

IN THE CORONERS COURT
OF VICTORIA
AT MELBOURNE

Court Reference: COR 2012 000608
COR 2012 000630
COR 2012 001854
COR 2012 003804
COR 2012 003849
COR 2012 003850
COR 2012 003852

FINDING INTO DEATH WITH INQUEST

Form 37 Rule 60(1)

Section 67 of the Coroners Act 2008

Inquest into the Death of: AARON OAKLEY

Delivered On: 4 JUNE 2013 and PUBLISHED ON 19 AUGUST 2013.

Delivered At: MELBOURNE

Hearing Dates: 4 JUNE 2013

Findings of: CORONER K.M.W. PARKINSON

Place of death/Suspected death: LAKE HINDMARSH

Counsel Assisting LEADING SENIOR CONSTABLE K. TAYLOR
VICTORIA POLICE CORONIAL SUPPORT UNIT

I, K M. W. PARKINSON, Coroner

having investigated the death of MR AARON OAKLEY
AND having held an inquest in relation to this death on 4 JUNE 2013
at MELBOURNE
find that the identity of the deceased was AARON OAKLEY
born on 30 APRIL 1973
and the death occurred on 10 JULY 2011
at LAKE HINDMARSH

from:

1a. UNASCERTAINED


in the following circumstances:

1. A summary inquest was conducted on 4 June 2013 into the circumstances of the death of Mr Aaron Oakley. I have relied on the inquest brief including various statements of the investigating police officers and family members and maps of the area in arriving at my finding.
2. At approximately 10.15 am on 10 July 2011, Mr Oakley left his home to go kayaking on Lake Hindmarsh. He informed his wife that he expected to be home at about 6.30 pm or 7.00 pm. Mr Oakley did not return home by this time and phone calls by his wife to his mobile phone went unanswered. Mr Oakley's wife and mother drove out to Fisherman's Hut at Lake Hindmarsh and located Mr Oakley's vehicle however there were no signs of Mr Oakley.
3. Police were contacted at approximately 10.00 pm and Mr Oakley was reported missing. Initial search efforts located a kayak, paddle and spray skirt. Search efforts continued until the official police search was called off on 14 July 2011 after finding no further signs of Mr Oakley. Subsequent search efforts conducted by Mr Oakley's father on 21 July 2011 and on or around 11 November 2011 yielded no signs of Mr Oakley.

4. On 14, 15, 16 February 2012, a skull and skeletal bones were located on the western side of Lake Hindmarsh. A further search of the area recovered clothing consistent with what Mr Oakley had been wearing when he disappeared. In March 2012 the skeletal remains were identified, through DNA testing, as belonging to Mr Oakley.
5. I am satisfied that the remains located at Lake Hindmarsh by various persons on 14 and 16 February 2012 and 21 April 2012 were the remains of Mr Oakley. I am satisfied that these remains were the remains which were examined on files 608 of 2012, 630 of 2012, 3804 of 2012, 3849 of 2012, 3850 of 2012 and 3852 of 2012 of this court.
6. There is nil suspicious reported by police and there is no evidence that Mr Oakley's entry into the water on that occasion was intentional or in any way motivated by self-harm.
7. There is some evidence that Mr Oakley had suffered from deep vein thrombosis for which he had been treated with Warfarin and had been given specialist clearance. There is also evidence suggesting that Mr Oakley continued to be concerned with his leg, despite this clearance.
8. It is unclear whether an adverse event during the course of the kayaking has occurred to overwhelm the kayak and cause Mr Oakley's entry into the water, or whether a natural medical event caused or contributed to his entry into the water.
9. The evidence is that on the day in question the weather was extremely cold and there were gale force winds reported in the area. However, in view of the circumstances of the finding of remains and the examination which has been made by investigating officers I am unable to conclude with any certainty that they were factors in relation to the entry into the water.
10. I am satisfied that Mr Oakley did, however, enter the water and that he met his death in the course of entering the water at Lake Hindmarsh on that day. The precise cause of death remains unascertained.
11. I find that Mr Oakley died on 10 July 2011 at Lake Hindmarsh, near Horsham, Victoria.

12. I direct that a copy of these findings be provided to the family of Mr Aaron Oakley, the Interested Parties and to the Investigating Police Officer.

Signature:



K M. W. PARKINSON
CORONER

19 August 2013

