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Police & Fire

Unsolved Cases: Man Found near Claysville 41 Years Ago Still Unidentified

The man's death was ruled a homicide.

By [Zandy Dudiak](#) [Email the author](#) 5:30 am



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An Avella resident was hitchhiking on Old Route 40 in Donegal Township, Washington County, about 9:20 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 18, 1972 when he spotted the badly decomposed body of a man.

The man was down an embankment, about 65 feet south of the roadway. His skeletal remains were found in a briar thicket, near a small trash dump, about two miles west of Claysville. It was estimated that he had been there for about 8 to 10 weeks.

[The man's death was ruled a homicide](#), according to the Pennsylvania Missing Persons website. The man had gunshot wounds in his left torso, possibly from a .22-caliber weapon.

While details about the man's appearance and clothing are many, there are no clues as to who he was, where he came from or why he died.

The man is estimated to have been between 45 and 50 years old (he'd be 86 to 91 today, had he lived), about 5-foot-5 to 5-foot-10, 140 to 175 pounds, with a stocky, muscular build. He had dark brown hair and was not balding. His eye color is unknown and he was right handed.

Authorities believe he had a full, broad, "strong" face; straight, prominent nose; a straight profile and "good" chin. [The Doe Network](#) reports that, according to a noted anthropologist, the victim had a general complexion probably between fair and slightly brunet. His national origin was probably a country in western Europe, most likely the British Isles or southern Germany.

He was found wearing green, cotton, flared-bottom dress pants, size 32Wx 29L; a light green, tie-dyed, long-sleeved shirt with French cuffs, size 16; black belt; Jockey shorts; and no socks or shoes. The pockets on the trousers had been turned out.

A bedspread, blanket and sheet that had been rolled into a ball were found about 25 feet from the remains.

His DNA and dental information are available, although there is no fingerprint information. At the time, authorities described his dental care as being

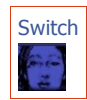
compatible with lower middle class. Staining on teeth suggests he was a heavy smoker and/or coffee drinker.

When he was found, information about the unknown man was teletyped by Pennsylvania State Police to network points across the country. Police received responses from Baltimore, MD and West Virginia. Both inquiries were ruled out.

Anyone with information about this case, is asked to contact Cpl. John Tobin at the Pennsylvania State Police Troop B, [724-223-5200](tel:724-223-5200).

For more information about this and other missing or unidentified person cases, visit [Pennsylvania Missing Persons](#), [NamUs](#) or the [Doe Network](#).

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