

# Man, 39, drowns in water at abandoned quarry

By Rich McKay  
JOURNAL REPORTER

A man taking a break yesterday from the heat in the water of the abandoned quarry off Rosann Drive drowned while playing around with friends.

Charles Williams said that he, Vernon Lee Nelson and two other men climbed through a hole in a fence to get to the quarry.

Williams said that Nelson tugged him into the water.

"I came up and he didn't," Williams said.

Williams, 37, and his friends Buster Burgess and Bill Newsom waited a few minutes on the shore for Nelson to come up.

Newsom said, "We sat there thinking he'd

just come back up, like a joke and he was gonna scare us or something."

Williams shed his blue jeans and dived back into the water looking for Nelson. He climbed back on shore and they ran to a house nearby and called for help, he said.

Divers from the Forsyth Rescue Squad were on the scene in about 10 minutes, said David Kivett, the captain of the squad.

Silt made it impossible to see under the water. A diver, Allen Mills, searched the floor of the 25-foot-deep quarry by hand, Kivett said. Nelson had been under water for about 30 minutes when Mills found him.

Paramedics tried to resuscitate him for almost 30 minutes.

Lt. D.L. Diamont of the Winston-Salem Police Department said that Nelson drowned. Nelson was 39 and lived at 1337 Belleauwood St. Friends said that he has a son and daughter.

Kivett said that although the quarry looks like a calm, shaded pool, it's a dangerous place to swim. It's filled with rocks, tree limbs and uncertain depths.

It has a bad reputation.

In unrelated incidents, it has hidden a stolen Volkswagen Rabbit, a broken-into safe and the body of a woman who was beaten to death.

Williams was shaken by the incident. He said that he and his friends swam in the quarry years ago as teen-agers. He said he wished he could have saved Nelson.

1994 Aug Vernon Nelson drowns at quarry

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