

Killer escapes N.J. mental hospital

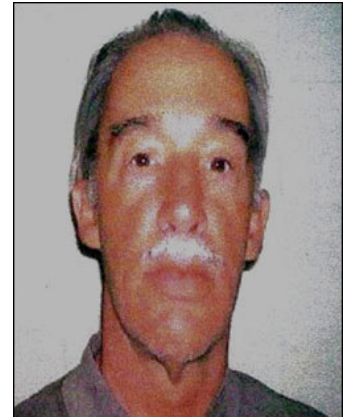
By Troy Graham

INQUIRER STAFF WRITERS

Although he has been locked up as criminally insane since 1975, William Enman has managed to escape from hospitals at least three times, and he once took a sojourn to get married and father a child without the requisite court approval.

He also has been caught smoking marijuana and, years ago, was found with a mail-order crossbow and arrows in his hospital room.

On Sunday, Enman, who admitted to two brutal homicides, donned a backpack filled with "camping and survivalist equipment" and walked away from the Ancora Psychiatric Hospital, a state hospital in Camden County that has seen its share of troubles in recent years.



William Enman has been missing from Ancora Psychiatric Hospital since Sunday.

Enman, 65, remained missing Monday, despite a massive manhunt around the Winslow Township hospital and at least two other areas in the state where Enman was known to have connections.

The Prosecutor's Office in Morris County, where Enman's murder case originated, said that Enman, strangely, may have purchased real estate in Nova Scotia.

Officials at the Prosecutor's Office could not provide more details to explain how a man diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and confined to a mental hospital managed to buy a place in Canada.

Both the Morris County Prosecutor's Office and the Winslow Township police said they considered Enman to be dangerous. But officials at the state Department of Human Services, which runs Ancora, said Enman wouldn't have been allowed to walk around the grounds unescorted if he were dangerous.

Enman disappeared Sunday afternoon while he was supposed to be taking a scheduled, 50-minute unsupervised walk.

Typically, in cases of defendants deemed not guilty by reason of insanity, a judge meets with a patient's "treatment team" and decides what privileges that patient deserves, said Ellen Lovejoy, a human services spokeswoman.

Enman last met with a judge to review his status in August of last year. He was supposed to meet with a judge again on Thursday, authorities said.

At some point, a Morris County judge gave Enman permission to walk the 80-acre Ancora campus without an escort. Lovejoy did not know how long Enman has enjoyed that privilege.

While Ancora, a 709-bed hospital, hosts some criminally insane inmates, the "vast majority" of the patients have been committed in civil proceedings, Lovejoy said.

There is a chain-link fence about eight feet tall around the hospital, but the grounds are not secured like a prison.

This is not the first time Ancora has been in the news recently.

Recently, two civilly committed Ancora patients killed other patients. In July 2006, a woman suffocated her roommate with a pillow. Two psychiatrists and five nurses were suspended for "neglect of duty" in that death.

Then, in January, a male patient punched another in a dispute over a cigarette. The victim started having abdominal pain later that evening, and he died nine days later.

Enman has been confined to hospitals since 1975 for the bludgeoning deaths of Peter LeSeur and LeSeur's 4-year-old son, Eric. Enman and LeSeur were roommates at the time in Morris Plains, N.J.

Enman, a former Marine, beat the father and son to death with a baseball bat while they slept in April 1974.

According to published reports, Enman twice escaped from the now-closed Marlboro State Psychiatric Hospital, which is where he was discovered with the crossbow.

He has been living at Ancora since 1992, and has not escaped since then. But, in the 1990s, he was allowed off-site visits. He used that privilege, which has since been revoked, to marry and have a child without the court's knowledge.

Enman is 5-foot-9 and 160 pounds, with brown eyes and gray hair. He was last seen wearing a green shirt and black pants, carrying a tan backpack, which Morris County authorities said contained survivalist gear. They wouldn't explain how they know the backpack's contents.

Many residents around Ancora said they were stunned to learn that an admitted killer had escaped from the hospital. The state operates a phone system that notifies residents of escapes, but the residents have to sign up.

Vito Finizio, who lives nearby, said he didn't know about the phone system.

"I'm surprised they haven't made calls or notified us or anything," he said. "We'll keep our windows locked and our guns loaded."

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