

# Brother in 'disbelief' after remains found 22 years after N.S. woman disappeared

Arlene McLean left her home in Eastern Passage, N.S., in 1999 and never returned

[Brooklyn Currie](#) · CBC News · Posted: Jul 28, 2021 11:18 AM AT | Last Updated: July 28



Arlene McLean was last seen on Sept. 8, 1999, when she left her home in Eastern Passage, N.S. Police found what are suspected to be her remains in July 2021. (Rewards for Major Unsolved Crimes Program/Province of Nova Scotia)

When Troy McLean answered his phone one Wednesday afternoon this month, what he heard was beyond anything he'd ever expected.

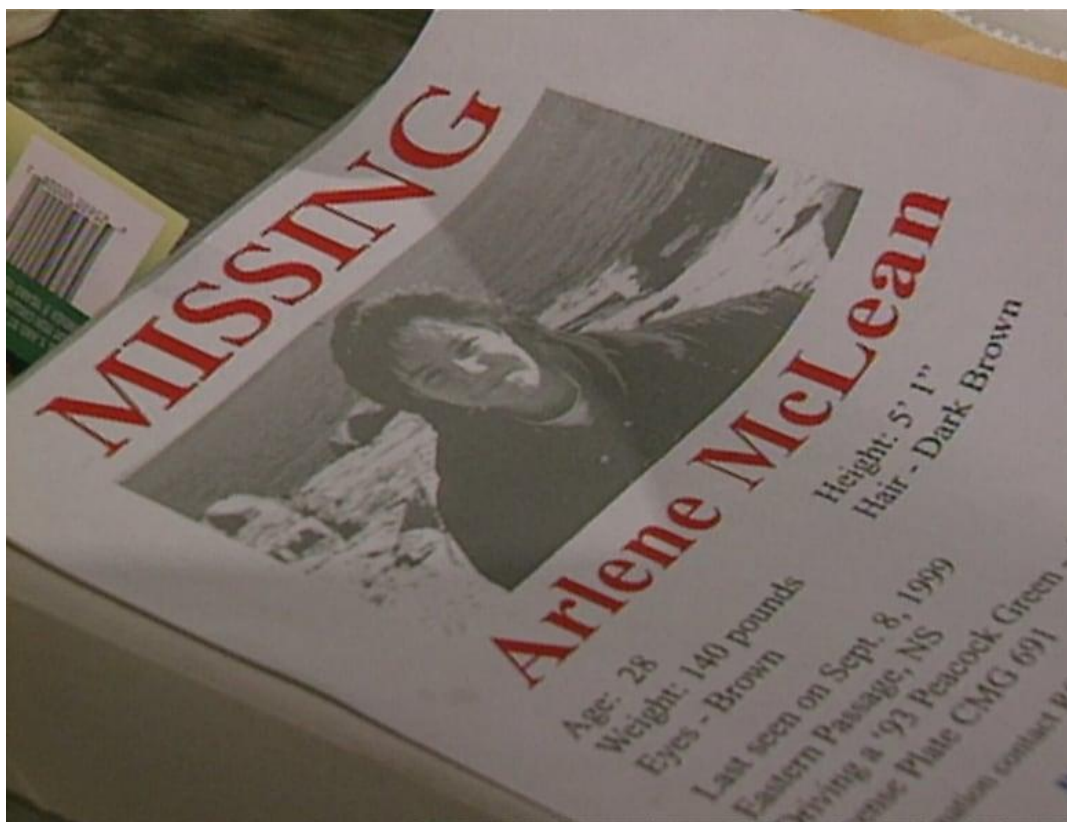
An RCMP officer was on the line, saying police had found what they believed to be the remains of McLean's sister, Arlene McLean, who was reported missing more than 20 years ago.

At the time of her disappearance, her common-law partner and young son were both at their home in Eastern Passage, N.S., a community in the Halifax area. Arlene McLean drove away in the family car, a 1993 green four-door Hyundai Elantra, around 8:30 p.m. on Sept. 8, 1999, her brother said.

Neither she, nor the car, were seen again.

## 'Good news. Bad news. Sad news'

"It leaves you in a little bit of shock — a little bit of disbelief," her brother said of the phone call from police. "It's good news, you know, after 22 years. It's bad news. It's sad news. It's weird news."



This file photo shows a missing-person poster with a photo and description of Arlene McLean. Posters like this one were handed out at vigil held by family and friends in the weeks after her disappearance. (CBC Archives)

During the initial investigation, police suspected foul play. The province later [offered a reward of up to \\$150,000 for information](#) leading to the arrest of the person responsible for her disappearance.

In a news release Wednesday, Nova Scotia RCMP said police recovered the remains in the search for Arlene McLean, and were working with the medical examiner's office to conclusively identify them.

A spokesperson for the RCMP would not say where the remains were found or whether foul play is still suspected in the woman's disappearance.

## Police still investigating

They said the investigation is ongoing and more information will be provided when available.

The news of the discovery brought Troy McLean, who lives in Dieppe, N.B., a "huge amount of relief," and closure that came too late for his parents, who "went to their graves wondering" what happened to their only daughter, he said.

He has since spoken with both his sister's partner, Cliff Hall, and their son, Kevin, and said the sense of closure extends to the whole family.

While he doesn't want to say he gave up hope, McLean said he had stopped expecting a positive outcome. He grieved his sister's death years ago, and figured if she ever showed up on his doorstep it would be like "winning the lottery."

That was his coping strategy.

Whenever the news reported that police had found human remains anywhere in North America, he'd wonder if they were his sister's.

Reports of other missing people — in real life or on TV — and even lost dog posters, would trigger the painful notion that he lost his sister to some unknown event. He felt he would likely never get answers.

He said he's spent 22 years thinking up every plausible — and implausible — reason for his sister's disappearance.

"I'll go crazy on the weirdest conspiracy theories in the world, like did she lose her memory and she's got a life and met somebody?" he said. "[Has she] moved over to Europe?

"You can go on and on and on."

With the news from police, he said he's thankful his mind can stop wandering down that path.

Source: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/arlene-mclean-remains-found-1.6117760>