

# He vanished in 1994: NY remains identified as missing Niagara man

Buried in US cemetery as a John Doe 29 years ago  
PelhamToday Staff Jan 4, 2024 2:40 PM



Olcott Beach, NY, on the shores of Lake Ontario. Remains of a man were recovered from the lake near here in June 1994. Google Streetview

[Listen to this article](#)

00:04:10

NEWS RELEASE

NIAGARA REGIONAL POLICE

\*\*\*\*\*

In 1994, the Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) commenced an investigation into the disappearance of a 33-year-old male who went missing in the Niagara

Region. After all investigative avenues had been exhausted, the incident remained open pending any new information.

In July 2018, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) Missing Persons and Unidentified Remains (ONCMPUR) Unit completed a standard analysis identifying potential unidentified remains that could be associated with the missing person investigation.

A review of the analysis identified remains which were recovered on June 17, 1994 in Lake Ontario near Olcott Harbour in New York State. At the time of the recovery a postmortem was completed, however, the remains were not positively identified and subsequently were buried as a "John Doe" in a local US cemetery.

In February 2019, dental records from the unidentified remains were received from US investigators and a Canadian dentist completed a review, noting that although identification was probable, a positive conclusion could not be made due to inconsistencies between the records.

In April 2019, ONCMPUR investigators confirmed with US officials the file associated with John Doe did not contain any additional information to further the investigation and DNA was never obtained at the time of recovery.

In late 2020, the matter was assigned for further investigation to the NRPS Missing Person and Unidentified Remains Coordinator, who commenced a review of the files on both sides of the border. Based on the totality of the investigation, family DNA was sought for entry to Canada's National Missing Persons DNA Program, which is managed by the RCMP, for comparison purposes. An additional review of the dental records was completed by a Forensic Dentist with the aid of DIP, a computerized dental comparison program. The review noted an excellent correlation between the missing male and that of John Doe.

Since 2020, the NRPS Missing Person and Unidentified Remains Coordinator has been communicating with US officials and Office of the Chief Coroner / Ontario Forensic Pathology Service (OCC/OFPS) in Ontario. As a result, based on the totality of circumstances, the only next viable investigative step was to exhume the remains, obtain DNA and complete a comparison.

With the remains having been buried in the US, the Niagara County Sheriff's Office in New York submitted an affidavit requesting the exhumation take place in an

attempt to identify John Doe. The Chief Coroner for Ontario granted authorization for the remains to be transported back to Ontario for a complete examination.

In September 2023, judicial authorization was granted in the US and the exhumation subsequently took place in October 2023. John Doe was brought to Canada and an examination commenced. On Oct. 25, 2023, through the work of the OFPS Forensic Anthropology Unit, John Doe was positively identified as being a match to the missing male from Niagara in 1994.

The recovered male has since been laid to rest here in Niagara and at the request of the family his name is not being released.

Quote:

NRPS Missing Person and Unidentified Remains Coordinator, Detective Constable Sara Mummery states:

"Although this young male had been missing for 29 years, the recent investigation sheds light on the importance and needed collaboration between both Canada and US law enforcement agencies to bring much needed closure to families who after all these years still seek answers."