



# NEWS RELEASE

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**Editor's Note:** Brian Browne's statement is available on our website: [www.everettwa.gov/flag](http://www.everettwa.gov/flag).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: [Meghan Pembroke](#), communications director, 425-257-8687  
[Aaron Snell](#), Everett Police public information officer, 425-508-8854

## Everett Police confirm identity of man who dropped off ground zero flag Everett man returns to fire station following media coverage

EVERETT – In early September, Everett Police [announced](#) that they had determined that a flag that was turned into an Everett fire station in November 2014 was most likely the flag that was raised above the site of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center. The flag, which went missing in the years following the attack, had been dropped off at the station by a man who identified himself only as “Brian.”

On Thursday, Sept. 8, that man returned to Fire Station #1. Everett resident Brian Browne had seen the national media coverage of the investigation and the flag's return to New York and wanted to identify himself and provide any additional details that he could about the flag's journey.

Everett Police detectives interviewed Browne, who describes himself as a flag collector, and were able to determine that he was the individual who had dropped off the flag in November 2014. Browne described how he received the flag from a friend at a Veterans Day gathering in 2006. He believed the friend had received the flag from the wife of a former New York City employee.

“Brian was able to sensibly and chronologically retrace the steps of the route that the flag had traveled from New York City to Everett,” said Detective Mike Atwood. “He was also able to corroborate details about the flag and about his initial visit to the fire station.”

The flag remained a part of Browne's collection until 2014, when he watched Brad Meltzer's “Lost History” episode on the History Channel. He noticed the similarities between the flag in the episode and the flag in his possession, and he and his wife decided he needed to turn it in.

“I had that sickening feeling inside that this flag must be the one,” [said Browne in a statement provided to detectives](#).

While he was surprised to see the national coverage of the flag nearly two years later, Browne said he is glad that the flag has been returned to New York City.

“My motivation was to return what I thought was lost property, and now to come forward with the actual events for the historical record,” Browne said in his statement. “My only wish is that it never leaves its beautiful custom case. It has too much sentimental value, and in my opinion is a very sacred piece to be shared and shown at the museum, never to leave hallowed ground.”

Atwood noted in his summary of the investigation that he believes that Browne is sincere that he does not want any further attention from the incident, and that “he hopes that his semi-anonymity and privacy be respected.” Everett Police have concluded their investigation of the flag and of Browne and do not anticipate any further investigation at this time.

For more information and photos of the 9/11 flag, visit [www.everettwa.gov/flag](http://www.everettwa.gov/flag).

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