

After 43 years, Illinois 'Jane Doe' identified as Massachusetts woman

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The Brief

- A woman found dead in Illinois in 1982 has been identified as 39-year-old **Linda Cecilia Haddad**.
- Advanced DNA and genealogy work led to the breakthrough, decades after traditional investigation stalled.
- Her family expressed gratitude to investigators and those who tried to help her more than 40 years ago.

CHICAGO - A woman whose remains were found in rural McLean County, Illinois, more than four decades ago has finally been identified through advanced DNA testing.

What we know

The McLean County Sheriff's Office announced that "McLean County Jane Doe," discovered on Feb. 2, 1982, along U.S. Route 136 between LeRoy and Bellflower, has been identified as 39-year-old Linda Cecilia Haddad. Investigators determined at the time that she died by suicide.

Her case remained unsolved for 43 years until the nonprofit **Moxxy Forensic Investigations**, working with the McLean County Coroner's Office and Sheriff's Office, used genetic genealogy to confirm her identity. That followed years of repeated openings and closings of the case when new leads would trickle in.

"Due to recent immigration in Linda's ancestry from Lebanon, Ireland, and Québec, which are greatly underrepresented demographics in public DNA databases used for investigative genetic genealogical research, our team is very appreciative that some of her DNA matches were willing to assist us in sharing their family history, which helped lead us to Linda," Bryan Worters, assistant case lead, said in a statement.

What we don't know

It is unclear why Haddad was in Illinois at the time of her death. Several people, however, recalled giving her rides in the area or trying to help her in some manner before she died.

What they're saying

In a statement, Haddad's family reacted to the news.

"Linda grew up in Cambridge, Massachusetts, with her parents, older sister, and golden retriever Michael. Her father brought home fish and chips every Friday evening, which her family would often eat together on the banks of the Charles River near their home. Like her mother and sister, Linda had great style and dressed elegantly. She attended the same all-girls prep school as her older sister, where she made many close friends, some of whom are still in contact with her family today. The family spent summers at their cabin in Spencer, Massachusetts, where Linda enjoyed many hours playing with her sister, swimming in the lake, and appreciating the outdoors.

"Linda's family and friends love her and have missed her greatly. We want to express our deepest gratitude to the dedicated individuals at **Moxxy Forensic Investigations**, McLean County Coroner's Office and the McLean County Sheriff's Department, who went to great lengths to identify and locate us. We also want to thank the people of Le Roy, Illinois, who helped and cared for Linda in her time of need. After 42 years of searching and wondering, we are relieved to finally have some answers."

McLean County Sheriff Matt Lane also released a statement.

"I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the skilled professionals at Moxxy Forensic Investigations and their partners," said Lane. "Their expertise and dedication were instrumental in helping us bring resolution to this case and, most importantly, closure to the family and everyone impacted. I also want to recognize the outstanding investigators from both the Sheriff's Office and the Coroner's Office, past and present, who worked tirelessly to retrace Linda's steps and ultimately uncover her identity. Their commitment to resolving this investigation and compassion for the victim will not be forgotten."

The Source

The information in this story came from the McLean County Sheriff's Office.