

Cold case solved: Man killed 38 years ago in Toronto crash finally identified

DNA testing confirmed that a southwestern Ontario man reported missing in 1988 is the same person who died in a motorcycle collision that year at Harbord and George streets.

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TORONTO — Police say a man who went missing almost four decades ago from southwestern Ontario has been identified as the victim of a 1988 motorcycle crash in Toronto.

The Ontario Provincial Police force says 19-year-old **Bradley Verbeek** was reported missing in March 1988 and had been last seen in London in December 1987.

They say investigators last year obtained information suggesting Verbeek was involved in a fatal motorcycle crash at the intersection of Harbord and George streets in May 1988.

Police say he was buried at the time as an unknown person, but recent DNA testing confirmed his identity and his family was notified.

Detective Inspector Nathan Parker of the OPP said, while tragic, the outcome reflects that police are committed to bringing families closure.

"Every missing person matters," he said in a news release issued by the OPP. "We remain committed to locating the missing, identifying the unknown and helping families and loved ones find answers."

The police news release also included a statement from Melissa Godwin, Verbeek's sister.

"For 38 years, my family lived with the heartbreak of not knowing what happened to my brother," she said. "He wasn't just my brother; he was my best friend. Every day I thought about him and hoped that one day we would be reunited."

She expressed her "heartfelt gratitude" to investigators.

"Although my parents are no longer here, I find comfort in knowing Bradley will finally rest beside them," she said. "To every family still searching for a missing loved one, please don't lose hope. Our family waited 38 years for answers, and I sincerely hope that one day you will receive the same gift of truth, peace and closure."