
INFORMATION BULLETIN

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General
BC Coroners Service

July 10, 2008

DNA ANALYSIS YIELDS MORE CLUES IN FEET MYSTERY

BURNABY – Using recent DNA analysis, the BC Coroners Service (BCCS) has confirmed remains of a right foot found on Feb.8, 2008, on Valdes Island and the remains of a left foot found on June 16, 2008, on Westham Island are from the same male. As well, the BCCS has determined the right foot found on Kirkland Island on May 22, 2008 is from a female.

DNA profiles are now completed for the matched feet as well as the right male feet found on Jedediah Island and Gabriola Island. Work to obtain a complete DNA profile for the foot found on Kirkland Island continues. The BCCS uses information on physical characteristics from exams by forensic pathologists and anthropologists, along with DNA analysis of the feet in order to build the most enhanced profile possible for each. Found remains profiles are maintained in a provincial database for future comparisons until identifications are determined.

BCCS and police are in the process of taking this enhanced information on the matched feet and comparing it with other B.C. found remains profiles and any missing persons profiles to search for similarities or links. This is a collaborative and time-consuming process. Where a link is established, the new information will be analysed and evaluated to determine whether or not the link is viable.

Investigations by the RCMP, Delta Police Department and the Coroners Service to determine identities for the remaining three right feet found between August 2007 and May 2008 in the waters around Jedediah Island, Gabriola Island and Kirkland Island are ongoing. It is not known at this time what association, if any, the DNA-matched feet have to the remaining three right feet.

In all cases, these remains appear to have naturally separated (disarticulated) from the body. There is no forensic evidence at this time to support anything other than disarticulation as there are no tool or trauma marks on the remains. Factors that contribute to disarticulation include water temperature, decomposition and predation from marine life. Due to a variety of variables it is very difficult to determine how long remains may have been in water.

For photographs of the shoes and information from the police, go to www.bc.rcmp.ca. No further information is available from the Coroners Service at this time.

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