



HARRISON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

MATT HALEY

SHERIFF

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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

For Immediate Release

On Monday, October 14, 2024, Sheriff Matt Haley announced the identification of baby Mary Josephine.

According to Sheriff Matt Haley, on December 21, 1993, a newborn baby was found deceased on I-10 near the Lorraine Road exit in Gulfport, MS. An autopsy was performed, which determined cause of death as blood loss and exposure. The manner of death was determined to be homicide. Bradford O'Keefe gave her a proper burial at Floral Hills Memorial Garden in Gulfport, and she was given the name "Mary Josephine". Investigators could not find the mother in this case at the time, and the case went cold.

December 7, 2023, Harrison County Criminal Investigations Division (CID), with the help of the Harrison County District Attorney's Office, was granted a court order to exhume the body of baby Mary Josephine to obtain DNA to help investigators identify her. Othram Inc., a DNA/Genealogy company in Houston, Texas, performed the DNA testing and Forensic Genetic Genealogy.

October 10, 2024, CID obtained the results from Othram Inc., which included identified relatives of Mary Josephine. After conducting several interviews, investigators identified the possible mother of Mary Josephine. Investigators obtained a search warrant for DNA comparison on who they believed to be the mother of Mary Josephine.

October 11, 2024, investigators attempted to contact the possible mother of Mary Josephine in Gautier, MS. Subsequently, entry was made into the woman's residence, and she was found deceased. Her death was determined to be a suicide. Investigators located a letter inside the residence, in which the woman claimed to be the mother of Mary Josephine.

Sheriff Matt Haley would like to thank Bradford O'Keefe Funeral Home, Coroner Brian Switzer, Floral Hills Memorial Garden Cemetery, Harrison County District Attorney's Office, MS State Medical Examiner's Office, Gautier Police Department, Jackson County Sheriff's Office and Othram Inc. for their assistance in this case.

Approved For Release:

Matt Haley, Sheriff, Harrison County, Mississippi