

ACTIVITY: Unknown

CASE: 1951.09.02.R

DATE: Reported September 2, 1951

LOCATION: The incident took place in the Fitzroy River near Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia.

NAME: Dr. E. A. Joske

DESCRIPTION: He was a 56-year-old male, doctor from Adelaide.

NARRATIVE: Dr. Joske was sailing single-handedly around the world on his luxury yacht, the 45-foot ketch *Christine*. The vessel was luxuriously appointed, and had a two-way wireless and radio telephone with a range of 500 miles. He had sailed around the Australian coast and spent two months in Brisbane before leaving for Bowen. His last contact with the shore was by radio with the Government radio station. He was then at Port Clinton, 60 miles from where the yacht was found by the ship *Caledon* two days later. The *Caledon* radioed that the ketch was drifting in a dangerous position and apparently needed assistance. When the police arrived, the *Christine* was aground. A blue and gold flag was flying at the masthead and a spanner was lying on the deck, suggesting that the yacht may have had engine trouble. Dr. Joske's body was lying amidships, one arm tangled in the rigging, the other arm dragging overboard in the mud. Police theorized that Dr. Joske was attacked by a shark either while leaning over the side or swimming near the yacht and that he managed to scramble back on board before dying.

INJURY: His right leg was missing at the hip and bowel was protruding through a gaping wound in the abdomen.

SPECIES INVOLVED: Not identified

SOURCES: The Independent Record, Sunday, September 2, 1951; Courier Mail, Monday September 3, 1951, page 1; Jack. Green, page 34; Victor M. Coppleson (1958), pages 91-92.



Dr. Joske

Yacht Owner Believed To Be Shark Victim

Sydney, Australia, Sept. 4.—(AP)—The luxury yacht Christine wallowed in the mud near Rockhampton, Queensland, the mangled body of a man believed to be its owner sprawled across the lonely deck. Police believe a shark killed him.

Although police could not immediately identify the body, it was believed to be that of Dr. E. A. Joske of Adelaide, who had sailed from Brisbane Saturday in hopes of circling the globe alone.

Police said they thought a shark had attacked the man while he was swimming near the trim 38-foot ketch, and that with a last terrific effort he managed to pull himself onto the deck.

*Townsville Daily Bulletin,
Wednesday, October 17, 1951, page 2*

DOCTOR WAS KILLED BY A SHARK

ROCKHAMPTON, October 16: Police evidence at the inquest to-day on Dr. Ernest Alexander Joske, who was found dead with his right leg missing on the ketch Kristine in the Fitzroy River on September, stated that it appeared that the ketch had reached Thompson's Point after dark on September 1 and had run aground.

During the night the ketch had refloated and Joske had received an injury to his leg when pushing it off. He had lost a considerable amount of blood and had lain on the forward deck. He was unable to secure the boat.

The vessel had floated up the river and then floated back to Thompson's Point as the tide went out and had again gone aground. It was seen there early next morning.

Later in the day the boat drifted up the Humbug Leads and Joske made an effort to reach the cabin by crawling down the starboard side.

He was halfway along when the ketch ran aground and keeled over.

Joske had been thrown partly into the water.

It was then that he was attacked by a shark and received the injuries that killed him within three or four minutes.

The evidence stated that there were no suspicious circumstances.