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Two lives cut short

By Aviva L. Brandt
The Associated Press

SEATTLE — Peter Giles and Russell Brisendine died close to the work they both loved, in an office overlooking their small Lake Union shipyard and the city skyline.

Giles, 27, fell in love with the sea as a boy, working summers on his uncles' fishing boats from the age of 12 as they fished salmon in Alaska. He had been left in charge of the Northlake Shipyard north of downtown while his uncles, owners Peter and Richard Kelly Jr., were on vacation.

Brisendine, 43, also had a passion for the sea. He joined the Navy right after graduating from high school in Granite Falls, Minn. After studying industrial technology at Minnesota's Bemidji State University, he worked in the fishing industry in Alaska before settling in north suburban Lynnwood.

Both were gunned down Wednesday as they drank coffee together in a back office. Two men with them were shot as well. They remained hospitalized Thursday, both in satisfactory condition. Their names have not been released.

Richard Kelly Sr., Giles' 82-year-old grandfather, was still shocked Thursday that anyone would harm his beloved grandson. He was mystified as to why anyone would target the two-berth, two-crane shipyard at the north end of Lake Union.

"The shipyard is just a plain ol' shipyard. There's a door and anyone can walk in. The little office Peter was in was kind of in the back of the building. [The gunman] apparently walked back there, opened the door and just started shooting," Kelly said.

Giles joined Northlake Shipyard four years ago after graduating from the University of Illinois with a degree in business administration, keeping the books and working his way up to general manager, Kelly said.

"He was an outstanding — I can't say enough about the kid. He was just one in a million," Kelly said.

Brisendine was a marine engineer who worked on boats' electrical systems. He and his wife, Naomi, were raising four sons, two of them teen-agers and two younger, relatives said.

Marshall Brisendine of North Bend said he learned his cousin had been shot from a radio newscast. It triggered eerie memories from 1982, when he learned of another cousin's death on the radio, in a case involving a drunken driver.

"They mispronounced the name both times — the same way. I called KIRO to correct the name," he said — to "bri-zen-DINE," not "bri-zen-DEEN. I said I'm not going to put up with that this time. I know it's silly, but ..."

An electrician by training, Russ Brisendine was a supervisor at the shipyard and a longtime right-hand man to its owners, friends said.

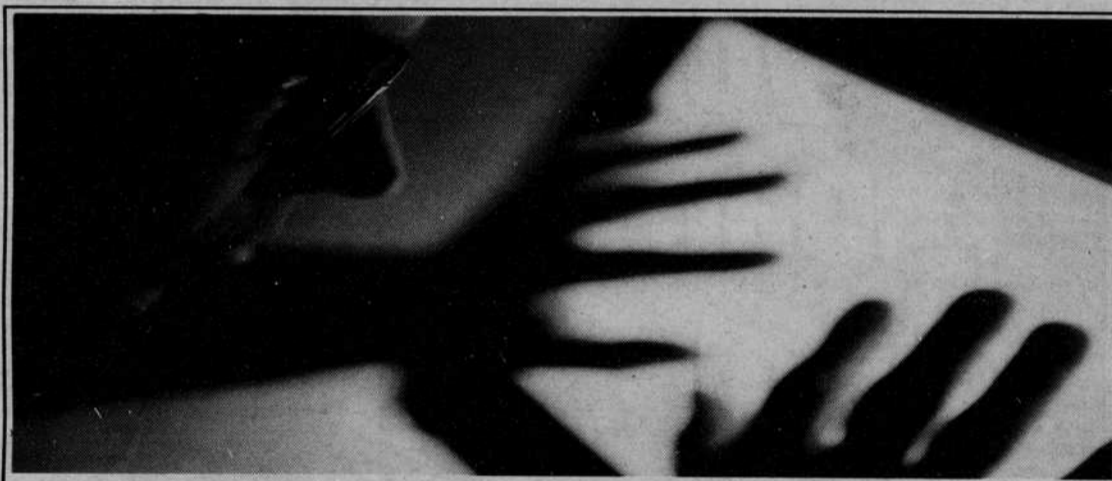
"He was probably the top man at the shipyard as far as taking care of problems," Taylor Pennock, a machinist at a Ballard shipyard who had worked with Brisendine in the past, told The Seattle Times.

"When he returned from a trip at sea, Brisendine would often bring back shrimp and fish to share with the neighborhood, Cliff McMullen, who lives across the street from the family home, told the Times.

"He was just a great guy. If you needed a hand or something, he was out there working at the boatyard and all ... so he was pretty handy," McMullen said.

Peter and Richard Kelly Jr. were cutting short their separate vacations, and Giles' parents, George and Kathryn Giles, were flying in from their home in Libertyville, Ill., on Thursday to help plan their son's funeral service, Richard Kelly Sr. said. He said Giles also had an older brother, Craig, and a younger sister, Monica.

Brisendine's survivors include his wife and sons; his parents; a brother, Steven; and a sister, Michelle Foss.



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