

Pontiac Tempest sought

By MARY CONNELLY-SZCZESNY

People who have owned or driven Pontiac Tempests are the target of a massive search this week by police seeking the Oakland County child killer.

Police are checking out tips about individuals who might have driven a 1964-67 blue Pontiac Tempest during the time several children were murdered in Oakland County.

The search for Tempest drivers comes after 20 months of investigation by the Oakland County Homicide Task Force investigating the kidnap-murders of four county children in 1976 and 1977.

Michigan State Police Lt. Robert Robertson, commander of the task force, said Thursday that a Tempest is believed to figure in at least two of the four Oakland County child killings.

A witness has reported seeing a light blue 1967 Tempest with primer spots on the driver's side on the shoulder of northbound I-75 in Troy about 3:30 a.m. Dec. 26, 1976, Robertson said.

The car reported by the witness was near the scene where the body of 12-year-old Jill Robinson of Royal Oak was found.

A 1964-67 Pontiac Tempest or Buick Skylark is now also believed to figure in the murder of 10-year-old Kristine

Mihelich of Berkeley. Detectives pinned the car models after studying photographs of marks made in the snow on Bruce Lane in Franklin near where the girl's body was found Jan. 21, 1977.

On Thursday, police also revealed that a witness saw a small, shiny Pontiac or Buick near where the body of 12-year-old Mark Stebbins was discovered in Southfield Feb. 19, 1976.

"THE PHONES are jangling pretty good," Robertson said Friday after appealing for help in tracking Tempest drivers Thursday. "It's working. I'm not sure of the value of the tips because I haven't gone through them yet."

The new clues in the murder investigation have led police to seek someone who probably drove a blue Pontiac Tempest during the period of February 1976 to January 1977.

Robertson said police continue to theorize that a blue American Motors Gremlin with a white hockey stripe figures in the kidnap-murder of 11-year-old Timothy King of Birmingham in March 1977.

"The ability to drive a certain kind of car may be more important than the ownership of the car," Robertson said. "It may just be someone with access to both types of cars. Maybe his mother has got a Tempest."

"WHAT WE'RE looking for is the person who knows someone and says 'Oh, he couldn't be the killer.' They should let us know and let us decide whether or not he's involved."

"This guy isn't going to have a label on him," Robertson said. "Someone may think their neighbor is a nice old man or a nice young guy and wouldn't kill. Let us decide who might do the killing and who might not."

The witnesses who saw intermediate-size cars near Mark Stebbins' and Jill Robinson's bodies are not new to the task force, Robertson said.

Troy police checked many tips about owners of blue Tempests following the discovery of Jill Robinson's body.

"A lot of the Tempests have been checked out," Robinson said Friday. "We have to go back now with these new tips and verify those we cleared."

THE PLACEMENT of a 1964-67 Tempest or Buick Skylark near where Kristine Mihelich's body was found in Franklin is the result of hundreds of hours of work by police and auto companies.

Birmingham Police Lt. Jack Kalbfleisch, assigned to the task force, and FBI special agent M. Nickells have been working since Jan. 21, 1977 to identify the car model based on photographs of marks in the snow near where the girl's body was found.

The investigation was completed two weeks ago and made public Thursday.

Car marks were found in a snowbank on the west side of Bruce Lane in Franklin and some tire tracks were also found on the east side of the street near where the body was dropped, Kalbfleisch said.

"Due to investigative techniques, we know that the impression in the snowbank was made between 3 and 5 a.m. the morning Kristine Mihelich was found," Kalbfleisch said. "And we know her body would have been dropped there at the same time period."

FROM THE MARKS, it appears the car was headed southbound on Bruce

Lane but turned around to re-enter Thirteen Mile.

"Bruce Lane appears desolate at first," Kalbfleisch said. "However, there is a rise in the road between Thirteen Mile and the cul de sac at the end of Bruce Lane."

The detective said the cul de sac and its homes come into view at the rise in the road because of yard lights illuminating the area.

At that point, the car apparently made a sharp turn to the east, causing the front end to hit a snowbank and then backed into another snowbank on the west side of the street before re-entering Thirteen Mile, Kalbfleisch said.

THE DETECTIVES determined that the photographs of the marks in the snow showed the undercarriage of the back end of an automobile, Kalbfleisch said. From subsequent investigation, it appeared the gas tank, exhaust pipe and rear fender seam, had left the marks, he said.

"We then went through a federal agency and from there we got the names of people considered experts in photograph interpretation," Kalbfleisch said. "These sources directed us to a man considered expert in ground photo interpretation."

The interpretation expert, who police will not identify, determined the measurements of the car's marks within one-half inch, Kalbfleisch said.

Help was then sought from the auto makers. Each company was asked to check the measurements against car models produced during a specified number of years, Kalbfleisch would not disclose how the detectives determined the model years under investigation.

"WE WENT back and discussed with representatives of each company what makes would be compatible."

Kalbfleisch said. "After some investigation, we narrowed it down to Ford and General Motors and asked them to investigate in greater detail."

"Finally, it came down to a General Motors product with an A-body," Kalbfleisch said. And from deviations in the different types of models, we came down to the Pontiac Tempest or the Buick Skylark."

AT ONE POINT, investigators tried

to tie the snow marks to the Gremlin reportedly seen by a witness in the Birmingham parking lot from which Timothy King was abducted.

Some of the marks in the snowbank might have been made by a Gremlin bumper guard, police theorized.

However, the photo interpreter ruled out that theory. Placement of exhaust pipes and other measurements of the Gremlin also did not match the photographed marks, Kalbfleisch said.

Hypnotism rids persons of unwanted bad habits

(Continued from page 1A)

the kinds of persons who usually volunteer for an entertainer-hypnotist's call because they already are responding to the hypnotist's suggestion, he explains.

THESE TYPES of individuals are very receptive to the most common form of hypnosis—TV ads, Watt says. The repetition and higher volume allowable affect the analyzing abilities of viewers, he says.

"If you're not paying as much attention, they're more effective," he says. "That's why they're geared to the 10-year-old mentality."

Two opposing thoughts cannot exist in the subconscious mind at the same time, Watt claims. Therefore, when a client's negative feelings toward the potential goal must be eliminated. For smokers, he suggests they start thinking like a non-smoker, and planning that thought in the subconscious will eliminate the negative feeling that the smoking cannot be controlled.

For example, if a smoker believes that the shakes, irritability and weight gain will accompany withdrawal, those symptoms will be present. If the client loses those preconceptions, he or she can quit without unpleasant side-effects, he says.

He suggests the clients play a tape twice a day for about two weeks after the hypnosis session to reinforce the thoughts presented to the subconscious mind. After two weeks, he asks to be informed of their progress. If they're having trouble, he may suggest another session.

AS A FORMER obese person who found success in losing weight through hypnosis, Watt is a firm believer in its appeal. He practices self-induced hypnosis every day for relaxation and reinforcement. For his potential clients, he refuses to perform tests to determine a suggestibility quotient.

He prefers to approach each person in a positive manner. He uses the blindfold and taped ocean sounds to block out extraneous sights and sounds and heighten subconscious awareness. That's the extent of the "tricks" he says.

"It's totally unnecessary to touch anyone," he says. Sometimes when a client doesn't want to come out of a state of relaxation, he may touch them on the shoulder and mention that his fee is \$100 an hour and they can stay "hypnotized" as long as they like. "They come out right away," he quips.

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