



Kansas Bureau of Investigation

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KBI uses DNA and forensic genetic genealogy to identify woman killed in 1987

TOPEKA, Kan. – The Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI) with assistance from the DNA Doe Project has identified the remains of a previously unidentified homicide victim who was found in 1987 in Marion County, Kansas.

On September 21, 1987, a county road crew discovered human remains off 290th St., a rural road near Lincolnville, Kan. The investigation revealed the female victim had been murdered. Typical identification methods were unsuccessful since the remains were badly decomposed. At the time of the discovery, the Kansas State University Anthropology Department examined the remains and created a physical profile of the victim. It was determined she was a white female between 20-35 years, who had likely died two to three months prior to her discovery.

In February 2019, KBI agents and forensic scientists, with assistance from the DNA Doe Project, worked to identify the woman using DNA testing and forensic genetic genealogy searching. During this search, a distant cousin was identified who had submitted DNA to an online service. A family tree was constructed and it was determined that the victim was closely related to the Carnall family from Cherryvale, Kan.

KBI agents were then able to connect with Leonard (Bud) and Donna Carnall of Corpus Christi, Texas, who had a missing daughter, Michelle. In October, the Carnalls voluntarily submitted DNA so that the KBI could test it against the woman's DNA. That testing recently confirmed that the remains found in Marion County back in 1987 belonged to their missing daughter.

The victim has been identified as Michelle E. Carnall-Burton. At the time she was killed, Carnall-Burton was 22-years-old and lived in Wichita. In 1986, she had left her home in Cherryvale, and lost touch with her family.

Carnall-Burton was a white female, 5 ft. 7 in. tall, and weighed approximately 140 lbs. She had brown hair and hazel eyes. She had a small cross tattooed on her lower left forearm.

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The KBI is pursuing leads in this case and asks anyone with knowledge of Carnall-Burton's whereabouts in June or July of 1987 to contact the KBI at 1-800-KS-CRIME, or submit a tip to <https://www.kbi.ks.gov/sar>.

(Photos and a flyer are included.)



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