

ACTIVITY: Body surfing
CASE: GSAF 1929.01.12
DATE: Saturday January 12, 1929
LOCATION: Bondi, New South Wales, Australia.
 33°54'S, 151°14'E

NAME: Colin James Stewart
DESCRIPTION: He was a 14-year-old male. He was a "tall, strapping lad who lived across from the beach."

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: It was a dull and cloudy day and the air temperature was 74°F.

MOON PHASE: New Moon, January 11, 1929

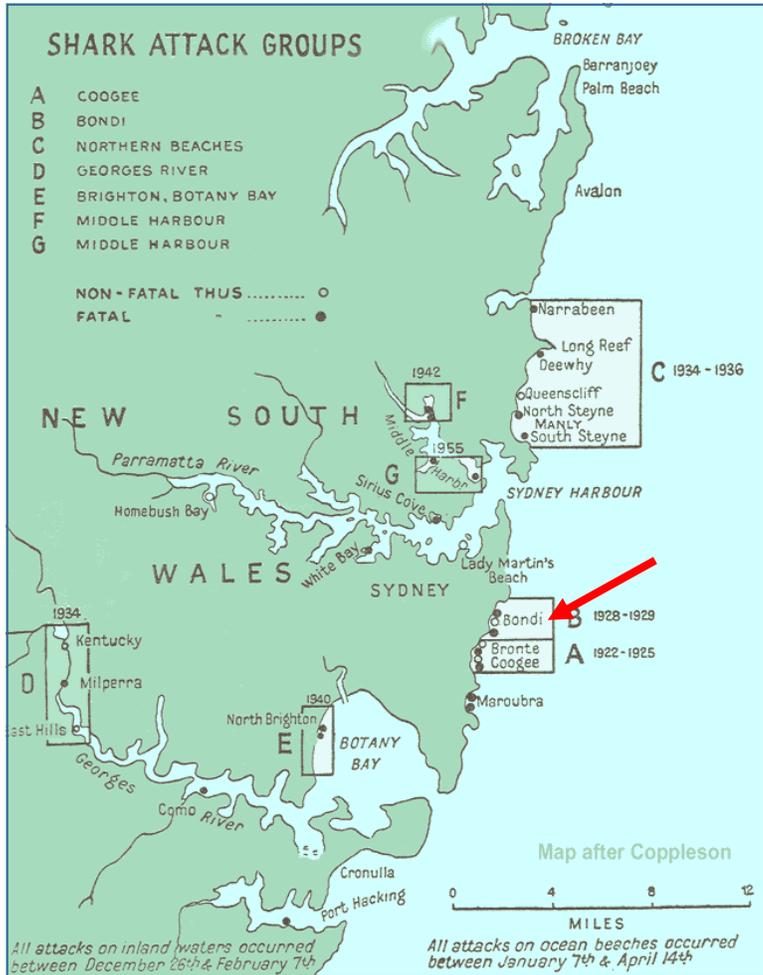
SEA CONDITIONS: The water temperature was 75°F and the sea was choppy.

ENVIRONMENT: The incident took place on a sandbar.

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 18 metres

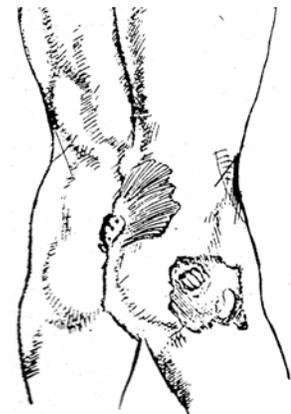
DEPTH: Four feet

TIME: 17h00 or 18h10



NARRATIVE: Colin Stewart entered the water ten minutes after the surf lifesaving patrol left for the day. In spite of the weather, there were 60 to 70 bathers between the flags when he waded out. Many people were much farther seaward than Stewart when the shark lunged at the boy, lacerating his leg from thigh to hip. Robert Kavanaugh, who was only a few metres away, saw him struggling with the shark; it was lashing the water and dragging at him. As Kavanaugh neared, the shark lunged at Stewart again, nearly pulling him beneath the surface. Securing a hold on Stewart, Kavanaugh struggled towards the shore. As he neared the beach, a man named Kelly and another man, dragged Stewart ashore.

INJURY: Large lacerated wound of the right lumbar and pelvic areas and upper third of the thigh: nine inches by 15 inches, extending from the middle of the right thigh to the iliac crest. The crest of the ilium was partly torn off and lying in fragments, and all neighboring muscles torn off their attachments



FIRST AID: Club members packed towels around the wound and

he was transported by ambulance to the hospital

TREATMENT: When Stewart arrived at St. Vincent's Hospital in Sydney, he was severely shocked, his pulse was 104, and he died fourteen hours after the accident.

SPECIES INVOLVED: Not identified. The shark was seen earlier in the day.

NOTE: The coroner who investigated the attack praised Kavanaugh's "heroic act", and believed that he should be decorated with the highest honour possible for his actions. Kavanaugh was subsequently awarded the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia's meritorious award in silver and the Albert Medal

SOURCES: The Sydney Morning Herald, January 14, 1929, page 14
The Canberra Times, January 15, 1929, page 1
Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, October 1930;
Victor M. Coppleson, N9 (1933)
Victor M. Coppleson (1958), pages 64 & 231



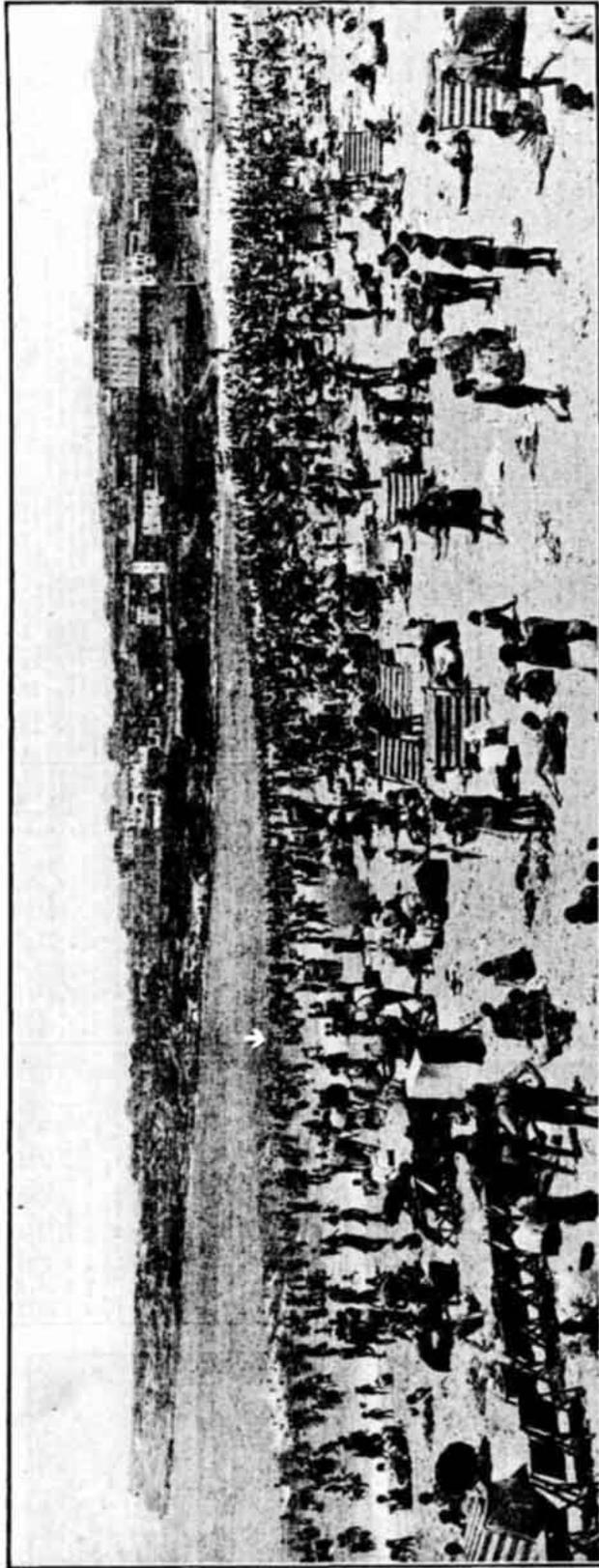
Colin Stewart

FUNERAL OF VICTIM

—
SYDNEY, Monday.

The funeral of Colin Stewart, who was bitten by a shark at Bondi, took place at Rookwood Cemetery. Hundreds of persons lined the footpath near the home of his parents, where a short service was held.

BONDI BEACH. THE SCENE OF THE FATAL SHARK ATTACK ON SATURDAY AFTERNOON.



THE PICTURE TAKEN YESTERDAY MORNING SHOWS A LARGE CROWD VIEWING THE SPOT (INDICATED BY AN ARROW) WHERE COLIN STEWART WAS ATTACKED BY THE SHARK.

Sydney Morning Herald, Monday January 14, 1929, page 14