

NDDB - Back to the Future

1984: Before DNA technology was known as a forensic identification tool, police investigators are called to a scene where the body of a 48 year-old woman has been found, 16 kilometres from her home. The Winnipeg Police Service (WPS) interview a number of persons of interest, but have no conclusive evidence to link anyone to the crime scene. Police file the crime scene evidence.

1998: The WPS re-opens the 1984 murder file as a cold case. Knowing that DNA has been used as a valid investigational tool since 1989, they submit crime scene evidence for DNA analysis. Police identify possible suspects and obtain biological samples for 14 of the suspects. The suspect's DNA profiles are compared manually against the crime scene evidence, but no match is made.

2000: The National DNA Data Bank begins operation. The crime scene DNA profile developed in 1998 is entered into the Crime Scene Index.

March, 2005: A new upload of convicted offender samples into the Convicted Offender Index yields a crime scene to convicted offender hit. The case is re-activated and the WPS Cold Case Unit works in conjunction with Correctional Services Canada, Hamilton Police Service and the RCMP.

The convicted offender whose DNA profile matched with the crime scene evidence is a 64 year-old male

servicing a lengthy sentence at the Joyceville Penitentiary in Kingston. His DNA profile was entered into the Convicted Offender Index as a result of a sample collected following conviction for another crime.

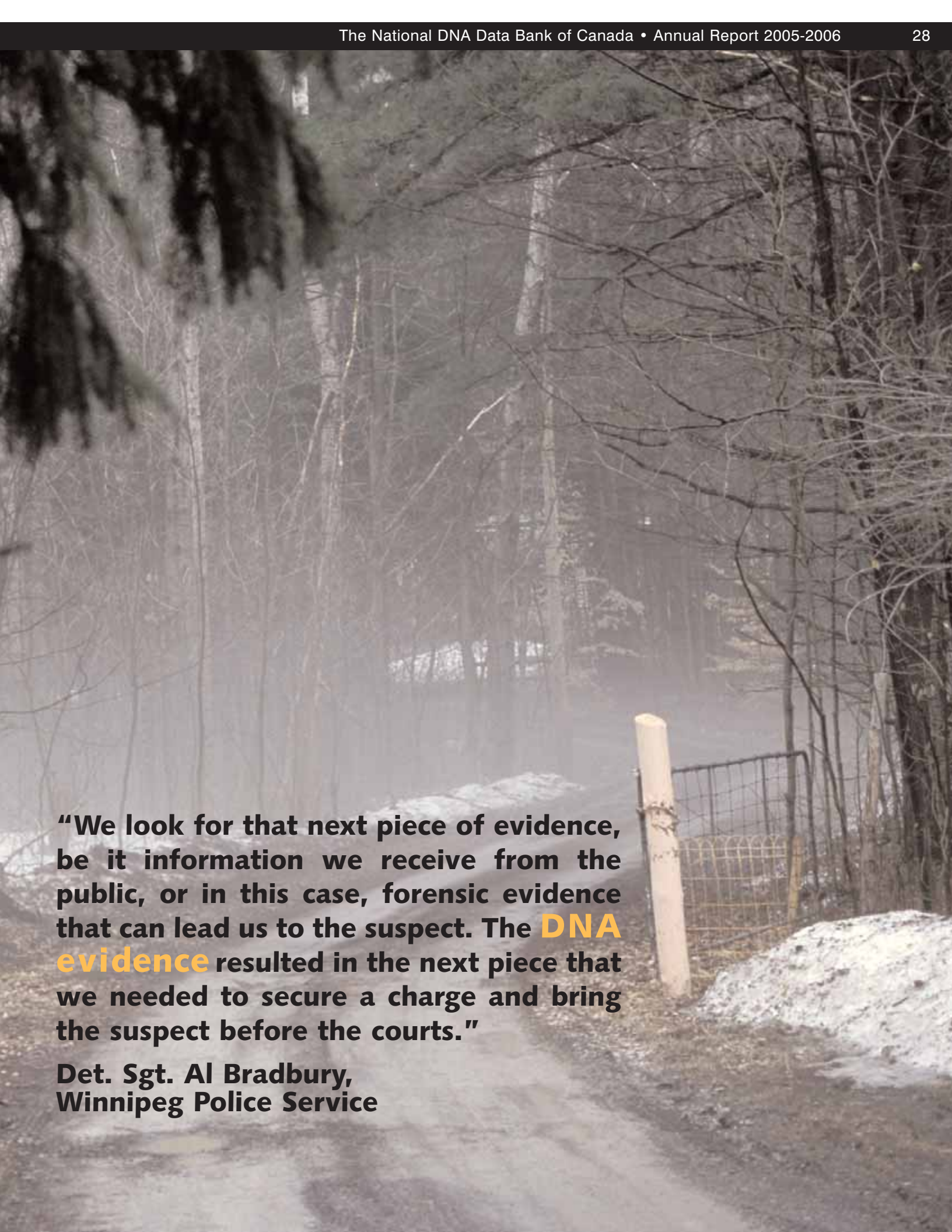
November, 2005: The suspect is returned to Manitoba and is charged with first degree murder in the case. Although the suspect was a person of interest in the original 1984 homicide investigation, this preceded the DNA legislation which would have allowed the collection of a biological sample from the suspect for DNA analysis.

Key Success Factors:

- Maintenance of crucial crime scene evidence by WPS,
- Follow-up by the Cold Case Unit,
- Submission of the DNA profiles to the NDDB Crime Scene Index,
- Submission of a convicted offender DNA profile to the Convicted Offender Index,
- Confirmation of a match through a DNA collection warrant secured by police.

The Result:

- Armed with new forensic tools, dedication, and good police work, justice is served across the boundary of time.

A photograph of a misty, wooded path. The path is covered in snow and leads into a dense forest of bare trees. A wooden post and wire fence is visible on the right side of the path. The overall atmosphere is somber and mysterious.

“We look for that next piece of evidence, be it information we receive from the public, or in this case, forensic evidence that can lead us to the suspect. The **DNA evidence resulted in the next piece that we needed to secure a charge and bring the suspect before the courts.”**

**Det. Sgt. Al Bradbury,
Winnipeg Police Service**