CARL HANRATTY

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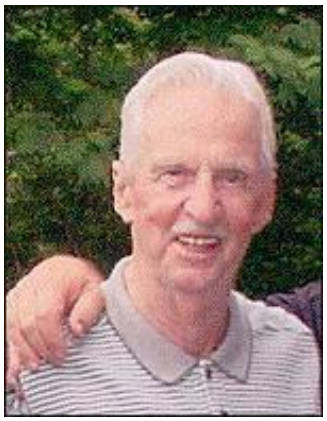
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The actual FBI agent who arrested Frank Abagnale, Jr. was Joe Shea. He is pictured here, in a cropped photo, later in life. Shea talked about Abagnale's life-as-a-thief at the time the film was released. Click on the image for a clearer view.

The FBI, of course, was on Frank's trail. It's just that he was always a step ahead of the police. Eventually wanted by all fifty states, plus numerous countries throughout the world, Abagnale's days as a freewheeling scam artist were numbered.

In his book, *Catch Me If You Can* (which was actually written by Stan Redding), Abagnale refers to the lead FBI agent assigned to his case as Sean O'Riley. That's a fictitious name. So is the name of Tom Hank's composite FBI character—Carl Hanratty—in the movie version of Frank's life.

The real FBI agent who first caught Abagnale was Joe Shea. Without identifying him, Abagnale tells a Blackstone Audio interviewer (near the end of the link):

> *In my book I called him Agent O'Riley, but that's not his real name. He is in his 80s and has been retired from the FBI for many years. We have a wonderful relationship and I correspond and speak with him often.*

Shea (then the FBI's lead agent in Marietta, Georgia), caught Abagnale at a motel in Smyrna, Georgia, a suburb of Atlanta. Although he spent very little time in the now-expanded Cobb County jail, Abagnale escaped during a work detail.

Eighty-three years old at the time of the movie's release, Shea told the *Marietta Daily Journal*:

> *He was not a violent type of criminal - no guns, no knives, never hurt anybody. That wasn't his style. He used his brains and his bravado to pass himself off as what he was impersonating.*

Although Frank slipped through the FBI's control in Georgia, he was less fortunate with the French authorities. It was there—where prisons are more like 17th-century nightmares than 20th-century rehabilitation houses—that Abagnale began his course correction.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/CARL-HANRATTY-Catch-Me-If-You-Can

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/CARL-HANRATTY-Catch-Me-If-You-Can

Media Stream



Joe Shea

Image online, courtesy chasingthefrog.com website.
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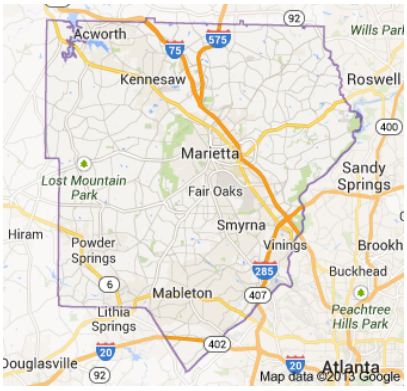
Abagnale with FBI Agents

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Marietta, Georgia - Map Locator

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