

ACTIVITY: Bathing

CASE: GSAF 1949.04.17

DATE: Sunday April 17, 1949

LOCATION: Ellis Beach, 20 miles from Cairns, Queensland, Australia.

16°41'S, 147°E

NAME: Richard Joseph Maguire

DESCRIPTION: He was a 13-year-old male.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: Third Quarter, April 20, 1949

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 30 feet

DEPTH OF WATER AT INCIDENT SITE: Three feet [0.9 metres]

TIME: 13h30

NARRATIVE: Maguire, a boarder at the Marist Brothers College, traveled from Cairns to join his parents at Ellis Beach. He was about 15 feet away from the other bathers when he cried, "Shark!" Ted Stockwell went to his rescue and Macguire's father, Richard, dashed into the water, fully-clothed, to help his son.



INJURY: Fatal. His left leg was severed near the hip. He was dead when he was brought ashore.

SPECIES INVOLVED: His father saw a shark about 12 feet [3.3 metres] in length. The Cairns Surf Lifesaving Club set baited lines to floating petrol drums and caught a tiger shark about 11 feet in length but there was no evidence that it was the shark involved in the attack.

SOURCES: The Canberra Times, Monday April 18, 1949, page 1; Gilbert P. Whitley (1951), page 194, citing the Sydney Morning Herald and Daily Telegraph, April 18, 1959 editions; Victor M. Coppleson (1958), page 239; Alan Sharpe, pages 38 & 97

BOY FATALLY MAULED BY SHARK

BRISBANE, Sunday.

Thirteen-years-old schoolboy, Richard Joseph Maguire, was fatally mauled by a shark while bathing in three feet of water at Ellis Beach this afternoon.

The shark severed the boy's leg at the hip, and he was dead when brought to the beach.

The victim was the son of Mr. C. J. Maguire, postmaster at Tolga.

While others were swimming about 20 to 30 feet from the shore, they heard cries from the boy who was about 15 feet away from the party.

Constable Stockwell and Leonard Hastie, both of Tolga, went to the boy's assistance and brought him to the beach.

The boy, who was a boarder at the Marist Brothers' College in Cairns, went to the beach with his parents and some friends who had come down from Tolga, 18 miles away.

Constable Stockwell said tonight that the only member of the party who saw the shark was the boy's father.

The body was brought to Cairns to-night and the funeral will take place to-morrow.

The last shark tragedy near Cairns also took place at Ellis Beach, in August, 1946, when a shark about 12 to 14 feet in length fatally mauled Phillip Collins.