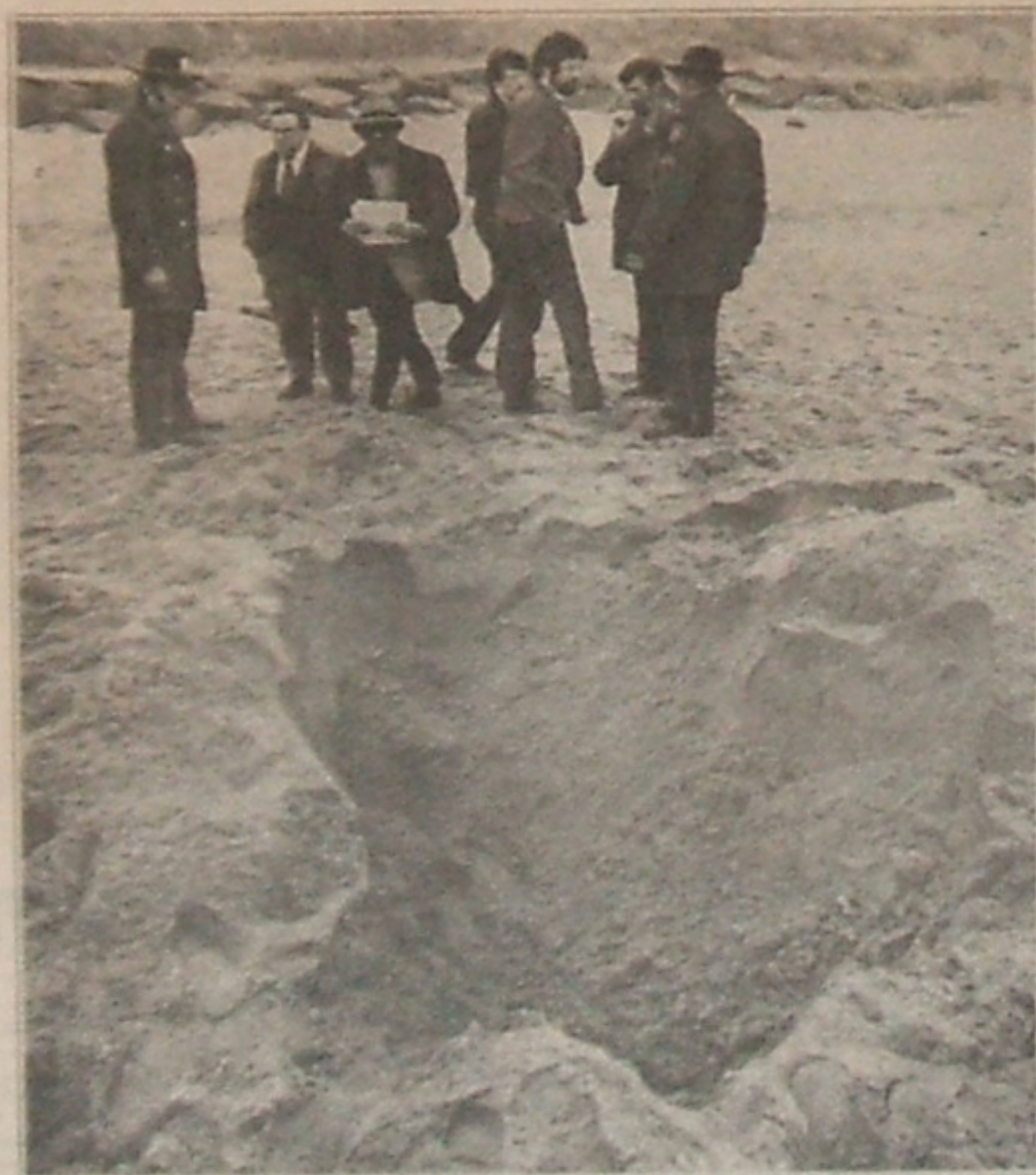


FRESHMAN DIES IN FRAT HAZING



Officials at scene of the "grave" that Flowers dug on beach.



News photo by Frank Hurley

Buried Alive

William Flowers, of Neptune City, N.J., first black ever to pledge the Zeta Beta Tau fraternity at Monmouth College, died early yesterday during initiation hazing at Long Branch, N.J. The freshman and four other pledges were made to dig mock graves in sand (←). Flowers suffocated when walls of the "grave" collapsed. Seven members of the fraternity were charged with manslaughter. —Story on page 3

Dies in Sand Grave Dug at Frat Rite

By JUDY RUSSELL,

Staff Correspondent of The News

Long Branch, N.J., Nov. 12.—Fraternity initiation ended in tragedy early today for a Monmouth College freshman who died when the sand walls of a mock grave he was digging collapsed and buried him on the beach here.

Seven members of the fraternity, Zeta Beta Tau of 310 Ocean Ave., Long Branch, were charged with manslaughter in the death of Willie Flowers, 19, of Neptune City, N.J., a chemistry major and the fraternity's first black pledge.

Long Branch Detective Capt. Michael A. Irvine said that Flowers, a 1974 honor graduate of Christian Brothers Academy in Middletown, N.J., and four other pledges were made to dig graves about three feet apart in the sand opposite the frat house.

To understand the pledges had to lie down in their graves as part of the rite," Irvine said. "Then the members were to walk by each grave and toss a handful of sand on top of each boy."

When the frat members reached the third of the five graves, one of them noticed that the walls of Flowers' grave had collapsed, leaving only his feet exposed, police said.

Fraternity members told police that they tried to pull Flowers out of the sand and went screaming to the fraternity house to call for help.

Police, first aid squadmen and doctors arrived at the scene just after 1:15 a.m. yesterday. Flowers was pronounced dead on arrival at Monmouth Medical Center, Long Branch, at 1:30 a.m. Cause of death was listed as suffocation and lung collapse.

A police spokesman said that there were "still a lot of unanswered questions" about Flowers' death. He noted that the young man, a high school basketball player, stood 5 feet 4 inches, "big enough to stand on in the 4-foot grave."

A frat official would not

discuss the "hunt for the grave when we got there. None of the boy's body was exposed. When we dug him up, he was lying face down." Fraternity members had said that all the pledges had been lying on their backs in the graves.

Of the fraternity's 15 members, seven were charged and arraigned yesterday before Superior Court Judge Patrick J. Holloway in Freehold Hall over an \$2,000 each pending a Nov. 25 hearing in Long Branch.

Charged were Richard A. Paves, 21, of River Edge, the fraternity's president, Howard P. Ball, 21, of East Brunswick,

Illustrated on page 5, col. 1)