

NEWS

United States Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey
401 Market Street, Fourth Floor
Camden, New Jersey 08101



Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney

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Assistant U.S. Attorney
JASON M. RICHARDSON
856-968-4869

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Third Brother Pleads Guilty to String of Bank Burglaries

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Greg Reinert, PAO
Public Affairs Office

856-757-5233
973-645-2888

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CAMDEN – An Egg Harbor man pleaded guilty today for his role in a string of southern New Jersey bank burglaries that he committed with his two brothers, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

John Earl Anderson, 42, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Renée M. Bumb to a four-count Superseding Indictment, which charges him with four-counts of bank larceny. Judge Bumb continued the defendant's detention without bail pending sentencing, which is scheduled for May 30.

At his plea hearing, Anderson admitted that he participated with two brothers, Samuel Anderson, 44, of Egg Harbor City, and Donald Lee Britton, 46, of Browns Mills, to break into various banks to steal money from ATMs and teller drawers. Anderson also admitted that they also stole the necessary equipment used to commit the burglaries.

On Oct. 10, 2007, both Samuel Anderson and Donald Lee Britton pleaded guilty before Judge Bumb to separate one-count Informations that charged them with bank larceny. Judge Bumb detained Anderson and Britton pending sentencing, which are scheduled for March 14.

At their plea hearings, both Andersons and Britton admitted on April 29, 2007, they went to the First Bank of Williamstown. Once at the bank, they approach the bank and cut the telephone lines in order to disable the bank's alarm system. Samuel Anderson acted as the "look-out" to see if police responded the alarm, while John Earl and Britton walked to a nearby construction business to steal tools, including a crow bar, an ax, a pair of shears, and welding equipment to use to break into the bank and the bank's safe. John Earl and Britton also stole a truck that they used to transport the stolen equipment back to the bank. Upon returning to the bank, they used the welding equipment in an attempt to open the main safe. Eventually, they gave up trying to cut open the safe and took approximately \$1,800 from a teller's drawer.

John Earl admitted that he and Samuel also burglarized a Wachovia Bank in Egg Harbor City on June 4, 2007. John Earl admitted that they used a stolen acetylene torch to cut into the ATM machine and steal approximately \$40,000 in cash from the ATM.

Furthermore, John Earl admitted that on June 21, 2007, he and Samuel were driven to a Wachovia Bank in Paterson. When they arrived, they cut the telephone lines into the bank to disable the alarm system and broke a door to enter the bank. They then broke into a gas station near the bank and stole welding equipment. When they returned to the bank, they attempted to use the equipment to cut into an ATM safe inside the bank.

John Earl also admitted burglarizing a Wachovia Bank in Egg Harbor Township with Britton on Dec. 12, 2005. Using a stolen acetylene torch, they broke into the ATM machine located near the drive through area and stole approximately \$80,000 in cash.

The charge of bank larceny carries a statutory maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000.

In determining an actual sentence, Judge Bumb will consult the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI's Atlantic City Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun in Newark, with the investigation.

The Government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jason M. Richardson of the Criminal Division in Camden.

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Defense Attorney: M.W. Pinsky, Esq. Haddon Township