

Cold Case: Jerry Lee Armstrong  
30 Year Old Cold Case Still Looking for Answers  
Updated: Wednesday, 23 Sep 2009, 9:38 PM CDT  
Published : Wednesday, 23 Sep 2009, 9:38 PM CDT

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HERNANDO, Miss. - Almost 32 years after a Hernando high school quarterback disappeared on prom night, his family still hasn't given up hope that the case will be solved.

Jerry Lee Armstrong disappeared, in 1977. Today his brother, Johnny, is still searching for answers.

Johnny Armstrong says, "Hurts to look at him like that, gone that long, 32 years no body is talking."

December 23rd, 1977. 18-year old Jerry Lee Armstrong drove to prom at the National Guard Armory in his brothers 1973 White Pontiac LeMans. It was the last time the Hernando High School quarterback was seen.

DeSoto County Commander Fred Perez says, "Several people saw him at the dance, one saw him as he was leaving the dance that was the last time he was ever seen."

Commander Perez, recently dusted off the case. He says, not only was Jerry Lee Armstrong's body never found, neither was the car he was driving.

Perez says, "Normally on a robbery, burglary of an automobile we would have found the car somewhere abandoned, stripped, burned normally you're going to find the car, but no car."

Johnny believes his brother was murdered and a victim of mistaken identity. He thinks someone, possibly the Ku Klux Klan, was after his older brother, James, who was dating a white girl at the time...something he says was not accepted in Desoto County in 1977.

Jerry Lee was driving James' white LeMans that night. Deputies say they're not ruling anything out.

Perez says, "Anything could have happened to this young man but it's the not knowing part that you're going to lose sleep over."

Johnny says he and his family has lost a lot of sleep over the disappearance and the unwillingness of sheriff's deputies to investigate the case in 1977. Armstrong says, "I don't feel like they investigated like it was supposed to be investigated."

He's not the only one that thinks the case wasn't fully investigated.

Perez says the case file is unusually thin, showing a disorganized investigation or lack of interest.

Perez says, "pictures, initial reports, missing person reports, case logs of what action was taken when this man was reported missing, none of that was in the file."

Johnny says he's been told someone with "a lot of power" was involved with his brother's death. At one point, the FBI was investigating. They have since; made their files available to the Sheriff's Office who says the case will remain open until it's resolved.

Perez says, "There's no reason anyone would want him dead, everyone we interviewed says he was an average high school kid, never in trouble."

Armstrong says, "Jerry never been in trouble, Jerry never got a speeding ticket, never pulled over by police."

Both investigators and the Armstrong family believe the people responsible are alive and still in the area.

Perez says, "we're willing to talk to anybody who may have information doesn't have to be here at the sheriff's office, names don't have to be made public, we just need help, we need information."

Armstrong says, "These people who did this have to pay one way or another, if it's not here they'll get it when judgment day comes."

Sheriff's deputies say if you have information that can help them, call Crimestoppers at 662-429-TIPS. That's 662-429-8477. As always you may remain anonymous and may be eligible for a cash reward.

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