

Skeletal remains found in 1980 in rural Clark Co. identified, detectives seek more information

- FOX 12 Staff
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Photo of Sandy provided by the Clark County Sheriff's office

CLARK COUNTY, WA (KPTV) - The Clark County Sheriff's Office is asking for the public's help regarding an unsolved homicide from 1980.

On Feb. 24, 1980, the sheriff's office began investigating the discovery of human skeletal remains found along Fly Creek near Amboy, in rural Clark County.

The victim, believed to be female and in her mid-to-late teens, was the victim of a homicide, according to the sheriff's office.

The sheriff's office said that over the years, three facial reconstructions and multiple media releases were unsuccessful in identifying the remains, which were often referred to as Fly Creek Jane Doe.

With help from Parabon NanoLabs, a DNA technology company in Virginia, detectives were able to identify the remains this year as Sandra "Sandy" Renee Morden, who was born in 1962.

Through an investigation, detectives learned the following:

Sandy and her parents, Andrew "Andy" Bain Morden and Kathryn Irene "Irene" Morden, moved to Portland from the San Francisco Bay area. Andy, who was a Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War era, worked in the maritime trades on tugboats providing service to pulp, paper and logging interests on the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. Andy and Irene were divorced in the early 1970s, with Andy assuming custody of Sandy. Following the divorce, Irene lived separately at various locations in Portland and in the Bay area. Andy and Sandy lived in Portland and Vancouver. Sandy attended Binnesmead Middle School (now Harrison Park Middle School) on SE 87th Avenue in Portland in 1974 and 1975. She attended Gaiser Middle School on NE 99th Street in Vancouver in 1975 and 1976. She attended Wilson High School on SW Vermont Street in Portland in 1976 and 1977. Irene Morden passed away in San Francisco in 1988. Andy Morden retired to Ilwaco, Washington, where he died in 1999.

The sheriff's office said Sandy's whereabouts between May 1977 and February 1980 have yet to be determined.

After identifying the remains as Sandy's, detectives contacted probable family members identified by Parabon.

According to the sheriff's office, one family member told detectives that Sandra had been missing since the 1970's.

The sheriff's office said the family member provided a name, family history, photographs, and a family DNA reference sample which confirmed the relationship between Fly Creek Jane Doe and the Morden family.

Now, detectives would like to hear from friends, acquaintances, neighbors, coworkers, fellow veterans and classmates of Andy, Irene and Sandy Morden, particularly those who interacted with them after 1970.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Detective Lindsay Schultz at Lindsay.Schultz@clark.wa.gov or 360.397.2036.