

Victims: Sally Elisabeth Tharaldson

DOB: 03-11-34 Age 44

Virgil Lapanta

DOB: 12-21-14 Age 64

On 8-31-1978 at 1520hrs Mr. Jerry Tharaldson reported to the Duluth Police Dept. his wife Sally Tharaldson was missing. Mr. Tharaldson informed police that he had done his own investigation, and found that his ~~fr~~ wife was last seen at the Seaway motel with Virgil Lapanta at 2:15 am on the morning of 8-31-78.

Mr. Lapanta was an associate of the family and was known to stock pile liquor in his ~~former~~ room at the motel. Mr. Lapanta would later sell this liquor to friends when the liquor stores were closed. Mr. Lapanta was also known to sell small amounts of marijuana and sometimes spoke of being able to get other drugs.

Mrs. Tharaldson and Mr. Lapanta were considered missing persons on 8-31-78. All investigations & searches came up empty handed until 8-29-1983 when an ore boat the Philip R. Clarke of U.S. Steel, raised anchor in the Duluth harbor.

The Ship's anchor had raised the missing 78' 2 door Tornado with two bodies inside, Both in the back seat.

The bodies were later identified as Mr. Lapenta and Mrs. Tharaldson. Identification was confirmed solely on the belongings with them, the clothing they were wearing and the fractured collar bone Mrs. Tharaldson was known to have. Dental records for both bodies were unable to have been located. Autopsy of both bodies found no signs of trauma or damage to any vital organs. Cause of death determined to be drowning.

The two main suspects in this case are Mr. Tharaldson and his drinking buddy Robert Brodin. Mr. Tharaldson and Mr. Brodin were out drinking the night of 8-30-78 and early morning of 8-31-78 when the disappearance occurred. Mr. Tharaldson and his wife Sally were known to have a troubled relationship.