

Missing girls:

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Andre Rand is undergoing psychiatric examination after his arrest on charges of kidnapping Jennifer Schweiger, while police are hard at work attempting to link him to multiple kidnappings and murders.

Detectives are studying more than 30 cases — including those of four missing Staten Island girls.

Investigators have singled out the girls' cases due to intriguing similarities surrounding each disappearance, including Rand's "somehow being placed in the area" from which each girl disappeared. Many of the connections may be coincidental or circumstantial, but police have vowed to follow up every possible clue.

Missing:

Alice Pereira

Alice Pereira was 5 years old when she vanished from a park near her New Dorp home in 1972. Rand worked as a painter in the

Tysens Park Apartments, the girl's residence at the time of her disappearance.

Fifteen years after Alice mysteriously disappeared, her grandmother, Frances Dendariarena, still clings to the hope that one day her granddaughter will walk through the front door.

Since Alice knew her own address and phone number, Mrs. Dendariarena has refused to move from the Tysens Park apartment where the girl once lived.

Even the phone number remains the same. "I expect one day, she will call and tell me about it. If she came back I would tell her. Let's forget everything and start a new life."

Now, investigators have targeted the 43-year-old Rand, a transient, who spent years eating from Island soup kitchens and living in hidden campsites, as a suspect in Alice's disappearance.

On Jan. 21, 1972, Rand was conditionally released from prison after serving approximately 17 months on a sex abuse charge. He had been convicted of sexually attacking a 9-year-old girl in the Bronx in May of 1969.

Alice disappeared July 7, 1972. Sources told the Advance that following

Detectives studying 30 cases to find connecting evidence

Alice's disappearance, police summoned the Tysens Park maintenance crew for questioning.

Rand was the only one who failed to show. He turned up days later, was questioned, and subsequently sent on his way.

Alice's aunt said she vividly recalls Rand working at the apartments.

"He had teeth then and more hair. I remember seeing him by the back door entrance (of the building)," she said.

"I hope there is no connection, but you have to think about it," she said.

At the time, investigators found neither a trace of the girl nor a witness who might help them determine her fate.

"It was if the ground had opened up and swallowed her," a veteran detective said during the investigation.

Mrs. Dendariarena thinks it is possible Alice could have been lured off by a stranger.

"She was very friendly, very friendly," Mrs. Dendariarena said. "I think if someone called her (to go somewhere), she'd go."

One of Alice's aunts described her niece as a "very bright little girl."

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Andre Rand, center. Was he involved?

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