

**ACTIVITY:** Swimming

**CASE:** [GSAF 1949.08.28.a](#)

**DATE:** Sunday August 28, 1949

**LOCATION:** The incident took place at Yorkey's Knob Beach, near Cairns, Queensland, Australia.

16°49'S, 147°E

**NAME:** James Howard

**DESCRIPTION:** Howard was a 34-year-old male.

### BACKGROUND

**MOON PHASE:** First Quarter, August 31, 1949

**ENVIRONMENT:** Yorkey's Knob is a beach suburb of Cairns. It is approximately 13 kilometres (8.1 miles) north of the centre of Cairns.

**DISTANCE FROM SHORE:** 35 yards

**TIME:** 13h20

**NARRATIVE:** James Howard was swimming when he was "caught by the leg" by the shark, but struggled free. He was rescued by Brian Ware. No shark was seen before, during or after the attack.

**INJURY:** Howard's injury was fatal; he sustained "deep gashes in his right leg and thigh and his fingers were "badly mauled."

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** Not identified

**SOURCES:** The Canberra Times, Monday August 29, 1949, page 2; G.P.Whitley (1951), page 194, cites Daily Telegraph (Sydney), August 29, 1949; Victor M. Coppleson (1958), pages 88 & 239



## MAN FATALLY MAULED BY SHARK AT CAIRNS

CAIRNS, Sunday.

James Howard, 34, barman, was fatally mauled by a shark while swimming about 35 yards from the beach at Yorkey's Knob, near Cairns to-day.

Brian Ware, a 21-years-old friend of the victim, pupil surveyor, of Alexandria, Sydney, made a gallant attempt to save Howard and was scratched across the chest and stomach by the monster as he dragged Howard to the beach.

Howard had been in the water for only a few minutes when the shark attacked. He shouted for help, and as he was fighting it off, Howard received severe lacerations to the right leg and lost a great amount of blood while he floundered in the water.

Ware managed to drag Howard away from the shark, and bring him to the beach. Howard was still alive when brought ashore, but died while being taken to hospital.

The scratches on Ware's chest are believed to have been made by the shark's fin or its tough scaly head. They were not tooth marks like wounds on Howard's leg, thigh and hands.

The shark was not sighted at any time.