

Beat: News

Canadian declared dead after 1977 fire found living in Oklahoma

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USPA News - A Canadian man who was believed to have died in a fire in Ontario almost four decades ago has been found to be alive, living under an assumed identity in the U.S. state of Oklahoma, police said on Monday. The man's motives for disappearing are unknown.

Ronald Stan, 32, was reported missing on September 29, 1977, when a fire destroyed a barn in the Township of East Williams, which is now part of the municipality of North Middlesex, in Ontario. He was officially declared deceased by the courts in 1986, nearly nine years after he went missing. Provincial Constable Laurie Houghton, a spokesperson for Ontario Provincial Police, said the investigation into Stan's disappearance was reopened in July as a result of a routine audit of the case. "Through the investigation, it was discovered that the male party was in fact alive and residing in the United States under an assumed identity of Jeff Walton, age 69," Houghton said. Police said affected families, as well as American authorities, have been notified of the results of the investigation. Houghton could not speak to Stan's motives for disappearing following the 1977 fire, but said the investigation had now been closed. "I can confirm that there is no basis for charges under the Criminal Code of Canada," the spokesperson said.

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