

Sabine Parish 'Man in the Well' remains identified after 37 years, investigation continues

CRIME

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SABINE PARISH, La. (KTAL/KMSS) – The Sabine Parish Sheriff's Office says remains found in a well more than 37 years ago have been identified, solving at least one of the unanswered questions in what has become known as the 'Man in the Well' case.



According to the sheriff's office, the remains found in April 1986 by a [Sabine Parish](#) landowner in a water well on his property are those of Lester Rome, who was 58 when he was reported missing out of Jefferson Parish two years before.

While some remains were recovered at the time they were discovered, it took more than three decades to recover enough to make the identification and gather more evidence from inside the well.

The LSU Forensic Anthropology and Computer Enhancement Services (FACES) Laboratory first made a possible connection to Rome in October 2013, when shotgun pellets were found embedded in the pelvic area. Rome had been shot in the abdomen area with a shotgun some years before when he went missing.

Seven years later, in December 2020, former D.A. Investigator Ted Delacerda gave several news clippings and photographs about the case to the Sabine Parish Sheriff's Office. Three months later, the current landowner gave permission to the sheriff's office to try to recover more of the remains, but they were unsuccessful.

The sheriff's office says more skeletal remains and other items of evidence were recovered from inside the well in April 2021, with help from Central Sabine Fire Department's confined space entry team personnel.

On Tuesday, Sabine Parish Coroner Dr. Mark Holder issued a Fact of Death Certificate stating the skeletal remains recovered from the well were those of Lester Rome.

His family has been notified and the sheriff's office says detectives are still investigating the case and looking for the person or persons responsible for his death.