

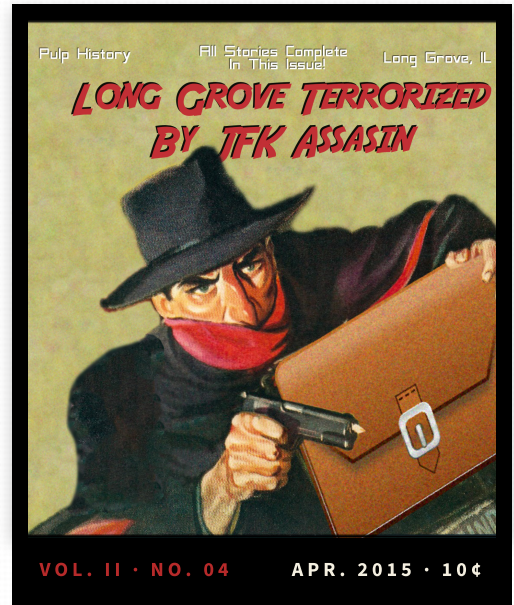
A Long Grove Man, the *Grassy Knoll*, and a Pond in Kildeer

Last issue closed on a tease — an old Long Grove tale that brushes against the Kennedy assassination. Here it is. Source: a man named James Files, currently in prison in Danville, Illinois. Believe what you like.

By Aaron Underwood · Long Grove Historical Society

Thanks for the positive feedback on February's article about Buddy Hackett and Alan Dorfman. In that article I alluded to another local *pulp history* tale, this one involving the Kennedy assassination. So for this month, I will give you the rest of that story.

As you may recall, there have been two official investigations into the assassination — the original Warren Commission, which concluded Lee Harvey Oswald was the lone gunman, and the 1970's HSCA (House Select Committee on Assassinations) report, which concluded the killing to have most likely been a conspiracy of two or more assailants.



The pulp treatment is mine; the source-material spelling ("Assasin") is not. Apologies to any actual proofreaders in the audience.



A NOTE BEFORE WE BEGIN

I will simply retell the Long Grove-related tale of James Files I came across and let you decide how much of it may be made up and how much may have actually taken place. Most of this information comes from interviews Files has given in the past decade since going public.

The subject of the file.

SUBJECT · FILE 1942-FILES-J		James E. Files
BORN	1942, Alabama. Family relocated to Chicago in the 1950's.	
MILITARY	Enlisted at 18. Weapons trainer, Vietnam.	
CIA	1961. Helped train dissidents for the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba.	
DAY JOB	Driver for Chicago hitman Charles "Chuckie Typewriter" Nicoletti.	
DALLAS	November 1963. Reports having been positioned on the grassy knoll as a backup — and having fired the fatal shot.	
STATUS	Convicted of attempted murder of two police officers, 1991. Currently in prison in Danville, IL. Projected parole: May 8, 2016.	

In the version Files has told publicly, after Vietnam and after the CIA, he began doing odd jobs for the Chicago mafia — mainly driving for Nicoletti, sometimes assisting with his weapons expertise. He says he drove a team of Chicago hit men to Dallas in November of 1963, and was given a role as a backup assassin on the grassy knoll. His instructions were to fire only if the President appeared to have survived the other shooters. He reports that he did, in fact, have to fire the fatal shot.

After the assassination, Files continued to work for the mob — until Nicoletti was himself assassinated, shortly before Nicoletti was to testify before the HSCA. During the 1980's there were several unsuccessful attempts on Files's life.

The Long Grove chapter, 1991.

In 1991, Files was living near Gurnee. Driving through Long Grove with an associate — right past where the Long Grove Menards sits today — he proceeded down Lake Cook Road to Rand, turned right at Rand, and stopped for gas at Plum Grove Road.

Just after leaving the gas station, two Round Lake Beach police detectives in an unmarked car recognized Files and recalled he was wanted for possession of stolen property. A brief chase down Rand Road ensued. Files crashed, and grabbed a pistol from his car. A gunfight followed. One officer was wounded. Files escaped on foot into what was at the time a wooded area — now the site of the Kildeer Best Buy — where he was later found by a police dog, entirely submerged in a marshy pond, breathing through a hollow cane.

THE LONG GROVE ITINERARY

*From now-Menards, east on Lake Cook · right at Rand · gas
at Plum Grove · crash · gunfight · pond at now-Best Buy*

SEPT. 1991 · ROUND LAKE BEACH P.D. · JAMES E. FILES

Files was convicted of attempted murder of the detectives, and is currently in prison in Danville, Illinois. His projected parole date is May 8, 2016. Google him if you would like further information — there is plenty of debate online about whether his story is true or an elaborate hoax. Either way, it remains a strange and seemingly small world we live in, doesn't it.



NEXT ISSUE / MAY 2015

Onward from the grassy knoll: a Long Grove-area tavern, an FBI raid, and a sculpture in Highland Park.

Filed with no commentary on whether any of the above is true. That part is on you.

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