

POLICE: Human bones found

Remains possibly aboriginal

BY RICK VANDERLINDE
Staff Writer

York Region police believe they may have stumbled on remains from an aboriginal gravesite in Richmond Hill.

Police were sent to a farmer's field near Elgin Mills Road and Leslie Street Tuesday after a man walking his dog last fall found what turned out to be human bones.

For some reason, the man kept the remains over the winter, taking them to York Central Hospital for examination this week.

After a pathologist decided the bones were human, the Ontario coroner's office determined they had been buried for at least 25 years.

Det. Sgt. Dennis Mulholland, head of the homicide unit, said officers soon found several more bones in the area.

Mulholland said long-time farmers in the area told police the bones were found near a native burial ground.

"The field hadn't been plowed in years and when they plowed the field in the fall, the bones must have come up," he said.

Bone fragments are scattered all over the field, leading to the possibility they may be the remains of one person scattered by a farmer's plow.

Mulholland added there has been a lot of development in the area, suggesting the bones could have been dug up by construction crews and placed in the field.

Under Ontario law, aboriginal burial sites must be reported to the provincial government, resulting in a stop work order being placed on new development.

Mulholland said detectives are going over old missing persons cases dating back to the 1970s, looking for a possible match.

Cheryl Hanson, 8, went missing in 1974. And 14-year-old Ingrid Bauer disappeared from Islington Avenue in 1972.

But, so far, none of the bones appear to match the remains of a young female.

Police continued searching the area yesterday, placing tiny red flags in about 100 spots where bone fragments have been discovered. There are no plans to excavate the entire field.

Any remains found by police will be sent to the Centre of Forensic Science for further examination.



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