

# South Dakota cold case solved after 46 years

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PIERRE, S.D. (Dakota News Now) - The man whose body was found in the Missouri River near Pierre in 1976 has been identified thanks to advances in forensic technology.

“Modern technology has assisted law enforcement in solving this 46-year-old cold case,” said Attorney General Marty Jackley. “An autopsy was conducted which resulted in a probable cause of death by drowning, and there is no further evidence of foul play.”

The South Dakota Attorney General’s Office states there was no identification on the body when it was found. Partial fingerprints were taken, but a match couldn’t be made at the time without a potential subject to compare them to.

He was buried at the Riverside Cemetery in Pierre as “Unknown Man.”

In 2020, the case was reopened by Pierre Police Department Detective Trevor Swanson, and the remains of the unidentified individual were disinterred on Oct. 8, 2021. A DNA profile was obtained by collecting samples from the remains.

Detective Swanson remained assigned to the case, and in 2022, the DNA profile was compared to genealogy databases. A potential match was found for 39-year-old **Stephen Earl Boice** of Seattle, Washington.

“Investigators obtained a fingerprint card that had been collected from Stephen on Feb. 15, 1962. The South Dakota Forensic Laboratory compared Stephen’s fingerprint card to the fingerprints collected from the unidentified individual and determined that they were made by the same person,” reports the South Dakota Attorney General’s Office.

Stephen’s relatives were informed and given the death notification. Stephen’s remains were reinterred last fall at Riverside Cemetery at his family’s request.

A permanent headstone marker was placed at the gravesite in April.

“I want to thank everyone who spent so much time on this case,” said Attorney General Marty Jackley. “Thanks to them, this family now has some closure about what happened to their loved one.”