

IN THE CORONERS COURT
OF VICTORIA
AT MELBOURNE

Court Reference: COR 2014 001816

FINDING INTO DEATH WITH INQUEST

Form 37 Rule 60(1)

Section 67 of the Coroners Act 2008

Inquest into the Death of: UNIDENTIFIED SKELETAL REMAINS

Delivered On: 15 December 2014

Delivered At: Coroners Court of Victoria
65 Kavanagh Street
Southbank Victoria 3006

Hearing Dates: 15 December 2014

Findings of: Coroner Paresa Antoniadis SPANOS

Police Coronial Support Unit Senior Constable King Taylor, assisting the Coroner

I, PARESA ANTONIADIS SPANOS, Coroner,

having investigated the death of UNIDENTIFIED SKELETAL REMAINS
and having held an inquest in relation to this death at Melbourne
on 15 December 2014:

find that the identities of the deceased individuals is UNKNOWN
and that the death occurred at an unknown date prior to 1983
at an unknown location
from an unknown cause

in the following circumstances:

1. This matter was listed for inquest this day on the basis that the identity of the deceased person/s is unknown and an inquest is therefore mandated by section 52(2)(c) of the *Coroners Act 2008*.
2. On 6 April 2014, Dr Paul O'Hanlon attended Doncaster Police Station and relinquished skeletal remains that he described as having been in his family's possession for many years. Dr O'Hanlon told police that he had purchased the skeletal remains from another medical doctor in approximately 1983, as a teaching aid for his son who had just commenced a university medical degree. Dr O'Hanlon's daughter subsequently used the skeletal remains when she studied medicine.
3. On 8 April 2014, having examined the skeletal remains, Dr Christopher Briggs, Consultant in Forensic Anthropology at the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine, reported that they comprised of:
 - a. one incomplete and disarticulated post-cranial skeleton;
 - b. one unrelated skull and mandible;
 - c. one partially disarticulated pelvis consisting of two innominate (hip) bones;
 - d. one incomplete right foot
 - e. one complete right footand that several of the skeletal elements had the indicia of a teaching set.

4. Dr Briggs determined that the skeletal remains are typical of a Caucasian origin, and that the shape of the skull indicates that this is of Caucasian ancestry and likely to have originated in the Indian subcontinent. None of the remains is Australian Aboriginal.
5. Dr Briggs determined that the pelvis of the disarticulated post-cranial skeleton, the unrelated skull (including mandible) and the partially disarticulated pelvic bones are likely to be those of male individuals.
6. Dr Briggs determined that the absence of open growth centres on the long bones of the post-cranial skeleton indicated that skeletal maturity had been attained at the time of death. Dentition present in the unrelated skull and mandible and the fact that these were not extensively worn suggested that these remains may have been those of a young adult.
7. I am satisfied that no further investigation is warranted.
8. I find that the skeletal elements relinquished by Dr O'Hanlon in this case are human. On the available evidence, it is not possible to make findings as to the identity of the deceased/s, the medical cause of death, or the place and time of death, beyond accepting that they died before the time they came into Dr O'Hanlon's possession in 1983. I find that the skeletal remains are of Caucasian origin and are likely to have been part of a medical teaching set.
9. In light of the application made by Dr Briggs on behalf of the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine, I order the release of the skeletal remains, pursuant to section 47 of the *Coroners Act 2008*, to the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine so that they may be used for teaching and/or research purposes.

I direct that a copy of this finding is provided to:

Dr O'Hanlon

Dr Chris Briggs c/o Ms Fiona Leahy, V.I.F.M.

Signature:



PARESA ANTONIADIS SPANOS

Coroner

Date: 15 December 2014

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