



MAGISTRATES COURT of TASMANIA

CORONIAL DIVISION

Record of Investigation into Death (Without Inquest)

*Coroners Act 1995
Coroners Rules 2006
Rule 11*

I, Olivia McTaggart, Coroner, having investigated the death of Graeme Clem Bell

Find, pursuant to section 28(1) of the Coroners Act 1995, that

- a) The identity of the deceased is Graeme Clem Bell;
- b) Mr Bell died of natural causes in the circumstances set out below;
- c) The cause of death is acute myocardial ischaemia; and
- d) Mr Bell died between 26 and 31 August 2019 at Lanena, Tasmania.

In making the above findings I have had regard to the evidence gained in the investigation into Mr Bell's death. The evidence comprises the police report of death; an opinion of the forensic pathologist who conducted the autopsy; toxicological results; identification and life extinct affidavits; and forensic evidence.

Mr Graeme Clem Bell was born to Orton Clem Bell and Mavis Josephine Mitchell-Mansfield in Subiaco, Western Australia on 10 June 1942 and was aged 77 at the time of his death. At the time of this finding, comprehensive enquiries have not uncovered the identity of any living family members.

Mr Bell owned and lived in a Mazda van E2000 registration E91YK that was fitted-out for living in the style of a campervan. The evidence suggests that he travelled in other states before moving to Tasmania in about 2017. In Tasmania, Mr Bell stayed at caravan parks or on the roadside and his bank accounts show movement mainly across the north of the state. Mr Bell tended to move his van every few days to a new location.

Mr Bell was last seen alive in Exeter next to his van by a staff member of Caltex Exeter who drove past him in the afternoon of 26 August 2019. Subsequently, on 31 August 2019, a member of the local community observed that his van had not moved as expected from its position on the side of the West Tamar Highway at Lanena, south of Exeter, and telephoned police as a result of concern for Mr Bell's welfare.

Police officers forced entry to the van and Mr Bell was located deceased on the bed inside. There were no suspicious circumstances suggesting that other persons were involved.

An autopsy was performed upon Mr Bell by pathologist, Dr Terry Brain, who determined the cause of death to be acute myocardial ischaemia (“heart attack”) due to heart disease. Toxicological testing did not reveal any substances or medications of note in the blood of Mr Bell.

I find that, whilst in his van, Mr Bell suffered a heart attack, due to his pre-existing heart disease which caused his death. This occurred at a time between 26 and 31 August 2019.

Comments and Recommendations

The circumstances of Mr Bell’s death are not such as to require me to make any comments or recommendations pursuant to Section 28 of the *Coroners Act 1995*.

I have forwarded this finding to the Public Trustee, given that no family member has yet been located.

Dated: 16 January 2020 at Hobart Coroners Court in the State of Tasmania.

Olivia McTaggart
Coroner