

ACTIVITY: Swimming

CASE: GSAF 1964.11.18

DATE: Wednesday November 18, 1964

LOCATION: The incident took place at Fingal Beach near Tweed Heads, Queensland, Australia. 28°12'S, 153°30'E

NAME: Glenthorne Prior

DESCRIPTION: He was a 29-year-old male, a musician from Morningside, Brisbane. He was the first trumpeter in the Queensland Symphony Orchestra. He was a strong swimmer.



Fingal Beach

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: Full Moon, November 20, 1964

ENVIRONMENT: It was believed that Prior swam into a school of sharks. A pilot who reported the shark school said that a second school moved into the area later the same day.

TIME: 13h30

NARRATIVE: Prior's wife and three children were on the beach. He was swimming with several members of the orchestra when three surfers got into difficulties. As the surfers were being swept out to sea, Prior began swimming towards them but was suddenly pulled below the surface of the water. The incident was witnessed by lifesavers Barry Phillips (Fingal Lifesaving Club) and Norm Neeld (a Bondi Lifesaver) who donned belts and went to the rescue; both lifesavers were certain that Prior was taken by a shark. Lifesavers subsequently rescued the three surfers.

INJURY: Fatal

SPECIES INVOLVED: Not identified

SOURCE: Daily Mirror (Sydney), November 19, 1964

Shark kills man on coast

A 29-year-old musician swam into a school of sharks yesterday and disappeared.

The tragedy occurred at Fingal, on the North Coast.

A pilot who reported the shark school said that a second school moved into the area later.

The missing man is Glenthorne Prior, of Morningside, Brisbane, father of three children and first trumpeter in the Queensland Symphony Orchestra.

Prior was swimming with several members of the orchestra at Fingal Beach about 1.30 pm yesterday when three surfers got into difficulties.

Belts donned

As they were being swept out, Prior swam to help them.

He disappeared when swimming strongly.

Local lifesavers said today they were certain Prior was taken by a shark.

The three surfers in difficulties were brought ashore by lifesavers.

Two of the lifesavers

who donned belts and went to the rescue are Barry Phillips, 18, a member of Fingal Lifesaving Club, and Norm Neeld, a visiting Bondi lifesaver.

Prior he was not in trouble.

Prior's wife and three young children were on the beach when he disappeared.

Near death

Neeld briefly instructed spectators on how to handle the surf line, and ran into the waves.

Neeld got two of the three in difficulties—a man named Hansen and a woman named Jane Freed.

He was bringing them in when the inexperienced linesmen almost drowned the three of them.

Wife on beach

Neeld had to slip his belt, swim to shore, give instructions, and then swim out again.

The two lifesavers said that when they last saw