

EPISODE 305 – The Disappearance of Robin Graham

Announcer

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Steve Gregory

On any given day in Southern California, hundreds of investigators are working more than 10,000 unsolved cases. That's thousands of friends and families who have lost loved ones, thousands of people who got away with a crime, and thousands of murderers who still walk the streets. Killers who may be your neighbor, go to your church, or could be dating a close friend. For the next two hours, we'll highlight cases that have gone cold, baffled investigators or just needs that one witness to speak out. This is Unsolved with Steve Gregory.

Steve Gregory

Los Angeles Police Department missing persons case number 70-687411, the disappearance of Robin Ann Graham. This is our first visit with the LAPD Missing Persons Unit. It's staffed with at least four detectives who work on cases going back decades in addition to reviewing current and active cases. I was connected to the unit by the LAPD's captain in charge of Media Relations, Kelly Muniz. Muniz got me in touch with the captain in charge of the Missing Persons Unit Lynette Miles, who then referred me to detectives Molly Beall and Omar Franco. Both level two supervisors and the new leads on the Graham case. We met inside the unit's conference room at the LAPD headquarters in downtown Los Angeles. Detective Franco begins with an overview.

Detective Omar Franco

This case is about Robin Ann Graham. At the time of her disappearance she was 18- years-old, still living with her parents. She was a college student at Pierce College and she worked at the Pier One Imports in the Hollywood area. On the night of November 14, 1970, she was at the Pier One Imports at work, she was closing up shop. After that point, she and a couple of friends have gone out for you know just hanging out at little spots here, The Cafe Troubadour in Hollywood and so forth. While she was out with her friends she had left her car at The Pier One Imports while she was out and about with her friends. Later that night, she was driven back to The Pier One Imports where she picked up her car to head home. At that time, she drove off the parking lot of Pier One Imports and made her way towards the 101 freeway. When she got on the 101 freeway, I believe this time she's going southbound, she ended up running out of gas so she pulls over to the side of the freeway. At some point a CHP unit who's just doing routine patrol on the freeway spots her as a disabled vehicle and pulled over to render some help. She advises them that she ran out of gas, the CHP unit offers her a tow truck at her expense, or next option was to use the freeway call box to call home or someone to come help her out in any kind of way. She opts to use a CHP the freeway call box to call home, and she does. The CHP officers at some point notice that the car is somewhat, I guess the way they described it was the tire or something of the wheel was on the I guess the gutter of the freeway so they assisted to kind of push it out. So they actually had some good contact with her, they spoke to her actually spoke with her and helped her and so forth. By the time they left, they saw her on the phone on the call box and off they went. The CHP unit noted that as they're continuing on the freeway, they noticed a little Corvette driving was it northbound on the freeway.

Steve Gregory

So they were patrolling. They went southbound and then they had come back northbound and noticed across the freeway, right?

Detective Omar Franco

Correct. Yeah. So at this point, they noticed the blue Corvette parked, I believe in front...

Detective Molly Beall

I thought it was behind..

Detective Omar Franco

...behind her car which is a Dodge and they continue past the vehicle. Through another routine drive down through the freeway, now they see that the hood is open, and now they see a white male underneath the hood, and what appears to be Miss Graham in the driver's seat of the car. Based on what they saw, they didn't see her in any kind of distress, it wasn't a flag down, like 'hey kind of help me,' it appeared like she was the getting assistance she needed, and they perceive that as that was a help that she called for, so nothing alarming, according to them.

Steve Gregory

Sure.

Detective Omar Franco

Probably by the third or fourth pass come through, the car was, Miss Graham's car was now by itself, no occupants, and the Corvette was gone. Later that night, Robin's parents arrive home and they're advised by their daughter that they had gotten a phone call from the CHP advising that Robin had ran out of gas and was requesting their father come help them out. So Robin's father goes out there to kind of check it out, and as he's driving the freeway, he spots a car but continues going to fill up at the local gas station, a tank of gas, a gallon of gas. Comes back to the car sees that it's abandoned by itself. The car is secured except for I believe the passenger side door was slightly unlatched. I guess he doesn't think much of it, fills it up, uses the spare key ends up taking the car home. And that was pretty much the last time Robin has ever been seen or heard from.

Steve Gregory

Okay, so there's a lot to unpack here, and I know by looking back at this, this was one one heck of a high profile case for a number of reasons which we'll get into later. I do have a few questions. First of all, how far was the Pier One location from where she was at to where the car was left or where she broke down? Do you know?

Detective Molly Beall

It wouldn't have been very far. I actually worked Hollywood division so I actually remember

Steve Gregory

Oh ok.

Detective Molly Beall

I actually remember that Pier One Import right there and it was fairly close to the freeway it. If anything was maybe a half a mile.

Steve Gregory

Okay.

Detective Molly Beall

At the most.

Steve Gregory

And then, how far away was the call box from where she broke down?

Detective Molly Beall

Well the call box that they noted was about they said 1000 feet.

Steve Gregory

Okay.

Detective Molly Beall

It says the call box, which was about 1000 feet south of Santa Monica Boulevard on the overpass. So she would have had to have walked to the call box in order to get the dispatcher to call her parents.

Steve Gregory

Got it. And then how far away did she live?

Detective Molly Beall

Not very far. She lived in, I think it would be northeast division now, but back then it was Rampart...

Detective Omar Franco

Rampart division.

Detective Molly Beall

...she was heading towards home, it only would have been a couple of exits for her to get home, maybe.

Steve Gregory

So everything, everything was...

Detective Molly Beall

She was right there.

Steve Gregory

...her life was right there. Her life was pretty much right in that radius there, a couple mile radius.

Detective Molly Beall

Yeah, the only thing that was out of the ordinary was that she was a student at Pierce, which is all the way out in the valley.

Steve Gregory

Okay, but there was nothing. I mean, that's just that could have been just any for any reason, whatever her her interests were. Okay, when we come back, I want to start going back to all the details little by little. But I also want to note that when did you both pick up this case? When did you when did you first lay eyes on it?

Detective Molly Beall

We inherited it. Well, when you came in and I came in. We've known about this case for a while. Probably since what, 2020?

Detective Omar Franco

So, yes, I got to the unit in 2020. Roughly around October 2020, it caught our attention I believe, because it was the 50th...

Steve Gregory

50th anniversary

Detective Omar Franco

...so we had a lot of...

Steve Gregory

..a lot of interest in it.

Detective Molly Beall

Tips, crimestoppers, people calling in

Detective Omar Franco

...and so forth, and our commander asked, 'Hey, can you rev it up again, and see if there's any new leads. So that's how it kind of gained life again.

Steve Gregory

Well, and then so when you study because we're I'm looking at it a two inch stack of papers here of a report. And I know that you have many other cases you have to also go through so obviously you're not expected to remember all the details. So it's kind of interesting when you put your fresh pair of eyes on it. I do want to get your thoughts as we move on. But first, this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI AM 640, time now for a news update.

Steve Gregory

KFI-AM 640 heard everywhere live on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory, and this is Unsolved. If you're listening on the app, you can send us a tip about a case, a story idea or a comment about the show. Just tap the red microphone on the app and record your message.

Steve Gregory

Welcome back we're at the Missing Persons Unit of the Los Angeles Police Department inside headquarters in downtown Los Angeles. We're talking with Molly Beall and Omar Franco both detective 2's with the LAPD Missing Persons Unit. Before the break, Detective Beall, we were talking, you know, kind of going back to the fact that you just laid eyes on this case a couple of years ago, and as you thumbed through this, I mean, we're looking how many hundreds of pages that we got here? This looks like a couple...

Detective Molly Beall

...a couple 100 pages

Steve Gregory

..a couple hundred pages here. What jumped out at you? As a seasoned investigator, you're looking at something like this and this is going all the way back to 1970. What jumped out at you?

Detective Molly Beall

Well, first, I mean, we're obviously the information we have available now wasn't the information that they could have gotten back then for all intents and purposes. CHP officers are patrolling the freeway, they had a large area actually from Barham all the way down to Rampart area close to downtown. And by for all reasons, it doesn't look like there would have been anything suspicious, other than she was a young girl who ran out of gas and was waiting for a parent to come help her with her vehicle. There wasn't, there was, interestingly enough, though, being such a young girl, she was 18 she had a job, you know, she was driving a car she was going to to school, you know, for everything that she appeared to be responsible. She was given a lot of responsibility in working and going to school, yet she runs out of gas on the freeway. And we were some of the things that we were discussing is, would she have known that she was running out of gas? There was a Texaco station nearby that she frequented quite a bit, which was close to her work. She didn't stop off to the Texaco station she just got on the freeway and headed home. It would seem...

Detective Molly Beall

...so do you think she just assumed she ran out of gas?

Detective Molly Beall

You know, it's hard to say.

Detective Omar Franco

I believe that when the father showed up, he noted that the car was out of gas.

Detective Molly Beall

Right, he couldn't start the car.

Detective Omar Franco

He couldn't start it, so it was almost confirmed that. The thing that we're kind of kicking around the idea, and I don't know if you want to get into that now...

Steve Gregory

Sure.

Detective Omar Franco

So look, reviewing these cases, a lot of work was done, a lot of people were interviewed coworkers, friends, former boyfriends, a lot of people were interviewed

Detective Molly Beall

Witnesses who were driving up and down the freeway.

Detective Omar Franco

And they're following up on people putting in radio calls of a screaming woman, unknown troubles in the area, like they followed up on a lot of stuff, but it just leading up to dead ends. The one thing that we're thinking about is, if a young woman, she seems very responsible, I think even parents know that that she wouldn't just voluntarily get into a stranger's car. So maybe this will be like, what if she knew this person, you know, from whatever, you know, and...

Detective Molly Beall

It could have been a customer? Maybe it could have been a student...

Detective Omar Franco

..a classmate at Pierce College.

Detective Molly Beall

I mean, but more importantly, you know, she went to the Texaco station quite a bit that the people who worked at the Texaco station knew her. They knew who when they went to officers and detectives went to go back and ask them, they knew her. They knew who she was, they said she was there quite a bit. It just seems unusual that she would have driven to work and then got on the freeway to head home on an empty tank.

Steve Gregory

So what does that tell you?

Detective Omar Franco

So we're kicking around the idea that perhaps if there was, this was some kind of an abduction maybe it was premeditated and planned out where maybe she had an admirer or someone that...

Steve Gregory

Cut the fuel line?

Detective Omar Franco

Cut the fuel line, or siphoned...

Detective Molly Beall

...or siphoned the gas out...

Detective Omar Franco

...because if you remember, her car was left at the parking lot for a good amount of time.

Steve Gregory

Right.

Detective Omar Franco

Someone could have been watching her and said this is a perfect time. I mean, how vulnerable can you make a person by cutting the resources to get back home?

Steve Gregory

And I you know what? My first question was going to be on this was what about surveillance cameras, but I'm like, okay, 1970's Steve...

Detective Omar Franco

Nothing.

Detective Molly Beall

Yeah nothing.

Steve Gregory

No, nothing like that back then. I'm so used to saying and asking surveillance but 1970. And then we're looking at, this was about 1230 in the morning, so we're talking about probably 1am that this was all going on so...

Detective Molly Beall

...and that Texaco station was open 24/7.

Steve Gregory

And then, well was their line of sight between where she broke down and Texaco, or was she just nearby?

Detective Molly Beall

It was nearby...

Steve Gregory

Nearby. So then in that time of the morning in 1970, there can't have been the traffic that there is now.

Detective Molly Beall

No.

Detective Omar Franco

I would assume not.

Steve Gregory

And that would have been an unusual occurrence on the side of the road like that.

Detective Molly Beall

Right.

Steve Gregory

So that's interesting, because you know, all the narrative and stuff that I was reading here, I was, you know, I'm trying to figure this out in my head, too, but and the fact that it's a blue Corvette, was that a common vehicle in 1970? Or did you have to have some money to own one of those?

Detective Molly Beall

Don't know. I mean, the detectives who investigated this case, I mean, they ran down just about every lead that they could anybody who had a Corvette between years '57 to '60. And, you know, they just never, there was no plate. Nobody, the CHP officers never took down the license plate because they didn't think that there was a problem. The way that she was interacting with this person on the side of the freeway, didn't give them any pause like he maybe she's in trouble. maybe we need to stop and check. They didn't you know, so, you would assume that the person, he was described as a male Caucasian, 25 years of age, that more than likely he probably owned the vehicle, whether or not people it would have been a popular car it was 10 to 12 years old at the time. It was between '57 and '60 and here we are in 1970, so he would have probably had the car for 12, 10 or 12...

Steve Gregory

Assuming he was a teenager maybe, indicating that perhaps, wealthy or...

Detective Molly Beall

Yeah, could have been well off

Detective Omar Franco

...or driving a parent's car.

Detective Molly Beall

..or you like to refurbish cars or on the off chance he might have stolen it.

Steve Gregory

When we come back. I want you to see how far back you can go in terms of how LAPD operated when it comes to this stuff. But first, this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI-AM 640, time now for news update.

Steve Gregory

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Welcome back, we're in downtown Los Angeles at the headquarters of the Los Angeles Police Department inside the Missing Persons Unit. We're speaking with Molly Beale, Omar Franco, both detectives with the Missing Persons Unit and we've been talking about Robin Ann Graham. She was born in 1952, and she was last seen in 1970 southbound on the 101 near the Santa Monica Boulevard exit. Before the break, you were getting into this really interesting theory about maybe what prompted this young lady who was responsible, had a job, was going to college, and how on earth could something as simple as keeping gas in your tank go past you. I mean, how do you ignore that or how does it get past you? It seems like a very responsible young lady, all of a sudden finds herself from work very, very near where she worked, finds yourself out of gas and disabled on the side of the road. And before the break you were suggesting the theory that maybe she had a stalker she had, you know, an admirer someone that went to the lengths of maybe siphoning out the gas, I got more devious and said maybe cut the fuel line. But how did detectives back then treat this kind of information, because this is long before surveillance cameras? I don't know what forensic technology was like in 1970. What can you tell and glean from the notes from detectives? What was their first thing? Well, first of all, before we do that, how long did it go before the parents reported or missing?

Detective Molly Beall

Well, back then, the old adage was you had to wait 24 hours before you could report somebody missing, obviously, that's not the case now. But I believe that the father went to Hollywood police station and tried to report her almost right away. I think the following day, the date on the missing persons report...

Detective Omar Franco

Yeah on the 16th...

Detective Molly Beall

He went on the 16th to report her and the the officers at the station said we'll just wait 24 hours, but and he may that he may have reported or on the 15th, try to report on the 15th, and he waited the 24 hours and then came back and completed the report. You know, back then we didn't have a Missing Persons Unit.

Detective Omar Franco

Nor was there any kind of like missing person laws. I mean, if you look at the California Penal Code, it's very, very specific that anyone that wants to report anyone missing, the respected law enforcement shall take police report. So none of that was in effect in 1970.

Steve Gregory

So which brings me back to what I was going to ask you is, so how does LAPD treat something like this? Where do they start? What do your notes tell you?

Detective Molly Beall

Well, it started with the Hollywood detectives. And they did a really extensive investigation, you know, they talked to boyfriend, the current boyfriend, the ex boyfriend, they ran down leads for witnesses, they even talked to a guy who passed her on the freeway. You know, I believe there was a lot of media, there was I won't say media coverage, there were newspaper articles written about it. So it would seem to me that the the way they treated this case that they knew was under suspicious circumstances. I would based on the reporting, I mean, within five days, they were polygraphing people.

Steve Gregory

Interesting

Detective Molly Beall

Right, and so I mean, I would say it almost immediately they treated it as if this was foul play. And within again, within five days there polygraphing people, and they didn't have, I mean there wasn't CCTV back then. But as we were going through this case, we were just kind of amazed at the information that they obtained. I mean, they were trying to find people who had registered Corvettes, through, you know, the information or the Insurance Bureau, they were running down, I don't even know we would have been able to get this kind of information had this occurred today. So I mean, it was really, really extensive. And, you know, I think they knew it was beyond their capability and they actually created a task force for this from what we can tell on the notes....

Steve Gregory

For just this case?

Detective Molly Beall

For this case.

Steve Gregory

Did you have and I don't know that you would know this but what was what was LA like in 1970? I mean, based on you know, was this was how was crime and because I'm not from here, so I don't have any history here but I'm mean, what was life like here? I mean, was this did you have missing person cases like this all the time? I mea what was going on around here?

Detective Molly Beall

Well, I don't want to say we have missing persons cases all the time from this time.

Detective Omar Franco

Not from this time period.

Detective Molly Beall

Not from this real time period. You know, we actually have all the most of the original reports on missing people dating all the way back to 1954.

Steve Gregory

Wow.

Detective Molly Beall

Right, and so we, as we go through, you know, as we go through our files, and we, you know, as we pull stuff out of cabinets, and we're like, where did this come from? You know, we're seeing all these reportings from you know, there was cases in 1968, 1969. But they weren't, the volume of it was not what we are dealing with today, by no means.

Steve Gregory

These are not digitized.

Detective Molly Beall

Nope.

Detective Omar Franco

Typed and some even handwritten.

Steve Gregory

Yeah. Oh, wow. Yeah,

Detective Molly Beall

The original report was handwritten.

Steve Gregory

So it's kind of amazing that over time that because you know, you move from Parker Center to here and you always wonder if things get lost in the shuffle. So it's pretty amazing. Detective Franco, I wanted to ask you this. What's you know, I asked Detective Beall, this but what stuck out to you when you first went through these stacks and stacks of pages?

Detective Omar Franco

Pretty much it made me wonder how I would handle a case like this if this happened today. I mean, obviously, we're fortunate that we have all this technology, forensics at our fingertips, we have social media and stuff. I can only imagine how difficult it was for these investigators to look for someone that's in a city like in the population of a city of LA. To me I was very impressed like my partner said of how many people they tracked down, they spoke to, they polygraphed, how they tracked down all these owners of Corvettes, I mean to the point where they even tracked down someone in Orange County who was driving in a stolen Corvette and interviewed him on that just to eliminate or more just see if he was any type of suspect. It's to me as it reads, I mean, I see it as a clear abduction. I don't see it as a voluntary missing, I don't see it as a girl that just ran away to do who knows what, at that age or to see the world or anything like that. I think someone contacted her at that moment in time, lured her into the car and took her somewhere and she's never been found.

Steve Gregory

Putting you on the spot, you talk about all the extensive research detectives did back then do you have numbers how many people were interviewed, or polygraphed?

Detective Molly Beall

Well, I've been reading through, but at least three people were polygraphed.

Steve Gregory

Three people polygraphed, about how many Corvettes were registered back then? Is that in there somewhere?

Detective Molly Beall

That's not actually in here. But they the people were calling and taking up leads, and they were just I mean, they're basically running down people, 'oh I think this guy has Corvette.'

Steve Gregory

I would imagine that was a popular vehicle on the west coast.

Detective Omar Franco

Yeah. Yeah. You had neighbors calling in 'Hey, my neighbor has a Corvette. Check him out.'

Steve Gregory

Wow, that's interesting. When we come back more on the case of Robin Ann Graham who went missing in 1970. But first this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI-AM 640, time now for a news update.

Steve Gregory

KFI-AM 640 heard everywhere live on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory, and this is Unsolved. You can always reach the Unsolved team on email, just send us a message unsolved@iheartmedia.com, that's unsolved@iheartmedia.com.

Welcome back, we're at the Missing Persons Unit at the Los Angeles Police Department headquarters downtown Los Angeles where we've been speaking with detectives Beall and Franco, about Robin Ann Graham who was last seen November 14, 1970 roadside on the 101 freeway southbound at the Santa Monica Boulevard exit. Before the break detectives you were both telling me about how aggressive the department got, like pretty much right out of the chute. You didn't have a Missing Persons Unit, but detectives knew early on this was foul play, something was not right here. So you talked about the number of people that were polygraphed, number of people interviewed, apparently your tip line went crazy. And of course, everyone with a Corvette was suspect at this point. So where did the investigation go when this started building some steam?

Detective Molly Beall

Well, I mean, it's it's still going. It's still an ongoing investigation. I mean, where they went to in 1970, it's almost like they they ran it all the way to the end, and they just couldn't, they couldn't get anymore.

Steve Gregory

Yeah.

Detective Molly Beall

I mean, like they interviewed the Texaco station, they interviewed, you know, boyfriend, current boyfriend, they, in addition to the parents, they talked to her friends they talked to, I mean, it was it, it's actually kind of mind boggling, literally how extensive this investigation was an even if you take it into current times into the '90s and, you know, there was people who were calling in like, 'you know, my, I think my son, he had a, you know, he was down there, I think he's he said that he was driving on the freeway, and there she was standing," and the father ended up calling the police and telling maybe my son was involved. I mean, it was a mean, it's quite extraordinary, actually, really, I mean, we're looking at a couple hundred pages of reports, and nothing. There's, there just is no resolution. It's as if she just literally vanished.

Steve Gregory

Okay, so fast forward now. Crimefighting, technology, technique, all of this stuff has really improved over the years. And something you said Detective Franco was interesting, when you said I was trying to look at this case, if this happened today. Do you think this case would be cold today, if it had happened today?

Detective Omar Franco

Hit or miss depending on how aggressive we get at it. They can say with technology, cell phones, GPS...

Detective Molly Beall

GPS tracking, CCTV,

Steve Gregory

So technology would be a huge help.

Detective Molly Beall

Absolutely.

Detective Omar Franco

Huge help, huge help.

Steve Gregory

So going back then you talked about, Detective Beale, that this thing really ran its course. At what point, and I don't know if you can glean this from your notes, but at what point did detectives just say 'okay, we can't there's nothing more we can do?' I mean, how long into this, we're talking 1970? Did they take it into '71, '72, or just a few weeks, a few months, do you know?

Detective Molly Beall

Based on the notes, it looks like they they hit it pretty hard for several weeks. I don't exactly have a time period, but it looks like it was it was taken to at least till the end of the year of 1970, as far as we can tell. But then of course when we look when you look at the notes and stuff, handwritten notes, actually original handwritten notes on this case. You know, there, there was never a time that this wasn't being investigated at some point. You know, CrimeStopper tips were still coming in.

Detective Omar Franco

I mean, as recent as last year.

Detective Molly Beall

Right.

Steve Gregory

Really?

Detective Molly Beall

Yes.

Steve Gregory

Because now we're talking, this is 52 years ago, and you're still getting tips. And do you have the ability to follow up on every tip?

Detective Omar Franco

When we can and put the resources, like my partner mentioned, it began with Hollywood division, and from Hollywood got passed to the task force. Task force ran it to as far as he could until they pretty much, you know, hit a dead end. A couple of years later, went to robbery homicide division, and I feel like each time they try to get a fresh pair of eyes to see like okay, let's see what was uncovered, let's see if we can think out the box and so forth. And it just throughout the day It just went to a different unit different set of eyes and so forth. And even now, when we look at it, we kind of came up with a theory, which I mentioned earlier, like, hey, what about this idea? That was the only thing that was ever covered?

Detective Molly Beall

It was never it was never addressed...

Detective Omar Franco

...never addressed and discussed.

Steve Gregory

Interesting. Yeah.

Detective Omar Franco

So, if we think about it. Technology in the sense, I mean, I don't know if it would highlight anything in this specific case, but there's things I'm sure that we can follow up on. These, these tips come in every so often, and some are just very, very left field where it's like, man, come on, we're not going to follow up on this.

Steve Gregory

Right, right sure.

Detective Omar Franco

Where you want us to start digging up backyards and violating..

Detective Molly Beall

Ground penetrating radar...

Detective Omar Franco

Give us a little more meat to it, that we can at least come up with something factual to write a search warrant or anything to conduct that search. They'll just tell us, I think they're buried at this location underneath, whichever building.

Steve Gregory

When I looked back, I saw a lot of coverage in the LA Times was covering it extensively and they were pretty much the only game in town back then. I mean, I, you had a couple three local TV stations at the time. But even years later, this still gets a lot of attention, because it just seems so unusual, but back then when I looked back, when I look back historically, there were other similar cases going on around the same time were there not? There were other, like the same MO, where it was a young girl that was either disabled on the side of the road or, or approached or something like that. It seemed like there was a big problem with that back then.

Detective Molly Beall

As far as I know, this was the only missing persons case in Los Angeles. I mean, there were there are notes in here regarding missing females from different states that they tried to connect to this case.

Steve Gregory

Oh Ok, ok.

Detective Molly Beall

Yeah, one I think is one was in New Orleans, New Orleans,

Detective Omar Franco

New Orleans, Arizona...

Steve Gregory

With similar MO's or just missing?

Detective Molly Beall

I think just missing. It wasn't necessarily kind of kind of, you know, kind of how Robin just kind of just seemed to vanish. And, you know, they have there wasn't anything in the notes that said they actually connected these theories, but it was information they were receiving from the public. In fact, one of the we tip, actually, there was a laundry list of people that they thought would be missing women, I think there was seven at least seven incidences where she was detailing where women went missing. But none of the circumstances were necessarily specific about being on the side of the freeway and picked up that way.

Steve Gregory

Got it.

Detective Molly Beall

But it was, I mean, they're really again, you know, they were really thinking outside the box. They weren't just running down leads for a couple days and like, 'oh, we can't find her.' No, I mean, they, they ran these theories down, I mean, extensively.

Steve Gregory

And I want to talk more about those theories, because there's actually, there was a connection. One of the theories connected the Manson family to this case, and my station KFI. We'll talk more about that with detectives Beall and Franco but first this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI-AM 640, time now for a news break.

Steve Gregory

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Steve Gregory

Welcome back we're at the Missing Persons Unit of the Los Angeles Police Department at headquarters in downtown LA talking with detectives Beall and Franco, about Robin Ann Graham last seen November 14, 1970, roadside southbound on the 101 near the Santa Monica Boulevard exit. We talked about a number

of theories leading up to her disappearance because by now it's pretty obvious and evident that there was foul play. It's just kind of figuring out what type of foul play and who was responsible. You both were telling me about one of the theories you came up with that was not in the notes that perhaps someone may have siphoned gas out of her tank and forced her to run out of gas so that this person could come up, because that was what was interesting to me, because the notes in there said the hood was up, the CHP officer noticed the hood up. So maybe implying this person might have been saying there might have been a problem with the car, disarm her a bit, that kind of thing, is that kind of what you were thinking?

Detective Omar Franco

Well, yeah, because that's my thinking. If you know for a fact that you run out of gas, and someone is coming to help you and says 'ok what's wrong with your car?' and you're like 'I ran out of gas.' Why are you going to the hood, why are you popping the hood open if it was just an easy fix as just putting gas in the tank.

Steve Gregory

Right.

Detective Omar Franco

Why are you trying to put up this front that you're like helping out this damsel in distress or I'm being this guy trying to, you know, gain your gain your confidence, you know, that's my idea of it.

Steve Gregory

Detective Beale, where did the description come from of this person? Was that from the CHP officer?

Detective Molly Beall

There was yes, the CHP officers who were interviewed extensively and there was actually a motorist who was also interviewed, and he actually gave a similar description as well.

Steve Gregory

Okay.

Detective Molly Beall

So he was yeah, he was he just happened to see the blue Corvette. He described it as a blue Corvette '60, '61 a hardtop parked to the rear of another vehicle. He said he gave the description, male, Caucasian, 25 years of age 5'8, 165, semi muscular and he was just driving by. So but it coincides with the description that the CHP officers gave, as well. I mean, they they do coincide.

Steve Gregory

Speaking of CHP, I understand they took a lot of grief...

Detective Molly Beall

Oh they did...

Steve Gregory

...over that night too, you want to explain that.

Detective Molly Beall

There was if we're gonna go back to how people really connect with these cases. You know, people have, somehow they create an attachment or they feel a personal experience with missing persons cases, and there was a lot of people who were calling the CHP headquarters. They said the phone was ringing off the hook, people blaming the CHP officers for not standing by. People were asking watch commanders, why didn't they just wait a half hour? If they if they waited a half hour, she wouldn't be missing. And even, you know, the CHP had since now it's changed their policy. But at the time, reasonable explanation was of watch commanders was, there are so many stranded motorists on the freeway, so few of us, we can't sit and wait with everybody. You know, once we determine that there isn't an issue and they don't need any further assistance, then they just keep on going. But after this case, CHP actually had a, I don't know if it was a policy or some type of directive, where they were telling officers if they came across female motorists that they were giving them direction as far as not getting out the vehicle, don't talk to strangers. They were doing staying a little bit longer with the with the motorists and to make sure that this wouldn't happen again. So I mean, it looks like the public was really blaming the CHP. The sentiment, I guess, I should say was that they were blaming the CHP.

Steve Gregory

And the policy changes, I read it too, it really specifically mentioned women by themselves.

Detective Omar Franco

Yes.

Steve Gregory

Yeah, and that was that was a big part of that too. You talk about the sentiment and how people are outraged, and we're always quick to point fingers and whatnot, but emotionally this case really connected with people, didn't it?

Detective Molly Beall

It did.

Steve Gregory

Explain a little bit about I mean, what are some of the letters and the calls and the tips that you would get on this because of the sentimental part of it?

Detective Molly Beall

Well, I mean, even just going back through the original file, there's a letter here, a three page letter to KTTV, channel 11 News, pleading with them to put the information out to continue with, you know, getting that information out, because she might be found. One line that says, Don't, don't, don't not do this for me, but do it for the parents of the missing girl. There's another letter in here from another woman who grew up in Echo Park, and near near where Robin was, and you know, she wanted to plead also to the police, like, please don't, please don't lose sight of this, and you know, offering up suggestions and maybe a neighbor. We have father, a father who called in on his son because his son had made an offhanded remark about seeing a girl on a freeway, and he actually called the police to report his son who was

thoroughly investigated. So there was and even though this happened in 1970, we still get that sentiment today. If this isn't, you know, this wasn't just for 1970. I mean, we we get this all the time, I think on a regular basis.

Steve Gregory

Detective Franco, at any point, did detectives focus in on a particular suspect or individual?

Detective Omar Franco

Yeah, so they spoke to extensively one of her ex-boyfriends, and he's the one that actually got a polygraph, right.

Detective Molly Beall

He did.

Detective Omar Franco

And obviously, they couldn't get much on him. I know I spoke to, I believe, Robin's sister, who, sometime last year who she also believes like to this day, she thinks that perhaps it was the ex the ex-boyfriend who had something to do with it, because he had some kind of like, obsession towards her.

Detective Molly Beall

Jealous.

Steve Gregory

Key being 'ex'

Detective Molly Beall

Right.

Detective Omar Franco

Correct. Yeah, but I mean, anyone that they thought would have any kind of close ties with her that'd be responsible for her disappearance, they interviewed extensively, and...

Steve Gregory

Well, she would be 70 years old today.

Detective Omar Franco

Yes.

Steve Gregory

So would, is the ex-boyfriend still around?

Detective Omar Franco

From my understanding he is. When I spoke to her sister, I believe he's still in California, I remember correctly. And there's some kind of Facebook community or some rumors, something of that nature, and but yeah, he's still, he's still around.

Steve Gregory

And then there was actually connection to the Manson family. At one point, someone in the Manson family. I'm using air quotes was tied to this case, right.

Detective Molly Beall

I don't know if there was...

Steve Gregory

Well, there was suspicion.

Detective Molly Beall

Suspicion, I don't know. I was just I think a theory, I don't I don't know, if the detectives... we've determined that Charles Manson was actually in custody in 1969. So yeah, it could have been somebody from his family, but I don't know how extensively that was run down by the detectives, because there really isn't. I mean, there's, I mean, there's all sorts of theories rolling around about this case. I mean, a lot of people believe it was a serial killer.

Steve Gregory

There was even a connection to the Zodiac,

Detective Omar Franco

Zodiac.

Detective Molly Beall

And the Golden State killer, killer. But, you know, this was, I don't even want to say this isn't, I mean, it could be an MO if she did get her gas siphoned out of her car and knowing that she'd run out of gas and be a lone female on the freeway in distress. You know, I don't we don't know if that's specific to an MO, of the serial killer. But I mean, certainly, you know, all these other Golden State killer this was not his MO, Zodiac Killer, not his MO.

Detective Omar Franco

Because Zodiac liked to publicize his kills and write about it...

Steve Gregory

Write about it.

Detective Omar Franco

I mean if it would have been him he would have...

Steve Gregory

..been writing about it.

Detective Molly Beall

..we would have known and, you know, even though the Golden State killer was up and down the entire state, this was not his MO at all. So you know, even with the Charles Manson, could there have been? Sure, I mean, they were active at the time, their fringe, but I don't know if it was actually an actual real theory that they ran down. Just speculation.

Steve Gregory

Okay, more with detectives Beall and Franco, but first, this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI-AM 640, time now for a news update.

Steve Gregory

KFI-AM 640, heard everywhere live on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory, and this is Unsolved. If you're listening on the app and have a tip, story idea or comment, simply press the red microphone button and leave us your message.

Steve Gregory

We are at the Los Angeles Police Department headquarters in downtown Los Angeles at the Missing Persons Unit. We've been speaking with detectives Beall and Franco about Robin Ann Graham, who was last seen November 14, 1970. We've been really covering a lot of ground here and I'm just absolutely fascinated by this because you're new modern detectives in 2022 that is going back and looking at the notes of your predecessors in 1970, and trying to make something of all of this. First of all, I just think that's kind of cool that you're going back, it's like in a library, and you're going back and it's like these authors back in the 70s, and you're all in the same industry. But you can tell the things are different. Like you came up with a theory about siphoning the gas. You say you, that was your first theory, right?.

Detective Molly Beall

Right?

Steve Gregory

After you went through the stacks and stacks of hundreds of pages, first thing that popped in the mind was like someone siphon the gas out of this girl's car, right?

Detective Omar Franco

Yeah.

Steve Gregory

So what other things did you see on this, like, you talked about all the different people that were interviewed for this case, what are some of the people that you would have interviewed? How would you have approached this case?

Detective Omar Franco

Well, one idea I had and after just coming up with the whole siphoning of the gas and perhaps her having some kind of a stalker or admirer, we believe that you know, she willingly got into this car thinking that there might have been some kind of...

Detective Molly Beall

...she might have known known the person.

Detective Omar Franco

...known the person, So we're thinking that she knew this person in a different setting other than her close friends or her....

Steve Gregory

Romantic?

Detective Omar Franco

Not romantic...

Detective Molly Beall

No, not romantic.

Detective Omar Franco

...perhaps, so our theory is probably someone from school...

Steve Gregory

Oh, ok.

Detective Omar Franco

...you know, her classmates. And not someone that was she hung out with regularly, but perhaps someone that may be quiet but seemed like a real nice guy and very, probably wholesome and welcoming, and they didn't give up, you know a little like, creepy, you know...

Detective Molly Beall

Red Flag...

Detective Omar Franco

....red flag vibe right? So, the way I would probably approach it now is, I was telling my partner, is how can we go back to Pierce College and be like, 'Hey, can you give us the admission records for 1970?' And it kind of just go from there? And then just kind of just eliminate just based on description?

Steve Gregory

And did they, correct me here I don't know, but would colleges, they don't have yearbooks do they?

Detective Omar Franco

I know universities do, I don't know about Pierce College is a community college, right?

Detective Molly Beall

It's a community college.

Detective Omar Franco

...so I'm not sure if they have one. But I'm sure they have archived admission records.

Steve Gregory

So have you done that already or do you say you're about to do that?

Detective Molly Beall

No, it was just it was just something we were kicking around in reviewing the case, because, you know, my partner had asked me, he goes, is it unusual that an 18-year-old girl would run out of gas on the freeway? And to put that in context, I don't find it so unreasonable, but when you look at her background, it seems a little unreasonable. Unlikely, I guess I should say unlikely that she would have run out of gas on the freeway because she forgot.

Steve Gregory

Because she's pretty responsible.

Detective Molly Beall

Exactly.

Steve Gregory

Very responsible...

Detective Molly Beall

So, right. And so then we take it, then we took it from a what if she had a customer? What if there was a customer that came into the store she was familiar with? Because based on the description...

Steve Gregory

Or a teacher.

Detective Molly Beall

...anything, but we feel in reading back on this, that she was comfortable to a degree with the person who was talking to her. So, you know, you kind of okay, well, where would you go with that could have been a customer, could have been somebody she was having class with. It would be impossible for us to go back and you know, try to find out customers, but school records may still be around, we could check her class schedule and, you know, see if there's any type of crossover. I mean, but we even kind of laughed, and we're like, they're not digitized. So we don't know if they actually have the records because now we could call it you know, a college and ask them, could you please send us some information and we would get it right away because everything's digitized. But in 1970, as you can see handwritten reports, typed reports. Nothing was digitized.

Steve Gregory

Not everyone was as fastidious as your detectives.

Detective Omar Franco

Yeah, and it's probably boxed up somewhere in Iron Mountain that someone has to manually thumb through and get for us.

Steve Gregory

Wow.

Detective Omar Franco

But I think what, at least to me, one thing that's stands out is, I don't think it seems like you're, I don't want to say typical traditional, but like your knockdown drag, throw into my car and drive off.

Detective Molly Beall

Right.

Detective Omar Franco

So I think...

Steve Gregory

I mean, was it in the notes that....any signs of struggle?

Detective Molly Beall

No.

Detective Omar Franco

No, especially seeing, reading the CHP's statements, that there's no signs of distress that she was in there, calm and that it seemed like she needed any kind of help.

Detective Molly Beall

I mean, they in, you know, we talked about it, they passed by her a couple times. So if she was in some type of distress, you know, she didn't she didn't send off any signals that she needed help from the CHP. And also too, I think the parents made it very clear to the detectives, very early on that she would not get into a car with a stranger. That was, they felt very strongly about that.

Steve Gregory

So let me, but let me ask you this. You guys are both experienced investigators. Parents always think they know their kids.

Detective Molly Beall

Oh yeah.

Detective Omar Franco

Oh yeah.

Detective Molly Beall

Oh, yeah.

Steve Gregory

So, but we're looking at sort of a behavior pattern of this young woman that would suggest with a full time job, college, her own vehicle, it suggests, and group of friends, it would would suggest that she's a well adjusted person. Right.

Detective Molly Beall

Right.

Detective Omar Franco

Yeah.

Steve Gregory

So is it out of the ordinary, do you think for someone like her to to have a second life or a dark side?

Detective Molly Beall

I don't want to say yes or no, I mean, anything is possible.

Steve Gregory

I know I'm really, really stretching it here.

Detective Molly Beall

I mean, but based on based on the hundreds of pages that we could read through, that was never really that was not the sentiment, as you read through this is, you know, you know, we also talked to we don't know, she called somebody else. We know, we know, we know, the call operator made the call to the dad.

Detective Omar Franco

And that was confirmed that the detectives followed up and there was a call made...

Steve Gregory

To the home...

Detective Omar Franco

...to the home from the CHP.

Detective Molly Beall

...from the CHP.

Steve Gregory

The sister was the one who, right...

Detective Molly Beall

Yeah, and maybe she thought, well, I don't know when my parents are getting home. Could she have called somebody else to help her? We wouldn't know. Because that information, it wasn't theorized as far as we can tell. They didn't check any additional, you know, there is no notes in here saying that they followed up with CHP, were there any additional calls from her after that first call to the home. So we don't know if she might have called somebody else not knowing how long it was going to take her parents to get out there. It was actually a...

Detective Omar Franco

...a good hour because I believe that the call came in, went from CHP to the house at two or four in the morning. Mom, dad didn't get home until three in the morning.

Detective Molly Beall

And I think Dad said he got out there like 3:45.

Steve Gregory

Okay, hold that thought. When we come back, we're gonna wrap this all up in a nice little package. First this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI-AM 640, time now for news update.

Steve Gregory

KFI-AM 640, heard everywhere live on the I Heart Radio app. I'm Steve Gregory and this is Unsolved. To learn more about this case and others go to our website KFI-AM 640.com/unsolved, that's KFI-AM 640/unsolved.

Steve Gregory

We're talking with detectives Beall and Franco at the LAPD's Missing Persons Unit. And before the break, you were talking about all the different types of theories and things that that have cropped up over the years. One of the things that popped up in my quick research on this was KFI's connection to this case. This is 1987 December 15, 1987, and the headline in the LA Times says, 'I just wanted to show she wasn't forgotten.' And it starts like this, "Dearest Robin. You ran out of gas on the Hollywood freeway, a man in a Corvette pulled over to help, you've not been seen of since. It's been 17 years, but it's always just yesterday. Still looking for you. Sincerely the Echo Park ducks." Now, that was in a classified ad that was in the LA Times. Come to find out a KFI disc jockey named Geoff Edwards, read it on the air that day that it came out, and Edward said it sounded romantic. He thought it was he thought it was some sort of a connection between a man looking for a woman. But it was indeed it was the case that we're talking about here Robin Ann Graham and it was written by, come to find out it was written by someone who was a childhood friend Al Medrano at the time was a 36-year-old computer operator, he said he was a childhood friend and they grew up together in Echo Park. Were you familiar with this Al Medrano?

Detective Molly Beall

No.

Detective Omar Franco

No.

Steve Gregory

I'm just wondering, you know, even the guy you described was in his 20's based on two separate descriptions. And this man, he would be in his mid 70's, today, right?

Detective Molly Beall

Right.

Detective Omar Franco

Right.

Steve Gregory

Do you think that guy is still around?

Detective Molly Beall

Well, I mean, it was it was certainly just take a few computer searches to verify that information.

Steve Gregory

What about DNA? Were you able to get any DNA from the family and do the familial DNA?

Detective Molly Beall

Yes.

Detective Omar Franco

Yes, so we have that on file..

Detective Molly Beall

And we have dental.

Detective Omar Franco

...and we have dentals. Yeah, it's not protocol to collect dental and DNA from missing persons.

Steve Gregory

So if you have the familial DNA in do you put it, do you put that in CODIS?

Detective Omar Franco

CODIS, yes.

Steve Gregory

So nothing, no hits?

Detective Omar Franco

No, no hits.

Steve Gregory

These tips that you were getting, you say you were getting all the way up until last year? What's the craziest tip you've gotten?

Detective Molly Beall

Well, reading one in there, again, going back to this this woman, it actually says I think it starts off with when she does a Crimestoppers 'This is not a joke,' and again, she lists like seven, seven women from across the country, including Robin Graham. It just seems like people are like, how would you even connect Robin Graham's disappearance with six other missing women across the country? It seems like a lot of people just kind of pull stuff out of thin air. You know, people in here were the son, you know, the father, 'he's a narcissist,' so he was reporting that, you know, I mean, it's, it's, it's people were just well, this person might have done it, because he's, I think the father, 'narcissistic, sociopath.' So, I mean, it's like people are just going off of hunches, or, you know, now with the advent of, you know, information at our fingertips, you know, there's a lot of people who stay at home and, you know, work on this stuff...

Steve Gregory

Sure.

Detective Molly Beall

...and they're developing their own theories. And, you know, I mean, we can rule out Zodiac, we can rule out Golden State, we can mostly rule out every kind of everything else. But do we know if this is a serial killer? We don't know. We don't know. Could it be connected to deaths across the country? It could, unlikely but it seems like you know, everyone just kind of wants to throw their opinion and just say, well, he's a narcissistic sociopath, so I'm going to report them.

Steve Gregory

Let me ask you kind of an overall question based on the experience you both have. So you've got a guy that's in his 20s that most likely kidnapped Robin, and Lord knows what happened to her at that point. Does someone like that, that age, do they go on to offend for the rest of their lives? Or is this one of those thrill things that they do when they're younger, and then they end up having families of their own?

Detective Molly Beall

I think it either or...

Detective Omar Franco

Either or...

Detective Molly Beall

...I think it depends on the person.

Detective Omar Franco

I think it really depends on the person. My opinion, it might be the second one, but it might have been a thrill, one or two, and then it's becoming a regular citizen with growing old with the family.

Steve Gregory

Because one thing I noticed about a lot of unsolved crimes, not necessarily missing persons, but unsolved crimes, you know, a lot of people with gang relations or gang connections, and people do all of these things when they're younger, and then they grow out of it, or they lose the appetite for it. And then they end up having their own families, and then you come to find out guilt...

Detective Molly Beall

Right...

Steve Gregory

... pushes them into a confession, or at least an anonymous tip or something. Do you find anything like that in a in your world?

Detective Omar Franco

Nothing like that yet.

Detective Molly Beall

Nothing...yeah, nothing quite like that.

Steve Gregory

Because you're doing missing persons, but this could very well be a kidnapping.

Detective Molly Beall

And we believe it was.

Steve Gregory

So if you're officially calling into kidnapping, then is it still a missing person case? Or does it become more of a robbery homicide?

Detective Molly Beall

And that's where we get into the gray area.

Steve Gregory

Oh Okay.

Detective Omar Franco

Yeah,

Detective Molly Beall

Yeah, there's, I don't know if there's any real simple answer to that. But as we said earlier, based on the extensive investigation on this case, I mean, and from the very beginning, they treated it as missing person with suspicious circumstances. And no really nowhere in the notes does it say that anybody said that she was actually kidnapped...

Detective Omar Franco

The word kidnapped does not come up in this report.

Detective Molly Beall

It does not come up.

Steve Gregory

It's just still still missing persons.

Detective Molly Beall

It's a missing person. And, but and I don't know, if, would we really have handled it any different? You know,

Detective Omar Franco

It's hard to say, and it all depends at the at the very point when that officer gets our radio call and how good of an investigation they do at the very, very beginning, because how they determine it, or how they label that that crime report will determine which direction...

Steve Gregory

How it gets treated...

Detective Omar Franco

...how it gets treated and which direction it's going to go. Right...

Detective Molly Beall

It's either a crime, you know, the person is missing, because it's due to a crime, some, you know, anything, homicide, kidnapping, whatever it is, versus missing persons where there's no crime. It's not a crime to be a missing person. So when you kind of get in, we talked about that gray area, she's still a missing person, but they treated it as if it was under suspicious circumstances...

Detective Omar Franco

Right.

Detective Molly Beall

...because she's still missing. So there's you can't there's we do know she's missing...

Detective Omar Franco

Right?

Detective Molly Beall

...But we don't know if there's actual crime that occurred.

Detective Omar Franco

Because before all this extensive follow up, and you just read the first initial missing persons report, it reads as a missing person. She went to work, and didn't come home. And that's it. That could, I mean it opens it up, she could be with a friend, with a boyfriend, in the hospital. I mean, it could be anything. It wasn't until we got the detectives and intervened CHP that wait a minute, this this, something funky about this. That yeah, it gets treated as an abduction a crime, but we're still keep treating, labeling it as a missing person.

Steve Gregory

How many missing person cases do you have right now?

Detective Omar Franco

Oh, my gosh. Active?

Steve Gregory

Well, I mean, what I guess, yeah, active.

Detective Omar Franco

So cold case, a cold case is a case where the individual has been missing for more than three years, and they haven't been located or recovered. So we have roughly 254-ish dating back to like, when 1950?

Detective Molly Beall

Well, we have original reports back from 1954, we're still trying to verify if those people are actually missing.

Detective Omar Franco

Yeah.

Detective Molly Beall

But I think Robin Graham is actually one of the...

Detective Omar Franco

One of the first earliest...

Detective Molly Beall

...first earliest cold cases that we actually have. We have again, we have missing persons reports from '54 through through '70. We're still trying to determine if they're still missing, but...

Detective Omar Franco

We average about 4000 cases a year.

Detective Molly Beall

Yeah.

Steve Gregory

Missing persons.

Detective Omar Franco

Missing persons cases. If I were to just pull up the numbers, I could tell you that as of 2021, we have about approximately 90% clearance of clearance meaning they were located and recovered.

Steve Gregory

Located and recovered, solved.

Detective Omar Franco

..in some way. Yeah.

Steve Gregory

Okay, let's hold that thought because we need to take one final break. When we come back. We'll wrap up with detectives Beall and Franco from the Los Angeles Police Headquarters. This is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI-AM 640, time now for news update.

Steve Gregory

KFI-AM 640 heard everywhere live on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory and this is Unsolved. You can always contact the team on the iHeartRadio app through the talkback feature. Just press the red microphone and record your message, tip or show idea. Welcome back, we're wrapping up the case of Robin Ann Graham last seen November 14, 1970, southbound on the 101 at the Santa Monica Boulevard exit she was in her vehicle ran out of gas, and we've been talking with detectives Beall and Franco with the Missing Persons Unit at LAPD. A theory they had come up with fairly quickly after seeing the file for the first time was that perhaps a stalker had siphoned gas out of her car to force her to become disabled and have to pull her car off to the side, and then lo and behold, the knight in shining armor shows up to offer assistance, and then she's never seen again. So before the break, we got in, we're really digging deeper and deeper into kind of what your Missing Persons Unit does, and LAPD and you say you deal with about 4000 cases a year, you have a 90% solve rate, which is, which is admirable. But most of those cases, as you mentioned, are not the types of cases we're talking about now, right?

Detective Molly Beall

Correct

Steve Gregory

Those are, those are a lot, a lot of times people running away from home don't want to be seen, mental health issues, homeless, whatever the case is. And in fact, you were telling me off air about, you know, getting letters from families back east or other parts of the country, because their loved ones all come out west, and you said it dates all the way back to how long?

Detective Molly Beall

The late 1800s?

Steve Gregory

Late 1800s, people, so the gold rush.

Detective Molly Beall

Right, as the migration was moving west, and families were losing contact due because we didn't have, there wasn't telephones there wasn't...

Steve Gregory

So you were getting Pony Express letters , the LAPD was getting

Detective Molly Beall

Pony Express letters from families back east who were asking the police department to find their family members, because last they'd heard they were migrating west to the Los Angeles area.

Steve Gregory

That is, you don't have any of those letters handy, do you?

Detective Molly Beall

No

Detective Omar Franco

No.

Steve Gregory

Your records aren't that good then. Okay. And I guess, you know, no chance of talking to the detectives back then.

Detective Molly Beall

No (laughing) But, but as we see, like, that really hasn't changed. We still get letters from family members saying that they've lost contact with their loved one and asking us to locate them.

Steve Gregory

I can't imagine though, because at a time and I know for a fact having covered LAPD for many years, you don't have the manpower to go to every one of these, you know, to to address every one of these things, and you have to actually go through and prioritize. Now when you take a cold case like this, and you've already said that it's an abduction, this is a kidnapping.

Detective Molly Beall

That's our belief.

Steve Gregory

You believe. So is this a missing persons case or is this a kidnapping case? And where does it, and you know, if you're just doing missing persons at what point do you have to hand it off to robbery homicide?

Detective Molly Beall

Well it was handed off to robbery homicide.

Steve Gregory

Okay, and then it got sent back to you.

Detective Molly Beall

Right, because they couldn't prove that a crime occurred, so she's a missing person. I mean, it's it's, it's simple in its concept, right? Because if you can't prove a crime, then it's a missing person. But when you look at this, it reads as a crime.

Steve Gregory

So how do you approach that then? I mean, you've already said that you looked at it and you said, when you open this up, sorry, it screamed already, it screamed abduction to you and that's a crime.

Detective Molly Beall

Right?

Steve Gregory

You can't prove it.

Detective Molly Beall

Right.

Steve Gregory

But everything in there says this thing was an abduction.

Detective Molly Beall

Right.

Steve Gregory

So what are some of the leads you're working on now? Now you told me about the Pierce College, you want to go back and look at the class roster, right?

Detective Omar Franco

Right.

Steve Gregory

What other things you looking at?

Detective Omar Franco

Just the class roster, getting some names, getting a list of names, some cross reference to see at any point, I don't know how I'm going to do this, but if they owned or family owned any kind of Corvettes during that time.

Detective Molly Beall

There was one mention of somebody in the case package.

Detective Omar Franco

There's a case package here and I don't want to get too much out of it because I don't think it's ever, I haven't read anything if it got touched on or followed up with. So there's definitely a person of interest here that the detective at some point identified who owned a Corvette, but there's no statement or any mention of contacting that person.

Steve Gregory

So that person could still be around.

Detective Molly Beall

Right?

Detective Omar Franco

Yes.

Steve Gregory

So in my business, we call that burying the lead. You should have, why are you waiting till now, the last segment of the show to tell me there's a person of interest... <laughing> That's got to be so...is that person in the city of Los Angeles or in LA County?

Detective Molly Beall

We don't know. I mean, again...

Steve Gregory

You have a name though?

Detective Omar Franco

Yes.

Detective Molly Beall

Yes. But again, you know, we're, as we reading through these hundreds of pages of notes, you know, we're trying to make sure that that person was eliminated initially...

Steve Gregory

Got it.

Detective Molly Beall

...right, and then if it wasn't, then that may be something that we would, you know, we say Person of Interest, maybe, you know, somebody who owned a Corvette, you know, somebody, somebody offered information that linked it up that they felt linked it up to Robin Graham case, you know, so, again, it's mostly finding the time to really sit down and really just take a real, I mean, we call it rabbit, I mean, this is a rabbit hole. I mean, it is, I mean, you can get lost in this....

Steve Gregory

Sure.

Detective Molly Beall

...And, unfortunately, our caseload as it is now, doesn't really allow us that time...

Steve Gregory

To go down that rabbit hole.

Detective Molly Beall

Right.

Steve Gregory

But I think the college is kind of interesting, because it sounds like you keep coming back to the college like as if that's going to be a perhaps a place for information.

Detective Omar Franco

Because I feel just based on reading the reports, nothing was ever touched on the college, everything was touched on her circle of friends, her work...

Detective Molly Beall

...or customers, I don't think there was anything in there...

Steve Gregory

What was her major? Do you know?

Detective Molly Beall

I don't...I don't.

Steve Gregory

What was she focused on? Do you have any idea?

Detective Omar Franco

I don't know.

Detective Molly Beall

I mean, she was only 18, so she would have just been right out of high school.

Steve Gregory

Right.

Detective Omar Franco

Because she just graduated high school that summer.

Steve Gregory

That summer right. I was just curious on what our major would have been. Kind of like what kinds of other people would be in that kind of a major?

Detective Molly Beall

Right.

Steve Gregory

You know, it's fascinating. And the picture that I see, I see there's a different picture there. I don't know what that is, is that driver license?

Detective Omar Franco

So it's fine, because we just talking like this, it looks a lot like her, but at some point, they ruled it

Detective Molly Beall

I mean like dead ringer.

Detective Omar Franco

They ruled it not to be her.

Steve Gregory

Oh okay.

Detective Omar Franco

So this person here, her name is Robin Brown, but her maiden name was Robin Graham.

Steve Gregory

Oh, interesting, because the photos I've seen mostly are the ones from her high school.

Detective Omar Franco

That one.

Detective Molly Beall

This one.

Steve Gregory

Yeah her high school photo, her senior photo.

Detective Omar Franco

Yeah.

Detective Molly Beall

We spent a couple of minutes looking at both of them, and she looks exactly the same. I mean, it looks like the same person.

Detective Omar Franco

That's just been the look in the 70s.

Steve Gregory

Yeah.

Detective Molly Beall

Right.

Steve Gregory

Yeah, exactly.

Detective Molly Beall

Right.

Steve Gregory

Well, listen, this has been absolutely fascinating. I wish you all the success on this, you've got a great challenge ahead of you. And I, I really hope you can update us if you have anything that comes up because we'd love to do updates on the show. Kind of do a case update on down the line, but let me know if Pierce College yields anything, I'm very curious about that and hopefully someone out there listening may have some information too. And of course, you can always call # 250 and say the keyword Unsolved, leave your tip, or your suggestion, your comment or you can always reach out to us on the iHeartRadio app press the red microphone and leave us your comments. Detective Molly Beall and Detective Omar Franco, both of you, thank you so much for your time. Really appreciate it and best of luck to you.

Detective Molly Beall

Thank you.

Detective Omar Franco

Thank you very much.

Steve Gregory

And that's going to do it. Unsolved is a production of the KFI news department for iHeartMedia Los Angeles, Robin Bertolucci Program Director, Chris Little News Director. The program is produced by Steve Gregory and Jacob Gonzalez. Our field engineer is Tony Sorrentino, our technical director is David Callaway, our digital producer for this episode is Michelle Kube, our social media producer for this episode is Lina Chappelle. Coming up it's Coast to Coast, but first, this is KFI-AM 640, time now for a news update.