

Speed Kills: Who killed the Cigarette Boat King, the fastest man on the seas? (Harris True Crime Collection)

By Arthur Jay Harris

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PHOTOGRAPHS INCLUDED IN FRONT. CLICK "LOOK INSIDE"

“Ocean racing superstar Don Aronow loved it when writers called him a living legend. His life of adventure is well known. It is his death that baffles police.

“He was afraid of nothing, no one. In his final hour, when a stranger spoke to him in riddles and talked about killing, Aronow laughed. He felt no fear, until he lowered the window of his white Mercedes and looked death in the face. And then it was too late.”

-- Edna Buchanan in The Miami Herald

Bordering a canal leading to Biscayne Bay, a short dead-end stretch of Northeast 188th Street in Miami was the crossroad of the Americas in the mid-1980s for the biggest drug smugglers into the U.S.; the guys who ripped off the drug smugglers; the biggest South American drug suppliers; competing federal agencies investigating major drug trafficking and money laundering; the CIA, covertly advancing the Contra war against Central American land reform (which they called Cuban-sponsored communism); some of the highest national politicians in the country—and what attracted them all there, the most famous fast-boat companies in the world.

On that splashy boulevard of (wet) dreams factories built marine magazine-ad ultra-sleek gleaming speedboats ostensibly for racers, royalty to show off on the Côte d’Azur, and wealthy divorced or divorcing middle-age overweight men to pick up South Florida’s sun-soaked hot chicks in string bikinis (while the rest of us unwashed wondered how they did it), but the boat builders’ real business was fueling an arms race between smugglers, who purchased them for cash, and Drug War feds to catch smugglers.

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champion and the personification of a sport in which people crazily risked their lives and bodies to win—not to mention a wicked ladies' man to boot, Don Aronow was shot and killed in broad daylight in front of his factory in 1987. Police found they didn't just have a murder mystery—they had Murder on the Orient Express.

FEBRUARY 3, 1987

USA Racing Team, Miami, Florida

Someone entered the front door and walked in front of salesman Jerry Engelman's desk. He asked to speak with Don Aronow, then looked right at him without recognizing him.

"What do you want?" Aronow said.

"I've been trying to get ahold of you," the man said. He said he worked for a very rich man, with an Italian surname, who wanted to make an appointment to buy a boat.

"I never heard of him," Aronow answered.

Engelman could tell something else was happening, and he thought Aronow was trying to find out what.

Then the conversation got weird. He was proud of his boss, he said. "He picked me up off the street when I was sixteen and took care of me. I'd even kill for my boss."

For the moment, none of the observers thought anything more of it. Minutes later, Aronow drove his new 1987 white Mercedes 560 sports coupe across the street, found Mike Britton, a marine supplier, and asked if he could help him at his new house.

Driving out of his parking space forward, with Aronow behind him, Britton saw a dark Lincoln Town Car with tinted windows, about ten yards away, facing east as Britton was about to head west. The driver's window was down, and Britton could see the driver looking at him.

At their closest, when they passed, they were just a few feet apart, keeping eye contact the entire time. Then Britton drove on, about fifty yards.


Then he heard gunshots.

Britton finished parking his truck, then raced back toward Aronow. In a hurry, the Lincoln passed him, going west. It had turned around.

By the time Britton got to the car, he found Aronow's driver's side window down, the automatic transmission in neutral, and Aronow's foot pressed against the accelerator like a rock, forcing the engine to rev at its most shrill. Apparently,

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- Sales Rank: #202451 in eBooks
- Published on: 2013-12-24
- Released on: 2013-12-24
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

From the Author

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By the time Britton got to the car, he found Aronow's driver's side window down, the automatic transmission in neutral, and Aronow's foot pressed against the accelerator like a rock, forcing the engine to rev at its most shrill. Apparently, Aronow had stopped to kibitz with his killer.

From the Inside Flap

In addition to Speed Kills...

ARTHUR JAY HARRIS IS ALSO THE AUTHOR OF OTHER TRUE CRIME BOOKS:

THE UNSOLVED "MURDER" OF ADAM WALSH

Who killed Adam Walsh (and is he really dead?) The search for the truth behind the crime that launched "America's Most Wanted"

A two-book series (with a separate Single Edition, a condensation of both books)

What if almost everything most everyone thinks about the Adam Walsh case is wrong?

Here is the case's conventional knowledge:

In Summer 1981, drifter Ottis Toole stole Adam from a mall in Florida and killed him, say police and Adam's parents, John and Reve Walsh. Although Jeffrey Dahmer became a suspect and was then living nearby, he couldn't have done it because his M.O. wasn't children as young as Adam, 6.

But ten years of book research shows that most of this case's long-accepted basic facts are dead wrong:

- *Seven independent witnesses, their names found in police investigative files, identified Dahmer as who they saw at the mall either with or close by to Adam.*
- *There is a problem, never before reported, with the identification of the child who was found and said to be Adam.*

After more than 30 years, this case has never come to trial -- and it never will because the case files are inexplicably missing their most essential forensic documents:

A medical examiner identified the found child as Adam strictly by its teeth, but Adam's dental records, which he used for matching and was handled by three official agencies, is gone; there was never any forensic dental report; and worst, there was never even an autopsy report. That, especially, should never happen. As a result, prosecutors will never be able to establish in court that the child who was found is, in fact, Adam Walsh.

- *And most shockingly, it is extremely unlikely that the found child is Adam.*

When the positive ID of the found child as Adam was made, it was done quickly and

announced hastily. But photographs and documents recently released in public records show that the found child has a top front tooth grown in almost all the way. That is much too far to match Adam. In his famous "Missing" picture, taken only a month before he vanished, Adam had neither top front tooth. His best friend last saw him a week or two before he disappeared, and he still didn't have them. After that, one front tooth did erupt. When the found child was discovered, Adam had been gone two weeks but the medical examiner said that he (Adam, he said) had been dead probably for all that time. Teeth don't keep growing after death.

In the space of up to two weeks, the time after his friend last saw him and when he disappeared, top front teeth just don't grow that fast, from eruption to in almost all the way.

If that's not Adam, who is it? And could Adam, incredibly, be alive?

UNTIL PROVEN INNOCENT *begins with a night 911 call from a woman gasping her last breaths.*

When police arrived at the house they found her dead, stabbed, and her husband, infant, and father-in-law all shot point-blank. They would survive.

Minutes later, a man also called 911, a gunman had released him from a robbery at the same house. He said he knew of no violence before he left. Yet he was the only one who the gunman hadn't tried to kill. Police instantly suspected him.

That night and long after, police tried to shake the man, Chuck Panoyan, who insisted he didn't know who the gunman was.

Police guessed right. A tip led them to the gunman, and that led to a cross-country trip Panoyan took to see him. Both were arrested, and prosecutor Brian Cavanagh won a death penalty indictment against them both.

But in pretrial, Panoyan's attorneys unraveled Cavanagh's case against their client. No longer certain Panoyan was guilty, Cavanagh reached No Man's Land: his choice was to let the jury sort it out, or admit he was wrong about Panoyan for now three years.

Cavanagh's dad Tom was a retired NYPD lieutenant who'd had a double murder he couldn't solve, then at another precinct a suspect confessed. Tom recognized it had been coerced and quietly asked his detectives if they could prove it wrong. When they did, the case became famous for police integrity. A TV movie renamed Tom's character: Kojak.

Years later, son Brian was at a similar turning point, but Panoyan wouldn't open up to him. Who was the only one could make Panoyan comfortable enough to talk? The old man, the real-life Kojak, Tom Cavanagh.

FLOWERS FOR MRS. LUSKIN *begins with a flower delivery to the best house in the best part of Hollywood, Florida.* Inside, Marie Luskin was cautious; her husband Paul used to send her flowers but those days had ended more than a year before when she filed for divorce. She thought it was safe to open the door just enough to accept the pot of azaleas.

She was wrong. The delivery was a ruse; the man pointed a gun at her and demanded her money and jewelry. When he left, she fell to the floor, bloodied, thinking he'd hit her with the gun.

Over 40 years, Paul's family had built a business called Luskin's from one store in Baltimore into a chain of consumer electronics stores in Florida. Coming of age, Paul was taking it over, to run. He'd already made his first million, and he and Marie were living a life their friends admired. But between them all was not well. Then Paul's high school girlfriend moved to town with her husband, and sparks rekindled. When Marie discovered it she threw Paul out of the house. For a moment it looked like they would reunite. She asked Paul to move back in at the end of the day after Thanksgiving, the biggest sale day of the year. But that was a ruse, too. That day at the store, her attorneys served him the divorce.

Marie's attorneys were aggressive. Accusing Paul's parents of shielding his assets, they asked the judge for everything he--and his parents--had. A year later, it looked like Marie would get it all.

The divorce was overwhelming and compound stress. Three times Marie had him arrested for not paying his very high support payments exactly on time; the judge had frozen his assets, and his dad had asked him to leave his high-paying job because he couldn't concentrate both on it and the divorce. Marie's attorneys wanted Paul's mom to testify for days about the business's finances, but because she had a blood clot that stress could loosen and become lethal, Paul's family asked them to lay off her. They refused. Not long after came the flower delivery.

The Feds indicted Paul for attempted murder-for-hire. They told the jury:

A Luskin's employee called his brother in Baltimore who was a mob guy, who got someone to come to Hollywood to kill Marie. Although she thought the gunman hit her with the gun, he really shot her--his bullet grazed her head. Paul was convicted and sentenced to prison for 35 years.

In prison, Paul married his high school girlfriend. To me, they protested so insistently that there was no murder-for-hire that it seemed something was truly wrong. I eventually found there had been a murder plot--but the real question was, who had asked the Luskin's employee to call his brother in Baltimore?

Testimony said "Mr. Luskin" ordered the murder; the prosecutor naturally assumed that meant Paul. But there was a better case that "Mr. Luskin" was Paul's dad. As a result of his son's divorce he lost his whole business, owed Marie \$11 million he didn't have and was facing jail for contempt of court for not paying her, and so had to leave the country.

At the story's turning point, "Mr. Luskin" had to choose between two untenable outcomes: the death of the elder Mrs. Luskin or the younger. But prosecutors also were forced to make a tragic choice. Without certainty of which "Mr. Luskin" it was, did they choose the wrong one?

From the Back Cover

He built the fastest boats -- for royalty, the rich, spies, smugglers, Feds and a former U.S. President. Then came six shots.

It was the era of cool shades and *Miami Vice*, and Don Aronow's Cigarette boats were the symbol of the city's sun-drenched decadence. But faster than his speed boats was Aronow himself -- in races behind the throttle, in business deals and on the town with his collection of stunning women. And then, in broad daylight, someone in a dark Lincoln gunned him down.

Who had Don double-dealt? A dope smuggler? The Mafia? The husband or boyfriend of one of his many paramours? After ten years of dogged work, did Miami police get it right -- or were they dead wrong?

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Eric Alaniz:

People live in this new time of lifestyle always aim to and must have the spare time or they will get wide range of stress from both lifestyle and work. So , when we ask do people have free time, we will say absolutely without a doubt. People is human not just a robot. Then we consult again, what kind of activity do you possess when the spare time coming to you actually of course your answer will probably unlimited right. Then do you try this one, reading publications. It can be your alternative in spending your spare time, typically the book you have read is usually Speed Kills: Who killed the Cigarette Boat King, the fastest man on the seas? (Harris True Crime Collection).

Omar Carter:

Speed Kills: Who killed the Cigarette Boat King, the fastest man on the seas? (Harris True Crime Collection) can be one of your beginning books that are good idea. We all recommend that straight away because this reserve has good vocabulary that can increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nevertheless delivering the information. The article writer giving his/her effort to set every word into enjoyment arrangement in writing Speed Kills: Who killed the Cigarette Boat King, the fastest man on the seas? (Harris True Crime Collection) although doesn't forget the main stage, giving the reader the hottest in addition to based confirm resource info that maybe you can be among it. This great information can easily drawn you into new stage of crucial pondering.

Elaine Sitz:

Many people spending their period by playing outside with friends, fun activity together with family or just watching TV all day every day. You can have new activity to invest your whole day by examining a book. Ugh, ya think reading a book can really hard because you have to accept the book everywhere? It ok you can have the e-book, bringing everywhere you want in your Smart phone. Like Speed Kills: Who killed the Cigarette Boat King, the fastest man on the seas? (Harris True Crime Collection) which is finding the e-book version. So , try out this book? Let's see.

Kyle Smallwood:

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