

WHO KILLED SCOTT MACKLEM?

Author's Note: Every wrongful conviction causes dual torment: the torment of the innocent yet imprisoned individual, and the social torment that the actual perpetrator remains free. This blog focuses primarily on the latter, in the hope that we will gain more knowledge about the murderer of Scott Macklem.

Post #2: Reputations

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You may wonder how the investigation of the murder of Scott Macklem resulted in a wrongful conviction. Scott was 20 years old when he was found shot to death in a parking lot at St. Clair County Community College on November 5, 1986. Scott grew up in Croswell, Michigan. His father was elected Mayor of Croswell in 1982, while Scott was attending Croswell-Lexington High School. Scott's father also owned an insurance agency in Croswell. He was an influential member of the community.

Although Scott was a good student and excellent athlete in high school, there is evidence that things changed after he graduated. He was slipping as a student at St. Clair County Community College, and didn't have the ambition one would expect from the son of such a successful and prominent father. There is broad speculation that Scott had become involved in using cocaine, and that he may have even been involved in dealing cocaine. If this is true, and they were aware of (or even suspected) this, it was undoubtedly embarrassing to his family, and to his pregnant fiancée.

Mysteriously, no one involved in the investigation of Scott's murder focused on any information about Scott's lifestyle and associations in 1986 and 1987. Rather than focusing on Scott, the police pursued a different angle, and one that led them to a person of "bad character." This person could be the fall guy for the widely publicized murder of an influential person's son. Is it possible that the investigation intentionally sought to avoid making public any information that would damage Scott's reputation, or that of his family?

In addition to avoiding the potential embarrassment of revealing Scott's possible involvement with drugs, the conviction, albeit wrongful, also undoubtedly brought emotional closure to his family and friends. This may have been understandable, but it certainly wasn't justifiable. Thirty years later it's trumped a hundred-fold by the fact that an innocent man has been incarcerated for a

crime he didn't commit. It's trumped a thousand-fold by the fact that Scott's murderer is still at large.

There is no intent on my part to disrespect the memory of Scott Macklem, or to disrespect Scott's family. What I respect is the truth. And there has been a paucity of truth from those who were closest to Scott and closest to the investigation of his murder. In the effort to search for truth, Scott's family, his friends, and those involved in the original investigation have refused to acknowledge the mountain of evidence which points away from the convicted individual. In fact, they won't talk about the case at all. They feel safe in their comfort zone of protected reputation and emotional closure, built upon fear and denial.

Reputations be damned. It's long past the time to worry about whether someone is embarrassed. It's time for everyone to respect the truth, and solve this crime. I'm reaching out to anyone - and everyone - who knows that truth. I'm reaching out to Scott's friends, his family, his fiancée's friends and family, anyone who knew Scott in high school and thereafter, anyone who knew Scott at St. Clair County Community College, or at the men's clothing store where he worked in 1985 and 1986. I'm reaching out to anyone who knew Scott's fiancée Crystal when she worked at the video store or at the State Farm Insurance agency in Croswell. Anyone - everyone - even if you have never spoken about this case before, it's time to come forward. It's time to come clean.

I especially appeal to those who have spoken about this case before, from a place of fear or manipulation. Please show respect for the truth. Consider this: the jailhouse snitch, who claimed that the accused confessed to him during a brief encounter, came clean years later and admitted on video that he made the story up to get leniency on his prison sentence. A convicted felon had the good conscience to speak the truth. He couldn't live with his deceit any longer. Can you?

It's time to find out who killed Scott Macklem. If you have any information that may assist in this effort, I implore you to contact Dave Sanders at bdanders@provinginnocence.org.

Thank you, let's find Scott's killer!

