

October 9, 2008

PRESS RELEASE

Hinds County District Attorney Robert Shuler Smith announced this afternoon that MARY L. LEWIS [712 Beaverbrook Dr., Jackson, Mississippi; DOB 5-10-1060] has been found guilty of the June 23, 2007, murder of Arthur Lee Patterson after a jury trial that began on Tuesday, October 7, 2008. The jury deliberated about three and one-half [3 1/2] hours today before returning the unanimous verdict of guilty about 2:30 p.m. Lewis was immediately sentenced to life imprisonment.

Lewis and Patterson lived together on Beaverbrook Drive in Jackson. Evidence presented at the trial showed that Lewis shot Patterson in the upper abdomen near the intersection of Sears Drive and Eminence Row in Jackson the morning after she told a neighbor she planned to kill him. She then took Patterson's automobile and stayed away from home all night. Early on the morning of June 23, 2007, Patterson found Lewis in his automobile and demanded that she get out of the car. Witnesses described a brief struggle between the two and then Lewis shot Patterson. Lewis then fled the scene and had Patterson's car parked behind her uncle's house. Lewis was arrested the next day by Jackson Police Department detectives. Lewis admitted shooting Patterson, but claimed it was an accident. At trial, Lewis did not testify, but defended her case by arguing self-defense. Prosecutor's argued that Lewis intentionally shot Patterson rather than surrender the car and noted that Patterson was not armed and there was no evidence that Patterson intended to harm Lewis in retrieving the car.

District Attorney Smith stated: "We elected not to make any plea offers in this case. We felt this was a heinous murder as the jury has found. Defense counsel sought sympathy for this female defendant, but this jury stayed focused on the true facts and justice has been done."