

## Two Suspects in Custody. One Takes Own Life

# 5 Die in Murder Rampage

*Louis Smit*  
*Feb. 24, 1979*  
Five persons were left dead and two suspects in custody last week following a robbery and murder spree which stretched through Georgetown, Colleton and Horry Counties.

Fifteenth Judicial Circuit Solicitor Jim Dunn says he will seek the death penalty for one of the suspects who is charged with the murder of two Georgetown residents and one Horry County resident.

Dunn said he has notified the court-appointed attorneys for 24-year-old Ronald R. Woomer of Huntington, W. Va. that he will seek the death penalty against him for the slaying of Louise Sellers.

Mrs. Sellers was abducted Thursday night from a store in Pawleys Island where she worked as a clerk. She was allegedly raped by Woomer and Eugene Shaar, 40, following her abduction and then killed by a shotgun blast.

Skaar later turned a shotgun on himself and committed suicide as police surrounded Woomer and him at the Komo-Mai Motel in Myrtle Beach.

A third man was arrested Saturday and charged in connection with the crimes.

Fred Thomas Whitehead, 30, who owns Myrtle Beach Coin and Stamps at 7 Arcade Building in Myrtle Beach, was charged with being an accessory before and after the fact of the murder of John Turner in Colleton County.

Police say Whitehead arranged with Woomer and Skaar to kill Turner and steal his coin collection.

The 67-year-old Turner was shot and robbed of a suitcase full of coins Thursday afternoon, according to police. They said some of Turner's coins were found in the motel room where Skaar and Woomer were hiding.

A statewide manhunt ended about 11:50 p.m. Thursday when two Myrtle Beach policemen radioed headquarters they had found a 1972 Maverick which matched the description of the car used by the suspects in the series of robberies and murders earlier in the day in Colleton, Georgetown and Horry Counties.

According to police reports, the two suspects left their room at the Komo-Mai Motel about 11 a.m. Thursday. Skaar had registered there under the name of John Fisher on Wednesday.

According to witnesses, two men in a brown Maverick stopped at a store in Cottage town near Walterboro, which is about 30 miles west of Charleston, around 3:30 p.m. Thursday to ask directions to John Turner's house.

Turner's wife told police she saw two men in a brown Maverick pull into her driveway about 4 p.m. just before she left to visit a neighbor.

When she returned 45 minutes later, she found her husband dead from a single bullet wound in the back of the head.

A coin collection and his wallet were missing. Both were later found in Skaar's motel room at the Komo-Mai.

About 5:30 p.m., 78 miles away and 10 miles west of Georgetown, two men in a brown Maverick stopped for water for their overheating car at Arnie L. Richardson's house in the sparsely populated Sampit Community, according to Georgetown County Sheriff Woodrow Carter.

Within a few minutes, the 27-year-old Richardson and his sister-in-law Earldean Wright, 36, were dead from shotgun blasts.

Five-year-old Diane Richardson escaped by riding her bicycle from the scene with her father's blood splattered on her hands after she had tried to revive him. Her mother was at work and survived.

About 7 p.m. Thursday, two men entered Jack's Mini Mall, a convenience store on U.S. 17 near the northern entrance to Pawleys Island.

They pulled a sawed-off shotgun and a .38 caliber pistol on the two clerks in the store, 25-year-old Wanda Summers, and 35-year-old Louise Sellers.

Mrs. Sellers was working at the time, although Mrs. Summers had just dropped by. Mrs. Summers' husband and 5-year-old daughter were waiting outside.

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The gunmen then ordered Mrs. Summers' husband into the store. He carried his daughter in his arms, and followed their instructions by lying flat on the floor, holding his daughter under him.

Three men and another small child who were bystanders were also told to lie down on the floor and remain still or they would be shot.

After taking about \$300 from the store's cash register, the two gunmen then forced Mrs. Summers and Mrs. Sellers to go with them in a brown Maverick.

Less than an hour later, the two women were shotgunned and left on a deserted dirt road off S.C. 544 near Socastee in Horry County.

Although Mrs. Summers had part of her jaw blown away when a shotgun was stuck under her chin, she managed to walk to a house on S.C. 544 where the occupants called for help.

Mrs. Sellers and Mrs. Summers were taken to Myrtle Beach Air Force Base Hospital and later transferred to the Medical University of South Carolina for emergency treatment. Mrs. Sellers died at 12:10 a.m. Friday.

Mrs. Summers was able to write notes about her attackers for police and her condition was listed as "stable" by hospital officials Friday night.