

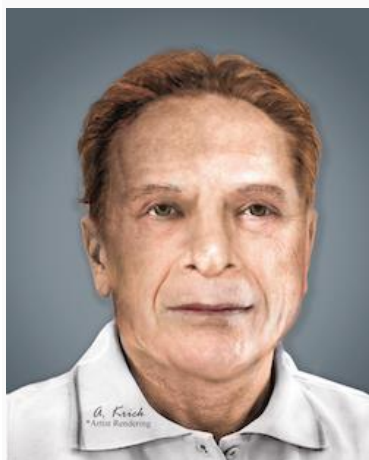
Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office & Medical Examiner's Office Teams with Othram to Identify a 2003 Maritime John Doe

A man whose remains were found in the Atlantic Ocean near Boynton Beach, Florida has been identified as 76-year-old **Donald H. Kirk**, born July 18, 1927.



Solved

Summary



In September 2003, the remains of an unidentified individual were discovered in the Atlantic Ocean approximately five miles east of the Boynton Beach Inlet near

Boynton Beach, Florida. Fishermen discovered the individual floating face down in the edge of patch of weeds. Investigators determined the remains were that of a white male who was between the ages of sixty-five and seventy-five years. The man was estimated to be approximately 6'1" tall and weighed approximately 176 pounds.

The man had an aged tattoo that appeared to be an eagle with an anchor and the letters "USN" or "USM" which were believed to mean US Navy or US Marines. The man was wearing a white t-shirt, a white polo shirt with black and brown pinstripes on the border of the sleeves and neckline, khaki pants, and brown socks. Investigators were unable to identify the man and he became known as "Maritime John Doe".

In 2008, details of the case were entered into the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) as UP1037. Throughout the course of the investigation, a forensic sketch was developed to depict how the man have looked during his life. Law enforcement provided information about the case to the public via social media and by profiling the case on "The Lead Podcast". Despite their extensive efforts, the man could not be identified.

In 2023, the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office submitted forensic evidence to Othram in The Woodlands, Texas. Othram scientists used Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing® to build a comprehensive DNA profile for Maritime John Doe. Othram's in-house forensic genetic genealogy team used the profile in a genetic genealogy search to develop new investigative leads that were returned to investigators.

In a follow-up investigation, investigators made contact with potential genetic relatives of the man, and were able to obtain a familial DNA reference sample. That reference sample DNA was submitted to Othram for comparison against the DNA of the unidentified man using KinSNP® Rapid Relationship Familial Testing. This information allowed law enforcement to establish the identity of "Maritime John Doe" as seventy-six-year-old Donald H. Kirk who was born July 18, 1927. Donald was reported missing to the Ft. Lauderdale Police Department on September 15, 2003.