



STATE CORONER'S COURT OF NEW SOUTH WALES

Inquest:	Inquest into the death of Edward Ronald Vuissoz
Hearing dates:	5 March 2014 and 18 August 2014
Date of findings:	12 September 2014
Place of findings:	State Coroner's Court, Glebe
Findings of:	State Coroner Barnes
Catchwords:	Coronial Law- suspicious death
File number:	2012/247639
Representation:	Sgt Mulligan assisting the NSW State Coroner

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Events preceding the death

The receptionist, Ms Campbell, recalls that on 23 July 2012 realised she had not seen Mr Vuissoz for a number of days. She spoke to another tenant at the boarding house who confirmed that he had not been at the premises for a few days at least.

By 30 July Miss Campbell had become so concerned she reported him missing at the Kings Cross police station.

When she heard reports of the finding of an unidentified body at Waverton she went to police with identification documents she obtained from Mr Vuissoz's room.

The death is discovered

On the afternoon of Wednesday 8 August 2012, a North Sydney resident, Mr Jonathon MacDonald, was walking in the Balls Head Reserve as he often did. He followed a little used track down part of the reserve he had not previously explored. It led down towards the water and became quite steep and rugged and so he decided to retreat. As he was making his way back towards the more established walking track he saw something in the scrub that looked as if it may have been clothing or a person. He investigated and found a dead body lying on the ground. He immediately reported the finding to police via 000.

Scene examination

Uniform officers attended the scene and secured it. Detectives attended as did crime scene officers. The area was searched and photographed.

Mr Vuissoz was discovered lying on his right hand side in the foetal position in thick scrub approximately five metres below a stone rock wall and a little used walking track. There was nothing found in the area that appeared to be relevant to any understanding of how he came by his death. In particular no bladed instrument which could have been responsible for the incised wounds found on the neck of the deceased was located in his possession or nearby.

Autopsy results

The autopsy was made more difficult by the extent of decomposition. The pathologist who undertook it, Dr Duflou, opined that Mr Vuissoz had been dead for between five and ten days when found.

He located incised wounds on the left side of the neck, the right elbow and the right wrist. He expressed a view that they appeared self-inflicted and noted there were no defensive injuries and there were no stab wounds or evidence of blunt force injury.

Dr Duflou also noted internal changes consistent with hypothermia. He suggested in his report and at the inquest that while affected by hypothermia the deceased may have inflicted the wounds himself as a result of being confused or delusional. He gave evidence that the wounds would not have caused immediate death and that the deceased could have walked some distance before stumbling off the walking track and falling to the place where he was found. He suggested the cause of death was combined effects of incised wounds and hypothermia.

Place of death

He died at Waverton in NSW.

Cause of death

He died as a result of the combined effects of hypothermia and incised wounds to his neck.

Manner of death

The manner of Mr Vuissoz's death is undetermined.

I close this inquest.



Magistrate Michael Barnes
State Coroner
Glebe, NSW
12 September 2014