

The Volunteer Group Hunting Down The Missing People Police Couldn't Find



by Jessica Lever [Follow @Jessica Lever](#)
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It's very hard to imagine – especially in a world of mobile phones and constant social media posts – just how someone can go missing forever.

But people *do* vanish all the time, and in Britain alone, almost [275,000 people are reported missing](#) every year. In fact, one person goes missing in the [UK every two minutes](#). What's even scarier is that police, driven by lack of evidence, are often forced to close cases down unresolved, meaning that thousands of people's disappearances remain a mystery.

Nicholas Hoult and Charlize Theron's latest movie, 'Dark Places', focuses on a group of amateur investigators called 'The Kill Club' who, curious about cold cases, meet up to try and fill in the gaps that the police left behind. Kind of like what we've all been doing on our lunch breaks and whatsapp groups since we finished watching 'Making A Murderer'.



But outside of movies and heated Netflix debates, these groups do actually exist in real life. The Doe Network is an organisation of volunteers devoted to getting to the bottom of missing persons cases that have been closed for over ten years. We met up with one volunteer, Della Williams.

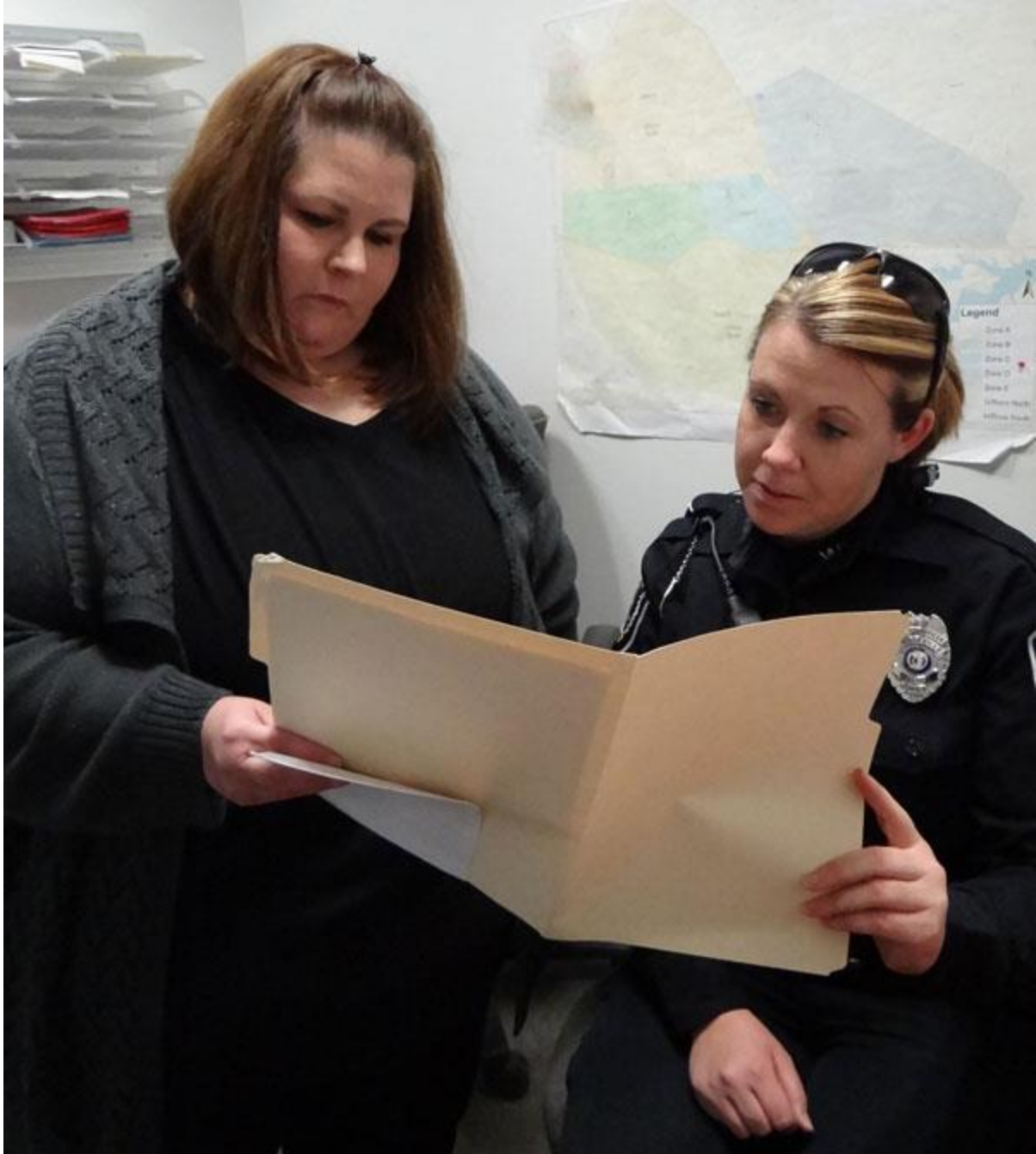
Della, who works as a police dispatcher in Missouri, became interested in missing persons cases when a [woman's torso was discovered](#) 3.5 miles from where she lived:

“I was looking for information on the Wright City Torso [and] I started reading about all the missing and unidentified persons and was just shocked there were so many out there... it's the nations mass disaster... I had to do something.”

But surely not just anyone can start delving into old police investigations? How are these people different from your standard nosy parker?

“Confidentiality plays a huge role, and we have to sign lots of agreements before we get started. The most frustrating part is trying to get law enforcement agencies to reopen cold cases and be cooperative. Some are go getters, who really want to solve the crime and appreciate our help.

“But I had one detective who laughed at me and said he didn't understand what I was trying to do. However, I am currently working closes with the lieutenant on the Wright City Torso case, and they're working on providing me with different DNA samples.”



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She explained that, the reasons why people go missing vary drastically. Some people “lived a high risk lifestyle” while others:

“were just seen on one day and then never again. Some people just kind of walk away from their families and friends after getting into things they don’t think they’d approve of, and they never hear from them again.”

Researching such horrible cases sounds super creepy, but Della explained it’s actually very upsetting:

“You get sad... all these ladies disappearing makes you feel very sad and you have to take a break. I’ve only had one person who’s given me a horrible vibe, and myself and another volunteer **both believe he’s the reason his wife disappeared**... Honestly, I don’t know how people live with themselves after they’ve killed someone. I believe I’ve met with husbands who’ve killed their wives and gone on as if nothing has happened.”

Does this sound like it would satisfy your morbid curiosity? This is how you become a member of [The Doe Network](#):

“You apply via the application form online. This is then reviewed and if you’re successful you get invited to forums and discuss confidential cases and try and get answers. You have to log on once a week, but the amount of time you put in is up to you... for some of us, it becomes a part time job without getting paid. I will help anyone if they just ask me.”

What an amazing hobby.

DARK PLACES is available on **Blu-ray™** and **DVD** from **22nd February**, courtesy of Entertainment One.

Source: <http://www.hellou.co.uk/2016/02/volunteer-group-hunting-down-the-missing-people-police-couldnt-find-81681/>