

Man wrongly accused of murder wins release

BOSTON (AP) — An inmate who served almost 16 years for murder before winning a new trial and the chance to prove his claim of innocence walked out of court a free man Monday when a judge dismissed the case against him.

"I just figured this would happen someday," said George Reissfelder, 42, who had once been a lifer with no hope of parole. He smiled at the crowd and at his lawyers after Judge Paul K. Connolly dismissed the case in Suffolk Superior Court.

Reissfelder and his lawyers went for a victory lunch at Quincy Market, a popular tourist spot that hadn't been

renovated when Reissfelder was jailed in 1967.

After ordering a beer, Reissfelder, tanned and grinning in his jailhouse jeans and a blue shirt, said he was feeling "like a bug under a microscope."

"My only regret is my family is not here to see this," he said, referring to his mother and father, who died while he was in jail.

"We're very happy," said the inmate's brother, Richard Reissfelder, 40, of Randolph. "We're going to have to take one day at a time."

George Reissfelder won a new trial in June on the 1966 murder charge after a series of witnesses testified he

was innocent.

George Reissfelder's relatives had already begun their celebration when he was released.

"There's a big sheet outside," said Donna Reissfelder, the inmate's sister-in-law. She said her four children made a banner that said "Welcome Home Uncle George" and hung it on the garage door at the family's home.

"All he wants is peace and quiet," Donna Reissfelder said after talking with George Reissfelder late Sunday by telephone from Walpole State Prison.

He said his brother was mainly worried about how to answer questions

from reporters.

During his imprisonment, George Reissfelder's wife divorced him and he saw his three children seldom or not at all. One, a 21-year-old daughter who identified herself only as "Maria," waited at the court Monday. "He's my blood," she explained.

She said she last saw her father five years ago, in prison.

George Reissfelder planned to live with his brother's family and return to work in Boston's garment district at a pleating company, the brother said.

George Reissfelder spent nearly 16 years in state prisons after being convicted of first-degree murder and

armed robbery in the theft of a \$20,000 Railway Express Agency payroll at Boston's South Station in 1966.

Witnesses identified George Reissfelder as being at the scene.

He won a new trial in June, based largely on a deathbed statement in 1972 by his co-defendant, William "Silky" Sullivan. Gravely ill with leukemia, Sullivan told a priest that George Reissfelder was innocent.

Five policemen, an FBI agent and a probation officer also submitted statements that authorities conducting the original investigation knew George Reissfelder was not Sullivan's partner in the robbery.



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