

**ACTIVITY:** Sea disaster / treading water

**CASE:** GSAF 1971.12.05

**DATE:** Sunday December 5, 1971

**LOCATION:** The accident took place in the Coral Sea approximately 13 miles off Curtis Island, Queensland, Australia.

**NAME:** Gregory Carroll

**DESCRIPTION:** He was a 20-year-old male.

**BACKGROUND**

**MOON PHASE:** Full Moon, December 2, 1971 at 18h48

**TIME:** Late night

**NARRATIVE:** Three men, Ronald Hansen, Michael Fagan, and his brother-in-law Gregory Carroll, were returning from a week-end fishing trip at Gladstone, 329 miles north of Brisbane, when their 17-foot outboard-powered boat capsized and sank in heavy seas. Hansen said he would drift with the current, while Fagan and Carroll attempted to swim to the Cape Capricorn lighthouse. Then the two men stopped for a rest.

Carroll was treading water about six feet from Fagan. "I heard a splash, there was a swirling of water and [Carroll] went under," said Fagan "The shark had leaped right up at him from below and carried him under for perhaps half a minute." Fagan said that Carroll reappeared and gasped, "I've been hit by a shark", sank again and disappeared. After waiting for a time, Fagan swam for the lighthouse, reaching Curtis Island seven hours later.

**INJURY:** Fatal

**SPECIES:** Not identified.

**SOURCE:** The Age, Thursday December 9, 1971, page 3



Cape Capricorn Lighthouse,  
Northeast end of Curtis Island

