

Nogales John Doe 2002

Success Stories

On September 8, 2002, the manager of a hotel in Nogales, Arizona, discovered the body of an adult man in one of the rooms. The man had an 8" surgical scar along his left frontal hairline and had told the hotel manager that he had been consulting a doctor in Mexico about surgery on his head.

Investigators think the man was Caucasian and between 49-73 years old. He was approximately 6' tall and 192 pounds, with brown eyes and short, partially gray hair. He also had a short gray beard and mustache. When this John Doe was found, he was wearing a silver necklace with a "C" medallion and was in possession of an identification card belonging to "Edward C" from St. Petersburg, Florida. He may also have used the name "Donald H".

NamUs ID:

UP6352

Date Body Found:

Sept 8, 2002

Race:

White/Caucasian

Sex:

Male

Estimated Age:

49-73

Estimated PMI:

Hours

Agency of Jurisdiction:

Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner

Bruce Anderson

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More Information:

<https://www.namus.gov/UnidentifiedPersons/Case#/6352?nav>

https://unidentified-awareness.fandom.com/wiki/Donald_Hadland

Status:

Identified

Nogales, Arizona – After 21 years, the mystery surrounding the identification of a man who died in a Nogales hotel room has been resolved. **Donald Hadland, Jr.** was found on September 8, 2002 by the

hotel manager, apparently having died hours earlier. He had registered for the room as "Edward C." of St Petersburg, Florida, but that name led authorities to records of identity theft and fraud. A fingerprint search came back with the name Donald Hadland, Jr, but investigators questioned whether or not this was also a stolen identity.



Donald Hadland, Jr. in 1960 University of Puget Sound yearbook photo

This year, the Pima County Medical Examiner's Office brought the case to the DNA Doe Project as part of a collaboration with Ramapo College of New Jersey's new Investigative Genetic Genealogy Center, an undergraduate certificate program offering practical experience on real cases to its students. With funding from the Ramapo IGG Center, a blood sample taken from the body was sent for DNA analysis and development into the profile that was uploaded to GEDmatch Pro. Then, the students got to work – building a family tree of the DNA relatives of the John Doe in order to try to determine his true identity.

Right away, they started finding the Hadland name in their research. "This case was unique as there was an investigative lead to the identity of Donald Hadland Jr. to begin with," said Ramapo IGG Certificate Program Director Cairenn Binder, "Our students at Ramapo College of New Jersey were able to compile additional supporting information using investigative genetic genealogy to demonstrate how Nogales John Doe's genetic matches were consistent with Donald Hadland Jr."

After providing authorities with genealogical evidence of Mr Hadland's identity, confirmation was obtained by a comparison with the DNA of a close family member.

"Being part of a multidisciplinary team working to establish the identity of an individual in a 20-year-old cold case was very rewarding," said Ramapo

student Dr. Brad Combs. “The team worked efficiently and effectively together to help identify this individual and bring closure for the family.”

The DNA Doe Project is grateful to the groups and individuals who helped resolve this case: the Pima County Office of the Medical Examiner, who entrusted the case to the DNA Doe Project and the Ramapo Investigative Genetic Genealogy Center; Genologue for DNA extraction from blood and sequencing; Kevin Lord of Saber Investigations for bioinformatics; GEDmatch Pro for providing their database; and students participating in Ramapo College's IGG Certificate Program for their hard work and deployment of investigative genetic genealogy techniques.

About Ramapo College of New Jersey's Investigative Genetic Genealogy Center

The [IGG Certificate Program](#) at Ramapo College provides a 15-week, remotely delivered program to students around the United States – and the world. Students learn how to conduct IGG proficiently and ethically from one of the top practitioners in the country, working an IGG case from beginning to end. In addition to the skills required for practical IGG work, students learn how to effectively communicate with investigating agencies and forensic DNA labs to ensure a successful workflow.

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