



Pend Oreille County

PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

Hall of Justice

Dolly N. Hunt
Prosecutor ~ Coroner

229 S. Garden, Post Office Box 5070
Newport, Washington 99156-5070

(509) 447-4414
Fax: (509) 447-0235

NEWS RELEASE

March 31, 2023

Date Found: November 1982

Date Identified: March 20, 2023



Mildred (Allison) Hubertz

In November of 1982, per newspaper reports, a human skull was discovered by a hunter in a remote wooded area north of Newport, Washington. The Pend Oreille County Sheriff's Office responded to the scene and the remains were reported to have been examined by multiple agencies. In the years that followed, the case grew cold and, due to a far less extensive records keeping process by the Sheriff's Office and the Coroner's Office at the time, it is unclear the extent of the work that investigators may have done.

In 1999, Undersheriff Mike Cress with the Pend Oreille County Sheriff's Office located the skull in a box at the Sheriff's Office and began investigating its origins. With the emergence of new DNA technologies, the skull was sent in March 2017 to the Washington State Forensic Anthropologist at the King County Medical Examiner's office in hopes of obtaining DNA samples that were not taken during the initial exam. The late Dr. Kathy Taylor, the Washington State Forensic Anthropologist performed an examination of the partial skull and estimated that it belonged to an adult female. Dental and fingerprint records were not available for this case.

Also in March 2017, the case information was entered into the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) under case # 16379. NamUs is a federal database funded by the National Institute of Justice that contains information on missing, unidentified, and unclaimed persons cases from across the country. Dental records and fingerprints, when available, can also be uploaded to a NamUs file which can then be compared against known missing persons nationwide who have had their own dental profiles and/or fingerprints uploaded.

A section of the skull was sent for DNA extraction and uploaded to the FBI's Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). CODIS is a database designed to compare DNA profiles from missing persons to DNA from family reference samples and certain convicted offenders and arrestees. No matches were made, but this is not unusual for unidentified human remains.

In September 2022, the Spokane County Medical Examiner's Office invited the Pend Oreille County Coroner's Office to join in a collaboration with Othram, Inc. to obtain an advanced DNA profile, suitable for investigative genetic genealogy, for our unsolved cold case. In October 2022, a section of the skull was sent to Othram, Inc. for additional testing and a DNA profile that could be uploaded to genealogical databases.

In January 2023, Othram successfully obtained a DNA extract that was sufficient for testing. Othram scientists used Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing to develop a DNA profile that could be uploaded to genealogical databases. The DNA profile was uploaded to GEDmatch and FamilyTreeDNA which obtained a match. The profile matched to Mildred (Allison) Hubertz who disappeared from St Ignatius, Montana in 1968. DNA reference testing of Mildred's great granddaughter ultimately confirmed that the unidentified person was Mildred (Allison) Hubertz, who was about 59 when she went missing.

The circumstances of her disappearance are not known. On March 20, 2023, Pend Oreille County Coroner Dolly Hunt officially identified the decedent as Mildred (Allison) Hubertz.

The Pend Oreille County Prosecutor/Coroner's Office would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their assistance in this case: Othram, Inc., the Pend Oreille County Sheriff's Office and Sergeant Mitch Parnell, the Spokane County Medical Examiner's Office and Investigator Nicole Hamada, the King County Medical Examiner's Office and the late Dr. Katherine Taylor, Forensic Anthropologist, Dr. Andrew Seidel, Forensic Anthropologist, NamUs, and Mildred's relatives for sharing their DNA and family history to help solve this 41 year mystery.

If anyone has information about the circumstances around the disappearance of Mildred (Allison) Hubertz, please contact the Pend Oreille County Sheriff's Office, Sergeant Mitch Parnell at (509) 447-1911.