

Awaits sentencing

Andrews convicted of Srock murder

Oliver Andrews faces Jan. 2 sentencing, following his conviction this week of first degree murder in the 1976 slaying of Birmingham teenager Sheila Srock.

The sentence will be imposed by Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Farrell Roberts, who presided over the four-day murder trial which ended late Tuesday.

The jury returned a guilty verdict after less than two hours deliberation. Conviction of first degree murder carries a sentence of mandatory life imprisonment in Michigan. The jury could have found Andrews, a 42-year-old North Carolina resident, guilty of lesser included crimes, such as second degree murder or manslaughter.

Andrews' court-appointed attorney, Joseph Hardig, was unavailable for comment at press time, but it was reported that he was planning to appeal the conviction.

Hardig had unsuccessfully challenged the admissibility of a confession made by Andrews, claiming it was made under duress. Police and

prosecutors said the confession, admitted by Roberts at a pre-trial hearing, greatly enhanced chances for conviction.

Birmingham Police Lt. Jack Kalbfleisch, who pieced together evidence and doggedly pursued Andrews for 14 months, said he was gratified by the conviction.

"It was a tremendous effort by an awful lot of investigators all over the country and it proves that the system (of justice) still works," said Kalbfleisch.

"I'm thankful we were able to do the job and I think we've fulfilled our obligation to Sheila's family and to Sheila."

OAKLAND COUNTY Prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson praised the Birmingham Police Department.

"It was a very lengthy investigation and to the credit of Birmingham they never lost interest and were able to see it through to a successful conclusion," said Patterson.

"They continued to pursue it beyond the point where some departments

would have given up," Patterson added.

Patterson described the trial as "almost anti-climactic" because the dispute over admissibility of the confession was settled at an earlier hearing.

"That was the tough part of the case," Patterson said. "Once that was admitted as evidence the outcome was nearly a foregone conclusion."

Prior to his extradition for the Srock trial, Andrews was serving a 102-year sentence in Virginia for attempted murder of a police officer.

Patterson said, however, that Andrews will be eligible for parole in 12 years on the Virginia conviction, which took place after the Srock murder.

Kalbfleisch, meanwhile, said there were a couple of surprises during the brief trial and that he was apprehensive about conviction.

"You're never sure as to what the jury is going to do," he said. Kalbfleisch said he was surprised Andrews testified in his own behalf

and that it wasn't necessary for Kalbfleisch to take the witness stand.

Andrews testified that the confession was not freely given because police made promises in exchange and that he only told investigators what he knew they wanted to hear.

Kalbfleisch said Asst. Prosecutor Edward Soenick did such a thorough job of assembling and presenting evidence to the jury that Kalbfleisch didn't have to testify.

In the taped confession, Andrews says he entered the Villa Street house where Miss Srock was babysitting in search of jewelry and silverware. There were no lights on in the house and Andrews was surprised when confronted by the babysitter.

Police have linked Andrews to more than 200 burglaries. He states in the confession that he shot Miss Srock to prevent being later identified. Police said the 14-year-old Marian High School student was also raped.

The Srock murder in January 1976 was the first in Birmingham in 11 years.

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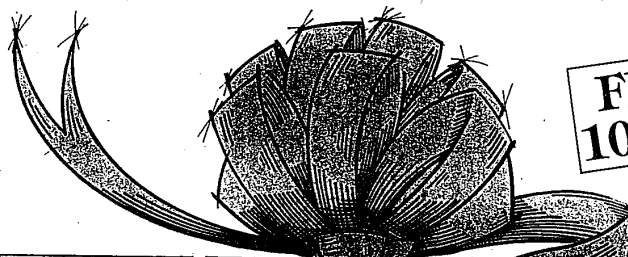


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