

Deor Jones, David Hunter, Two Companions Killed As Truck Leaves Canyon Road

Tragedy Climaxed Day of Skiing at B. A. C. Ranch; Two Die Of Injuries And Exposure As Wreck Undiscovered For 24 Hours

A long awaited and pleasant skiing trip into Cedar mountains turned into tragedy Monday for two recently returned war veterans and their companions, when an automobile accident on the return trip resulted in the death of all four.

Dead as the result of the tragic accident are Deor Jones, 21, son of Mr. and Mrs. Carlos Jones; David V. Hunter, 24, son of Mrs. Leone Hunter; Miss Nona (Billie) Staton, 27, of Pleasanton, Kansas, and Vada Lou Gibbs, about 23, of Los Angeles, California.

The four young people had gone to the B. A. C. ranch in Cedar canyon, Monday forenoon to spend the day skiing, and as they were returning home, apparently in the evening, the car in which they were riding, from some undetermined cause, left the highway near the mouth of the gulch and catapulted down the 200 foot embankment.

When the two young men failed to return to their homes Monday night, the families, not knowing that the two girls had accompanied the veterans, thought perhaps they had gone to another town to visit instead of going into the mountains. When they did not return Monday morning, Donel Hunter, brother of David, and Don Nelson went to the ski run to investigate, but finding no trace of the party or the car, assumed that they had returned to town, or had not been in the canyon. In the afternoon Carlos Jones, accompanied by his brother LaNoir, went into the canyon. On their trip up the canyon they saw signs of any accident, but upon the return trip they detected a mark in the snow that might have been made by a car leaving the highway, and upon investigation found the car at the bottom of the canyon, with the four bodies strewn about the hillside.

They immediately returned to town for help and a group of friends, together with county and city police officers, went to the accident scene and recovered the bodies at about 7:30 p. m. Tuesday.

There is no way of determining the cause of the accident, but apparently the driver for some reason had failed to negotiate the sharp turn just where the road turns out of the gulch into the main canyon, and the car hurtled over the rim and rolled about 200 feet down the steep, rocky mountain side, coming to rest on a ledge only a few feet from the bottom of the canyon.

The car, a pickup truck owned by Mr. Jones, was almost completely demolished.

The body of Miss Gibbs was found on a ledge some twenty feet above the car, while that of Mr. Jones was lying near the car. These two young people had apparently been killed instantly. However, the other two may have lived for some time.

Signs in the snow indicated that Miss Staton had crawled a short distance down the hillside to a spot where she lay among the rocks. Examination revealed that she had apparently suffered only a very badly broken right leg, just above the ankle, and severe bruises, indicating that her death may have resulted more from exposure than from her injuries.

Hunter had apparently had been thrown at least thirty feet from the car, and had managed to make his way some distance farther where he collapsed on the rocks and succumbed to his injuries and exposure.

The two young men had returned to their homes only recently after each had spent nearly three years in military service. Deor had been home only ten days and David had returned eight days earlier. The two girls had been in Cedar City only since the first of this month, having come here to visit with Miss Staton's sister, Mrs. James Fife, and had taken employment here. They were staying at a local hotel and consequently were not missed until their bodies were found at the scene of the accident.

Carlos Deor Jones, 21, was born in Cedar City, on January 5, 1925, a son of Carlos L. and Alice Leigh Jones. He had spent his life here, except for a few years spent in

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Colorado, and for the time spent in military service.

He entered service with the Navy on March 9, 1943, and spent 25 months on overseas duty, serving as a radar operator on the Auxiliary Aircraft Carrier Corrigedor, participating in many of the nation's greatest sea battles of the Pacific war against Japan. Through this entire action he escaped injury, and was released from service on February 5th.

He is survived by his parents and by his grandfather, Samuel B. Jones.

Funeral services will be held in Fourth Ward Chapel Saturday at 2 p. m.

David V. Hunter, 24, was born in Cedar City on June 9, 1922, a son of George and Leone Rosenberg Hunter, and had spent his life here until entering military service on April 10, 1943.

He had served with the United States army in India for twenty-six months, and was released from military duty on January 22nd. He, too, had gone through the entire war without injury.

His father, George (Jody) Hun-

ter, was also killed in an automobile accident in Cedar canyon, succumbing to injuries suffered when a car in which he was a passenger left the highway and rolled down an embankment. The accident occurred in September, 1931.

David is survived by his mother, three brothers, June, Donel and Sheldon Hunter, all of Cedar City, and one sister, Mrs. Leora H. Pace, of St. George.

Funeral services will be held in the First Ward Chapel at 3:30 p. m. Friday.

Nona (Billie) Staton, 27, was born in Pleasanton, Kansas on January 10, 1919, a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Staton. She spent her youth in Pleasanton, but had lived in California for a number of years, and came here about February 1st. from San Francisco.

She is survived by her parents, three sisters, Mrs. James Fife, Cedar City; Mrs. Jesse Bishop, Coffeyville, Kansas, and Mrs. John St. James, Cameron, Missouri, and one brother, Claude Staton, Pleasanton, Kansas.

The body has been shipped to Pleasanton for burial.

Miss Vada Lou Gibbs, about 23, is a resident of Los Angeles, but

very little is known of her since she came here only a couple of weeks ago as a friend of Miss Staton. Relatives in Los Angeles have

been notified, and it is understood her father and other relatives will arrive here today. Tentative plans call for burial in Cedar City.