

# 'Someone Knows Something': Podcast traces path to justice in 1964 cold case

USA TODAY NETWORK [Jerry Mitchell](#), Clarion Ledger Published 6:50 p.m. ET Nov. 12, 2017



(Photo: Courtesy of David Ridgen)

The [new season](#) ([/story/news/local/journeytojustice/2017/11/10/podcast-features-story-behind-prosecution-of-kkk-killings/851098001](#)) of the popular podcast, *Someone Knows Something*, tells the in-depth story of how the 1964 murders of two African-American teens in Mississippi were reopened more than four decades later.

For Canadian Broadcasting Corp. filmmaker David Ridgen, it is a story that has consumed him for the past 13 years. That was when he met Thomas Moore, a retired command sergeant major whose brother, Charles, had been abducted and killed by the Ku Klux Klan, along with his friend, Henry Hezekiah Dee.

[The KKK killed her husband. She can never forget.](#)  
(<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2017/11/11/kkk-killed-her-husband-she-can-never-forget/854877001/>)

Together, the two began delving into the murders, gathering more than 500 hours of video and audio, plus photographs, from witnesses, family members, Klansmen and authorities.

Thanks to their hard work, Klansman James Ford Seale received three life sentences for the kidnappings and killings of the two young men.



**Thomas Moore holds a photograph of his late brother, Charles, who was killed by the Ku Klux Klan.** (Photo: Special to The Clarion-Ledger/CBC)

Ridgen put together some of that material into the award-winning documentary, *Mississippi Cold Case*.

He said the new podcast episodes (available on iTunes) tell the never-before-heard story of redemption and reckoning between Moore and one of the Klansmen involved. To date now, the series has more than 32 million downloads.

The podcast, Ridgen said, also “celebrates the strength and agency of people like Thomas Moore,” and those who spoke to them about the case.

On May 2, 1964, Seale ordered the two teenagers into his Volkswagen. What the pair didn’t know was there was another carload of Klansmen behind them.

In the Homochitto National Forest, Klansmen brutally beat the teenagers before loading them into a Ford and driving them to the Mississippi River.

There, Klansmen duct-taped the teens’ mouths and tied their wrists and ankles together before taking them, one by one, out onto the river and tossing them overboard.



*(Photo: Courtesy of David Ridgen)*

The teens drowned, and their bodies weren't discovered for months.

Even after the bodies were found, no one was prosecuted. The killings of Dee and Moore are among those listed at the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum, which opens Dec. 9.

Ridgen said the case still resonates today — in its details, its history and how it came to be solved.

The story, he said, "reminds us that individuals can make a difference in their own lives against incredible odds, even while engulfed in fear, to come out the other side with truth and justice on their side. ..."

"I often say that it takes a village to solve a cold case, and the Dee-Moore story shows that. From the citizenry of Franklin County and southwest Mississippi, to the FBI investigation conducted in the 1960s to various reporters and filmmakers who covered the story, to Thomas Moore's personal quest for justice, courtrooms and officials like Dunn Lampton and Paige Fitzgerald — all made a difference in some way to bring out the truth."

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