
**FINDINGS of Coroner Olivia McTaggart following the
holding of an inquest under the *Coroners Act 1995* into the
death of:**

JEREMY DEAN YOUNG

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Record of Investigation into Death (With Inquest)

Coroners Act 1995
Coroners Rules 2006
Rule 11

I, Olivia McTaggart, Coroner, having investigated the death of Jeremy Dean Young, with an inquest held at Hobart in Tasmania, make the following findings.

Hearing Dates

28 and 29 January 2021

Representation

Counsel Assisting the Coroner: J Dennison

Introduction

1. This inquest concerned the death of Mr Jeremy Dean Young, aged 45 years. The body of Mr Young was found at Little Howrah Beach by two members of the public in the afternoon of Tuesday, 3 September 2019. An extensive investigation was subsequently carried out at my direction by First Class Constable Adam Bowden in order to assist me in making the necessary findings under section 28 of the *Coroners Act 1995* – being: the identity of the deceased; how death occurred; the cause of death; and the date and place of death.
2. Despite the comprehensive investigation, there was no evidence of Mr Young's movements after 7.30pm on Sunday, 1 September 2019 when he left his house, telling his mother that he loved her and that he would not be long. The evidence could not establish where Mr Young went during the night or how his body came to be at Little Howrah Beach, two days later. His cause of death was also unclear, although drowning and acute methamphetamine intoxication were the most likely causes. However, there were also what appeared to be two deep wounds to Mr Young's lower back of uncertain origin.
3. Upon submitting the documentary evidence and report to me, Constable Bowden advised that a potentially important witness, Annabelle Millhouse, was unwilling to provide an affidavit and cooperate with him during his investigation. Ms Millhouse was a friend of Mr Young and, on the existing evidence, had significant contact with him on both 31 August and 1 September in the context of illicit drug use. In particular, Mr Young's telephone records showed that there were a number of brief phone calls between himself and Ms Millhouse, the last being at 8.29pm on 1 September.

4. Following consideration of all the evidence, I was of the same view as Constable Bowden - that it was necessary to have evidence from Annabelle Millhouse to assist me in my functions under the *Coroners Act 1995* (the Act). Ms Millhouse was under no legal obligation to provide a sworn affidavit or interview in the investigation. However, in the circumstances of this case, her refusal to assist in providing a full account of her relevant interactions with Mr Young and possible knowledge of the circumstances surrounding his death caused me to determine that, under section 24(2) of the Act, an inquest was desirable so that Ms Millhouse could be compelled by summons to provide sworn testimony. A summons to attend the inquest was duly served upon Ms Millhouse, who appeared and testified.

5. The documentary evidence in the investigation compiled by Constable Bowden and tendered as exhibits at inquest was as follows:
 - Tasmania Police Report of Death for the Coroner;
 - Identification and life extinct affidavits;
 - Post-mortem report prepared by the State Forensic Pathologist, Dr Donald Ritchey;
 - Toxicology report prepared by Forensic Science Service Tasmania;
 - Medical records of the Tasmanian Health Service;
 - Medical records of Drug and Alcohol Services;
 - Medical records of Clarence and Eastern Adult Community Mental Health Services;
 - Medical records of the Department of Health and Human Services, Correctional Health Services;
 - Affidavit of Shirley Young, Mr Young's mother;
 - Affidavit of Danielle Young, Mr Young's daughter;
 - Affidavit of Nathan Valentine, Mr Young's friend;
 - Affidavit of Jody Carmichael, Mr Young's friend;
 - Affidavit of Vanessa Wolf, Mr Young's friend;
 - Affidavit of Shane Denny and Hayley Lovell, witnesses who discovered Mr Young's body;
 - Affidavit and subject report of First Class Constable Adam Bowden, investigating officer;
 - Affidavits of nine police officers attending the scene, including CIB and forensics officers;
 - Affidavit of Senior Constable Callum Herbert regarding drift and tide movements;
 - Telstra phone and laptop records, screenshots from Mr Young's phone and bank records;
 - Recorded video footage of the scene; and
 - Police information reports, prior convictions and body worn camera footage.

6. I heard oral evidence at the inquest from the following persons:
- First Class Constable Adam Bowden, investigating police officer, who provided an overview of his investigation;
 - Annabelle Millhouse, friend of Mr Young; who gave evidence of the relationship between herself and Mr Young, and also events occurring on 31 August and 1 September;
 - Shirley Ann Young, mother of Mr Young, who gave evidence of Mr Young's life and her last contact with him;
 - Vanessa Wolf, friend of Mr Young, who gave evidence of the relationship between herself and Mr Young, the relationship between Ms Millhouse and Mr Young, and events occurring on 31 August and 1 September; and
 - Dr Donald Ritchey, State Forensic Pathologist, regarding the cause of Mr Young's death.

Mr Young's Background

7. Mr Young was born on 17 November 1973 to Barry and Shirley Young, the youngest of three children. He was 45 years of age at his death and lived with his parents in Bellerive.
8. He grew up in a loving household in Rokeby with his parents and two siblings. After completing grade 10 at Rokeby High School, he attended Rosny College but left after five months and commenced employment. Mr Young held various types of employment throughout his life, including landscaping, woodcutting and factory work. At the time of his death, Mr Young was working at the Hobart Milk Factory in Derwent Park as a process worker. The evidence indicates that he took great pride in maintaining employment.
9. Mr Young had a long history of abusing illicit and prescription drugs, commencing in his early adult life, if not before, and continuing until his death. His drug use impacted upon his judgement and also his personal relationships. He regularly committed offences which were, no doubt, significantly related to his substance use.
10. Mr Young entered into a de-facto relationship with Ms Tania Kaye in his early twenties. Their daughter, Danielle Young, was born in 1998 when Mr Young was 25 years of age. In October 1998, just after Danielle's birth, he committed a robbery at a bank, seemingly to finance his drug addiction and to provide money for the household. He was sentenced to a period of 15 months imprisonment, partially suspended, for this crime.

11. Mr Young's relationship with Ms Kaye was most unstable, ending and recommencing on several occasions over a period of about six years until it finally ended in 2001. During the period of the relationship, Mr Young was diagnosed with depression and anxiety and was prescribed medications. Although he attempted at various times to cease his drug use, he was unsuccessful in his quest for rehabilitation.
12. In about 2007, Mr Young entered into a relationship with Ms Gaye Grey. There were no children born to that relationship. The relationship was also volatile, with a number of family violence incidents being reported between Mr Young and Ms Grey. Although the relationship ended in about 2015, issues concerning the property settlement remained ongoing and were a source of distress for Mr Young. The property settlement was eventually finalised in August 2019, the month before Mr Young's death, when he received a small sum of money that he did not consider was adequate. He purchased a motorcycle with these funds.
13. In 2013, Mr Young suffered severe damage to his right arm in a work accident and he underwent reconstruction surgery. During the healing process, he contracted a golden staph infection which required further surgery. He suffered chronic pain from that time until his death.
14. Mr Young experienced suicidal thoughts throughout his adulthood. He was admitted to the Royal Hobart Hospital on several occasions in respect of suicidality and depression. He was referred to mental health professionals and prescribed medication. His medical records indicate that his depression and anxiety was exacerbated by periods of unemployment, financial hardship and his volatile relationships with his partners, and later with Danielle. His drug addiction also clearly contributed to his poor mental health. There is no evidence, however, that Mr Young had ever made suicide attempts during his life.
15. Particularly in the last four years of his life, Mr Young abused illicit substances heavily. It is difficult to ascertain the extent and details of his drug use. The evidence indicates that, in addition to methamphetamine, he likely also injected amphetamines, methadone, oxycodone and diazepam at various times. He also abused the prescription pain medication, pregabalin. It is likely, too, that he sourced synthetic drugs via the internet. Additionally, he was a regular user of cannabis.
16. Mr Young was under the care of his regular general practitioner who was treating his chronic pain condition and substance use disorder. Although his general practitioner took steps to limit his supply of prescription pain medication (for example, pregabalin), I am satisfied that Mr Young obtained most of his drug supply illicitly and had the funds to continue to do so. There was little more that could have been done to assist Mr Young with his substance use issues.

17. Several incidents involving Mr Young's interactions with the police, as described by Constable Bowden in his report, indicate the propensity of Mr Young to become irrational and paranoid whilst under the influence of drugs.
18. In January 2015 police attended the home of Mr Young who was under the influence of substances, behaving irrationally, threatening to burn his house, brandishing knives and inviting police to shoot him. The incident ended when he was taken into custody and transported to hospital for a mental health assessment.
19. On 1 October 2018 Mr Young called police stating that someone was accessing his email and computer and conducting Google searches on chemicals and drugs.
20. On 8 June 2019 Mr Young called police stating that two of his acquaintances were trying to break into his house. When police attended, Mr Young was in a hyper-vigilant state and apparently under the influence of drugs. There was no evidence to substantiate his allegations.

Circumstances Surrounding Death

21. In the three weeks leading up to Mr Young's death, his family members and friends consistently recounted that Mr Young was behaving in a significantly more paranoid and anxious manner than usual. Mr Young was known by his long-standing friends to exhibit irrational behaviour and paranoia on a regular basis. It appears that the escalation in his paranoia was specifically triggered by a fear that he would be arrested and incarcerated as a result of failing to appear on a scheduled court date in August 2019 in the Magistrates Court, where he was due to face a variety of potentially serious offences where his mother was surety in respect of his bail. In his affidavit, Mr Young's oldest friend, Mr Nathan Valentine, indicated that Mr Young had expressed such a fear to him. Mr Valentine stated that *"It felt like I was fighting a losing battle with him. He was convinced he was being followed by the police and thought police were in tow trucks."*
22. Mrs Shirley Young said that, during this time, her son was moody due to taking "ice" (methamphetamine) regularly and described his overwhelming fear that police were after him for not appearing in court. She said that, because of this, during one evening she had to follow Mr Young around the streets to calm him down.
23. Mr Young also told Mr Valentine that he was scared of Ms Millhouse. He also told his mother in the week before his death that he believed Ms Millhouse would burn his much-loved motorcycle.

24. Mr Valentine, who saw and spoke with Mr Young very regularly, said that Mr Young reported that he had not slept for 12 days (in the 15 day period leading to his death) and that his use of ice had increased in time.
25. Both Mr Valentine and Ms Jody Carmichael (another of Mr Young's close friends) had frequent contact with Mr Young in the three days before his disappearance. Ms Carmichael said in her affidavit "*It was quite evident that [Jeremy] was under the influence of something... he was talking flat out, wouldn't sit still and the longer it went on the more he started to hallucinate and become paranoid.*"
26. Mr Young met Ms Vanessa Wolf four months before his death. Ms Wolf provided an affidavit in the investigation and credible oral testimony at inquest. At the time of giving her evidence, she was serving a prison sentence for drug-related offences. In evidence, she described that she met Mr Young "*through a drug sort of scenario*" involving Ms Millhouse, whom she had known for some years. Ms Wolf said that she became "*good mates*" with Mr Young, a fact borne out by the evidence generally.
27. Ms Wolf gave frank evidence that she had been supplying drugs, particularly ice, to Mr Young. During the week before his disappearance, Mr Young purchased two "points" (or packets) of ice from Ms Wolf at a time when he already had seven packets in his possession. Ms Wolf gave evidence that she noticed that Mr Young's drug use had increased but she did not perceive a change in his behaviour and commented that he still appeared to be in a fit state to go to work. She said that, apart from the drugs she sold to Mr Young, she did not know what other substances he may be using.

Events of Saturday, 31 August 2019

28. During the day of 31 August 2019, Mr Young attended Ms Millhouse's residence in Howrah, where Ms Wolf was also present. At that time, Ms Millhouse questioned Ms Wolf about an alleged previous request by Mr Young of Ms Wolf to obtain him a gun. Mr Young then responded by saying that he was going to "*take a few people out before taking himself out.*" Ms Wolf thought it was unusual for him to talk about suicide as she described Mr Young was generally a happy person. In the time she had known Mr Young he had occasionally said words to the effect that life was not worth living but that these were more in the nature of passing comments. In her evidence at inquest, which I accept as credible, Ms Wolf denied having purchased a gun for Mr Young. It is unclear whether he did actually ask her to obtain one. In any event, Mr Young's statement of apparent homicidal and suicidal intent is a clear indication of his deteriorating mental state and high level of paranoia in the days leading to his death.

29. Mr Young spent Saturday evening with Ms Millhouse using illicit drugs. In evidence, Ms Millhouse maintained that she was just friends with Mr Young, although the friendship was difficult and Mr Young was often abusive towards her. She said that she had known Mr Young for six years but had lost contact with him until reconnecting again a couple of months before his death. She denied that there was a sexual relationship between them, however I do not accept her evidence on this point. The images and videos recorded on Mr Young's phone taken during this evening strongly suggested that there was sexual activity between them. Ms Millhouse explained the videos as simply depicting drug-fuelled behavior. Ms Millhouse was also questioned about whether she provided Mr Young with sexual favours in payment for him supplying drugs to her based upon suggestions in other parts of the evidence. She denied that this was the case and, again I do not necessarily accept her denials. I do not need to determine the question of any sexual aspect to the relationship, however the nature of the relationship generally is relevant to any potential knowledge or involvement of Ms Millhouse in the circumstances surrounding Mr Young's death. For the purposes of my findings, I am satisfied that the relationship between Mr Young and Ms Millhouse was dysfunctional but close, and based largely upon mutual drug use and supply. I formed the impression upon the evidence that there was emotional manipulation of Mr Young on the part of Ms Millhouse and that both engaged in verbal abuse towards each other. It was also apparent upon the evidence that Mr Young displayed particularly paranoid behaviour towards Ms Millhouse. Ms Wolf gave evidence that Mr Young was convinced that Ms Millhouse was checking his phone and had knowledge of the contents of his phone.
30. It appears that, after using drugs during the Saturday evening with Ms Millhouse, Mr Young sent a text message to Mr Valentine asking to stay at his house in Howrah as the police were after him. Mr Valentine responded by stating that he was not at home at that time. Mr Young returned to his parents' house that evening. I am satisfied that, during the evening, nothing occurred that was significant in relation to Mr Young's death, except that it illustrated Mr Young's uncontrolled drug use and Ms Millhouse's involvement in that activity.

Events of Sunday, 1 September 2019

31. In the morning of 1 September, Mrs Young observed her son to be in a good mood. During the morning, he rode his motorbike to Ms Millhouse's residence. At around 10.30am, Mr Young called Mrs Young to say that he could not find his motorcycle key and requested a spare key. He later made another call to her reporting that he had found the key. Ms Millhouse gave evidence that, when looking for his key at her house, Mr Young was behaving in an abusive and paranoid manner, accusing her of intentionally hiding the key. Mr Young eventually found it, caught up in his motorcycle helmet. In broad terms, I accept Ms

Millhouse's evidence concerning Mr Young's behaviour, which is consistent with the other evidence and Mr Young's increasingly irrational mental state. I am hesitant to accept her evidence that he threatened to kill himself when he lost the motorcycle key. It is possible that he made such a statement, although Ms Millhouse, in her dealings with police and in evidence, maintained that Mr Young died as a result of suicide and would not entertain other causes of death. Her evidence that over the period of five to six years of their friendship, Mr Young spoke of suicide 50% of the time, is contrary to the evidence of the other credible witnesses.

32. Following his visit to Ms Millhouse, he visited Ms Wolf for a short time at her house at Warrane. I accept Ms Wolf's evidence that they had a cigarette on the front lawn and Mr Young said that he was intending to visit Mr Valentine and Ms Carmichael. He told Ms Wolf that he believed Ms Millhouse had hidden his motorcycle key and he appeared agitated about his motorcycle and the conflict with Ms Millhouse. He also told Ms Wolf that he had travelled to speed of 260 km/h on the highway.
33. At 1.30pm or thereabouts, Mr Young, after visiting Ms Wolf, rode his motorcycle to Ms Carmichael's residence in Blackmans Bay. Ms Carmichael said that Mr Young was paranoid and delusional. He told her that random vehicles that had driven past him were police cars and he thought he was seeing police everywhere. She said that he "*freaked out*" when a friend drove into her driveway and he thought it was the police. He ran out of the house to the beach, after which Ms Carmichael drove to him to coax him back to the house.
34. Mr Young's paranoia persisted throughout that afternoon, and he told Ms Carmichael and Mr Valentine (who was present in the house) that he wished to transfer his motorbike registration to Ms Carmichael for safekeeping as he feared he would be jailed. Mr Young wrote a note to Ms Carmichael, which was in evidence, stating that he had sold the motorcycle to her on that date.
35. At around 3.00pm, Mr Young called his mother and requested her to drive to Ms Carmichael's residence and follow him back home as he said he had taken 'a few' illicit drugs. Mrs Young insisted that he stay overnight at Ms Carmichael's residence. However, he did not do so. I am satisfied, upon the evidence of all who had contact with him, that Mr Young was heavily under the influence of substances at that time. Ms Millhouse, Mrs Young and Mr Valentine all believed that he had used methamphetamine that day but said that they were not aware of whether he had taken other drugs.
36. At around 5.00pm, Mr Young left Ms Carmichael's residence on his motorcycle.

37. At about 5.30pm, shortly before arriving home, Mr Young called Ms Wolf. Ms Wolf said in her affidavit *'He sounded pumped and excited and in a way better mood than what he was. Jeremy also told me that he had taken a research chemical which hit him pretty hard and he had to lie down on the ground for a while to "catch his breath."*
38. Shortly after this phone call, he arrived home to join his extended family for a Father's Day gathering. He sent a text message to Mr Valentine advising that he was home safely. According to Mrs Young, Mr Young appeared fine, but was looking out the window *"a couple of times."*
39. At around 6.00pm, Mr Young made another called to Ms Wolf to ask her to come to his house for dinner. Mr Young also mentioned to Ms Wolf that he was going to the "C-Bar" for some drinks. Ms Wolf declined his invitation to dinner and Mr Young told her that he would see her after work on Monday. Ms Wolf said that this was the last time she spoke to Mr Young. As previously stated, Ms Wolf gave articulate and coherent evidence, consistent with all of the other evidence, including the phone records. I fully accept her account of her interactions with Mr Young and am satisfied that she had no involvement in Mr Young's death or supplying him with what he described as the "research chemical", if indeed he had ingested such a thing.
40. Shortly after 7.30pm, Mr Young said to Mrs Young that he was going out for a ride. Mrs Young attempted to stop him as she was concerned for his wellbeing. He then put the motorcycle in the shed and began dressing for bed.
41. Approximately 10 to 15 minutes later, Mr Young asked Mrs Young where his shoes were and asked her to buy him cigarettes. He said that he intended to meet Vanessa (Ms Wolf). He further said that if anything happened to him that night, Mrs Young should give Nathan (Mr Valentine) the motorcycle. Mrs Young said that her son was "a bit agitated" at this time and she gave him some of her husband's cigarettes. Mr Young then re-dressed, walked out of his bedroom and said to Mrs Young *"I love you mum, I won't be long."* Mr Young then left the house on foot through the laundry door. Mrs Young did not see or hear from her son after that time.
42. The evidence does not permit me to determine where Mr Young went after leaving his house in Bellerive. It is safe to assume that at some stage he was walking in the Bellerive and Howrah area. According to the phone records, Mr Young and Ms Millhouse had exchanged text messages throughout the late afternoon, the tenor of those messages being requests by Ms Millhouse for drugs. After Mr Young left his house, taking his phone, the text messages with Ms Millhouse continued. Between 7.49pm and 7.54pm, Ms Millhouse sent two messages

to Mr Young asking him to save her drugs as she was too tired to walk to where he was (which is unknown on the evidence). Mr Young sent a message saying that he would not save her any drugs. Ms Millhouse telephoned Mr Young at 8.05pm and they spoke for 40 seconds. It is unclear what Ms Millhouse asserts to be the content of that conversation. At 8.29pm Ms Millhouse gave evidence that a further short call between them ended when Mr Young said, "she's here, I got to go." Ms Millhouse explained that Mr Young was referring to Ms Wolf, although, as discussed, I am satisfied that it was not Ms Wolf as her last contact with Mr Young was two hours previously. I do not accept Ms Millhouse's evidence that Mr Young used those words on the phone, at least to refer to Ms Wolf. Ms Millhouse's evidence generally was evasive, contrived and unhelpful, continually trying to deflect blame away from herself. It is quite likely that Ms Millhouse gave that evidence in order to distance herself from involvement with Mr Young at a time apparently close to his death. At 9.06pm Ms Millhouse sent a message to Mr Young stating "I'm not putting up with your wiggin (sic) acusatiinal (sic) shit." She explained this message as expressing disapproval of Mr Young's paranoid behaviour towards her, possibly as expressed in a previous text message or conversation. However, it is almost impossible to determine accurately the sequence and content of the telephone conversations and messages between them during that evening and when the messages ceased. The Telstra records seem to indicate messages sent between the two at 11.01pm and 11.53pm. However these do not appear on Mr Young's actual phone, and therefore this may be an incorrect interpretation of the records. In any event, I can be satisfied that Mr Young did not use his phone again after 11.53pm. Further, there is no other evidence from any source after this time to indicate that Mr Young was alive.

Subsequent events on 2 and 3 September 2019

43. In the morning on 2 September 2019, Mrs Young became concerned with Mr Young not returning home as promised. She then contacted Mr Young's workplace but he had not arrived at work.
44. At 2.04pm the following day, being 3 September, Mr Young's father, Mr Barry Young, contacted Tasmania Police with a concern about Mr Young's safety. Tasmania Police immediately commenced enquiries in an attempt to locate Mr Young.
45. A little after 3.53pm, Mr Shane Denny was walking along the rocks at Little Howrah Beach after fishing with his partner, Ms Hayley Lovell. Mr Denny observed what he believed was a body lying on the rocks and went closer to look. He observed a deceased male person lying face down on the rocks. Ms Lovell called the police and waited at the scene until the police arrived.

46. Numerous police officers attended the scene and commenced investigation. They observed that the deceased person was located on the shoreline outside the residential address of 10 Howrah Point Court. The officers observed that the tide was receding as the rocks were still wet in the area around the body.
47. The deceased male person was fully clothed and wearing shoes. His clothes were drenched with water and rigor mortis had set in. A black Samsung mobile phone was found in the right front pocket of his jeans. The forensics officer observed no obvious signs of a violent struggle upon the body and formed the view that scratches seen across his forehead were consistent with the rough surface comprising rocks and shells upon which his face had been resting.
48. A search of the shoreline by police officers did not reveal any clues about how the body came to be where he was.
49. After a full examination of the scene by the attending officers, the body was conveyed to the Royal Hobart Hospital mortuary. There, Mrs Young formally identified the deceased person as her son, Jeremy Dean Young.

Post-Mortem Examination

50. Dr Donald Ritchey, State Forensic Pathologist, performed an autopsy upon Mr Young. Upon external examination, Dr Ritchey observed widespread bruising of the face, trunk and extremities on the anterior surfaces of the body. He determined that the bruises were superficial injuries and appeared most consistent with having been sustained whilst face down in the water at the interface with the rocky foreshore on which Mr Young was found.
51. Further, Dr Ritchey noted a 4 cm wound on Mr Young's left lower back that appeared to him most consistent with a chronic pressure sore. He also noted a 0.5 cm ulcerated wound next to the larger wound. He specifically noted that the edges of the larger wound were necrotic with granulation tissue in the depths of the wound, this being associated with the healing process. Dr Ritchey determined that these wounds were pre-existing and not related to Mr Young's death. In coming to this conclusion, he also took into account that the wounds, whilst deep, were not fatal. They may have become larger through scavenging by sea life whilst Mr Young was in the water. They were also located under Mr Young's intact clothing and therefore unlikely to be knife wounds inflicted by another person. He also indicated that, in a long-term drug user such as Mr Young, vascular injury may cause healing to be prolonged. Dr Ritchey could not definitively indicate whether Mr Young would have experienced pain caused by the wounds. There was no evidence in the investigation that Mr Young complained of pain or was seeking medical assistance for this issue. Mrs Young was not aware of her son having these wounds.

52. Dr Ritchey observed that Mr Young's fingernails were intact and there was no significant or fatal traumatic injuries suggestive of assault. His internal examination of Mr Young, particularly the head and neck, revealed no traumatic injuries.
53. Histology of the lungs confirmed the presence of foreign body granulomas which Dr Ritchey indicated were conclusive evidence of Mr Young's long-term intravenous drug use.
54. Dr Ritchey identified that there was a marked congestion and oedema of the lungs were anatomical findings consistent, but not determinative, of drowning as a cause or contributor to death.
55. A blood sample taken from Mr Young detected a highly elevated level of methylamphetamine as well as the presence of diazepam and two other prescription medications. Dr Ritchey noted that methylamphetamine was detected at a concentration reported to result in symptoms of toxicity or fatality in some individuals when used alone. Dr Ritchey said in evidence that Mr Young had likely developed a tolerance to methamphetamine and it is difficult to determine its individual toxic effect upon him. He gave evidence, however, that the toxicology results showed that Mr Young had likely had "an acute and recent" injection of the substance close to his death.
56. Dr Ritchey commented methylamphetamine is an extremely potent central nervous system stimulant and causes behavioural and physiological effects. It generates intense euphoria, elevation in sensory awareness, increased energy. Its use can also result in dizziness, tremor, insomnia, dysphoria, paranoia and dyskinesia (abnormality or impairment of voluntary movement).
57. In evidence, Dr Ritchey also acknowledged the possibility of further substances being present in Mr Young's system, but unable to be detected on toxicological analysis. He said that so-called "research chemicals" are substances that are chemically "tweaked" so that they are not detectable in drug screens and yet produce the same physiological effect and harm to the user. He said that such substances are known to be available both on the street and on the internet. Such a substance may well have been a contributor to Mr Young's death.
58. Dr Ritchey provided very helpful oral testimony to supplement his detailed affidavit. He gave evidence that, taking into account his observations and findings, he did not consider that any other person was involved directly in Mr Young's death. His conclusion was that Mr Young's death was likely due to a combination of acute methylamphetamine intoxication and drowning. He was of the opinion, taking into account all of the circumstances of the case, that Mr Young likely entered the water in an intoxicated state and drowned. In his view, therefore, the

manner of Mr Young's death was either accidental or suicide. Although, ultimately this finding is a matter for me, I place great weight on Dr Ritchey's opinion, particularly given his extensive experience.

Conclusion

59. In the two days before his death, Mr Young was exhibiting a high level of paranoia to the point of being delusional. His mental state in this regard was attributable to his abuse of drugs over many years and, in particular, to his increased, high level of use of methamphetamine in the several weeks before his death. Mr Young likely had more money at this time, having received an amount from his property settlement. Although I can make no positive finding regarding his use of other drugs, it is plausible that he was using other, equally toxic substances from unknown sources. Before his death, his drug use was uncontrolled.
60. Mr Young did not display suicidal intentions in the days before his death to any increased level from the statements that he had made to various persons over a very long period of time. These statements appeared more to be made as a result of difficult life circumstances and perhaps to gain sympathy. The evidence strongly indicates that he did not intend to act on such statements and had plans for the future. He had made no previous attempt to end his life.
61. There was nothing in the departure from his mother's house on the evening of 1 September that suggested he would take action to end his life. He certainly believed irrationally that he may come to harm from an outside source and took steps to have his motorcycle secured by Mr Valentine and Ms Carmichael. He was heavily under the influence of drugs on this day. There is no evidence that any other persons wished to harm him, despite his belief. I do not consider that Ms Millhouse had intent to physically harm Mr Young. In coming to this conclusion, I am mindful that Ms Millhouse has a prior conviction for a violent stabbing perpetrated in 2016. I am satisfied that her relationship with him was based upon their mutual addiction to methamphetamine and involved a significant level of verbal abuse on both their parts.
62. Doing the best that the evidence permits, I find that Mr Young left his mother's house at about 7.30pm on 1 September for unknown reasons. I speculate that such reasons may have included removing himself from the house to avoid police, to obtain and / or use more drugs, and to visit Ms Wolf, Ms Millhouse or another friend. I am satisfied, based upon CCTV footage from the Waterfront Hotel, that he did not attend the area of the C-Bar as he indicated he intended to do.

63. Senior Constable Callum Herbert of Marine and Rescue Services, an experienced search controller, completed three SARmap predictions of Mr Young's movements in the water between 10.00pm on 1 September and 4.00pm on 3 September 2019. He concluded that Mr Young most probably entered the water at a point upon Howrah Beach, before his body floated to its final location across the bay and was deposited by the very high tide onto the rocky headland adjacent to Howrah Point Court. On this basis, Mr Young's body would have travelled approximately 500 metres.
64. I cannot determine whether, before his death, Mr Young was in the company of Ms Millhouse at any stage, either having visited her or having seen her at or near Howrah Beach. The fact that there had been messages and phone calls between them suggests that they were not in each other's company during those periods. However, I do not accept, on its face, Ms Millhouse's evidence that she did not see Mr Young in person before his death. It is clear, in particular, that she was seeking drugs from him during Sunday evening. Ms Millhouse may or may not have knowledge of the specific circumstances before Mr Young's death. I am, however, able to rule out that she did any act of harm to bring about Mr Young's death for the reasons previously given.
65. Whilst there are still questions surrounding the circumstances of his death, I am satisfied that Mr Young died accidentally or as a result of drowning himself intentionally. I cannot make a finding excluding either, although an accident seems much more likely. It may be, for example, that Mr Young walked to the beach, collapsed unconscious due to the toxic effects of the drugs he had ingested and then drowned upon the rising of the tide. It is also plausible that he may have walked into the water in a state of paranoia and drowned accidentally. If Mr Young did enter into the water with the intent of drowning himself, I am satisfied that such a decision was not the product of a rational mind.

Formal Findings Required by Section 28(1) of the Coroners Act 1995:

- a) The identity of the deceased is Jeremy Dean Young;
- b) Mr Young died in the circumstances set out in this finding;
- c) The cause of death was drowning and intoxication with methamphetamine and other substances;
- d) Mr Young died between 1 September 2019 and 3 September 2019 at Howrah in Tasmania.

Comments and Recommendations

66. The circumstances of Mr Young's death are not such as to require me to make any comments or recommendations pursuant to Section 28 of the *Coroners Act 1995*.
67. I extend my appreciation to First Class Constable Adam Bowden for his thorough investigation. I am also grateful for the assistance of Mr Dennison, Counsel Assisting, and Constable Alisha Barnes, Coroner's Associate, for their assistance in this inquest. I also am greatly appreciative of the work of Ms Ann Kho, intern in the Coronial Division, throughout the course of the matter.
68. I convey my sincere condolences to the family and loved ones of Mr Young.

Dated: 20 April 2021 in the State of Tasmania

Olivia McTaggart
Coroner