopes they have a witness with a good memory.

-The Bradford Era, <http://www.bradfordera.com>

What's a Headway?

How much does a human head weigh? The average human head weighs around 4.5 kilograms (10 pounds). Another question is how do you weigh it? You can cut off someone's head and weigh it, but how can you weigh someone's head without cutting it off? One standard way to weigh body parts is to measure the volume of the part by immersing it in water to see the volume of water it displaces. To measure the displacement of someone's head, they must lower their head into a tub of water vertically and crown downwards until the water reaches the base of the chin. The water needs to be as near to 0 degrees as the volunteer could bear (to know the water density). The water that spills over the sides of the experimental tub is collected and its volume measured. It is also good to repeat the immersion several times to make sure you have a repeatable result. Then you can estimate the weight of the head from the volume of water displaced. This estimate is also based on charts and tables of average body weight compared to displaced water.

Forensic Terminology

Vital Reaction: When a skin injury is sustained while the victim is still alive, a flush surrounds the injury due to dilation of small vessels. An injury inflicted after death when circulation has stopped does not produce this flushing.

Part III: Resources in Cold Case Investigations

By Richard H. Walton, V.S.M.

Cold case homicide investigation entails investigator awareness and understanding of a plethora of issues and avenues specific to the task of re-investigating these crimes. These investigations build upon the previous written record as well as the identification, collection, and retention of evidence, sometimes decades in the past. Not uncommonly, review of a long dormant case identifies evidence related issues, including evidence that is missing, physically deteriorated, or biologically corrupted. Among the most common instances are old crime scene photos and audio/video tapes that have faded or become inaudible, or articles with biological material that has degraded. Investigator awareness and utilization of additional investigative resources can help move a case forward toward resolution, or return it to the unsolved archives.

Cold case investigations may utilize the same investigative tools as those used for a hot homicide, including criminal investigative analysis, geographic profiling, and wiretaps, but also forensic anthropology, odontology, document examination and art, as well. Other resources in cold cases include:

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) - <http://www.ncmec.org>

Founded in 1984, this organization is a public-private partnership established as a national clearinghouse and resource center on issues addressing missing/exploited children. A number of services are offered, including 1) forensic age progression, reconstruction of facial mages, and computer assistance in creating artist composites; 2) handwriting comparison and analysis; 3) assistance in identification of children from confiscated child pornography; 4) no-cost DNA testing of child or remains of persons estimated to be under 21 years of age; 5) investigative assistance, including immediate assistance, long term case review, inter-state follow-up including witness interview assistance, equipment and technical support, and 6) family advocacy services, personal assistance, and media relations.

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The Head in the Bucket: The Murder of Gregory May

In January, 2001, Don May had not been able to contact his father Gregory May. Gregory did not reply to his son's telephone calls. It was customary for May to call his son several times a month. Calls to friends of his fathers did lead to any information on his father's whereabouts. Gregory May had not called his daughter or ex-wife Sheila, as was customary.

After three weeks of fruitless efforts to learn of their father's whereabouts Don and his sister Shannon traveled to Bellevue, Iowa, to file a missing persons report with the Bellevue Police Department.

Gregory May, 55 lived in Bellevue, Iowa. He was a collector of civil war memorabilia and Indian artifacts and a tattoo artist. He was divorced with a son and daughter. In January 2001 Gregory May rented his basement to his best friend of 30 years Douglas DeBruin and his girlfriend Julie Miller.

Gregory and Sheila May were married in Kenosha, Wisconsin, November 1965. They separated in 1976 and were divorced in 1978. The divorce was amicable; there was no custody battle over their two children or struggle over property. Gregory stayed in touch with his ex-wife by telephone and would visit her on holidays. Sheila last saw Gregory on Christmas 1999. That is when he told her he had moved to Bellevue.

A police investigation found that Douglas DeBruin and his girlfriend Julie Miller were the last people to see Gregory May. DeBruin and Miller were seen packing May's civil war memorabilia collection into a used Ford F750 Ryder truck Debruin had purchased. They had also gave away some of May's furniture to a Bellevue resident, Jackie Cram.

Investigators spoke with Jan Buman who had been dating Gregory May since July 2000. She knew Douglas DeBruin and his girlfriend Julie Miller as May's friends.

The night of May's murder, Buman was suppose to meet May at his house at 8 p.m. She went to the back door and rang the doorbell, then tried the door with no reply. She peered through the window and through a space below the shade she was able to see the lower half of Greg May sitting in a kitchen chair motionless and Julie Miller wiping something off the floor. She went to the Frontier restaurant and called the house. The

answering machine picked up. Buman returned from the Frontier Restaurant and heard the sound that "reminded her of drawers banging." She then went to the property manager, George Volrath, and asked him to let her in the house. He declined because she did not live at the residence. She called the following Sunday and Julie Miller answered, telling her that Greg May had gone to Chicago. The following Wednesday, Buman returned to Bellevue and found the house empty the furniture and civil war memorabilia were gone. She never heard from Greg May again.

On March 1, 2001, Rick Rahn, special agent for the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) was called into the investigation by the Bellevue police Chief, Lynn Schwager. The investigators found Greg May's 1996 red Chevrolet Blazer at an impound lot in Aurora, Illinois. It was turned over to criminalists at the DCI for analysis.

As the investigation continued a fellow collector notified Police Chief, Lynn Schwager that pieces from May's civil war collection were coming up for auction at the Rock Island Auction Company in Moline, Illinois. Armed with a list of the stolen items Police Chief, Lynn Schwager and Special Agent Rick Rahn notified Patrick Frances Hogan, the owner of the auction house, that the items were stolen. Schwager arrived with a search warrant to seize the items.

The seller of the items was Mary Klar. She said the items were her uncle's. Whenever the auction house tried to contact Mary Klar they always got Julie Johnson who said she was handling the auction for her mother. Julie Johnson in reality was Julie Miller and Mary Klar was her mother.

Debruin and Miller were arrested in Flagstaff, Arizona in April 2001 on outstanding warrants. Debruin was still driving the Ryder truck. Investigators searched the vehicle for evidence and found a weigh station ticket that put them in close proximity to Kearney, Missouri where the head was found.

Evidence against Debruin and Miller mounted. DeBruin was charged with first-degree murder and first-degree theft. Miller was charged with transporting stolen property across state lines.

The Head in the Bucket: The Murder of Gregory May

During DeBruin's trial Miller testified for the prosecution that DeBruin had strangled May with a yellow nylon rope on January 11, 2001. Calmly she recalled the murder and subsequent dismemberment of May: After he was killed, May's body was carried to the basement. The throat was cut draining the blood into the laundry tub. May's body was then cut up with a knife and electric chainsaw. The body parts were wrapped in plastic. The torso was weighted down and thrown off the Savanna-Sabula Bridge in Illinois. The other body parts were scattered north of Bellevue along Highway 52. The head was placed in a five-gallon bucket. DeBruin covered the head with his knit cap and poured cement into the bucket and inserted a blue reflector in the cement. Miller admitted participating in the dismemberment using a knife she would later discard with the body parts.

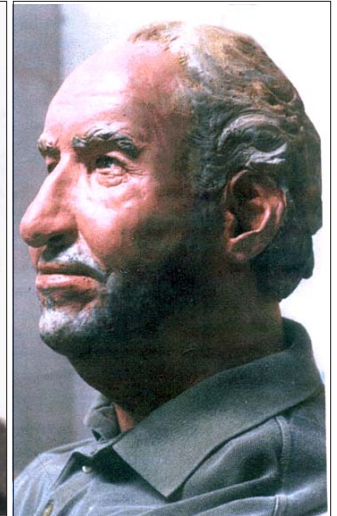
DeBruin testified in his own defense claiming that Miller had killed May. His memory of the dismemberment was "gray" and he could not recall the details of what took place.

After deliberating for two hours and 15 minutes the jury returned a verdict of guilty in the murder of Gregory May. DeBruin was convicted of first-degree murder and first-degree theft. Miller is serving a three-year sentence in federal prison for transporting stolen property across state lines.

The identity of the skull found at Kearney Truck Plaza, in Kearney, Missouri remained a mystery. The tie between the murder of Gregory May and the skull was not made until four years after his murder. Famed forensic sculptor Frank Bender of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was asked to create a likeness from the skull in the hopes of identifying the victim. The bust that Bender created was placed on the Doe Network website. The Doe network is an organization of volunteers dedicated to helping law enforcement connect missing persons with John/Jane cases. A volunteer from the organization helped connect Frank Bender's sculpture with a photograph of Gregory May. The identity was confirmed through a comparison of dental records.



Photo of Gregory May



Frank Bender's Bust

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as the Montgomery County Coroner working there since 1992. He was an assistant professor at Temple University teaching criminalistics.

During the presentation colleagues reminisced of his fortitude and bearing in standing up to attorneys who attempted to discredit him during his testimony as an expert witness. The opportunities he provided, giving Frank Bender his first chance to create a forensic sculpture and the freedom for which he shared his knowledge in forensic pathology.

The memory of Dr. Halbert Fillinger will remain with us all, for those he has worked with, those he has taught, and for those who have not met but know of his greatness through the memories of those he has touched.

**“veritas EST veritas”
truth IS truth**

National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center

This system is a program of the National Institute of Justice, the research and development arm of the U.S. Department of Justice, and is composed of a series of technical centers located across the nation. Each center has a different technology focus and operates independently, yet support one another and exchange information about their areas of special expertise. They may assist cold case investigation by providing forensic analysis of various forms of evidence as well as technical assistance in audio or videotape enhancement, explosives and scenario verification. www.justnet.org.

Carol Sund/Carrington Memorial Reward Foundation

This fund was established as a result of the murders of Carol Sund and her daughter Juli and their friend Silvina Pelosso at Yosemite National Park in 1999. Recognizing the role that media exposure and a reward played in the resolution of this case, this fund was established to help law enforcement locate kidnapped

or missing persons. This fund offers assistance to families without economic means to offer assistance to law enforcement. www.carolesundfoundation.com.

American Academy of Forensic Sciences

One of the world’s leading forensic groups, this body can provide potential sources of information and those with expertise in particular fields. <http://www.aafs.org>.

ViCAP (Violent Criminal Apprehension Program)

Has been operated by the FBI since 1985. Through documentation and analysis of a variety of crime scene, victim, and offender characteristics, this program seeks to identify patterns and link crimes heretofore not known to investigators and to provide a database of characteristics of homicides. Utilization of this tool is an important step in the beginning of a cold case investigation.

Other well known resources include “**America’s Most Wanted**” television show (www.amw.com). Cold case investigators may also obtain assistance from the FBI as well as the United States Marshall’s Service and of course the Vidocq Society.

Solve the Mystery

What practice was carried out to determine the inner workings of the human body and as a torture in WWII?

If you know the answer email us at: paudav1@earthlink.net

Answer to October 2006 Mystery of the Month

If someone is faster than a speeding bullet how fast must they travel?

Bullet velocity is determined by the load of the cartridge, weight of the bullet, and barrel length. Other factors are dimensions in the chamber, throat and start of the rifling that affect bullet velocity. Hand guns speeds vary: .32 S&W - 680 fps, .22 long rimfire - 1,125 fps compare to a .44 Remington Magnum - 1,610 fps. Game rifles: .458 Winchester - 2,040 fps compared to a .30/06 - 2,700 fps. This is a sampling of some common bullets and proves that **no one is faster than a speeding bullet**.

The Vidocq Society
Post Office Box 40285
Continental Station
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

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