

# The Murder Of Sheriff Mizell

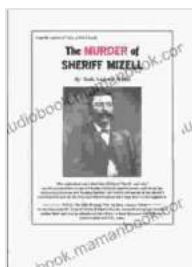
On a fateful evening in the rural reaches of Okeechobee County, Florida, a heinous crime sent shockwaves through the community and beyond. On January 1, 1968, Sheriff John L. Mizell, a respected law enforcement official, was brutally murdered under mysterious circumstances. The subsequent investigation and trial captivated the nation, leaving an enduring legacy of intrigue and unanswered questions.

## The Victim: Sheriff John L. Mizell

John Mizell, a native of Okeechobee County, dedicated his life to serving his community. He was elected Sheriff in 1964 and quickly established himself as a tireless advocate for law and order. Known for his unwavering determination and unwavering integrity, Mizell was a highly respected figure in the county.

## The Crime

On New Year's Day, 1968, Sheriff Mizell left his Okeechobee home to visit his girlfriend, Hazel Tucker. He was driving his unmarked police car, an Oldsmobile Delta 88. As he approached the intersection of State Road 70 and County Road 15, he was forced to stop behind a stalled pick-up truck.



## The Murder of Sheriff Mizell by Dale Andrew White

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 17 pages  
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Suddenly, a dark-colored car pulled alongside Mizell's vehicle. Two masked individuals exited the car and approached Mizell's driver's side window. Without uttering a word, they fired multiple shots into the car, fatally wounding the Sheriff. The assailants then sped away, leaving Mizell slumped over the steering wheel.

## **The Investigation**

The brutal nature of the crime and the prominence of the victim triggered a massive investigation. Law enforcement agencies from across Florida poured into Okeechobee County, determined to track down the killers. The FBI also became involved, providing technical support and investigative resources.

The investigation quickly focused on several suspects with ties to organized crime and local criminal elements. However, solid evidence remained elusive, and the case grew cold as the weeks and months turned into years.

## **The Trial**

Years later, in 1975, a breakthrough occurred when a former associate of the alleged mastermind behind the murder came forward with incriminating evidence. The accused, James Earl Haun, was a notorious racketeer and owner of several gambling operations in Okeechobee County.

Haun was charged with conspiracy to murder Sheriff Mizell and went on trial in 1976. The prosecution presented evidence linking Haun to a meeting with the alleged hitmen, as well as his motive to eliminate Mizell, who had been targeting Haun's illegal activities.

After a highly publicized trial, the jury found Haun guilty. He was sentenced to life in prison, where he died in 2003.

### **Unanswered Questions**

Despite the trial and conviction, lingering questions about the murder of Sheriff Mizell persist to this day. The identity of the actual shooters was never definitively established, and speculation continues about their possible ties to organized crime syndicates or other shadowy figures.

Furthermore, some believe that the full extent of the conspiracy and the involvement of other individuals may have never been fully uncovered. The truth about what transpired on that fateful night in 1968 may forever remain shrouded in mystery.

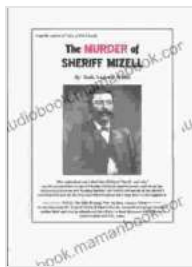
### **Legacy and Impact**

The murder of Sheriff Mizell left an indelible mark on the Okeechobee County community. It shattered the sense of security and trust that had once prevailed. The crime also highlighted the dangers and sacrifices faced by law enforcement officers in their unwavering pursuit of justice.

In 1968, the Okeechobee County Courthouse was renamed the Sheriff John L. Mizell Jr. Courthouse in his honor. Every year, on the anniversary of his death, a memorial service is held to pay tribute to his legacy and the ultimate price he paid while serving his community.

The murder of Sheriff Mizell remains a chilling and enigmatic crime that continues to captivate the public's imagination. The brutal circumstances, the elusive identity of the shooters, and the lingering questions surrounding the conspiracy have cemented the case as an enduring mystery.

While justice was ultimately served with the conviction of James Earl Haun, the full story of the murder of Sheriff John L. Mizell may never be fully known. The legacy of this tragedy serves as a somber reminder of the dangers inherent in upholding law and order and the enduring impact of unresolved crimes on the fabric of our society.



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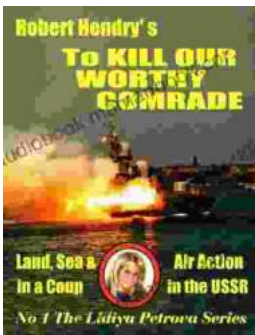
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