

## John Justin Bunting



Information researched and summarized by  
*Jessica Heckel, Tracy Drum, & Karoline Gravitt*

Department of Psychology  
 Radford University  
 Radford, VA 24142-6946

Date	Age	Life Events
09/04/1966	0	Inala, Queensland, Australia; born without a sense of smell
1974	8	Beaten and sexually assaulted by friend's older brother.
1981	15	First sexual experience and he got the girl pregnant.
1986	20	He had a job at a crematorium.
?	Teen	Enjoyed weaponry, photography, and anatomy.
1988	22	Worked at SA Meat Corporation. He would brag about slaughtering the animals – saying that's what he enjoyed the most. Shared house with Kevin Reid and Kevin's girlfriend in N. Adelaide's. Bunting killed Kevin's terrier bulldog.
?	Young adult	Strong hatred discovered for homosexuals and pedophiles.
01/1989	23	Bunting began taking a class for metal work. Also met Veronika Tripp during this time.
09/1989	23	Tripp and Bunting got married. He now has a step-son, James, but only Veronika moved into the house that he shared with Kevin.
12/14/1991	25	Bunting moved with Tripp to 203 Waterloo Corner Rd, Salisbury North Australia.
08/1992	26	Killed Clinton Trezise. (First victim murdered)
1994	28	Was in a sexual relationship with Elizabeth Harvy while still married to Veronika Tripp. During this year Bunting killed cats and dogs and skinned them. He got James to watch. Bunting also meet Vlassakis in April of '94.
1995	29	Step-son James moved into house with Bunting and Veronika. In December, he murdered Ray Davies.
02/1997	30	Police saw Suzanne's name and account had withdrawals in Murray Bridge and linked to John Bunting's address; Bunting told police Suzanne was a close family friend.
08/1997	30	Michael Gardiner is murdered.
10/1997	31	Barry Lane was murdered.
11/1997	31	Suzanne Allen disappeared
11/1997	31	Thomas Trevilyan was murdered.

08/1998	32	Troy Youde was murdered.
09/17/1998	32	Fredrick Brooks was murdered.
10/1998	32	Police tap Bunting's home phone
11/20/1998	32	Elizabeth Haden was murdered.
05/09/1999	32	David Johnson was murdered.
05/21/1999	32	Bunting was arrested.
10/16/2002	35	Bunting's trial began.
09/08/2003	36	Bunting was convicted of 11 counts of murder. Sentenced to life in prison.

### General Information

Sex	Male
Race	White
Number of victims	12 suspected, 11 convicted
Country where killing occurred	Australia
States where killing occurred	South Australia
Cities where killing occurred	Adelaide and Snowtown
Type of killer	Thrill Killer
Height	Short (all that was found)

### Childhood Information

Date of birth	9/04/1966
Location	Inala, Queensland, Australia
Birth order	1 <sup>st</sup> born
Number of siblings	None
XYX?	No
Raised by	Both Parents: Tom and Jan Bunting
Birth category	Only child
Parent's marital status	Married
Did serial killer spend time in an orphanage?	No
Did serial killer spend time in a foster home?	No
Was serial killer ever raised by a relative?	No
Did serial killer live with a step-parent?	No
Family event	None
Age of family event	N/A
Problems in school?	N/A
Teased while in school?	N/A
Physically attractive?	No
Physical defect?	He has no sense of smell when he was born.
Speech defect?	No
Head injury?	No
Physically abused?	Yes; around 8 years old by friend's older brother
Psychologically abused?	Yes; by his friend's older brother
Sexually abused?	Yes; around 8 years old by friend's older brother
Father's occupation	N/A
Age of first sexual experience	Age 15
Age when first had intercourse	Age of 15 and got her pregnant
Mother's occupation	N/A
Father abused drugs/alcohol	N/A
Mother abused drugs/alcohol	N/A

### Cognitive Ability

Highest grade in school	11
Highest degree	None
Grades in school	
IQ	

Source of IQ information	
<b>Work History</b>	
Served in the military?	No
Branch	
Type of discharge	
Saw combat duty	
Killed enemy during service?	
Applied for job as a cop?	No
Worked in law enforcement?	No
Fired from jobs?	Yes, but only because they couldn't afford to pay him at the crematorium. They thought he was a good worker.
Types of jobs worked	Age 20 he worked for a crematorium. Age 22 he worked at a SA Meat Corporation: slaughtering animals.
Employment status during series	None, because he was stealing money from his victims after their death.
<b>Relationships</b>	
Sexual preference	Heterosexual
Marital status	Veronika Tripp: First marriage in 1989 Elizabeth Harvey: Second marriage
Number of children	Four step-sons: Troy Youde, James Vlassakis, Adrian Vlassakis, and Kristoffer Vlassakis
Lives with his children	Adrian and Kristoffer Vlassakis lived with him and Mrs. Harvey more constantly than the other two. James lived with them for longer than Troy. Troy and James moved out when they got older.
Living with	
<b>Triad</b>	
Animal torture	Yes; During childhood Bunting tortured ants with acid. In late adulthood, he would kill and skin cats and dogs while making James Vlassakis watch. Sometimes Bunting made James Vlassakis participated whether he wanted to or not.
Fire setting	N/A
Bed wetting	N/A
<b>Killer Psychological Information</b>	
Abused drugs?	N/A
Abused alcohol?	N/A
Been to a psychologist (prior to killing)?	N/A
Time in forensic hospital (prior to killing)?	N/A
Diagnosis	N/A
<b>Killer Criminal History</b>	
Committed previous crimes?	No, just tortured animals. No criminal crimes.
Spend time in jail?	No
Spend time in prison?	No
Killed prior to series? Age?	No
<b>Serial Killing</b>	
Number of victims	11 victims, but 12 bodies were found. Suzanne Allen's murder became dropped due to the lack of evidence and claimed she died of natural causes, a heart attack.
Victim type	Pedophiles, homosexuals, cross dresser, heroin user and roommate, partners assisting in the crimes, mentally

	disabled, and some were relatives or associates of one of the accused.
Killer age at start of series	He was 25-years-old at the time of the first murder, but was turning 26 years two months later.
Date of first kill in series	August 1992
Date of final kill in series	5 /09/1999
Gender of victims	Mostly males and one female
Race of victims	White
Age of victims	Thomas Trevilyan: 18; Fredrick Brooks: 18; Michael Gardiner: 19; Troy Younde:21; Clinton Tresize: 22; David Johnson: 24; Ray Davies: 26; Gavin Porter: 29; Garry O'Dwyer: 29; Elizabeth Haydon: 37; Barry Lane: 42
Type of victim	Same as above in "Victim Type"
Method of killing	Torture that led to eventual strangulation by a rope or electrical cord
Weapon	Knives, Coils of rope, rolls of tape, rubber gloves, cloths, a Variac metallurgy tool that the killers used to give electric shocks to the genitals and other sensitive parts.
Was gun used?	No
Type	N/A
Did killer have a partner?	Yes; Bunting was the leader of three other men.
Name of partner	Robert Wagner 'Papa Smurf', James Vlassakis, and Mark Haydon were the three main group members. However, Elizabeth Harvey, Thomas Trevilyan, and Barry Lane, each assisted in one of the murdered victims.
Sex of partner	The main group consisted of three males. Robert Wagner was a homosexual, while James Vlassakis and Mark Haydon were heterosexuals.
Relationship of partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• James Vlassakis was a step-son.</li> <li>• Robert Wagner started out as a neighbor and become a best friend of Bunting's.</li> <li>• Mark Haydon and John met in a welding course and became good friends. John Bunting ended up dating Haydon's sister and later on Haydon's wife's sister.</li> </ul>
Type of serial killer	Missionary, Organized Lust, and Contract Killer
How close did killer live?	Drove to crime
Location of first contact	Victim home, killer home, street, hospital, etc.
Location of killing	Victim's home, Bunting's home, Kersbrook, Australia, and at the Snowtown Bank.
Killing occurred in home of victim?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suzanne Allen was claimed to be killed in her bathroom and was mutilated. Her body was buried in Buntings backyard.</li> <li>• Troy Youde was dragged out of his own bed by Bunting and his accomplices. At the time Youde was living at the 203 Waterloo Corner Rd house. He was tortured and strangled in the downstairs bathroom.</li> <li>• Michael Gardinear was killed by strangulation of a rope and burns were found on his scrotum.</li> </ul>
Killing occurred in home of killer?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinton Trezise was killed in Bunting's home in the living room by being bashed in the head with a hammer.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ray Davies was killed in Bunting's bathroom and was buried in his backyard. Davies was never reported missin.</li> <li>• Gavin Porter was killed in his car that was parked in Bunting's driveway. His body was stored in a barrel in the bank vault.</li> </ul>
Victim abducted or killed at contact?	
<b>Behavior During Crimes</b>	
Rape?	No
Tortured victims?	Yes; giving electric shocks to sensitive parts (generally genitals) of the body, crushing toes with pliers, ears and nose burned with cigarettes, and one victim even had a sparkler inserted into his genitals and lit. After being tortured the victims were strangled and to make sure they were dead, someone would jump on their chest to get all of the remaining air out.
Stalked victims?	Only to get personal information to obtain financial gains from victim (after they were murdered).
Overkill?	No
Quick & efficient?	No, he tortured all of his victims except for one.
Used blindfold?	No
Bound the victims?	Yes, using handcuffs, electrical cord, and/ or duct tape over the mouth with a sock in it
<b>After Death Behavior</b>	
Sex with the body?	No
Mutilated body?	Yes; almost of the victims' bodies were cut up with a knife and eight of them were placed in a barrel containing acid.
Ate part of the body?	Bunting and Wagner fried up and ate parts of David Johnson's flesh.
Drank victim's blood?	No
Posed the body?	No
Took totem – body part	No
Took totem – personal item	Yes; from each victim personal information was taken in order to be able to access victim's finances. These included credit cards, photo IDs, social security numbers, and other items.
Robbed victim or location	After each victim was murdered, their property was taken over, such as a car or house, to gain more money.
<b>Disposal of Body</b>	
Left at scene, no attempt to hide	Thomas Trevilyan was the one victim who was left at the scene, because it was supposed to look like a suicide. He was found hanging from a tree in the Kersbook area.
Left at scene, hidden	No
Left at scene, buried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ray Davies: body was buried at Bunting's former house in his backyard (Waterloo Corner Rd, Salisbury North) after being strangled in the bathroom.</li> </ul>
Moved, no attempt to hide	No
Moved, buried	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinton Trezise: body was buried in a shallow grave at Lower Light</li> </ul>
Cut-up and disposed of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All of his victims were cut-up and disposed of in Bunting's backyard or a barrel that was later stored in the rented Snowtown bank.</li> </ul>

Moved, to home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suzanne Allen was moved to Bunting's home after being "found" at her house in the bathroom.</li> </ul>
Sentencing	Supreme Court trial started on 10/14/2002
Date killer arrested	5/21/1999
Date convicted	9/08/2003 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outstanding murder charges of Suzanne Allen were dropped on 5/7/2007 when jury could not reach a verdict</li> </ul>
Sentence	Life imprisonment
Killer executed?	No
Did killer plead NGRI?	No
Was the NGRI plea successful?	N/A
Did serial killer confess?	Yes, but Bunting confessed after conviction (confessed & recanted).
Name and state of prison	E Division in Yatala Prison, South Australia's Maximum Security Jail in Adelaide.
Killer committed suicide?	No
Killer killed in prison?	No
Date of death	Still living

#### References

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We looked on the library website on LexisNexis, Criminal Justice Abstracts and Periodicals, and Newspaper Source Plus. We also searched for books in the library about John Bunting but there were none. We also searched some search engines on the web and most articles that came up were just about the hearings. All of the above did not have sufficient or any information about John Bunting.

\*\*N/A= No information was able to be found.

Areas where we had trouble finding information on John Bunting:

1. Some of his childhood and family relations i.e. Parent's occupation.
2. We could not find anything on Bunting psychological information, there was nothing mentioned about previous crimes, but we don't know if there just was not any information about it.
3. Location of killings were not found for Barry Lane and Garry O'Dwyer,
4. We were not able to find the dates of the murders of Gavin Porter, Gary O'Dwyer.

