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James Brittle convicted of burglary for stealing personal and historical items from Gresham residence

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announced that 38-year-old James Brittle change his plea and received a 46 month prison sentence for his role in a burglary wherein he unlawfully entered a residence and stole a box of sentimental objects including historical items of the deceased homeowners' time held in a Japanese internment camp.

"This is a just outcome to this case, and has already provided the victimized family with some closure," said Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney Leslie Wu, who prosecuted this case. "As a result of the Mr. Brittle's conduct, the victims' family had to deal with even more stress and grief than that of which normally comes with a family member passing. They have been incredibly patient as this process took place."

This investigation started on September 15, 2017 at approximately 7:30 a.m. when Gresham Police received information about a suspicious circumstance in the 1200 block of Southeast 4th Street.

Officers learned that a vehicle, occupied with three people, was parked in front of a home, and that multiple people were seen going into the home's backyard. At least two of the individuals were wearing black hooded sweatshirts.

The neighbor who reported the incident told police she considered the matter suspicious because the previous homeowners had died and that no one except for their immediate family should have been at the property, especially at such an early time in the day.

When police arrived in the neighborhood, they contacted an adult female inside the vehicle parked outside the residence and learned she had an outstanding warrant. She was taken into custody.

When police attempted to take Brittle and another suspect into custody, both ran from officers. Eventually, officers took Brittle and the other suspect into custody without further incident. At the time of his arrest, officers found Brittle in possession of a screwdriver and prying tool.

Officers determined that a back sliding door to the victims' residence had been pried open. Police found several valuable objects outside the home including several boxes and plastic storage bins containing nearly \$6,000 in cash.

Other possessions included historical items related to Japanese internment camps, silverware, documents and jewelry.

During the investigation, police learned that after the homeowners died in 2007, the house was purchased by other family members. It had remained vacant since 2010.

Brittle will have to pay \$348.00 in restitution and will be on 36 months of post-prison supervision.

Like in all criminal and civil matters, electronic copies of court documents, which are not subject to a protective order, are available to the public through the Oregon eCourt Information (OECI) system.

No additional information can be released by the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office at this time pursuant to the Oregon Rules of Professional Conduct.

The cases against the two other co-defendants are pending. They are innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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No photos of the evidence collected as part of this investigation can be released at this point.

This case is being investigated by the Gresham Police Department.

#MCDA#

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