

# NEWS RELEASE

**R. Andrew Murray**  
District Attorney

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## **Murderer pleads guilty to avoid trial in cold case killing**

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Today, Robert Bell, 41, pled guilty to second-degree murder for the 2002 killing of Jamie Dunbar, 38. The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Homicide Team had scheduled the case for trial on October 28, 2013. But today, Bell pled guilty in Mecklenburg County Superior Court. The Honorable Richard D. Boner, Superior Court Judge, sentenced him to 189-236 months in prison.

On May 8, 2002, Ms. Dunbar's body was discovered with cuts to her neck inside her apartment on Village Green Drive in Charlotte.

The investigation went cold until 2010, when the Combined DNA Index System, a national DNA database, found a match to DNA evidence found at the scene. That led the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department's Homicide Cold Case Unit to identify Bell as a suspect.

Bell's DNA had been entered into the national database around 2010, following his release from federal prison for 2003 embezzlement and drug-related convictions. Bell was found in Portland, Maine. He was interviewed and subsequently arrested for Ms. Dunbar's murder in 2011.



**Robert Bell**

*Note: Almost all guilty pleas entered in criminal administrative court are the result of an agreed upon plea arrangement between the State and the defendant, which is then approved by the sentencing judge. For more information about why most cases must be resolved by plea negotiation instead of jury trial, please visit the "Understanding Criminal Court" section of the DA's website at [www.charmeckda.com](http://www.charmeckda.com).*

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