

Amid Buzz from Netflix's Hit Show 'Monster:' Ed Gein Tombstone Thief Confesses to Crime 25 Years Later

Memoir Reveals Shocking Details of Crime, Aftermath, and Surprising Reaction from Victim's Own Family 25 Years Later

Gein's headstone found

PLAINFIELD, Wis. (AP) — The stolen headstone of Ed Gein, the grave robber and murderer whose story inspired the Alfred Hitchcock movie "Psycho," has been recovered in Seattle.

Police in Plainfield, the central Wisconsin town where Gein lived and is buried, say they aren't sure what they will do with the headstone once it is returned.

"We could bring it back and put it back in the cemetery, but it would only get stolen again," said Waushara County Sheriff Patrick Fox, referring to the continuing interest in Gein and his story.

The grave marker was taken, along with some dirt from the grave, a year ago from Plainfield Cemetery.

At the time, Fox and others said they expected to find it for sale on the auction site eBay, where vials of the dirt were offered, but that never happened.

Instead, Fox said he got a phone call about a month ago from a woman who suggested a connection with a rock band promoter in Seattle, and when the promoter was questioned, police found the marker.

He had been selling rubbings of the stone for \$50 each on his Internet site. He claimed he got the rubbings when he visited the Plainfield Cemetery, and that the marker he had was a reproduction of the original stone.

Fox said police did not believe that story.

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Patrick Fox**

"It was the same granite stone, the graffiti was the same, and it was chipped in the same way," Fox said.

No one has been charged in the theft and the case remains open, Fox said. He also said details of how the rock band promoter obtained the grave stone are unclear.

For now, the marker is at the Seattle police station until local authorities decide what to do with it.

Members of Waushara County Historical Society are considering placing it in the old jail museum in downtown Wautoma.

Gein was in that jail briefly after his crimes came to light in 1957.

He was arrested for murder when the headless body of a hardware store owner was found hanging at his farm

home. The woman's body was dressed out like a deer carcass. Investigators also found parts of other bodies. They concluded Gein had robbed graves and may have murdered other people.

A fictionalized account of Gein by writer Robert Bloch led to the Norman Bates character in Hitchcock's 1960 film classic "Psycho."

Gein, eventually ruled guilty but criminal insane, died in a mental hospital in 1984 at the age of 77.

Fox said Tuesday he is reluctant to discuss the headstone because there has already been too much "ghoulish" interest in the stone, which vandals have covered with Satanic symbols and obscenities.

Because of the continuing interest in Gein, Ardis Spuhler, president of the historical society, said it would make sense to place his grave marker in the local museum for safe keeping.

"People who come to the museum always know who he was and they are very interested when I mention that he was held in one the cells," she said. "His story isn't going to go away."

Milwaukee, Wisconsin Oct 16, 2025 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - As millions of viewers worldwide tune into the new Netflix series *Monster: The Ed Gein Story*, a key figure in the Gein saga has stepped forward with a definitive confession. More than two decades after the audacious crime made international headlines, artist and provocateur Shane Bugbee has released a definitive confession in his new book, *I STOLE ED GEIN'S TOMBSTONE: My Obsession with America's Most Notorious Killer*.

The memoir provides a stunning, unapologetic account of the 2000 grave marker theft, detailing the planning, execution, and complex psychological motivations behind the act that reverberated through the killer's hometown of Plainfield, Wisconsin, as well as the world.

The book's most shocking revelation centers on the raw, uncensored phone calls Bugbee recorded with the families still living in Gein's shadow. These include the Worden family, relatives of Gein's final victim Bernice Worden, and the Hill family. In a stunning twist, the book reveals a private admission of approval for the stone's removal from a member of the Worden family, significantly complicating the narrative of victimhood and community outrage.

"This wasn't just about a stolen rock; it was about confronting America's sick fascination with its own monsters," says Bugbee. "I wanted to hold up a mirror to the hypocrisy of the true-crime world and the commercialization of tragedy. The results were more chaotic and revealing than I ever could have imagined."

I STOLE ED GEIN'S TOMBSTONE is a document of provocation and a direct challenge to the true-crime industrial complex. It provides an unflinching look at the human cost of digging up ghosts and the ongoing struggle between historical memory and a community's desire for peace. The narrative includes: *THE CONFLICT*: The full story of Bugbee's infamous 2005 showdown with the Mayor of Salem, MA, over an exhibit featuring the alleged Ed Gein "death truck."

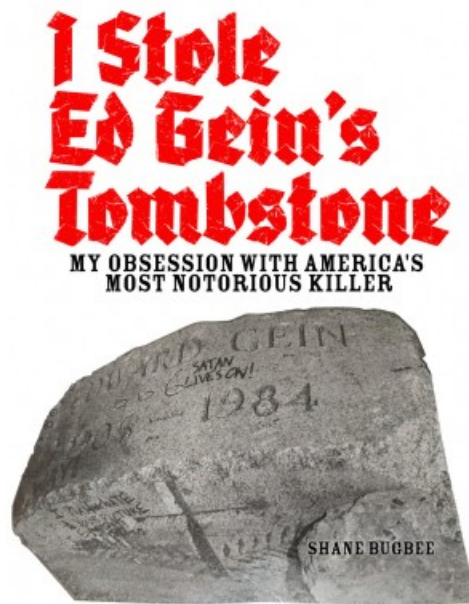
THE OBSESSION: A deep dive into the psychology of the act, connecting Bugbee's motivation to his life's work and his claim of an impossible, interview with Gein himself from beyond the grave.

THE HYPOCRISY: An exploration of the dark, often fraudulent world of "murderabilia" collecting and the outrage over the eBay auction of a truck alleged to have been Gein's.

About the Author: Shane Bugbee is a central figure in the transgressive art movement, a publisher, and a cultural provocateur. He co-founded The Satanic Temple and has spent his career exploring controversial aspects of American culture.

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