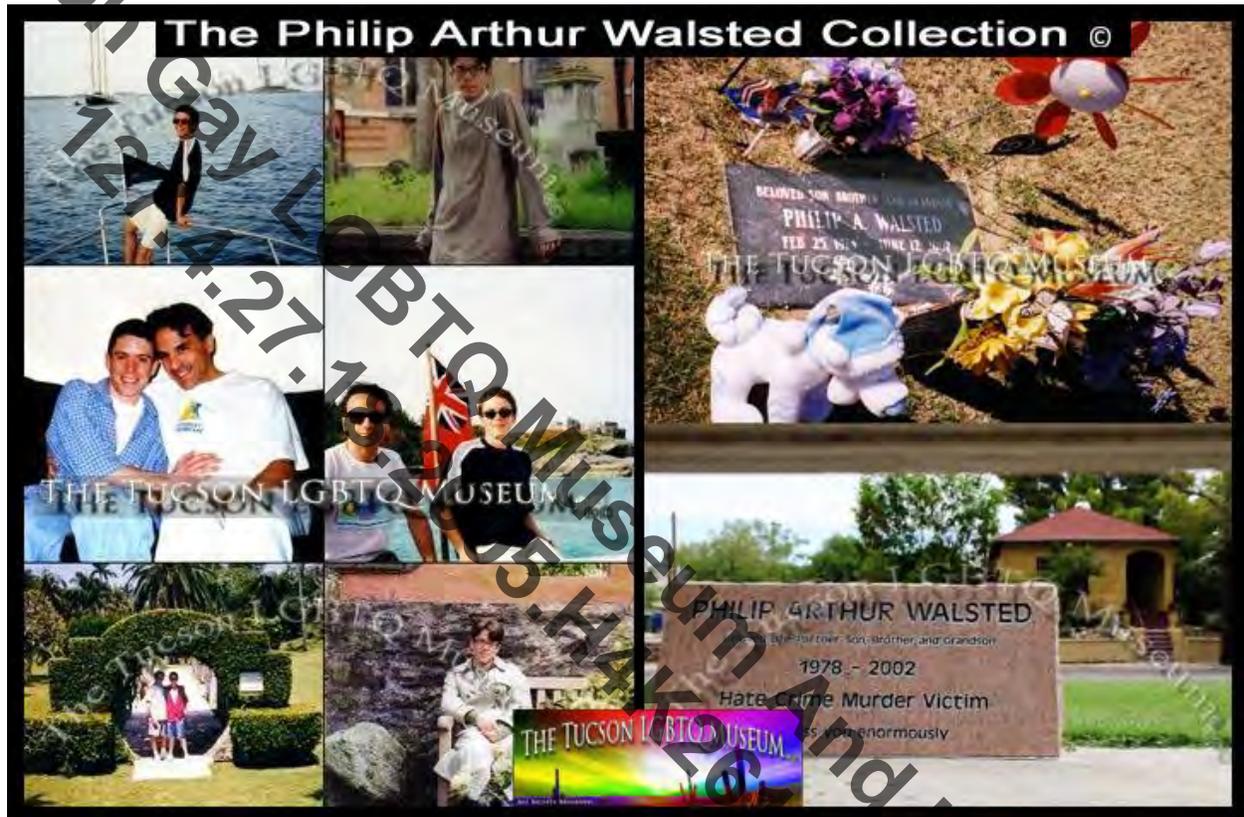


# Tucson Gay LGBTQ Museum And Library®

## Philip Arthur Walsted

### Tucson Gay Hate Crime Murder

#### Exhibit Collection®



Philip Arthur Walsted, a native of Tucson was a 24-year-old Gay Man who was murdered only because he was Gay according to the legal records of the crime and robbed by force in the University/4th Avenue Arts District Area of Tucson, Arizona on Wednesday June 12, 2002. Mr. Walsted was employed by American Airlines as a Reservation Agent, and lived with his partner Jonathan Hartman at 910 N. 4th Avenue.



Philip Arthur Walsted

Philips supervisor at American Airlines, Linda Kubiak, stated that she and all of Walsted's coworkers,

"Were Forever Changed by Knowing and Working with Philip Walsted."



Mr. Walsted was walking home on Wednesday June 12, 2002, when during the course of that he was attacked and then chased down and beaten to death with a metal baseball bat by 20-year-old David A. Higdon a twice convicted burglar who had recently been released back out into the public on parole from the Arizona State Prison System.

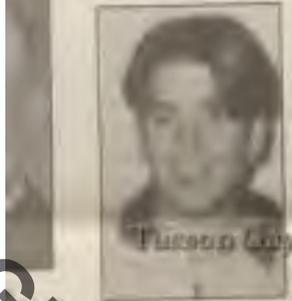
The victim Philip Arthur Walsted was struck in the head with the metal bat up to 20 times, and received more than 50 wounds to his entire body as a result of the attack which he did not survive. Walsted's body was found, covered with blood, with his pockets picked clean in the middle of the street just a few blocks away from the home he had shared with his partner Jonathan in the 4th Avenue area neighborhood near the University of Arizona.

Walsted was transported to the Tucson University Medical Center, where he was pronounced dead. Two police detectives first interrogated and then took a DNA sample from Philip's Life Partner, the couple's home and automobiles were both searched and processed, and both their vehicles were seized and taken to the Main Tucson Police Station for forensic examinations.

The unemployed murderer David Higdon was arrested one week later after law enforcement authorities broke open the front door during the course of serving a Search Warrant at Higdon's fathers house when the three (3) men inside failed to answer the door in the 2500 block of E. Florence Drive after police received tips indicating Higdon as the murderer in the capital crime. There on the Higdon property police quickly found the victim Philip Walsted's eyeglasses, watch, shoes, American Airlines key ring, the murdered victims driver's license in the convicted felon Higdon's possession, cut out local newspaper articles about the murder of the victim, two baseball bats, clothing soaked with the victim Walsted's blood, along with Higdon's marijuana, and cocaine.

### SW-side area loses power; substation overloaded

Memorial Service 10:30 a.m. Monday, June 11, 2002 at 2209 Street Station, Phoenix, AZ 85016. The victim was a member of the Tucson Gay Community Center. Arrangements by S&B LAFER FUNERAL HOME.



Philip Arthur Walsted

Philip Arthur Walsted, 34, was shot and killed by David Higdon on Monday, June 10, 2002, at 2209 Street Station, Phoenix, AZ. Mr. Walsted was a member of the Tucson Gay Community Center. Arrangements by S&B LAFER FUNERAL HOME.

Abby LIENSB, Harry, 4, Sonoma St., Sign 6, Harbor. LOPEZ, Raymond C., 36, Fry Avenue, June 7, Harbor. MARTINEZ, Orlando, 41, May 2, Harbor. MENARD, Edward W., 71, real estate manager, June 11, Arizona. MANTZ, Harold C., 41, restaurant cook, June 4, Abbe. RICE, Joe F., 42, insurance, June 5, Abbe. RANTZ, Thomas, 37, owner, June 10, Arizona. WATSON, John D., 36, construction worker, June 11, Abbe.

### MEMORIAM



David Higdon

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The murderer David Higdon openly bragged to his friends about his murder of a Gay Man according to witnesses while showing off to his friends. Higdon used the murder victim's driver's license to cut and separate his cocaine while at his father's house as he boasted to his friends of murdering Philip Walsted.

Initially, the Tucson Police declined to classify the murder as a Hate Crime. However, months later, as the evidence accumulated, the Tucson Police Department re-classified the case as a Hate Crime and reported it to the FBI as is required.

**On June 12, 2002, Philip Walsted was walking between his home at 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and University and the IBT bar.**

**He was accosted by a 20 year old twice convicted burglar on parole who demanded money after hitting Philip in the head with a baseball bat.**

**Philip ran, but the felon, twice Philip's size (Philip weighed 110 and was 5'5" tall), caught up with him and literally broke Philip's head open with the bat. The brutality of the murder obviously went beyond robbery.**

**Originally, the police suspected Philip's domestic partner, however, the killer was observed committing the crime, has been caught, and is facing Murder 1 charges and the death penalty. The Prosecutor's office says that the murder is being treated as a hate crime.**

Higdon, a self-avowed Neo-Nazi, had two WW2 German SS styled lightning bolts tattooed on his chest while in jail meaning he had 'committed murder for the Nazi cause', and arrived in court for his trial with his head fully shaved.

Pima County Prosecutor Teresa Godoy stated that Walsted's murder was fueled by Higdon's Neo-Nazi beliefs, and that the crimes of First Degree Murder and Armed Robbery were also part of an attempt to impress a white supremacist group.

Higdon "confessed" to the crime in the many numerous letters he wrote, and by openly boasting of the murder to other inmates at the Pima County Jail aka Adult Detention Center while he was awaiting his criminal trial.

# Man's killing may have been hate crime

By DAVID L. TEIBEL  
dteibel@tucsoncitizen.com

The father of a man beaten to death with a baseball bat June 12 says he fears that his son was killed because he was gay, and he wants the killer to be sentenced to death.

"I'm hoping it was just a random thing," Paul A. Walsted said of his son Philip Walsted's slaying.

But, Paul Walsted said, "if it was a hate crime because my son was gay, that makes it even worse."

Detectives have said robbery was a motive in the killing, and they are investigating whether Philip's slaying also was motivated in part by hatred of gays.

"We do believe robbery was a factor in the motive, but that doesn't eliminate that it could have been a hate crime," said Sgt. Marco Borboa, a Tucson police spokesman.

Borboa said, "We haven't been able to determine that it was a hate crime. There is a checklist called 'hate crime.'"

County Attorney David White explained that hat-

as a motive in a killing is a factor a judge may consider in imposing a sentence.

But, Borboa said, "if we charge first-degree murder, how much worse does it get?"

The maximum penalty for first-degree murder is death.

So far this year, two anti-gay or anti-lesbian hate crimes have been reported to Tucson police.

Details on the crimes

Philip Walsted was one of 100 statistics on hate crimes reported last year.

Walsted, 24, an American Airlines reservations worker, was found at 4:50 a.m., lying in the street at East Fifth Street and North Hoff Avenue, about a block and a half from his home, on North Fourth Avenue.

He had been beaten, police said.

He was taken to University Medical Center, where he died shortly after 7 a.m. that day.

Police arrested David Higdon,

20, of the 2500 block of East Florence Drive on charges of first-degree murder and armed robbery in Walsted's death.

Higdon is being held in the Pima County Jail in lieu of \$1 million bail on the charges.

A police search of Higdon's home turned up Walsted's driver's license, keys on an American Airlines key ring, two baseball bats, undisclosed amounts of

cash and a handgun.

Higdon suspected cocaine and various other items, according to a court-filed inventory of the seized property.

The senior Walsted said he last saw his son about a week before his death when the young man went to his father's Southeast Side apartment to take him to lunch.

Paul Walsted, who was disabled in a 1992 traffic collision, said he lives on Social Security disability payments and has little money to spare.

He said his son came by once or twice a month, sometimes more, to take him to lunch.

When Paul Walsted last saw Philip, "He was happy with his job," the older man said.

"He was fortunate in the last couple of years," Walsted said.

"He got to travel. He went to England, he went to Bermuda."

"He was a decent young man. He had his problems, like anyone, but he was a good young man."

Philip was openly gay, his father said.

And he "used to experiment with drugs," his father said, but he lived with a man who "had gotten his (Philip's) life turned around."

"It's been very difficult on me," Paul Walsted said of the weeks since his son's slaying.

"I don't know if the person who did this will get the death penalty. I hope so," he said.

"I'll be there at the trial. The bastard that killed my son, I hope he dies."

White said prosecutors have not decided whether to seek the death penalty, a decision they have about two more months to make.



Philip Walsted



David Higdon

# Area's gay community center vandalized

By LA MONICA EXPRETT-WYNES  
lwynes@tucsoncitizen.com

Wingspan, the resource center for Tucson's homosexual and transgender community, was vandalized a week ago

on the ground the following morning, Burbank said.

"The police found a couple of inches of thick glass, so somebody had used considerable force," Burbank said. "They had to plan this because

'Someone thought this out. This isn't a random act of vandalism.'

- Kant Burbank, Wingspan executive director

of hate.

Most recently, openly gay Philip Walsted was beaten to death June 12. Police have not determined that he was killed because he was gay, but the community is concerned that

A representative from a local Anti-Violence Project (Dr. Lori B. Girshick) attended the trial. She reported that, "Higdon had written hundreds of pages of letters and documents while he was incarcerated, leading people to believe that Philip was killed only because he was Gay."

While Arizona had no specific law at the time against Hate Crimes or Hate Murders, if the victims were targeted at least in part because of their race, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, or sex, judges could take those facts into account during the trial and in the sentencing of the accused.



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### Man Accused Of Hate Murder Refuses Plea Offer

By *Mindy Blake*, News Anchor

Posted 9/30/04

#### Tucson Gay Museum

A Tucson man accused of beating a gay man to death will go on trial for murder next month.

David Higdon refused a plea offer from prosecutors today.

He would have been sentenced to twenty-two years in prison, in exchange for pleading guilty to second degree murder.

Now, he could get life in prison if he's convicted of killing Philip Walsted with a baseball bat.

Walsted's body was found in the middle of a street in the University area in June 2002.

Prosecutors say Higdon killed Walsted to gain what's called "red laces." In skinhead groups red shoelaces signify the wearer has drawn blood for the white race.

On Monday January 24, 2005, Higdon went on trial for First Degree Murder and was convicted after he had turned down a Plea Bargain Offer to serve only 22 years for the murder.

After an outpouring of the public's letters from Tucson, Phoenix, and from other states sent to the judge, in March 2005 Higdon was sentenced to **Life Without Parole** in the Arizona State Prison System.



Philip Walsted Memorial Dedication Day

Tucson Gay Museum And Library Archives  
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Wingspan LGBT Center employees asked about the idea of a memorial for Walsted to City Of Tucson Officials. The City Of Tucson's response was, "You Can Do What You Want Within Reason, As Long As We Don't Have To Pay For It."

"I was flabbergasted, thrilled, and I gladly paid for all of it," noted Philip Walsted's Life Partner Jonathan Hartman in an interview at the time with the Tucson Gay LGBTQ Museum And Library.



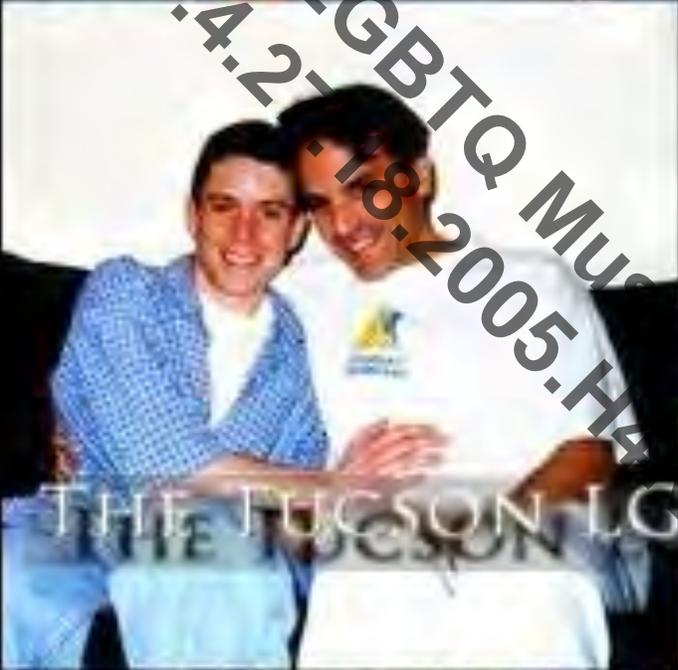
The Memorial to Philip Walsted was completely paid for by Philip's Life Partner Jonathan then built, and subsequently dedicated in the City of Tucson's Catalina Park section located on 4th Avenue, directly across the street within view of Philip and Jonathan's former home.

In early 2020 tree roots had caused wide cracks in and up-ended portions of the Walsted Memorial's concrete pad and in the sidewalks in that area of the park.

Jonathan Hartman contacted the Tucson Gay LGBTQ Museum And Library which sent out a museum historical photographer who took photographs of the damages to Walsted's Memorial.



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Upon the Tucson Gay LGBTQ Museum And Library's recommendation, Mr. Hartman then contacted the Tucson City Parks & Recreation officials who authorized repairs allowing the memorial to be safely visited again.



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