

SAN DIEGO MAN MISSING -- WITHOUT A TRACE-- FOR 23 YEARS AND COUNTING

*This is a synopsis of the disappearance of John S. Hahn, which occurred in June of 1989.
Written by his son, Rick Hahn.*

John S. Hahn is listed under Case No. 89-068714 with the San Diego Police, Missing Persons Unit.

John S. Hahn is listed in the data base of the Doe Network (doenetwork.org, under Case 878DMNV.)

John S. Hahn is listed in the NCIC data base under number M-368120952.

Rick Hahn (John S. Hahn's son) has DNA sample on file with the Clark County, NV Coroner's Office.



Photos of John S Hahn round about the time of his disappearance c. June 1989.

- **Date Of Birth:** May 29, 1914
- **Age at Time of Disappearance:** 75 years old; SSN 183-05-0410
- **Height and Weight at Time of Disappearance:** 6' 2"; ~190 lbs.
- **Distinguishing Characteristics:** White male. Gray-brown short straight hair; brown eyes. Hahn has a high forehead/hair line. Hahn wears glasses. He has a mental condition and is sometimes forgetful. Life-long Smoker. He was left handed, and tended to wear his wristwatch on the right wrist.
- **Glasses:** Bifocal glasses with "Photo-Gray" variable tint lenses and gold colored metal frame.
- **Scars/Marks:** Hahn has a vertical scar of about 12 inches in length on the center of his chest from a surgical implant. (an artificial repair made to his aorta, due to an aneurysm). He also has a 2" scar on the left side of his chin/cheek.
- **Dentals:** Full set of Dentures.

John S. Hahn, a longtime resident of San Diego, California, left his home (address 6550 Calle Pavana, San Diego) on c. June 12th, 1989, and has been missing ever since.

DETAILS OF DISAPPEARANCE

John S Hahn (my father) set out from his San Diego home c. June 10th 1989, and drove northeast toward Laughlin, Nevada, at approximately the same time that his wife Jean Hahn (my stepmother) departed for Seattle, Washington, to visit her daughter and family. Although he knew when to expect Jean to return, my dad did not specify a planned time for his own return.

Jean returned from her Seattle trip after about a week. Dad had not yet returned. After two or three more days, Jean proceeded to report Dad as a missing person to the San Diego Police Department, Missing Persons Unit. (Dad's case number with SDPD is 89-068714).

Over the next few weeks, information about this case was distributed to law enforcement agencies in about 17 western states.

On c. July 21, 1989, Jean received a phone call from the Laughlin, NV substation of the Las Vegas Metro Police, informing her that Dad's car (a white 2-door Mercury Marquis full size coupe, with dark blue vinyl roof, blue interior [see pictures], and CA License Number 382 WPJ) had been found, abandoned, in the desert south of Laughlin. The car had gotten stuck in deep soft sand, and had been in that location for a number of days, with windows rolled down, a full fuel tank, Dad's packed suitcase in back seat, and evidence that the radiator/cooling system had been recently filled up and treated with a cooling system "stop leak" compound. The A/C system was inoperative. The car had to be winched out of the soft sand. It was taken to the local impounding yard.

We are told that a search was conducted by the local authorities. However, no fingerprint analysis was done on the car, and I personally was skeptical about the thoroughness or quality of any search conducted at that time by local authorities.

On July 24-25, Jean, my sister Marti Bechtel, and I traveled to Laughlin to investigate further, recover Dad's car, and spread the word about Dad around the local area. Copies of Dad's picture and information were posted. While in Laughlin, we were told that on the weekend of July 4th, late at night, the local towing company received a phone call from someone (John Hahn...?), who had accurately described the location and condition of Dad's car, and had requested towing service. Due to their policy concerning off-road operations at night, the towing company told the caller to call back early the next morning to get towing service. However, the caller did not call back.

And my father, John S. Hahn, has not been heard from since that time. No leads have ever come up. He was declared legally dead in July 1994.

BACKGROUND HISTORY-John S. Hahn

John S Hahn's personality type was "Choleric/Melancholy". He was very intellectual. His was a dominant tendency. He was a very self-sufficient person all of his life. He was

austere in his own way, and commanded respect. He exercised a dominion over those closest to him. Over time, he developed a façade; a wall of pride as it were, behind which he hid his vulnerable side.

Normally, Dad was witty, personable, sociable, and had a dry sense of humor. Normally, Dad was definitely the head and ruler of the household, and everyone else knew this well. A good and benevolent relationship was to be had with him, at least provided that his air of dominion was not encroached upon. If this happened, Dad would respond by covert anger or intimidation, i.e., giving a “silent treatment”, withdrawal, or perhaps raising his voice, etc.

Roots of John Hahn’s high degree of self-sufficiency can be traced back to approximately age 2, when his own father left the family. Some years later, when Dad was about 12 or 13 years old, his mother died of tuberculosis; this was a catastrophic blow to him. He was raised by his grandmother for the remainder of his home childhood years. Dad had to drop out of high school, due to the economic difficulties associated with the Great Depression.

During those difficult times, John Hahn worked diligently to earn whatever living he could.

Around this same general time, Dad had gotten excommunicated from the Episcopal Church, due to a divorce he was going through at the time. Unfortunately, this had an adverse effect on him which lasted for the rest of his life.

At the onset of World War II, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps and worked as an aircraft engine mechanic. After the war, he finished his high school via the GED, and immediately entered college on the GI Bill. He went on to complete a 4-year engineering curriculum and earn his degree in about 3 ½ years, necessitated by the GI Bill time constraint. You might say that he was quite successful in “pulling himself up by his boot straps”.

When John Hahn became ill in late 1988, he began to lose some faculties, and thus found himself involuntarily becoming more dependent on others. That old air of his dominion was beginning to erode. This disturbed him, and he became insecure and self-conscious. Anger was there as well, and he became more difficult to live with. I’m told that he had (unsuccessfully) tried suicide once, by taking an overdose of pills of some sort.

My father, 75 years old at the time of his disappearance, had considerable difficulty with endurance while walking, due to poor circulation in his legs. Moreover, my father had developed symptoms of dementia rather abruptly, beginning c. October 1988. (Due to the relatively sudden onset of symptoms, we believe this was likely not Alzheimer’s, but rather a stroke, or other sudden physiological cause. My dad did not believe in going to the doctor, hence no certain medical diagnosis.)

Due to the condition, Dad had memory problems, slurred speech and difficulty expressing himself verbally, and often times could not remember how to do simple tasks, such as rolling up the car window or put items into their proper place in the dishwasher.

This led up to the episode in which Jean Hahn, my stepmother, wanted for a long time to go to visit her daughter, whom she had not seen for several years. Dad flatly prohibited it time and time again, though, citing economic reasons. Urgently needing and desiring a “break”, however, Jean went ahead with her travel plans.

Dad did not attempt further resistance to this. Instead, he seemingly conceded, and remained silent. Very soon after dropping Jean off at the San Diego Airport for her flight to Seattle, Washington on c. June 10th, 1989, Dad left. In his demented mental state, he drove his car toward Laughlin, Nevada. (Laughlin had historically been one of Dad and Jean’s favorite places to go on short weekend trips.) We are told that he took a large amount of cash along.

As was mentioned earlier, Dad was 75 years old when he left home, and was not in good health.

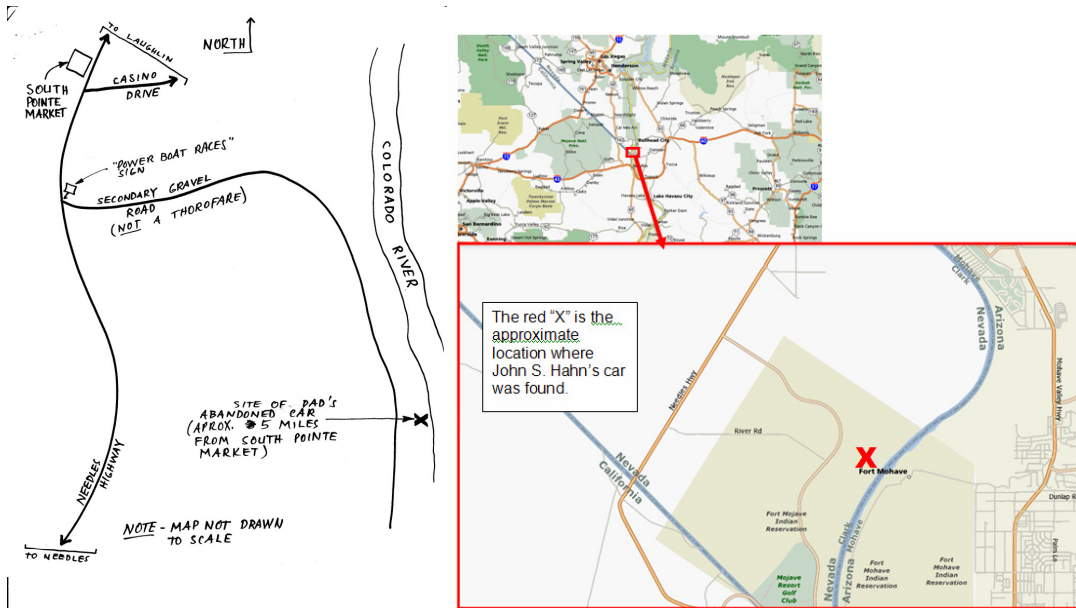
On the weekend of the 4th of July, 1989, we are told that two or three witnesses indicated having seen John S Hahn at a Laughlin convenience store called the “South Pointe Market”. We are told that he had placed a phone call to the Laughlin Towing Company, and gave an accurate account of his car’s location. As was mentioned earlier, John S. Hahn was not heard from again since that time, and he was declared legally dead in 1994.

Following is additional information about where John Hahn’s car was found; where he was presumably stranded.

(Photos and sketches on next page)



(above) John S Hahn’s 1979 Mercury was virtually identical to this picture



(above) Maps showing approximate location of John S Hahn's car when found



(This photo was taken c. 2007. Red arrow shows approximate location of car when found in 1989)

There is a narrow, 2-lane, hilly winding road [at least this was the description in 1989] called the Needles Highway. This stretched through the open desert between Needles, CA and Laughlin, NV. Heading north on this road, about 3 miles into Nevada, there is a gravel secondary side road which tees off the highway and heads east through the desolate sage brush and sandy terrain toward the Colorado River. There was no settlement in this area in 1989. The gravel road continues east, then begins to go south, roughly parallel to the river. In this vicinity, a clearing off to the left side of the road leads several hundred feet down toward the river bank. In this area, the sand becomes

soft. There were some seldom-used, soft, sandy “hairpin-curving” trails such as what you would expect an off-road motorcycle or ATV to ride on.

In this locale, on one of these sand trails, John Hahn’s car (a white 2-door Mercury Marquis full size coupe-see pictures), was found, abandoned and stuck in the sand. It took a four-wheel drive tow truck with a winch to pull the car out. This area was rough terrain. No one would normally attempt to drive a passenger car into this area.

The approximate distance between the location of the abandoned car, and the aforementioned South Pointe Market, was about five miles. A mystery here is, how could John Hahn have gotten from his stuck vehicle to the South Pointe Market? As mentioned before, Dad could not walk more than 100 yards or so without taking a rest stop. July desert air temperatures in that region are about 120 degrees by day, and 105 at night. The ground is hotter during daytime. The gravel road mentioned above had almost zero traffic.

Assuming somehow Dad was able to get a ride to the South Pointe Market, we wonder about the sequence of events immediately afterward. Did he in fact make it to the Market? Did he, or someone else, drive his car into soft sand near the river? Was it Dad who placed a call to the Laughlin Towing Company?

It is also thought that he purposely walked down to the River, and entered the water, in an attempt of suicide. Also, it is possible that he died in somewhere in the local desert.

It’s also possible that Dad, in his confused state, and with a lot of cash on him, could have fallen victim to robbery and possible other “foul play”.

Due to Dad’s old age and dementia, we don’t think he could have purposely started “a new life and identity somewhere else”.

This all occurred some 23 years ago.

We are convinced that, whatever fate Dad met, someone likely found him (or his remains) at some point. We believe that the likelihood is high that Dad was found by someone, somewhere, and his remains were listed somewhere as a John Doe case.

Unfortunately, as of now, the case remains unsolved. It is my family’s desire to find out what happened to John S. Hahn, and perhaps gain some closure.