

A10 Friday, May 16, 2003

NEWS

Daily Press

Mystery

Continued from A1

dubbed the Parkway Murders committed by a serial killer who took at least six lives and harmed thousands before he vanished, too. The FBI can't say for sure if Cassandra and Keith were victims seven or eight. Unlike the others, their bodies were not found.

Today, Cassandra would have turned 34. The Colonial Parkway stretching from Jamestown to Yorktown was built as a link to the past. For Teri Halley Barnhill and Paula Halley Mehan, though, it's been a fork in a long and bitter road.

"I'm the pessimistic one," Teri said. "She's the optimist. I can't believe she's that way. There's so much evil in this world. It's funny I feel that way because I brought three children into this world. They'll never know what it's like to sleep under the stars or to listen your door unlock."

The gray York River flows past the spot where Keith's red 1982 Toyota Camry was abandoned on April 11, 1988. Across the parkway is a swath of trees as dense they stand like a forbidding fence. For a year after the disappearance, the Halleys would search here for miles, bulldozing through the woods with their bodies, ignoring the cuts and scratches and the maddening insects.

"Cassandra?" "Misty?" "Missy?" Their cries died out years ago. "I just want to know where she is," Teri said. "I want her back."

"IF THIS IS A LOVING GOD"
 Teri, shorter than Paula, is three years older than Paula and eight years older than Cassandra. She has a long face and straight, caramel-colored hair. Paula's face is rounder, and she wears her hair in waves.

"Teri needs two cups of 'real' coffee to get going each day. Paula has coffee," Teri says. "Paula needs church. 'We believe.' She says. Teri does not go to church. With no Cassandras to lead to go to, the grief never gets buried. "I had to get an answer. I'm not going," Teri said. "If this is a loving God, I'll have to see him myself some day."

Keith Call's parents never got an answer either. Richard W. Call died in 1988. Barbara DeLain Call died in 2001. They were both 60.

Looking a brother was hard to deal with. Douglas, 22 and living with his wife and two daughters in Gloucester. "But it was hard watching my parents. And I grew up and had kids. I could better relate to the pain they were going through."

"Watching the pain my parents had was the worst." Joanne Halley still believes her youngest daughter is alive. "Mothers never give up until someone proves them different," she said. "But don't know how many times I walked up to go to bed." In Richmond once, she circled a store, virtually stalking a girl who resembled her of Cassandra. "It's been so long that her features could have changed a bit," Joanne said. "I just walked around looking at her and looking at her and looking at her. I hope I didn't scare her. But you never give up looking."

Joanne is 62 now and lives with her husband, Glenn, 61, in Florida. Summers, they hit the road in a motor home, where Joanne passes the time with arts and crafts and speaking to God. "I imagine they probably look everywhere," Paula said. "I know Moss. She never gives up." "I do believe in miracles," Joanne said in a recent phone interview from a spot in Mississippi. "And I pray one day she would come home."

Parkway murders: unsolved but not forgotten

The FBI suspects these crimes, between 1986 and 1989, were committed by the same serial killer.

October 1989
 Daniel Lauer, 21
 Anastaria Phelps, 18
 Both found dead with marks on necks and in New Kent County with stab wounds.

October 1988
 Haley Cassandra, 14
 David Knobling, 20
 Both found dead in head of Ringwood Island in Old Bright County.



Both found dead with marks on necks and in New Kent County with stab wounds. (Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation)

Scholarship started
 Cassandra Halley would have turned 34 today. The Halley family established an endowed scholarship in her honor at Christopher Newport University.

To fund the scholarship, the family needs a minimum of \$10,000, which will be provided by the Christopher Newport University Educational Foundation. Each year, a student will receive 1 percent of the endowment's earnings. The family has committed to contributing \$5,000 to the endowment, \$4,000 of which was left by the Cassandras' friends and family given years ago for the Cassandra Halley search.

If you are interested in making a charitable, tax-deductible gift to the endowment, send contributions to the Christopher Newport University Educational Foundation, 494-8758.

Go to dailypress.com/parkway to read the Daily Press' original coverage of the investigations.

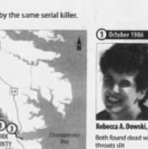
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and we didn't even know where to start." Once, while Teri led a search team on a nearby island, a gunman fired a shot. "He said 'the ground,'" Teri said. "Whoever it was got in the car and left." When physical searches proved pointless, the Halleys turned to psychic and private investigators, missing persons posters and appeals to the public.

In 1990, Joanne Halley appealed to the killer himself in an open letter that ran in the Daily Press. "I pray to My Almighty God that He will reach down and touch your heart and heal it of its pain, that through that healing, you will find the strength to allow for that you have done. I pray that statement will begin with you letting me know the whereabouts of my daughter, Sandra Halley and her friend, Keith Call." She told the killer her number was listed in the phone book. No one called.

She looks back on the investigation with the regret of modern perspective. Unlike the murdered Washington Intern Chandrea Lary, there was no 24-hour cable news coverage. Cassandra No FBI agents to coach and coax the Halleys at any conference. No daily media briefings delivered at the hot of their driveway. "I'm glad that things have changed, because the young ladies I see disappearing are getting help and getting assistance and support," Joanne said.

"I believe there is somebody in the city of Newport in town or Yorktown who knows what happened. I wish somebody would come forward." Teri, 42, and Paula, 39, are busy now with families of their own.



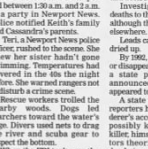
Rebecca A. Dowell, 21
 Both found dead with marks on necks and in New Kent County.



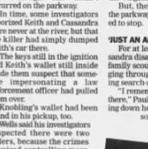
Kathleen Thomas, 27
 Both found dead with marks on necks and in New Kent County.



Keith Call, 20
 Car and clothes found in parkway pull-off in nearby river.



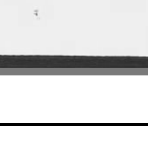
Cassandra Halley, 14
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Teri just working to be a full-time mom in Fredericksburg with a kid and two other children. She named her daughter, Mia Halley, after her mother. Mia Halley sleeps in her mother's old bedroom.

Paula, who works for the Virginia Living Museum, lives with her family in Newport News. "Life is pretty good," Paula said. "I have a wonderful son and a wonderful husband."

But there's something missing. Teri finished her bar. "The police no longer keep the gene's father made them every other system in their homes. They're both drawn to TV police dramas, as if the fictional detectives will someday get around to Cassandra's case file. "I think on my mind if I watch them catch the bad guys enough," Teri explained. "I usually they'll catch them."

Teri believes Cassandra was strong enough to have found her way home by now, if she was still alive.

Paula said that Cassandra is still alive but faded to a faint pink. Hope revived somewhat last month when Elizabeth Smart, the Utah teenager missing from her bedroom, was found alive months later. But she wasn't.

"I thought for sure we'd have an answer by now," Paula said. They never told us that there was never going to be an answer. "In my heart, just an answer would do."

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