

**Trooper Kenneth E. Flynt**  
*End of Watch: Thursday, January 1, 1976*



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**Justice Remembered 35 Years After Florida Trooper Kenneth Flynt's Murder  
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Florida Highway Patrol Trooper Kenneth Flynt was off duty when he was awoken by a loud knock at the front door of his Apollo Beach home, according to retired investigator Steve DeWeese.

Unbeknownst to Flynt, the investigator continued, a robbery had been under way at the house next door, shortly after midnight on New Year's Day in 1976, and his neighbors reportedly had scooted out the back door, to get to Flynt's back door, where Flynt's wife hastened to meet them.

Her husband, meanwhile, went to front door, where he met his death at the hands of Ernest Coyle Walker Jr., who years later would be convicted of the fatal shooting, with a sentence to live out the rest of his years in prison, where he died from a drug overdose.

On June 15, at the jail assembly room in Greater Brandon, at 520 North Falkenburg Road in Tampa, the case was revisited at a quarterly awards ceremony hosted by Hillsborough County Sheriff David Gee.

There, retired Florida Highway Patrol investigator H.M. "Mickey" Watson, for his work in the 35-year-old case, received the quarterly Florida Highway Patrol Award, with retired corporal DeWeese, the sheriff's key investigator on the case at the time, by Watson's side.

Watson and DeWeese, working for their respective agencies, met face-to-face for the first time Jan. 16, 1976 in Jacksonville, Fla., where their investigation of the case led to them to the building where Walker was apprehended.

"This guy was as close as we are, put a pistol to [trooper Flynt's] head and killed him on the spot," DeWeese said.

Standing with the two men, at the June 15 awards ceremony, was Flynt's daughter, Karen Flynt Meeks, whose memory of the loss was apparent in her tear-filled eyes.

"I don't think it's anything you ever get over," she said.

It was important for her to attend the award ceremony, she added.

"The last time I heard from Mickey is when he was getting ready to retire from the Florida Highway Patrol, but we had been in touch up to that point," she said. "I wanted to be here and surprise him. He was a friend of my father's, which made it even more special to be here."

Watson said he was humbled to have received the award and that he remembers very well the colleague who lost his life.

"He was a wonderful man," Watson said, about trooper Flynt. He was a very compassionate person, always willing to help his fellow man. He was an excellent friend and he always had a smile. He could always light up a room, always brought a joke and a laugh."

DeWeese said he, too, wouldn't have missed the chance to stand by Watson's side as he received recognition for his work on the case 35 years after the fact.

"What it means to me is he finally got some recognition and that was due him," DeWeese said. "I got recognition years ago, when (then- Hillsborough County Sheriff) Malcolm Beard told me, 'Boy, that was a good job, you can work next week, too.'"

"We all worked very, very hard on this case," DeWeese said. Catching the bad guy, is always "a great relief," he added, and especially so "when it involves a fellow law enforcement officer."