



The Story Behind "In Broad Daylight"

By Harry MacLean

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Standing a few feet from where the killers opened fire on Ken Rex McElroy more than three decade ago, Harry N. MacLean tells the story of how he came to write his Edgar Award-winning book in his new true crime short, "The Story Behind 'In Broad Daylight.'"

MacLean had doors slammed in his face, guns pulled on him, and was bitten by a dog. Eventually, he won over the closed community of Skidmore, Mo. The inhabitants shared with him the reign of terror Ken Rex McElroy inflicted for twenty years in Northwest Missouri, and information about his murder on the main street of Skidmore in 1981. Despite 45 witnesses, the case remains unsolved. MacLean tells the story in his book "In Broad Daylight," first published in 1988.

"The Story Behind 'In Broad Daylight'" brings the book up to date and includes several previously unpublished pictures. It also answers many questions about the killing itself, such as who was involved, and what has become of them. The author discusses the nature of the moral consequences of the killing for the town and those involved in the killing. MacLean describes the breakthrough events when key characters agreed to speak with him, and he realized he would finally get the story.

"In Broad Daylight" was a New York Times bestseller for 12 weeks and was made into a movie starring Brian Denehey, Cloris Leachman and Chris Cooper. It was re-released as an e-book on Amazon on July 10, the 31st anniversary of the killing.

Praise for Harry N. MacLean's
The Story Behind In Broad Daylight

"A riveting behind the scenes look at an author in pursuit of the story about the bully who brought down a town and paid for his sins with his life."

—Diane Fanning, author of "Mommy's Little Girl"

"Honest and intriguing. The riveting backstory of MacLean's true crime classic...a can't miss read!"

— Kathryn Casey, bestselling author of "Deadly Little Secrets"

“The Edgar Award winner takes readers right where they want to go—inside the story.”

—Gregg Olsen, bestselling author of “”Fear Collector”

“To understand and truly experience any story in its absolute wholeness, one must go ‘behind the scenes’ and learn the mechanics of what made it so riveting in the first place. Here, Harry MacLean takes us on a thrill ride into the crazy world beyond one of the most compelling true-crime stories of our time.”

— M. William Phelps, star of the hit Investigation Discovery series “Dark Minds” and national bestselling author of 23 books, including “Nathan Hale and his latest, “Kiss of the She-Devil”

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Editorial Review

Review

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About the Author

Harry MacLean had a successful career as a lawyer before turning to writing. MacLean graduated from Lawrence University with a degree in psychology. He then attended the University of Denver College of Law, from which he graduated magna cum laude in 1967. He went to work as a trial attorney for the Securities and Exchange Commission in Washington, D.C. He returned to private practice in Denver and accepted an adjunct professor position at the DU College of Law. He was appointed magistrate in the Denver juvenile court, where he served for two years, before becoming First Assistant Attorney General for the Colorado Department of Law. From there, he went to Washington, D.C. as the General Counsel of the Peace Corps in the Carter administration. Harry returned to Denver in 1980 and was working as an independent arbitrator and mediator when he read the story of the "vigilante killing" of Ken Rex McElroy, the "town bully," in northwest Missouri. After reading what he could find on the murder, he drove to the small town of Skidmore, and found the town wrapped up tight around the killers. Over time, MacLean made friends and became accepted in the community. He lived with a prominent Skidmore family, and for the next four years researched the story. "In Broad Daylight" is the tale of McElroy's reign of terror, his murder, and the ensuing cover up. The book won an Edgar Award, was a New York Times bestseller for twelve weeks, and was made into a movie starring Brian Dennehy, Chris Cooper, Marcia Gay Harden and Cloris Leachman. "Once Upon A Time" is the story of Eileen Franklin, a California housewife who claimed to recover a repressed memory of her father murdering her playmate twenty years earlier. Based solely on this memory, George Franklin was tried and convicted of the murder. The book chronicles the trial and the story of the highly dysfunctional Franklin family as it played out in court. It also explores the intersection of psychology and the law and the use of repressed memories as evidence in criminal cases. "Once Upon A Time" was selected as a Notable Book of the Year by the New York Times. Harry has long been interested in the state of Mississippi as the supposed unrepentant heart of the old South. When James Ford Seale was arrested in January 2007 for his role in the kidnapping and murder of two black youths in 1964, he decided to tell the story of the trial and explore the landscape of modern Mississippi. The result is "The Past Is Never Dead."

Users Review

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