

# Controversial handgun is back in court

By JACKIE KLEIN

A gun wielded by a Southfield man, which cut down his 20-year-old girlfriend in 1975, is once again the center of legal controversy.

Joseph Roberts, Sr., father of 24-year-old Joseph Roberts, Jr., who was acquitted of the shooting death of Marcia Craig by reason of insanity, is suing Southfield Police Chief Edward Ritenour and the city for malicious prosecution and false arrest.

Roberts Sr., a former claims adjuster with Republic Insurance Company of Southfield, was tried in 1976 on a charge of

embezzling from Republic the murder weapon used by his son. The case was later dismissed.

Roberts recently filed the \$500,000 lawsuit against Ritenour and the city in U.S. District Court, claiming he was deprived of his civil rights by "frivolous criminal prosecution."

Roberts was employed as a senior theft investigator for Republic in 1972 and 1973. Because he entered high crime areas in his job, the suit says, he was given a license to carry a concealed weapon.

**ROBERTS RECOVERED AN \$80 PISTOL IN**

the course of an investigation, the lawsuit states. He bought the gun and it was registered in his name, according to the lawsuit.

In March 1975, the suit alleges, Southfield police seized the pistol as evidence in Oakland County Circuit Court criminal proceedings against Roberts' son.

About a year later, Roberts sued the city and police department for the return of his gun, but the suit was dismissed in Oakland County Circuit Court.

The new lawsuit alleges that Ritenour arrested Roberts for embezzling the pistol. Without any supporting evidence, the lawsuit

claims, Ritenour and the city continued criminal prosecution against Roberts.

"The defendants publicly and without justification castigated Joseph Roberts in newspaper publications of large circulation," the lawsuit says. "Public accusations of guilt before court hearing, caused Roberts to lose his job."

The lawsuit claims Roberts won the embezzlement case because the prosecution failed to present evidence to support a conviction.

According to a warrant signed by Ritenour in July 1976, Roberts took a Walther P-38 millimeter automatic pistol, valued at more than \$100, from Republic without his employer's consent.

POLICE also accused Roberts of "fraudulently" taking a 22 calibre Colt pistol valued at more than \$100 from Republic.

Ritenour said the

claims manager of Republic told him Roberts had purchased the weapons from insured persons in claims settlements. Ritenour said the guns were recovered by Detroit police and Roberts claimed them.

The insurance com-

pany claims manager, according to Ritenour, said the company never sold or agreed to give Roberts custody of the pistols. Company procedures, he said, are to sell recovered property at auction or return it to the original owner.

## Autumn fair set at YWCA

Artists and craftsmen interested in participating in the third annual YWCA Fall Fair may make inquiries now at the Northwest Branch YWCA, 2600 Grand River. The show will include art, crafts and antiques.

The arts and crafts show and sale will take place inside the YWCA building from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 5.

Any professional or amateur artist wishing space for their medium should make inquiries at the YWCA while table space is still available. Tables are included in the \$15 registration fee for the show.

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