

Super Glue + Computer = Ident

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The following account helps to illustrate how the unknown perpetrator of a crime can be identified thru the use of modern fingerprint technology.

A little over a month ago, an individual walked up to a teller's window in the First American Bank carrying a multi-colored plastic shopping bag. He told the teller he had a gun and demanded she place the money in her cash drawer in the bag. The teller followed his instructions, and was clever enough to slip an exploding dye pack in with the money. As the robber left the bank the dye pack exploded and he dropped the bag on the sidewalk and ran, making a successful getaway.

What was left of the bag was recovered as evidence and turned over to Fingerprint Specialist Blanche Hightower to be processed in order to try and develop identifiable latent prints. Upon examining the dye stained plastic bag Mrs. Hightower concluded that the super glue method of developing latent prints offered the best possibility of obtaining something of value. After fuming the bag about an hour she examined it and discovered one latent print with sufficient ridge detail to make a positive identification, if she had a suspect.

The latent developed was then dusted with black magnetic powder, very carefully lifted, due to the condition of the bag, and placed on a contrasting lift card. Since no suspects had been developed the lift card was then taken to our Automated Fingerprint Identification System Computer, encoded, and searched against the data base. After checking eight individuals listed on the computer

print-out the latent was identified as the left index finger of the eighth person on the list.

Once again, by utilizing the modern resources now available to the fingerprint specialist we were able to identify a previously unknown individual as the perpetrator of the crime.



Pictured above are the members, wives and husbands of the Chesapeake Bay Division-IAI who attended the 1984 International Conference in Alaska.