

SON OF CHURCH Founder

Scientology Student Death Probe

By SHARON SPIGELMYER

SUN Staff Writer

Police and private investigators are probing the mysterious death of the Church of Scientology founder's son, found unidentified three weeks ago near McCarran International Airport in a coma, Coroner Dick Mayne said Monday.

Cause of death is still unknown for Geoffery Quentin McCally Hubbard, 22, of Clearwater, Fla. He was a student and counselor in Scientology.

The homicide division of the Metropolitan Police Department Monday combed the scene where Hubbard was found, and discovered identification, license plate, car registration and title. The items had been buried under a rock.

Sgt. Fred Anderson said, "The information I have leads me to believe it was not a murder," he said. A final conclusion as to cause of death is pending the coroner's report, he said.

Currently, police are seeking information as to who saw Hubbard last and where he had planned to stay in Las Vegas.

Mayne said at a press conference Hubbard was found in his car south of the airport near Sunset Road by a jogger about three weeks ago. He was treated as a "John Doe," person unidentified, for two weeks at Southern Nevada Memorial Hospital before he died Nov. 12.

Hubbard is the son of L. Ron Hubbard, who founded the Church of Scientology 26 years ago.

Art Maren, publicity agent for the church, who was in Las Vegas following the death of Hubbard, said the church has been considered "very controversial" in recent years because of investigations into the International Police Organization (Interpol), the Central Intelligence Agency and massive use of the Freedom of Information Act.

Asked if the family had enemies, Maren said it was a possibility although he could not cite names. He said the family has hired a private detective to look into the mysterious death.

Mayne said Hubbard was found by a jogger Oct. 28. He was taken to the hospital, where he underwent "intensive" care.

No drugs were found in his body when admitted, and examination by neurologists and other specialists turned up no cause for the coma, Chief Health Officer Dr. Otto Ravenholt said.

Once in the hospital, he never spoke a word or improved.

Following his death, he was identified through a police check of the car's serial number. Members of the Church of Scientology aided in the identification.

Maren said Hubbard was in Las Vegas for a vacation, specifically to enroll in a flight training school. He was on a three-week vacation, and as a result no one had reported him missing.

His parents, out of the country, were notified Saturday. A representative of the wealthy family was expected in Las Vegas Monday to arrange funeral services. It was expected the funeral would not be in Las Vegas.

Maren said he and the family do not believe the youth committed suicide. "He was a happy guy, more importantly he was very stable," Maren said.

Coroner Mayne said a gross autopsy and toxicological examinations failed to determine cause of death, and a microscopic examination of vital organs should be completed this week.

He said it is possible certain bizarre drugs might not have shown up in exams already conducted.

The youth at death was described by Mayne as about 5'1", 111 pounds, blond hair and blue eyes. There were no scars or marks on the body. He weighed about 120 to 125 pounds when he entered the hospital.

The church, which has about 600,000 active members, emphasizes "great personal awareness, happiness, self-respect and awareness of the world affairs," Maren said.

He said he did not know whether the family has been threatened in recent months. The church is currently attempting to get a past medical history of young Hubbard.

Hubbard Death Mystery

Geoffery Hubbard, the son of Church of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard, has been cremated at the request of his family, it was reported Wednesday.

Hubbard, who died from an unknown cause Nov. 12, was cremated Tuesday by Palm Mortuary. His remains reportedly were being taken to Los Angeles, where the church has its main headquarters.

Results from microscopic tests to determine what killed Hubbard were expected later. An autopsy and a toxicological exam failed to turn up any clues as to the cause of death.

Richard Mayne, Clark County medical coroner, said the cremation did not pose any problems for his office because samples of all the vital organs already had been taken.

Hubbard, 22, of Clearwater, Fla., was found in a car in a semi-comatose state Oct. 28. Hubbard was listed as a John Doe when he was taken to Southern Nevada Memorial Hospital for treatment because neither he nor his car contained any identification.

He didn't respond to medical treatment and died two weeks later at the hospital. He wasn't positively identified until last Thursday, when authorities traced the serial number of his car.

Police scoured the area near McCarran International Airport for a second time Monday and found some of Hubbard's identification papers buried under a rock.

Authorities said their investigation appears to rule out the possibility of murder.