

Remains found off I-95 decades ago identified as Mass. teen who went missing in 1988

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Remains found off I-95 decades ago identified

NEWBURYPORT, Mass. — Back in August 1988, teenager **Anthony Angelli Rea** was reported missing from the Harbor School in Newbury.

More than four years later, on Nov. 28, 1992, skeletal remains were found partially buried in the marsh grass on Interstate 95 South in Newburyport.

An autopsy determined the body to be a teenage male, yet no cause of death was declared, investigators said.

For 32 years, state and local police tried to identify the remains. Despite some strong leads, investigators could not make a positive ID due to limitation in DNA identification.

On Thursday, the Essex District Attorney's Office announced the remains are that of Anthony Angelli Rea, the teen boy who went missing nearly four decades ago.

The district attorney's office on Thursday mistakenly released photographs of Anthony's brother, Darren Rea, who died in 2008. The office released the correct photographs of Anthony on Friday.

Investigators are still looking for leads in his case, which remains unresolved.

Anyone with any information about Anthony Angelli Rea is urged to call the State Police Unresolved Case Unit line at 1-855-MA-SOLVE.

"Investigators are continuing to follow up on information already provided and asks anyone else with information about Anthony to please call the Unresolved Case Unit," a spokesperson for District Attorney Paul Tucker said Friday.

Born in 1973, Anthony Angelli Rea lived part of his childhood in Malden with his mother, authorities said.

Othram, a private forensic laboratory in Woodlands, Texas, helped identify his remains using advanced DNA testing, according to the district attorney's office.

"Othram scientists successfully developed a DNA extract from skeletal remains and used Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing® to develop a comprehensive DNA profile," Tucker's office said in a statement.

"Othram's in-house forensic genetic genealogy team then used the profile in a genealogical search to generate new investigative leads in the case, including the identification of potential relatives of the decedent," the statement said.

NamUs, a national program that helps investigators solve cases of missing, unidentified, and unclaimed persons across the country, funded the DNA testing for the Rea case, officials said.

NamUs is administered by the National Institute of Justice, and is managed through a contract with Research Triangle Institute International.

