

Paso killer faces new charge

Former CYA inmate suspect in winery slaying

By Dave Wilcox
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A former California Youth Authority inmate convicted of murdering a CYA teacher in 1975 is awaiting trial for allegedly killing a Sonoma County winery worker two months after being paroled.

Arvie Carroll pleaded guilty to second-degree murder for stomping 51-year-old Maria Romero to death March 31, 1975, in a classroom at the CYA's El Paso de Robles School for Boys in Paso Robles.

Carroll, 33, is awaiting trial next month for the Aug. 3, 1990, murder of a 27-year-old woman who worked at the Iron Horse Winery in Sonoma County.

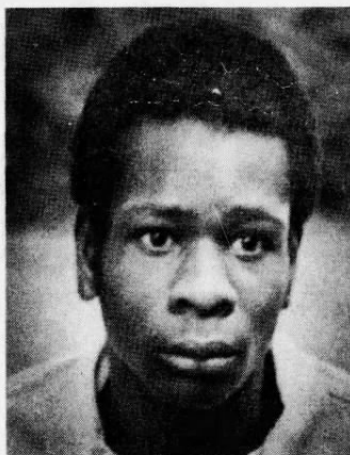
The body of Christina Appleton was found near the entrance to the winery with multiple stab wounds, according to David Sederholm, a Sonoma County sheriff's investigator.

Carroll had worked at the winery for less than a week in July 1990 when Appleton told him he had been fired, said Prosecutor David Dunn.

Deputies arrested Carroll two days after the killing.

Carroll had been paroled from prison in May 1990 after serving four years of a nine-year sentence for a Los Angeles burglary.

While in prison he had married a Sonoma



Arvie Carroll during a 1975 court appearance in San Luis Obispo.

County woman, said Dunn, so the parole board allowed him to live there instead of Los Angeles County.

Dunn said the parole board that granted Carroll his release in May 1990 could legally consider only the burglary and conviction for escape from a Los Angeles County Jail in making their decision.

He said a "subtle change" in parole laws in the late 1970s resulted in the termination of Carroll's parole for the CYA killing while he was in a Los Angeles jail.

"That was the only thing he had on him," said Dunn.

Carroll, then 18, was sentenced in January 1976 to five years to life in prison for Romero's death. He had pleaded guilty

to second-degree murder before his trial began in a Santa Barbara court.

The case was moved out of San Luis Obispo County because of extensive pre-trial media coverage.

Romero's badly beaten and partially disrobed body was found by two other CYA teachers in a pool of blood in a corner of her classroom.

The San Luis Obispo mother of four had moved to the county only two months before she was killed. Her husband had moved to San Luis Obispo a year earlier to take a job as a vocational instructor at the California Men's Colony.

Carroll was paroled in July 1982 after serving six years in prison for Romero's murder, according to Dunn.

Within a month he was arrested again and charged with murdering his father and another man, according to the Sonoma County prosecutor.

He was convicted of killing his father, but the jury hung on the other charge, said Dunn. The trial judge, however, granted Carroll a new trial because of legal errors and a second jury acquitted Carroll.

While awaiting trial, Carroll escaped from a Los Angeles County Jail and burglarized a home before being captured a few days later.

He pleaded guilty to the burglary and received a nine-year sentence in April 1986.

Besides the stabbing death for which he is currently awaiting trial, Carroll was also charged by Sonoma County prosecutors with a killing that occurred in June 1990.

But a judge at a preliminary hearing decided there wasn't enough evidence to order Carroll to stand trial on that charge, said Dunn.