

New Orleans Police Department and FBI Team with Othram to Identify a 2002 Homicide Victim

After 22 years, a murdered woman, whose remains were discovered in a vacant lot in New Orleans, Louisiana, has been identified as 49-year-old **Lelia Ann May Malley** of Long Beach, Mississippi.

Solved



Summary

In February 2002, the remains of an unidentified individual were discovered in a vacant, overgrown lot in New Orleans, Louisiana. The New Orleans Police Department responded to the scene. It was determined that the remains were that of a White female with green eyes and shoulder-length, dyed blonde hair, showing visible gray roots. The woman's remains were transported to the Orleans Parish Coroner's Office, where it was determined that she was between 32 and 45 years old, approximately 5'3" tall, and weighed around 110 pounds. No other identifying characteristics could be determined.



In an attempt to generate new leads in the case, the LSU Forensic Anthropology and Computer Enhancement Services (FACES) Laboratory developed a forensic sketch depicting how the woman may have looked during her life. Details of the case were entered into the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) as UP848. Despite investigators' work to identify the woman, her identity remained a mystery for more than two decades.

In November 2023, forensic evidence was sent to Othram's laboratory in The Woodlands, Texas to determine if advanced DNA testing could help to identify the woman. Othram scientists successfully developed a DNA extract from the remains and used Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing® to build a comprehensive DNA profile for the unknown woman. After successfully completing the process, the DNA profile was delivered to the FBI's forensic genetic genealogy team, who performed the necessary genealogical research to generate new investigative leads in the case.

Using this new information, a follow-up investigation was conducted leading investigators to potential relatives of the Jane Doe. This investigation led to the positive identification of the Jane Doe, who is now known to be 49-year-old Lelia Ann May Malley, of Long Beach, Mississippi. Malley had last seen her family in 2000.

Funding for casework performed by Othram in this case was provided by NamUs, a national clearinghouse that assists the criminal justice community with the investigation and resolution of missing, unidentified, and unclaimed persons cases across the United States and its territories. NamUs is funded and administered by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and is managed through a contract with Research

Triangle Institute International. We are grateful for the support of RTI, NamUs, and the NIJ.

Anyone with information about Malley, especially anyone who had contact with her in 2002, should call NOPD Homicide at [504-658-5300](tel:504-658-5300), or Crimestoppers at [504-822-1111](tel:504-822-1111) or toll-free at [877-903-7867](tel:877-903-7867) (STOP).

The identification of Lelia Ann May Malley represents the second case in the State of Louisiana where officials have publicly identified an individual using technology developed by Othram. Most recently in St. Tammany Parish, [Joseph Lee Muniz](#) was identified after almost thirty years.