



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: Erich Korinth
Coroner Investigative File No.: 4520201416
Name: Erich Korinth Date of Birth: 1941/12/31 Date of Death: 2014/07/24
Address: New Westminster, British Columbia
Ethnic Origin: Caucasian Location of Death: Lake Laberge

Cause of Death

Drowning

Manner of Death

Accidental

Autopsy Findings

No autopsy

There were minor abrasions on his right leg and ankle and lividity on his head, neck and ears that was consistent with the position of his body when recovered. His hands were clenched and blood tinged foam and froth was exiting the mouth and nose. There was no evidence or history to suggest that medication and/or alcohol consumption may have been a factor.

Toxicological Findings

Not applicable

Circumstances of Death

On July 24, 2014, the body of a male individual was found floating in Lake Laberge. The individual was later identified as Erich Korinth, a 72 year old male visitor to Yukon from British Columbia. Mr. Korinth was found floating approximately 8km from the boat launch at the Lake Laberge Campground north of Whitehorse. He was wearing a life jacket but no clothing that would protect him from the cold water in the event of a sudden immersion.

Mr. Korinth had planned to do a solo kayak trip from Whitehorse to Dawson City. He had some experience canoeing but minimal experience in a kayak. Mr. Korinth purchased his kayak on June 20, 2014, approximately one month prior to embarking on his river journey. The kayak was a yellow Chinook brand boat with black, red, and white striping. Mr. Korinth had been on the water familiarizing himself with the kayak several times prior to embarking on July 24, 2014.

It is believed that Mr. Korinth put his kayak into the river across from Walmart located at 9021 Quartz Road in Whitehorse, on the morning on July 24th, 2014.

The weather on July 24, 2014 at Lake Laberge was fair. According to historical weather data, the ambient temperature during the day was 16C. The wind was recorded in a southwest direction at 5-8km per hour.

Significant Factors/Conclusions

Mr. Korinth had very limited experience in a kayak and had purchased the kayak about a month before his intended journey from Whitehorse to Dawson City.

Mr. Korinth was dressed in cotton and nylon clothing, which would not have protected him from cold water effects of a sudden immersion into Lake Laberge. Hypothermia may have been a contributing factor in this death.

The examination of the body of Mr. Korinth revealed the presence of blood tinged froth and foam from the mouth and nose, which is often observed in a drowning death. Foam and froth is indicative that the victim was breathing when he or she entered the water. The foam is caused by admixing moving air (respiration) with water.

The weather conditions at Lake Laberge were favorable on July 24, 2014 and do not suggest that a sudden change in weather may have contributed to this death.

Mr. Korinth was wearing a life jacket.

Recommendations

No recommendations


Signature, Chief Coroner

Whitehorse, Yukon
Province/Territory

September 10/14
Date

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Clear