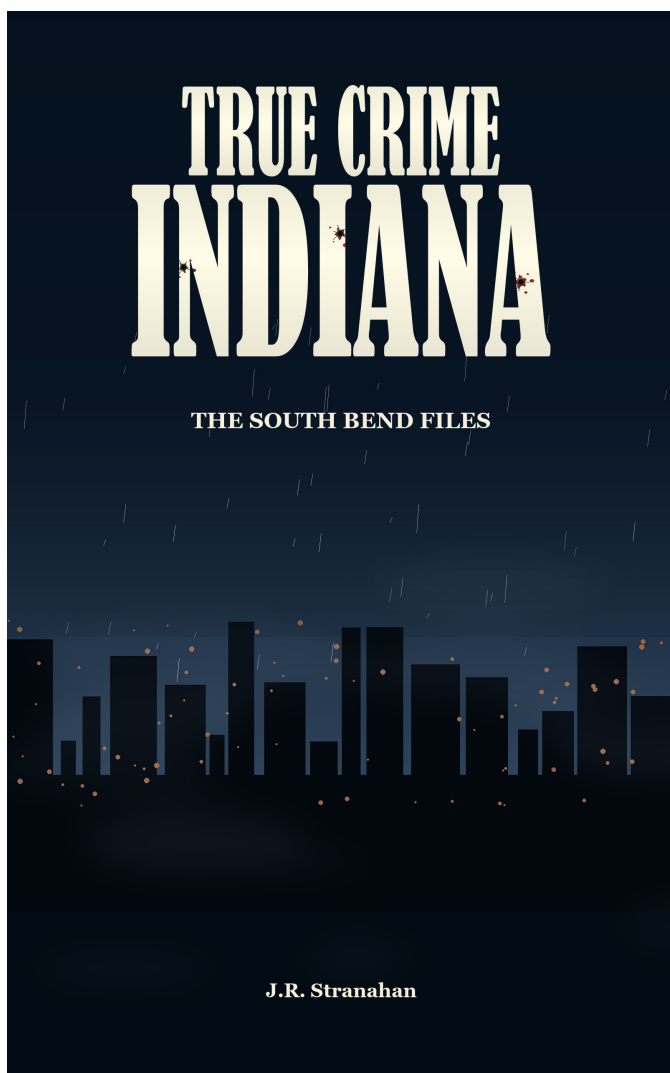




True Crime Indiana: The South Bend Files

J.R. Stranahan

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File 1: The Delphi Murders

Place and period: Delphi, 2017-2026

Present legal status: Richard Allen was convicted in 2024 of the murders and sentenced to 130 years. His direct appeal was argued in September 2026 and remained pending at manuscript lock.

This file belongs first to Abigail Williams, Liberty German, their families, and the Delphi community. The public record is necessarily organized around investigation and adjudication, but a criminal case is not the measure of a life. The account uses the available record to describe what happened and how institutions responded, while avoiding invented biography where sources are silent.

The human scale

Abigail Williams and Liberty German disappeared after visiting the Monon High Bridge Trail. That fact is the fixed point for this portion of The Delphi Murders. The account keeps the people harmed, the routines interrupted, and the community consequences in view. In Delphi, later retellings sometimes collapse the investigation and the judgment into one continuous story. The public record does not. It preserves the order in which information appeared and the forum in which it was tested. The present legal posture is stated separately: Richard Allen was convicted in 2024 of the murders and sentenced to 130 years. His direct appeal was argued in September 2026 and remained pending at manuscript lock.

For Abigail Williams, Liberty German, their families, and the Delphi community, the procedural vocabulary cannot be allowed to eclipse consequence. Liberty's phone preserved images and audio used in the investigation. The detail belongs here because it changes the chronology, not because it supplies atmosphere. The account keeps the people harmed, the routines interrupted, and the community

consequences in view. Keeping that boundary visible lets the reader understand both the institutional response and the loss that made the response necessary.

The 2017-2026 record from Delphi contains a point that resists shorthand: Their bodies were found the next day. The present legal posture is equally specific: Richard Allen was convicted in 2024 of the murders and sentenced to 130 years. His direct appeal was argued in September 2026 and remained pending at manuscript lock. The account keeps the people harmed, the routines interrupted, and the community consequences in view. One proposition may be established while a neighboring proposition remains disputed. Treating them separately is not hesitation; it is accurate reporting.

A headline can make this episode appear settled in a sentence. The underlying record is narrower. Allen was arrested more than five years later. From there, the inquiry moves through source, timing, corroboration, and legal consequence. The account keeps the people harmed, the routines interrupted, and the community consequences in view. None of those steps authorizes invented dialogue or a claim about what Abigail Williams, Liberty German, their families, and the Delphi community privately thought.

Location matters in this file. Delphi determined which agencies, courts, and communities carried the case, while 2017-2026 marks the span over which the public learned it. The verdict remains in force while the appellate court considers claims about evidence, confinement, and trial rulings. The account keeps the people harmed, the routines interrupted, and the community consequences in view. The result is a chronology with identifiable custodians rather than a collection of free-floating claims.

This part of the account begins with a modest question: what did the cited source actually establish? Its answer is plain: Abigail Williams and Liberty German disappeared after visiting the Monon High Bridge Trail. The answer does not automatically prove motive, identity, or every

charge in the case. The account keeps the people harmed, the routines interrupted, and the community consequences in view. The remaining status is stated without embellishment: Richard Allen was convicted in 2024 of the murders and sentenced to 130 years. His direct appeal was argued in September 2026 and remained pending at manuscript lock.

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The first account

By the time The Delphi Murders reached public memory, sequence had become easy to lose. Allen was arrested more than five years later. Restoring sequence shows what investigators knew, what prosecutors alleged, what the defense contested, and what a court or jury ultimately resolved. What witnesses reported at the time remains separate from what investigators later inferred. An older headline cannot replace the current status: Richard Allen was convicted in 2024 of the murders and sentenced to 130 years. His direct appeal was argued in September 2026 and remained pending at manuscript lock.

There is no need to enlarge the evidence to make this file serious. The verdict remains in force while the appellate court considers claims about evidence, confinement, and trial rulings. That proposition is consequential on its own. What witnesses reported at the time remains separate from what investigators later inferred. The account therefore avoids borrowing certainty from unrelated defendants, other jurisdictions, or later cases that happen to resemble events in Delphi.

The public record speaks most reliably when attribution travels with the claim. Here is the supported proposition: Abigail Williams and Liberty German disappeared after visiting the Monon High Bridge Trail. The source may recount an allegation, summarize trial proof, or state a judgment, and the language must match that function. What witnesses reported at the time remains separate from what investigators later inferred. That practice protects the accuracy of the case and the dignity of Abigail Williams, Liberty German, their families, and the Delphi community at the same time.

At this stage of the file, absence is also information. The available materials establish this much: Liberty's phone preserved images and audio used in the investigation. They do not establish every rumor that accumulated during 2017-2026. What witnesses reported at the time remains separate from what investigators later inferred. Refusing to bridge those gaps with speculation keeps the unresolved portions visible instead of disguising them as narrative momentum.

Consider the detail in its proper scale: Their bodies were found the next day. It is neither disposable nor self-executing. Its force depends on where it sits among the other records from Delphi. What witnesses reported at the time remains separate from what investigators later inferred. A measured account can explain that relationship without turning legal caution into a repetitive disclaimer.

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Building a chronology

The most useful context is the context that changes interpretation. Liberty's phone preserved images and audio used in the investigation. In the Delphi record, that detail helps explain why a particular investigative or legal step followed. Dates and sequence preserve the difference between early uncertainty and later knowledge. General crime lore would add volume but not understanding, so it is left outside the account.

The end of a proceeding is not always the end of a case's public life. Their bodies were found the next day. Families, institutions, and communities continued to live with the result after 2017-2026. Dates and sequence preserve the difference between early uncertainty and later knowledge. The legal status is reported in its own terms: Richard Allen was convicted in 2024 of the murders and sentenced to 130 years. His direct appeal was argued in September 2026 and remained pending at manuscript lock. It does not imply that every question or consequence disappeared.

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Physical evidence

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Witness evidence

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Digital and documentary trails

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Charging choices

By the time The Delphi Murders reached public memory, sequence had become easy to lose. Allen was arrested more than five years later. Restoring sequence shows what investigators knew, what prosecutors alleged, what the defense contested, and what a court or jury ultimately resolved. An indictment states allegations, while a plea or verdict resolves only the counts and defendants actually adjudicated. An older headline cannot replace the current status: Richard Allen was convicted in 2024 of the murders and sentenced to 130 years. His direct appeal was argued in September 2026 and remained pending at manuscript lock.

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The courtroom

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Appeal and review

A headline can make this episode appear settled in a sentence. The underlying record is narrower. The verdict remains in force while the appellate court considers claims about evidence, confinement, and trial rulings. From there, the inquiry moves through source, timing, corroboration, and legal consequence. Appellate review addresses claimed legal error on a fixed record rather than conducting a second trial. None of those steps authorizes invented dialogue or a claim about what Abigail Williams, Liberty German, their families, and the Delphi community privately thought.

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Uncertainty

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Institutions

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After the judgment

This part of the account begins with a modest question: what did the cited source actually establish? Its answer is plain: Allen was arrested more than five years later. The answer does not automatically prove motive, identity, or every charge in the case. Later sentencing, review, release, dismissal, or continued investigation can alter legal posture without altering the underlying loss. The remaining status is stated without embellishment: Richard Allen was convicted in 2024 of the murders and sentenced to 130 years. His direct appeal was argued in September 2026 and remained pending at manuscript lock.

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release, dismissal, or continued investigation can alter legal posture without altering the underlying loss. The account therefore avoids borrowing certainty from unrelated defendants, other jurisdictions, or later cases that happen to resemble events in Delphi.

The public record speaks most reliably when attribution travels with the claim. Here is the supported proposition: Their bodies were found the next day. The source may recount an allegation, summarize trial proof, or state a judgment, and the language must match that function. Later sentencing, review, release, dismissal, or continued investigation can alter legal posture without altering the underlying loss. That practice protects the accuracy of the case and the dignity of Abigail Williams, Liberty German, their families, and the Delphi community at the same time.

At this stage of the file, absence is also information. The available materials establish this much: Allen was arrested more than five years later. They do not establish every rumor that accumulated during 2017-2026. Later sentencing, review, release, dismissal, or continued investigation can alter legal posture without altering the underlying loss. Refusing to bridge those gaps with speculation keeps the unresolved portions visible instead of disguising them as narrative momentum.

Status at manuscript lock

The controlling status for this account is: Richard Allen was convicted in 2024 of the murders and sentenced to 130 years. His direct appeal was argued in September 2026 and remained pending at manuscript lock. That sentence is deliberately narrower than a television summary. It does not merge co-defendants, convert accusations into findings, or imply that an appeal erased a human death. Later proceedings may change the legal posture, but they should not be projected backward onto the record described here.

Sources from the edition

The Delphi Murders

- Indiana Supreme Court, original-action opinion: <https://public.courts.in.gov/Decisions/api/Document/Opinion?Id=TWpDY7S8sATqPWh50ta8w0N5f1k5NjXezrOt02MdSk7tzOjXnR6SVtncFrbE60HI0> - Indiana appellate decisions: <https://public.courts.in.gov/decisions>

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