



FOR PUBLIC RELEASE: Coroner Judgement of Inquiry and Inquest Inquisition and Recommendations

Department of Justice, Legal Services
Yukon Coroners Service
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Yukon Coroners Service: Judgement of Inquiry into the death of: Richard "Richie" Hager, Jr.

Coroner Investigative File No.: 4520201418

Name: <u>Richard "Richie" Hager, Jr.</u>	Date of Birth: <u>1993/01/16</u> <small>YYYY/MM/DD</small>	Date of Death: <u>2014/07/19</u> <small>YYYY/MM/DD</small>
Address: <u>14 Jon' Ra Subdivision, Pelly Crossing, Yukon</u> <small>Street Address</small>	<small>Province/Territory</small>	<small>Postal Code</small>
Ethnic Origin: <u>First Nations</u>	Location of Death: <u>Pelly River near Pelly River Bridge</u>	

Cause of Death

Drowning/Hypothermia due to a Jump from Pelly River Bridge. Heavy Intoxication with Alcohol was a contributing factor.

Manner of Death

Accidental

Autopsy Findings

No autopsy

Moderate effects of water submersion was noted post-mortem. There were no injuries observed, and only minor surface abrasions which are consistent with the body coming into contact with rocks and gravel in the river.

There are no ante-mortem contributing factors known such as natural disease or physiological conditions which may have contributed to Mr. Hager, Jr. being unable to self-rescue by swimming to shore.

Toxicological Findings

A post-mortem toxicology sample was obtained and sent to the British Columbia Provincial Toxicology Centre for analysis. Toxicology analysis revealed that Mr. Hager, Jr. had a heavy level of intoxication of alcohol (.20%) at the time of his death. There were no prescribed medications or illicit drugs detected.

Circumstances of Death

On July 19, 2014 at approximately 22:13hrs Mr. Hager, Jr. and a friend were walking to a nearby home in Pelly Crossing. The two men crossed the Pelly River Bridge by foot. Near the middle of the bridge Mr. Hager, Jr. removed his shoes and ball cap. He leapt off the bridge deck, performing a back flip and landing in the river approximately seven meters below.

Following the jump, he was observed to be swimming in the river and was last seen approximately 20 meters from shore. Witnesses ran downstream in an effort to find Mr. Hager, Jr. and the Pelly Crossing RCMP were notified.

At approximately 22:30hrs, RCMP launched a boat at Pelly Crossing campground on the south side of the river opposite to where Mr. Hager, Jr. was last seen but he could not be located.

On July 28, 2014 at 16:45hrs, Pelly Crossing RCMP located the body of a male individual in a back eddy of the Pelly River approximately 1km downstream from the Pelly River Bridge (62.50.129N and 136.38.209W). The body was identified as 21 year old, Richard "Richie" Arnold Hager, Jr. of Pelly Crossing, Yukon.

Significant Factors/Conclusions

Mr. Hager intentionally jumped from the Pelly River Bridge into the river below. He was observed to be in distress and was last seen approximately twenty meters from shore.

Pelly River Bridge is approximately seven meters above the Pelly River. Jumping from the bridge down to the river below is extremely dangerous due to many factors, including: water temperature, water currents and undertow and the vastness and potential hidden dangers of the water and shoreline.

Consumption of alcohol contributed to the death.

Recommendations

No recommendations

H. McDonald

Signature, Chief Coroner

Whitehorse, Yukon

Province/Territory

August 29, 2014

Date

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