

New Bedford Man Convicted of 2013 Murder of Retired Woman in Fairhaven

Bristol County District Attorney Thomas M. Quinn III announced that Joshua J. Silva, 38, of New Bedford, was convicted early this afternoon of First Degree murder and armed robbery, connected to the October 2013 homicide of 69-year-old Joyce Howland in Fairhaven.

The jury rendered its verdict shortly after noon today in Fall River Superior Court after deliberating for six hours over the course of the past two days. The trial, which lasted about a week, was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys Stephen Nadeau and Katie Rayburn.

Silva, who was an employee of Fairhaven Lumber at the time of the homicide, had been part of a two-man work crew insulating the attic in Ms. Howland's Hamlet Street home in October, 2013. At some point on October 14th of that year, Mr. Silva entered Ms. Howland's home, stole jewelry and killed Ms. Howland, a retired Fairhaven teacher, by slicing at her throat with a sharp instrument. Ms. Howland's body was not discovered until the next day when a concerned friend went to her home to check on her well-being.

After today's verdict was announced, Superior Court Judge Robert T. Kane sentenced Mr. Silva to serve life in prison with no possibility of future parole.

"This was a brutal and chilling murder. The victim was enjoying her years of retirement at home, minding her own business. She did not deserve this fate," District Attorney Quinn said. "I am gratified that the jury has found the defendant accountable for this vicious crime. I would also like to thank Assistant District Attorneys Stephen Nadeau and

Katie Rayburn, along with Fairhaven Police and State Police Detectives assigned to my office, for their tremendous efforts in the investigation and prosecution of this case.”
