

IN THE CORONERS COURT
OF VICTORIA
AT MELBOURNE

Court Reference: COR 2008 0750

FINDING INTO DEATH WITH INQUEST

Form 37 Rule 60(1)

Section 67 of the Coroners Act 2008

Inquest into the Death of: BRANKO JURAN

Delivered On: 30 September 2013

Delivered At: Level 11, 222 Exhibition Street
Melbourne 3000

Hearing Dates: 3 September 2013

Findings of: JUDGE IAN L GRAY, STATE CORONER

Police Coronial Support Unit Senior Sergeant Ken Burchett

I, JUDGE IAN L GRAY, State Coroner having investigated the death of BRANKO JURAN

AND having held an inquest in relation to this death on 3 September 2013

at MELBOURNE

find that the identity of the deceased was BRANKO JURAN

born on 22 May 1960

and the death occurred on 17 February 2008

at Mile Creek, Cheltenham Road, Keysborough at Eastlink off-ramp.

from:

1 (a) INCISED INJURIES TO THE BACK AND NECK

Background

1. On Thursday 21 February 2008 at approximately 7.45am, the body of Branko Juran was found lying in a weed bed adjacent to Mile Creek, Dandenong just metres from where Mile Creek flows under Cheltenham Road. His throat had been cut and he had been stabbed twice in the back. Recent heavy rains were believed to have washed the body down stream from where he was killed.
2. Branko Juran was born on 22 May 1960 in Karlovac, Croatia. He migrated to Australia in August 1968 with his mother, Jaga Tomasic. Branko and his mother initially lived in Footscray before moving to Clayton South with Jaga's new husband in April 1969. In 1984, Jaga divorced her husband and moved to Noble Park. Branko attended Primary School in Westall and Technical School in Noble Park where he completed an apprenticeship in boiler making. He was not employed at the time of his death.

Circumstances of the death

3. In the early hours of Sunday 17 February 2008, two males, Halil Kocoglu and Jamie Ercegovic attended Branko's home address. Over the next few hours they talked and played guitar outside his address. At approximately 7.00am, Branko left the address with Kocoglu and Ercegovic in Ercegovic's car. On evidence supplied by Ercegovic, after getting something to eat from a nearby McDonald's store, Kocoglu produced a knife and threatened Branko and Ercegovic. Ercegovic was forced by Kocoglu to drive around the south eastern suburbs of Melbourne. In the afternoon, Ercegovic was directed by Kocoglu to drive to Greaves Reserve, Dandenong and park adjacent to a cycling path.

4. At this location, Branko and Ercegovic were forced at knife point to exit the car and walk to the banks of Mile Creek, Dandenong. Kocoglu told Ercegovic to return to his car to collect Branko's mobile phone. As he was returning to the vehicle, Ercegovic states that he turned around and saw Branko being stabbed in the back by Kocoglu with a large knife. He then saw Kocoglu kick Branko in to Mile Creek. Kocoglu then returned to the car and a short time later went back to the creek where he entered the water and cut Branko's throat. Kocoglu then returned to the car carrying a knife wrapped in a jacket he had taken from Branko. Kocoglu and Ercegovic then left the area in Ercegovic's car.
5. When Branko's body was located he was wearing a pair of dark tracksuit pants, a black and white striped shirt, a pair of boxer shorts and one dark coloured Star Wars brand slipper. No personal effects or items were located on the deceased. A primary crime scene at Mile Creek and surrounds was unable to be established and a search of the creek and surrounds failed to locate any physical evidence.
6. On 24 April 2008, Homicide Squad investigators interviewed Halil Kocoglu. Kocoglu made a "no comment" interview. On 17 December 2010, Homicide Squad investigators re-interviewed Kocoglu. He again made a "no comment" interview.
7. Halil Kocoglu was charged with the murder of Branko Juran on 17 December 2010. Kocoglu stood trial at the Supreme Court of Victoria. The trial commenced on 16 April 2012 and on 3 May 2012 the jury returned a verdict of "not guilty".

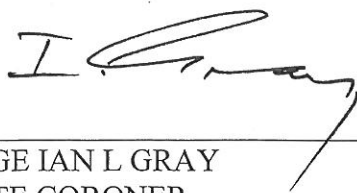
I extend my condolences to Jaga Tomasic (Branko Juran's mother).

I direct that a copy of this finding be provided to the following:

Jaga Tomasic

Senior Sergeant Ken Burchett

Signature:



JUDGE IAN L GRAY
STATE CORONER

Date: 30/9/2013

