

Remains identified of woman missing from Scottsville for more than 25 years

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SCOTTSVILLE, Ky. – Just nine days after her 24th birthday, a Scottsville woman walked out of her home in a Scottsville trailer park and vanished July 30, 1993.

Friday, the family of Christie Witcher learned the horrific details of her death.

Witcher's skeletal remains were found in a shallow grave in Pulaski County in the mid 1990s. Her throat had been cut. Until Friday, no one knew the identity of the remains.

Through the use of modern forensics, authorities determined the remains were of Christie Witcher. Her family has plans to bring her back home to Allen County.

"I just thought that she had left me. I had just come to terms with it," Allen Witcher said of his mother. Allen was only three years old when his mother disappeared.

"I heard rumors of different things growing up," Witcher said. "I just discounted them, you know, never thought too much about them. It was just a couple of days ago that it was positive that, you know, it was her remains and she was buried in a shallow grave and someone had killed her. I'm not really sure about too many details. I haven't really asked. Like I said, I came to terms with her being gone a long time ago.

"This kind of like, I guess, emotionally and mentally has opened up some new wounds and new questions. I haven't really had too much of a time to, like, think about it or soak it in," he said as he sat in a Bowling Green recording studio.

Witcher said the news is like something out of television show.

"I don't know what to think," he said. "It's a hard thing to deal with. I know there's a lot of bad that happens in the world but you know you never think something like that would happen to you. This is like stuff that you see on movies or crime shows. It was never a thought that entered into my mind.

"It raises more questions than anything," he said.

His mother missing is the only memory of her that he has.

Christie Witcher's sister Peggy Mandrell said Christie's disappearance has always nagged at her.

"I remember her just leaving one night," Mandrell said. "I think the fair was in town. She wanted to go work for the fair and that's the last time I seen her."

Mandrell has over the last two and half decades, searched online for any sign of her sister.

"You just wonder if she's living another life somewhere else and just forgot about this one or if somebody has done something to her. It's just stuff like that that you wonder about it."

"We'd search for her, Google her name to see if she was in jail anywhere. They finally put it on NamUs. My aunt filed a missing person's report," Mandrell said.

Ten years ago Mandrell provided her DNA to the FBI. Months ago she learned her DNA had some similarities to a Jane Doe listed in the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System, NamUS. Law enforcement reached out and asked for DNA samples from two of Christie's three children.

Friday, the family learned about Christie's death.

Allen County Sheriff's Detective William Francis said the investigation has changed from a missing person's case to a homicide. He is working with Pulaski County law enforcement officials and said the investigation will be difficult due to the passage of time.

"The main issue is lack of evidence," he said. "The crime scene itself is old. The remains are old."

Both Mandrell and Allen Witcher want other families of missing people to know that there is hope but it takes patience to get answers.

Christie Witcher's remains are at the state Medical Examiner's Office in Louisville and will soon be brought home for a proper memorial. She left behind three young children who are now grown. Had she lived, she would be a grandmother to three boys.

"We're going to give her the best memorial we can," Mandrell said.

She deserves better than a shallow grave in a wooded area, she said.