

Ontario Provincial Police & Toronto Police Service Leverage Othram's Genetic Testing Platform to Identify a 2005 Jane Doe

After nearly two decades, a woman whose remains were discovered at a picnic area in Rockwood, Ontario, has been identified as 41-year-old **Tammy Eileen Penner**, missing from Chilliwack, British Columbia.

Solved



Summary

In August 2005, the remains of an unidentified individual were discovered at a rest area off Highway 7 near a picnic area located between Guelph and Rockwood, Ontario. It was determined that the remains were that of a female who was between the ages of 25 and 45 years old at the time of her death. Prior to her death, the woman had suffered a broken left cheek, nose and left eye socket—all of which had healed. The circumstances surrounding the woman's death were deemed suspicious, but her cause of death could not be determined.

The woman's body was found under a Woods-brand sleeping bag. She was not wearing any jewelry or identification, and it's believed her clothing was purchased in the Montreal area. Forensic composites depicting how the woman may have looked during her life were developed and released to the public in hopes that it would

generate leads in the case. Despite investigators' attempts to identify the woman, her identity remained a mystery for nearly two decades.

In 2023, the Ontario Provincial Police, in collaboration with Toronto Police Service, submitted forensic evidence to Othram in The Woodlands, Texas to determine if advanced DNA testing could help identify the woman. Othram scientists used Forensic-Grade Genome Sequencing® to build a comprehensive DNA profile for the unknown woman. Upon successfully completing the process, the profile was returned to law enforcement so that a forensic genetic genealogy search could be conducted. This search, led by the Toronto Police Service genetic genealogy team, generated new leads in the case.



Using this new information, a follow-up investigation was conducted, leading investigators to potential relatives of the woman. This investigation led to the positive identification of the woman, who is now known to be Tammy Eileen Penner. Penner was reported missing to the RCMP on February 7, 2005. Before disappearing, she had lived in Chilliwack and Abbotsford.

Investigators now ask that the public come forward with any information that will assist in determining Penner's cause of death. Anyone with information about Penner is asked to contact the Ontario Provincial Police at [1-888-310-1122](tel:1-888-310-1122) or call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

The identification of Tammy Eileen Penner represents the ninth case in the Province of Ontario where officials have publicly identified an individual using technology developed by Othram. Most recently in Lincoln, Ontario, [Joseph Archie "Raymond" Brousseau](#) was identified as Nadine Gurczenski's murderer after 25 years.