

Missing 30-year sisters Anna and Kym Hakze have been

BY [MICHELE JARVIE](#), POSTMEDIA

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The last time Anna and Kym Hakze were seen by family was in Edmonton in the mid-1980s.

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An Edmonton man is longing to see his sisters again now that they have been located after being missing for more than 30 years.

Ken Hakze, 57, of Edmonton was notified last week that police had finally tracked down his two sisters, Anna and Kym, who are both living in the United States.

"My brother Gill called me last week when he was told. He was so shocked. He was really without words at first. We were always hoping they were alive," said Hakze.

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Anna and Kym Hakze were reported missing in 2003 by their mother who hadn't seen or heard from her daughters in more than a decade. The last time the women were seen by family was in the mid-1980s. At the time, Anna was estranged from her family and struggling financially. Ken said Anna had married an American man who went to prison in California and when he was released they ended up living in a ghetto and experienced some problems there.

Anna was in her 30s while Kym was in her early 20s at the time of their disappearance. Today they are 67 and 53, respectively.

Ken said Anna did not get along with their mother but was very close to their father and when he passed away in 1981, she disappeared. Ken said the girls were very close and "my younger sister went with the older sister," said Ken.

"We hired some detectives for that and we also went through a number of agencies and the police force and missing persons. They were seen but there were no leads when we found out that information," said Ken, one of three Hakze brothers. Gill lives in Lethbridge and Jerry is in Texas. Unfortunately, their mother passed away four years ago, never knowing what had become of her daughters.

"She never knew and that's very sad. She always wanted to reconcile."

The Lethbridge officer who oversees the Criminal Investigation Section said it's a remarkable ending and not one they see very often.

"After so many years it's very unusual for a case like this to end with good news," said Lethbridge Police Staff Sgt. Scott Woods. "Usually we find ourselves telling a family their loved one has met with some sort of tragedy or more often than not in a case of this age, never being able to provide any answers."

"We hope that knowing Anna and Kym are out there provides some sense of closure for this family and we are very pleased to finally have been able to do that."

Ken said the brothers are thrilled to learn the women are alive and said he hopes it gives them all a second chance.

"No, it's not a sense of closure. There's a longing there to see them. I'm very sad we lost all these years for some reason I'm not quite sure of yet. I have a real desire to see them and communicate with them, very badly. My heart goes out to have that opportunity if they would soften their hearts to that."

The efforts to find the missing women spanned nearly two decades, many detectives and dead ends. Police even asked the family for DNA samples during the Robert Pickton investigation as there was some evidence they women may have been in Vancouver during that time.

In a news release, Lethbridge authorities explained that in 2012 police had received and investigated a Crime Stoppers tip that identified two women — one being the author of several books and the other with an alias known to have been used by Kym Hakze — as the possible missing sisters. Police tried to contact the author and her publisher but neither responded to multiple requests. Police also attempted to locate the other woman but couldn't.

In new online searches of the author's name, police came across a news story which included a photo and said where she was living. Ultimately there turned out be no records in that name but police did find records in the name of the author from a 1984 Vancouver newspaper clipping. A number of documents related to that name were obtained and one of them listed a sister as the next of kin.

Fingerprint comparison confirmed the two women are Kym and Anna Hakze.

In late February U.S. police went to the home of Kym Hakze, who no longer goes by that name, and confirmed her identity. Lethbridge Police have since spoken to Kym via telephone. She explained the sisters were unaware they had been reported missing decades earlier.

Lethbridge investigators have not yet spoken to Anna, but her sister has had contact with her and other U.S. authorities have confirmed her location.

Kym has requested her privacy and police will not share her new name, location and other details about her life.