

Other unsolved murders

The Chino Hills mass murder and the Iranian family executions this summer are not the first time that San Bernardino County investigators have been faced with perplexing multiple murders.

On August 12, 1965, an Orange County aerospace engineer who had just returned from South Africa moved his family into a new home, a two-story cabin at Crestline. Two days later all four family members were slain. Their deaths, as yet, have not been formally solved.

An unknown gunman sprayed the family with 39 .22-caliber bullets. James Boles, 41, his wife Darlene, 37, and two sons, 12 and 13, all died from multiple gunshot wounds.

The family's flop-eared dachshund also was shot and killed. The pet was found lying in a pool of blood on the living room couch.

After the shootings, the killer apparently removed a key from Mrs. Boles' key ring and took the family car.

Two days later, the bodies were found. Eight hours later, the family car was found about a half-mile away from the cabin. On the ground under the car, investigators found the stolen key.

A sheriff's task force immediately began an intensive hunt.

As many as 25 deputies were put on the case at one time and within a year investigators had spent more than 20,000 manhours and logged more than 50,000 miles by car on the case. They conducted no less than 3,000 interviews and cleared more than 50 possible suspects.

But today, the case officially remains unsolved though the case's chief investigator, former sheriff's Capt. Charles Callahan, says he found a suspect but was never able to prove the man's guilt.

"He was a former mental patient and I have no doubt in my mind that he did it. We sent a polygrapher (to interview him) and he was dirty, but that was not enough. You have to have the hard

(Please see Other, B-5)

Other . . .

(Continued from B-4)

evidence," Callahan, now a private investigator, said last week.

At the time they occurred, the Crestline slayings were referred to as the most baffling in San Bernardino County history. Upon his retirement earlier this year, former Sheriff Frank Bland called the case the most frustrating of his 28-year tenure in office.

Callahan called it a "humdinger of a case."

Like the Ryen family members, who were stabbed and hacked to death in their Chino Hills home, the Boles family had no apparent enemies.

"There seems to be no rhyme or reason to the killing," Floyd Rice, Mrs. Boles' brother, said at the time. "They were a happy, close-knit family with no problems or enemies."

And like the Ryen family killings, Callahan said the motive for the Crestline slaying was never established.

"You have parents who were murdered. You have children who were murdered. It could have been a robbery. It could have been a sex play on the kids," he said.

Callahan said the killings oc-

curred in the week of the Watts riots, compounding the problems of their investigation.

"I think we had an extra 200,000 people in the mountains. A lot of people had flocked out of L.A.," he said.

And though the killings occurred within close proximity to several residences, no one reported hearing any shots or screams. Detectives said there was a noisy party of 300 people nearby.

Six months into the case, patrolmen discovered another mystery. The doors of the unoccupied Boles residence were found standing open. No one had been authorized to enter the house and the doors had been locked. After some checking the investigators determined that the cabin had been entered several times in the months after the slayings.

So for 33 days, 40 officers worked in 24-hour shifts, hiding inside the cabin and waiting for the intruder to return. No suspects ever returned to the cabin.

Callahan said last week that the case of the mysterious intruder still is a mystery.

As the investigation progressed, no fewer than three persons admitted to the killings, sending investigators as far away as Oregon for interviews. But in every instance the "braggarts" were cleared.

"Hell, we'd fly to Siberia on

this case if we thought a tidbit of the information would fit the puzzle," then-Chief Inspector Komer Dyal said.

Finally, in September 1967, two years after the slayings, investigators thought they had found their man. A drifter from Alabama and a former mental patient with a penchant for quoting the Bible was picked up in Texas.

The man, who was working in a San Bernardino mountain church camp at the time of the slayings, was wanted for a double homicide in Alabama.

"Alabama took him and for whatever reason his case was dismissed there. But we did not have the hard evidence to bring him back here," Callahan said.

During the heat of the investigation, Callahan promised that the case would be solved.

"Some cases just take a little longer than others," he said. "Time is on my side. And time I have. There are no statutes of limitation on murder."

Last week, Callahan said investigators just did not get the "copout" necessary to prosecute the suspect in 1967. The investigator said he has since lost track of the whereabouts of the suspect.

"You'd like to put them on the rack to get a copout but you've got to play by the rules. And the rules were no evidence, no extradition."

— By Mark Lundahl