

## Widows Accused of Killing Homeless For Their Life Insurance Money

by *The-New-York-Sun*

LOS ANGELES — Two women in their 70s have been charged with murdering homeless men in hit-and-run car crashes as part of a plot to collect more than \$2 million in life insurance policies.

Olga Rutterschmidt, 73, and Helen Golay, 75, are accused of hatching an elaborate scheme in which they befriended transients in Los Angeles and rented them apartments in return for the men's signatures, which they used to take out the policies.

The women then killed the men in darkened alleyways and masqueraded as aunts, cousins, business partners, or fiancées to claim the money, the Los Angeles district attorney's office said.

Ms. Rutterschmidt and Ms. Golay were each charged with two counts of murder and two counts of conspiracy to commit murder for financial gain.

They have been in custody since May, when they were arrested on suspicion of federal mail fraud for allegedly collecting the insurance. They deny the charges.

At the time, authorities described the women as suspects in the hit-and-run killings of Paul Vados, 73, who died in November 1999 in Hollywood, and Kenneth McDavid, 51, who was killed in June 2005 in Westwood, West Los Angeles.

After Vados died, the women came forward claiming to be his only relatives, though police later found that he had two children. The women could face the death penalty if convicted, although prosecutors have yet to decide whether to seek capital punishment. Ms. Golay's lawyer, Roger Jon Diamond, said of the charges: "I plan on winning the case because there was no murder, and there is no evidence of murder. I expect that Miss Helen Golay will be fully exonerated."

Ms. Rutterschmidt and Ms. Golay allegedly used an Eastern European church as a cover to get close to the men. They helped them find somewhere to live and paid their rent.

In exchange, the men wrote out copies of their signatures, which the women used to make rubber stamps.

With these, they obtained more than 30 insurance policies naming themselves as beneficiaries. The women were seeking further payments from insurers when they were arrested, and investigations continue amid suspicions that they could have had other victims.

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By CATHERINE ELSWORTH - The Daily Telegraph

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