



SNOHOMISH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Everett, WA 98021

Initial Case Report

Case Report # 2017-00168031

EVENT	OCCURRED INCIDENT TYPE Death Investigation		DATE/TIME REPORTED 10/24/2017 13:19		ASSOCIATED CASES	
	LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE ARLINGTON, WA 98223		OCCURRED DATE/TIME 10/24/2017 13:19 OCCURRED THROUGH 10/24/2017 18:00			
OFFENSES	STATUTE / DESCRIPTION				Counts	Attempt/Commit
SUBJECT	☐ NON-DISCLOSURE					
	SUBJECT TYPE Deceased		NAME Adult / STARK, ERNEST N			DOB / AGE RANGE [REDACTED]
	ADDRESS ARLINGTON, WA 98223				PRIMARY PHONE [REDACTED]	
					SECONDARY PHONE	
	RACE	SEX	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	HAIR	EYE
	[REDACTED]					
	DL NUMBER [REDACTED]		DL STATE HI		EMPLOYER	
SUBJECT	☐ NON-DISCLOSURE					
	SUBJECT TYPE Witness		NAME Adult / ABRAMS, JEFFREY ROBERT			DOB / AGE RANGE [REDACTED]
	ADDRESS ARLINGTON, WA 98223				PRIMARY PHONE [REDACTED]	
					SECONDARY PHONE	
	RACE	SEX	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	HAIR	EYE
	[REDACTED]					
	DL NUMBER [REDACTED]		DL STATE WA		EMPLOYER	
VEHICLE	PROPERTY CODE			YEAR	COLOR	
	TYPE / MAKE / MODEL /					
	PLATE	STATE	VIN			VALUE
	DESCRIPTION					
PROPERTY	PROPERTY CODE					
	SERIAL NUMBER		QTY/UNIT OF MEASURE	VALUE	COLOR	
	TYPE / MAKE / MODEL /					
	DESCRIPTION					

REPORTING OFFICER / ID #

Dawson, William

APPROVING SUPERVISOR

Vander Wel, Leslie K



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ADDITIONAL SUBJECTS

☐ NON-DISCLOSURE

SUBJECT

SUBJECT TYPE

Witness

NAME

Adult / ABRAMS, KATHERINE LILLIE

DOB / AGE RANGE

ADDRESS

ARLINGTON, WA 98223

PRIMARY PHONE

SECONDARY PHONE

RACE

SEX

HEIGHT

WEIGHT

HAIR

EYE

WA

☐ NON-DISCLOSURE

SUBJECT

SUBJECT TYPE

Contact

NAME

Adult / STARK, REBECCA JULIAN

DOB / AGE RANGE

ADDRESS

ARLINGTON, WA 98223

PRIMARY PHONE

SECONDARY PHONE

RACE

SEX

HEIGHT

WEIGHT

HAIR

EYE

DL NUMBER

DL STATE

WA

EMPLOYER

☐ NON-DISCLOSURE

SUBJECT

SUBJECT TYPE

Contact

NAME

Adult / GRIFFIN, TANNER K

DOB / AGE RANGE

ADDRESS

CARLSBAD, CA 92010

PRIMARY PHONE

SECONDARY PHONE

RACE

White

SEX

Male

HEIGHT

WEIGHT

HAIR

EYE

DL NUMBER

DL STATE

EMPLOYER

☐ NON-DISCLOSURE

SUBJECT

SUBJECT TYPE

NAME

DOB / AGE RANGE

ADDRESS

PRIMARY PHONE

SECONDARY PHONE

RACE

SEX

HEIGHT

WEIGHT

HAIR

EYE

DL NUMBER

DL STATE

EMPLOYER

☐ NON-DISCLOSURE

SUBJECT

SUBJECT TYPE

NAME

DOB / AGE RANGE

ADDRESS

PRIMARY PHONE

SECONDARY PHONE

RACE

SEX

HEIGHT

WEIGHT

HAIR

EYE

DL NUMBER

DL STATE

EMPLOYER

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CASE VEHICLES

VEHICLE ROLE		PLATE / STATE	REG YEAR	VIN
Victim Vehicle				
YEAR	TYPE / Automobile			
1996	MAKE / MODEL /			
STYLE	TOP COLOR		BOTTOM COLOR	
ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION				
MODEL: R22 BETA				

VEHICLE ROLE		PLATE / STATE	REG YEAR	VIN
YEAR	TYPE /			
	MAKE / MODEL /			
STYLE	TOP COLOR		BOTTOM COLOR	
ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION				

ADDITIONAL VEHICLES as PROPERTY

PROPERTY CODE	YEAR	COLOR
TYPE /		
MAKE / MODEL /		
PLATE	STATE	VIN
VALUE		
DESCRIPTION		

PROPERTY CODE	YEAR	COLOR
TYPE /		
MAKE / MODEL /		
PLATE	STATE	VIN
VALUE		
DESCRIPTION		

PROPERTY CODE	YEAR	COLOR
TYPE /		
MAKE / MODEL /		
PLATE	STATE	VIN
VALUE		
DESCRIPTION		

PROPERTY CODE	YEAR	COLOR
TYPE /		
MAKE / MODEL /		
PLATE	STATE	VIN
VALUE		
DESCRIPTION		

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NARRATIVE

2017-168031

AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT, FATAL (HELICOPTER)

On 10-24-17 a Robinson R22 helicopter (N8537J) crashed into King Lake in the 16500 block of 115th Ave NE in Arlington, WA. The aircraft was occupied by a pilot and passenger. The aircraft submerged to 31 feet but the pilot and passenger escaped. The passenger was able to swim to safety but the pilot drowned while trying to swim. SCSO, medics, and various State and Federal agencies responded to the location. The aircraft was recovered by the NTSB at a later date. The incident occurred in Snohomish County, Washington.

On the listed date I responded to the aircraft crash at King Lake. I am a qualified rescue diver with the SCSO Technical Water Rescue Team (SCSO Marine Services Unit). The information in the call stated a helicopter crashed into the lake and two people were in the water. King Lake is a private lake inside a private development in the 15500 block of Jordan RD in unincorporated Snohomish County.

On the way there updates were broadcasted over the air and by the time I got there two occupants of the helicopter were out of the water and being treated. There was a request for divers to check the wreckage for more people but it was confirmed the two out of the water were the sole occupants of the aircraft prior to divers deploying.

This report was submitted from an electronic device owned, issued, or maintained by a law enforcement agency using my user ID and password. I certify or declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing is true and correct.

REPORTING OFFICER / ID #

Dawson, William

APPROVING SUPERVISOR

Vander Wel, Leslie K

LOCATION SIGNED Snohomish County, WA

DATE SIGNED 10/29/2017

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NARRATIVE (continuation)

When I arrived at the scene I went directly to the crash site. The lake is accessed by the same road that leads to private homes situated in the area. There is a common area at the shore used by residents. It is an open area with picnic tables and the like. There are also small boats stored there owned by various residents of the community. The medic unit was in that area performing CPR and other lifesaving efforts on an older white male. I learned the male was the pilot of the aircraft and the passenger was in another ambulance out on Jordan Rd. In the same area a man who identified himself as Jeff Abrams told us he went out in his boat to rescue the two occupants.

Abrams lives on the lake shore and saw the helicopter flying low above the water. He said the pilot (Identified as Ernest N. Stark) lives nearby and often flies low over the lake taking on what he calls "sight-seeing tours". Abrams said he saw the helicopter fly up over the trees and descend to the lake then heard what he described as an explosion and saw the helicopter was in the water. Abrams went and got his small row boat and went to the aid of the two men who were on the surface. He saw one occupant (passenger identified as Tanner Griffin swimming to a nearby log and determined he was okay so he went to the pilot (Stark) who was on the surface but motionless. Abrams was able to get Stark on the bow of his boat and threw a line to Griffin who held on and was towed to the shore by Abrams. Katherine Abrams called 911 as Jeff Abrams was rendering aid to the crash victims. It wasn't long before medics arrived to take over for Abrams. Both Katherine and Jeff Abrams described the pilot's actions as "swooping down and flying fast over the lake" prior to a skid hitting the water and the helicopter exploding into pieces".

Jeff Abrams was able to show us where in the lake the helicopter submerged. From out vantage point is was about 75-100 yards into the main part of the lake. I could see a

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NARRATIVE (continuation)

thin film of oil sheen on the top of the water and smell fuel in the air. There was a few pieces of visible debris in the water and it was drifting slowly on top in a south westerly direction toward the lake's outlet aided by the light breeze prevalent at the time. I could not accurately identify the debris but there was a rectangular piece of debris painted gray that resembled a section of rotor. There were also some thin laminated papers that resembled checklists floating nearby. The items were too far out to recover and wound up near the south shore. They were recovered later by boat along with other items which will be listed later.

The medics continued to work on Ernie Stark (pilot). During that time someone had notified his wife Becky Stark. She was attended to by SCSO and eventually taken to the Cascade Hospital in Arlington while Ernie Stark was transported by ambulance. The medics were still trying to revive Stark as they left for the hospital. Jeff and Katherine Abrams returned home and were contacted later to provide written statements.

I was given the responsibility of primary investigator until the NTSB could arrive on scene. I had a Deputy from patrol go to Colby Campus in Everett to contact the passenger and get information on what happened prior to the crash and to see about injuries sustained. In the meantime I wanted to get a good location on where the aircraft was and possibly mark it with a float to aid in recovery later.

We put the boat in and went to the approximate crash site. It was not difficult to find. As we neared the site the smell of fuel became stronger and the oily rainbow colored sheen became more concentrated. We slowed down and I saw large blooms of oil appearing

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NARRATIVE (continuation)

on the surface that were coming up from below. Using that and the readout on the boat's depthfinder we determined the aircraft was very close or directly underneath us. We deployed a float in 31.1 feet of water to mark the spot.

The aircraft was marked at GPS: 48.08.862' N X 122.00.981' W in 31.1 feet of water. The water temperature was 50.7 degrees at the time we marked the site.

While we were on the water we were able to locate and recover several other items of floating debris near the shoreline. The recovered items are as follows:

1. Piece of metal resembling a rotor piece
2. Green plastic first aid box with N8537J (tail number) painted on it
3. Paper chart (map)
4. Various laminated papers resembling checklists
5. Water bottle with neoprene sleeve
6. Two small square pieces of flat wood
7. Plastic cigarette lighter

All the items were photographed in place before recovery and taken to shore and

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NARRATIVE (continuation)

arranged together at the request of the NTSB for identification. I also photographed all the items once they were in the same place before I turned them over to the NTSB investigator.

While I was in the boat I received a call from Dep. Mitteer. He was at the hospital talking with Tanner Griffin who was the passenger in the aircraft. Griffin was being treated for precautionary reasons but had no major injuries. He told us he was visiting his grandparents from Carlsbad, CA. Griffin said he was introduced to Ernie Stark as a friend of his grandfather and accepted an invitation for a flight around the area in Ernie's helicopter which was a Robinson R22 (later conformed by the tail number). Griffin said he was seated in the left seat of the two person helicopter and they were flying around the area for about ten minutes or so prior to descending onto the lake. Griffin was taking pictures out of the left side of the aircraft through the closed clear Plexiglas door and felt the aircraft lurch to the right. Griffin said he hit his head on the top of the doorframe just as he saw the main rotor touch the water. Griffin said the entire aircraft flipped over and hit the water. He was able to get clear of the sinking wreck and saw the pilot (Stark) on the surface. Griffin said he heard Stark say he couldn't swim and needed help. Griffin tried to help Stark but unable to due to his own condition and water temperature which was hampering his efforts. Griffin could not help Stark and swam to a nearby log since he saw Abrams coming out in a boat. Griffin directed Abrams to help Stark instead of him before Abrams came back.

The aircraft was a Robinson R22 Beta. It seats two people and is in common use General Aviation. The cockpit on this particular aircraft was described as fully enclosed. The aircraft is powered by a piston engine and has a two blade main rotor and a two blade tail rotor. The NTSB investigator will determine the technical specifications and pilot

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10/29/2017

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NARRATIVE (continuation)

experience in this particular aircraft.

All the appropriate government agencies were notified. NTSB Senior Air Safety Investigator Tom Little assumed the investigation and I assisted as needed. He took the aircraft pieces and I took the other items which I will return to Becky Stark later. Ernest Stark was pronounced dead at the hospital and the Snohomish County Medical Examiner's Office assumed jurisdiction over the death. This report will be forwarded to the appropriate agencies upon request.

END OF REPORT

W. Dawson # [REDACTED]

Marysville, WA/10-29-2017

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10/29/2017

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Snohomish County Sheriff's Office Statement Form

Incident # _____

First Name: JEFFERY M: R Last: ABRAMS DOB: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Driver's License #: _____ State: [REDACTED]
Home Address: [REDACTED] City: ARLINGTON State: WA Zip: 98223
Place Statement Taken: HOME City: ARLINGTON State: WA Zip: 98223
Employer: _____ City: _____ Best Number to Call: ☐ Home ☐ Cell ☐ Work
Home Phone: [REDACTED] Cell Phone: [REDACTED] Work Phone: () _____
E-Mail Address: _____

STATEMENT: I was standing on my porch and heard the helicopter start up at O'Leary State House. I heard it coming closer to my house on the lake. I was drinking a glass of V-8 juice. The helicopter came over the trees and dropped down to fly over the lake S to N. He had done this several times in the past, sometime hovering over the center of lake. This time he dropped about 6 ft from the surface of the lake, moving fast the length of the lake S-N, about the middle of the lake I noticed the runner put the water, the helicopter dove forward, hitting the water very hard with a explosive sound. I saw parts of the helicopter fly off. I immediately yelled to my wife (LILLIE) to call 911. I went in house when came out immediately the helicopter sunk. I saw two people in the water. Knowing we are far from emergency response, I decided to get O's + life jackets and went to my bank on the lake and pushed my 10ft dingy.

I have read each page of this statement consisting of 2 page(s). I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the State of Washington, that the entire statement is true and correct. (Initial) [REDACTED]

Deputy Signature: _____

Victim/Witness Signature: [REDACTED] 10/24/17

Date: ____/____/____ Time: _____ Place Signed: _____ Page 1 of _____



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Snohomish County Sheriff's Office

Continuation Statement Form

Incident # _____

First Name: JEFFERY M: R Last: ABRAMS DOB: [REDACTED]

STATEMENT: in the water. I rowed immediately
out to the 2 people in the water, maybe
to took 7-8 minutes. 0210.

The young man was slow swimming but
Ernie was faced ~~down~~ in the water floating
I went to Ernie first (faced down in water) pulled
him up to side of Boat (Dingy) pushed on chest
shook him to revive him could not due CPR
as in little dingy in 30 ft water. pulled him to front
of ~~boat~~ boat on dynamet lifted head & joshua hooked
it to front of Dingy.

I rowed over to the man who I pushed
up to the log (floating) and position him to go
into small Dingy. He got in he was moaning
disoriented vomiting etc I suspect head injury at first
couldn't say his name.

Then I paddled all three of us Ernie in the
front of boat and other man passenger in boat
behind me to waiting police at the shore.
They took the passenger to hospital and started
C.P.R. on Ernie.

P.S. engine sound normal.

I have read each page of this statement consisting of 2 page(s). I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the
State of Washington, that the entire statement is true and correct. (Initial) [REDACTED]

Deputy Signature: _____

Victim/Witness Signature: [REDACTED] 10/24/17

Date: / / Time: Place Signed: Page 2 of



Snohomish County Sheriff's Office

Statement Form

Incident # _____

First Name: Katherine M: Lillie Last: Abrams DOB: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Drivers License #: [REDACTED] State: [REDACTED]
Home Address: [REDACTED] City: Arlington State: WA Zip: 98223
Place Statement Taken: my home City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Employer: retired City: _____ Best Number to Call: ☐ Home ☐ Cell ☐ Work
Home Phone: [REDACTED] Cell Phone: [REDACTED] Work Phone: (✓) _____
E-Mail Address: [REDACTED]

STATEMENT: I heard a helicopter coming from Ernie Stark's house about 1:30pm(?) I was in the kitchen and he came flying pretty fast over the trees from his house and swooped down to fly over the water past our house. My husband was on the deck and we both watched as the helicopter went by our house. I walked over to the front room and watched him from the picture window. I saw him flying fast over the water very close to the water, the helicopter skids touched the water and the helicopter exploded into little pieces. I ran to my husband screaming, I told him to go out after them. I ran outside and saw two heads out of the water; I yelled we are calling for help. I called 911, my husband got our little boat and went out and saw the young man had swam over to a huge log and was hanging on, he started to search for Ernie, he found Ernie unconscious which I did not know, I thought Ernie was underwater and that my husband could not find him, the whole time he had gotten Ernie out of being underwater, tried CPR but could not get to him or pull him in.

I have read each page of this statement consisting of 2 page(s). I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the State of Washington, that the entire statement is true and correct. (Initial) [Signature]

Deputy Signature: _____ Victim/Witness Signature: [Signature] 10/24/17

Date: ____/____/____ Time: _____ Place Signed: _____ Page 1 of ____

(2)



Snohomish County Sheriff's Office
Continuation Statement Form

Incident # _____

First Name: Katherine M: Lillie Last: Abrams DOB: [REDACTED]

STATEMENT: the boat. I was trying to help direct people over to the other beach and my husband was rowing over towards the beach.

Ernie flies all time, he knows this lake well. He sometimes flies past our house and might hover over the lake for a moment, and then fly off. This time, he got too close to the water and was not hovering, he was zooming across the water about 3 ft. ~~above~~ above the water and it just went down.

Looked like his skids of the helicopter touched the water, ~~and there was a big explosion.~~ then followed by a huge explosion of the helicopter.

The helicopter sounded normal,

☐ I have read each page of this statement consisting of _____ page(s). I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the State of Washington, that the entire statement is true and correct. (Initial) _____

Deputy Signature: _____ Victim/Witness Signature: [REDACTED]

Date: ____ / ____ / ____ Time: ____ Place Signed: _____ Page ____ of ____