

ACTIVITY: Swimming

CASE: [GSAF 1948.12.27](#)

DATE: Monday December 27, 1948

LOCATION: The accident took place in the Indian Ocean at Lancelin Island, Western Australia, Australia.

NAME: Arthur Strahan

DESCRIPTION: He was a 17-year-old male from Moora.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: New Moon, December 30, 1948

NARRATIVE: He disappeared while swimming.

INJURY: Fatal. A hand, believed to be Strahan's, was found in a 2.4-metre [eight-foot] tiger shark caught January 5, 1949.

SOURCES: The Canberra Times, Thursday January 6, 1949, page 1; Victor M. Coppleson (1958), pages 22-23

IN SHARK'S STOMACH HUMAN HAND FOUND

PERTH, Wednesday.

A human left hand was found in the stomach of an 8-foot tiger shark caught four miles from Leighton to-day.

Detectives think that it may be the hand of either Arthur James Strahan, 17, or Moora, who disappeared on December 27, while swimming at Lancelin Island, or Alan H. Quarterley, 17, bell boy of the liner Stratheden, who was found to be missing after the ship had left Fremantle on December 21.

Because of the decomposed nature of the flesh on the hand, it was impossible for fingerprints to be taken, or for the police doctor to state whether it had been taken from a live or dead body.

The shark was caught by a hand line and the hand was found among a pile of other small bones presumably those of rabbit or wallaby.

TRAGEDY AT ISLAND

Moora Youth Gives Life For Sister

While attempting to rescue his young sister from deep water at Lancelin Island on Monday, Arthur James Strahan (17), of Moora, suddenly disappeared and it is feared that he was attacked and taken by a large shark. Search parties of nearly 200 persons have unsuccessfully combed the beach and searched by boat for the body for the last two days.

With their parents, Arthur and his 11-year-old sister Kathleen, arrived at the island—which is about 25 miles north of the mouth of the Moore River—for a holiday on Sunday. The youth and his sister were swimming near the mainland beach when the girl got into difficulty in deep water.

Arthur began pushing her into shallow water when suddenly without a sound he disappeared beneath the waves. Little hope is held of finding his body as a vicious rip tide runs through the area and it is powerful enough to tear a human body to pieces on the surrounding reefs.

The West Australian
December 30, 1948, page 3