

Three Charlotte cold case victims identified with forensic genetic genealogy

The victims were found dead in 1988, 2008, and 2021. One of them was the victim of homicide, according to police.

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Published: 10:30 PM EDT June 13, 2023

Updated: 10:30 PM EDT June 13, 2023

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Forensic genetic genealogy has led to cold case victims from three different decades being identified.

The [Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department](#) announced on Tuesday the names of three people who were identified years after they were found dead.

Oliver Doc Mundy, Jose Elder Espinoza, and Cody Ray Herrell were identified as the three victims.

Oliver Doc "O.D." Mundy



O. D. MUNDY

Address: 327 Parker Street, Mooresville, North Carol
Entered Service: January, 1943.
Branch of Service: Combat Engineer Unit.
Theatre of Operations: South Pacific.
Discharged: December, 1945.
Rank: Sergeant.
Present Occupation: J. B. Ivey's and Company, Char
North Carolina.
Remarks: He displayed great bravery in the invasion
Bougainville and at New Calendonina.

Credit: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department

O.D. Mundy

Mundy was found dead on Feb. 9, 1988, in an elevator shaft at a building on N Tryon Street near E 6th Street. The building had been abandoned for around seven years before it was remodeled when Mundy was found dead.

Detectives were unable to identify Mundy. A bone sample was sent to a lab in Texas for further examination in June 2022 by North Carolina State University forensic analysts. Mundy's DNA was then matched using a genealogy database and he was officially identified in May 2023.

Police say Mundy, who was born in July 1923, was a World War II veteran from Mooresville who later lived on the streets of Charlotte. He was known as "O.D." by his friends and family. His remains will be returned to his family members in Mooresville.

Jose Espinoza



Credit: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department

Jose Espinoza

Espinoza's partial skeletal remains were found on Dec. 24, 2008, in a wooded area near Dixie River Road. Police were unable to positively identify Espinoza but labeled his death a homicide.

CMPD detectives contacted the DNA Doe Project for help with this case in November 2019. Investigators worked on the case until a possible match was found in September 2022.

Police worked to match Espinoza to the remains using DNA and notified his family.

Espinoza was reported missing in May 2003, when he was 25 years old. The homicide investigation relating to his death continues. Anyone with information is asked to contact CMPD.

Cody Herrell



Credit: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department

Cody Herrell

Herrell was found dead on June 26, 2021, near the intersection of Trailer Drive and Dalecrest Drive. Investigators were unable to identify Herrell initially and said no signs of trauma were visible.

Similar to Mundy, Herrell had DNA samples sent to a Texas lab where it was matched through a genealogy database. Herrel was born in February 1983 in South Carolina but was known to live on the streets of Charlotte.

His remains were returned to his family members.

CMPD says they are continuing to work to identify unidentified victims. At least eight people remain unidentified with discovery dates ranging back to 1975, according to CMPD.

source: <https://www.wcnc.com/article/news/local/three-charlotte-cold-case-victims-identified-with-forensic-genetic-genealogy-north-carolina-oliver-od-mundy-jose-espinoza-cody-herrell/275-d22b4260-aa30-433f-9f0b-2685ca3d85dc>