

## Former detective says justice not served in Railey case



by BYRON HARRIS

[Bio](#) | [Email](#)

WFAA

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### NEWS 8 EXCLUSIVE

DALLAS — Twenty-four years ago, Peggy Railey was choked to a coma in her Dallas home. Her husband, charismatic Methodist preacher Walker Railey, was later acquitted of trying to kill her.

Stan McNear, a retired Dallas detective who worked the case, says justice was not done. He's been stewing about it since the day he snapped the cuffs on Walker Railey before he was tried for attempted murder and, eventually, set free.

The magnetism of Walker Railey pulled him to the top of First Methodist Church of Dallas while he was still in his 30s. He had a way of scolding his congregation, but he may have prophesied his

"We look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen, because the things that are seen pass away," Railey said.

As Peggy Railey lay contorted in a Tyler nursing home for nearly 25 years, detective McNear always hoped for a miracle.

"I was always hoping that some day Peggy might come around to the point where she could tell us what happened that night," he said.

McNear's personal high in the case was arresting Walker Railey. McNear and another detective found the minister at a church in California.

"I walked into that church on Wilshire Boulevard and I walked up to Walker Railey and said, 'I have a warrant for your arrest,'" he recalled.

From there, the case went downhill.

Despite a constellation of circumstantial evidence and proof that Walker Railey had a mistress — a glamorous psychologist named Lucy Papillon — the lead prosecutor in the case wanted to wait to take the case to trial.

"I am a patient man," said assistant district attorney Norm Kinne to a reporter at the time. Kinne died in 2004.

Former Dallas County prosecutor Toby Shook remembers the tension in the DA's office.

"Obviously, the Dallas police were under a lot of pressure to proceed, so when it [the case] did get filed, there was a lot of debate over whether it was the right thing to do," he said.

The trial was moved to San Antonio, where Walker Railey was acquitted on charges of attempted murder.

Now that Peggy Railey is dead, and has been technically murdered, could her former husband be tried on murder charges?

No, Shook said. "Essentially it's the same offense," he explained. "You have the same victim. You have the same evidence, and you obviously have the same suspect."

Although double jeopardy prevents a suspect from being tried twice on this Earth, Stan McNear thinks Railey will someday face another judge.

"If I were asked to say something to Walker Railey, I'd probably say, 'You won one round of the judgment system, but I don't think you can win the next one.'"

E-mail [bharris@wfaa.com](mailto:bharris@wfaa.com)