

Boy's body is found

The body of a 10-year-old patient at Fairview School and Training Center was found this morning in the school's recreational pond, Capt. Richard Bay of the Marion County sheriff's department said.

The body of Tony Webb was found underneath the dock by school employees, he said.

Deputies had been expected to begin dragging the pond this afternoon in search of the body of the boy, who was reported missing Sunday afternoon, according to Francis Smith of the State Mental Health Division.

The boy was committed to the school from Jackson County in 1971, and

the boy's parents live out of state, he said.

Smith said the boy lived in Holman Cottage, which is centrally located on the Fairview complex. The one-acre pond is located on the west side.

Attempts to drag the pond earlier this week were delayed because of weather conditions.

Found innocent

PORTLAND (UPI) — Robert Wood was found innocent Tuesday afternoon of a charge of murder in the rape-slaying of 17-year-old Sharon Ryan.



Janitor, 24, faces charge of murder

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — A 24-year-old pool hall janitor was arrested and charged with murder Thursday in the strangulation death of a high school girl.

The janitor, Robert Ernest Wood of Portland, was accused in the slaying of Sharon Ryan, 17, whose body was found in a vacant lot Dec. 18.

Miss Ryan, a senior at Jefferson High School here, disappeared Dec. 16. She was last seen walking from a grocery where she had purchased eggs to make cookies.

Police Lt. Cedric Aichele said Wood had been under close scrutiny for two days before his arrest.

Aichele declined to say what led police to Wood but he appealed for an unidentified man to telephone officers again and identify himself as having given information leading to the arrest.

Aichele said he did not know whether Wood might have known Miss Ryan.

Wood was born in Idaho and spent his youth in Baker, his brother, The Rev. Ben R. Wood, said. He served in the Marine Corps before coming to Portland more than a year ago, the Rev. Mr. Wood said.

Wood was a gas station attendant here until he began working at the pool hall two months ago.

Rape-murder case

Jury in Portland clears ex-janitor

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — A jury found Robert Ernest Wood innocent Tuesday of murder and rape charges in the death of 17-year-old Sharon Ryan in northeast Portland last Dec. 16.

Outpourings of emotion from the accused's friends and relatives in the courtroom accompanied announcement of the verdict, and Circuit Judge John Murchison of Multnomah County had to rap his gavel in a call for quiet.

Wood, 23, who had showed little emotion through the seven-day trial, lifted his head and sobbed briefly on his attorney's shoulder as the verdict was announced.

Miss Ryan, a senior at Portland's Jefferson High School, disappeared while returning from a trip to a local market. Her half-nude body was found in a northeast Portland parking lot.

Wood, a former janitor at a billiards hall, called out "It's over. I'm so glad it's over," as he left the courtroom under police guard.

"I can't tell you how happy I feel," Wood's mother, Vivian Hullen said. She said she didn't doubt the trial's outcome because she felt her son "didn't do it. He couldn't do it."

Defense attorney Wendell Birkland said, "I'm thankful (the jury) reached a just verdict. That was the only verdict in view of the evidence."

The eight women and four men on the jury deliberated for two hours and 20 minutes before reaching the verdict. It was not unanimous. The jury was polled and revealed 11 were for acquittal and one, a woman, was for conviction on each count of murder and rape.

In closing arguments, Wood was described by prosecutors as a man who had perpetrated "an utter fraud." His attorney described the defendant as a man innocent of any crime, persecuted while Miss Ryan's real killer remained at large.

The jury had viewed a tape of a Dick Van Dyke television show that aired the night Miss Ryan was murdered. Wood had said he was watching the program at home at the time the woman disappeared.

N

Arraigned on murder charge

PORTLAND, Ore. (UPI) — Robert Ernest Wood, 24, Portland, Monday was arraigned on a charge of murder in the strangulation death Dec. 16 of Sharon Ryan, 17.

District Judge Robert Redding appointed Wendell Birkland, a former deputy district attorney, to represent Wood. The judge set a preliminary hearing date of Jan. 10.

Wood found guiltless

PORTLAND, Ore. (UPI) — Robert Wood was found innocent Tuesday afternoon of a charge of murder in the rape-slaying of 17-year-old Sharon Ryan.

The Circuit Court jury of eight women and four men had begun deliberations earlier in the afternoon after hearing seven days of testimony.

Tuesday morning, the last of seven days of testimony, some jurors laughed but the defendant remained somber as a videotape was played of a television comedy show shown Dec. 16, the night of the slaying.

The program indicated that Wood arrived home from 5 to 10 minutes later than he had said he did that night. On the replay, nearly nine minutes elapsed before the monologue appeared which Wood told police he'd seen.

Time was of prime importance during the trial. Prosecutor Tom Howes contended the 24-year-old janitor had time to strangle Miss Ryan on her way home from a nearby grocery store.

Her family originally said she left home about 8 p.m., then revised the time to about 7:35 p.m. Wood claimed he went to the same store as Miss Ryan about 7:20 p.m. but was home by 8 to watch television with his mother.

Dancer, 17, dies

Portland police hunt for slayer

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Sharon Ryan was a 17-year-old dancer.

"She was in love with dance and she was in love with life," said her high school drama teacher Wanda Nichols. "Whenever she danced, she seemed to light up the stage."

Last Thursday night, she failed to return from a trip to a neighborhood grocery store to buy eggs for the cookies she was baking. Her strangled, partially clothed body was found Saturday in a lot behind a Northeast Portland apartment a few blocks from her home.

A box of broken eggs was found near the body.

Police said today they had no suspects.

Sharon was the youngest of eight children. Her parents were divorced; her father, William Ryan, lives in Portland, and her mother, Mardi Esselstyn, lives in Hollywood, Calif.

Sharon began dancing in Portland Parks Bureau programs when she was eight years old. She showed immediate promise and her mother, a former dancer, enrolled her in private classes.

At Jefferson High School, Sharon quickly earned a reputation as a top performer in the school's excellent dance department. She planned to enroll next September at New York University, then try her luck on the professional stage.

Friends said dancing was also Sharon's way of meeting people. A quiet, shy girl, her timidity sometimes bothered her.

"She had a lot of friends, but she didn't know it," said a close friend and fellow dancer, Marsha Floren, 16.

Portland girl, 17, is slain near home

PORTLAND (AP) — Sharon Ryan was a 17-year-old dancer.

"She was in love with dance and she was in love with life," said her high school drama teacher Wanda Nichols. "Whenever she danced, she seemed to light up the stage."

Last Thursday night she failed to return from a trip to a neighborhood grocery store to buy eggs for the cookies she was baking. Her strangled, partially clothed body was found Saturday in a lot behind a Northeast Portland apartment a few blocks from her home.

4,835 more boats in state

SALEM (AP) — The number of recreational boats in Oregon increased by 4,835 in 1976, James Hadley, director of the State Marine Board, said.

Hadley said registrations of recreational boats reached a record high of 115,880.

A box of broken eggs was found near the body.

Police said today they had no suspects.

Sharon was the youngest of eight children. Her parents were divorced; her father, William Ryan, lives in Portland, and her mother, Mardi Esselstyn, lives in Hollywood, Calif.

Sharon began dancing in Portland Parks Bureau programs when she was eight years old. She showed immediate promise and her mother, a former dancer, enrolled her in private classes.

At Jefferson High School, Sharon quickly earned a reputation as a top performer in the school's excellent dance department. She planned to enroll next September at New York University, then try her luck on the professional stage.

Friends said dancing was also Sharon's way of meeting people. A quiet, shy girl, her timidity sometimes bothered her.

"She had a lot of friends, but she didn't know it," said a close friend and fellow dancer, Marsha Floren, 16.

Man charged in girl's death

PORTLAND (AP) — A 24-year-old pool hall janitor was arrested and charged with murder Thursday in the strangulation death of a high school girl.

The janitor, Robert Ernest Wood of Portland, was accused in the slaying of Sharon Ryan, 17, whose body was found in a vacant lot Dec. 18.

Miss Ryan, a senior at Jefferson High School here,

disappeared Dec. 16. She was last seen walking from a grocery where she had purchased eggs to make cookies.

Police Lt. Cedric Aichele said Wood had been under close scrutiny for two days before his arrest.

Aichele declined to say what led police to Wood but he appealed for an unidentified man to telephone officers

again and identify himself as having given information leading to the arrest.

Aichele said he did not know whether Wood might have known Miss Ryan.

Wood was born in Idaho and spent his youth in Baker, his brother, The Rev. Ben R. Wood, said. He served in the Marine Corps before coming

to Portland more than a year ago, the Rev. Mr. Wood said.

Wood was a gas station attendant here until he began working at the pool hall two months ago.

Miss Ryan was considered to have been a talented dancer. Described as quiet and shy, her schoolmates said she chose dancing as a way of making friends and meeting people.