



ACTIVITY: Swimming (underwater)

CASE: **GSFAF 1975.02.10**

DATE: Monday February 10, 1975

LOCATION: the incident took place at Point Sinclair, near Cactus Beach, South Australia.

NAME: Wade Shipard

DESCRIPTION: The swimmer was a 12-year-old male.

BACKGROUND

MOON PHASE: New Moon, February 11, 1975

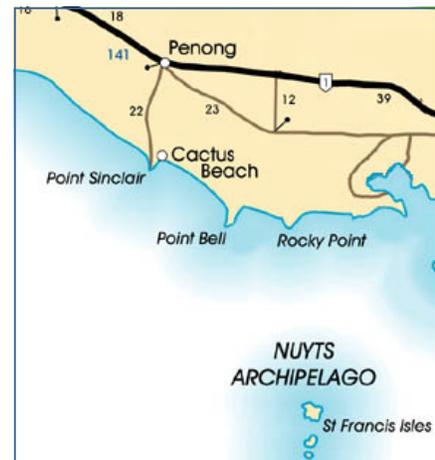
ENVIRONMENT: The incident occurred behind a sheltering headland where shark fisherman George Mastrosavas and his fishing partner were gutting and cleaning school sharks they'd caught at sea. "I told my mate we shouldn't clean them there," says Mastrosavas. "I told him kids might swim there, and the blood would bring sharks. But he was the skipper, and he said, 'Blow the kids! They can swim in the dam.'"

TIME: 18h00

NARRATIVE: "We saw this young lad swimming, and next thing he was yelling that a shark had bitten him," said Mastrosavas. "We sped towards him in the boat, but before we got there we saw the shark - a small [three-metre] white - come up behind him and swallowed his leg. It just rolled and snapped his leg right off."

Mastrosavas says he bashed the shark with a gaff as it came through the boy's blood for another strike, then pulled the boy into the boat. "He seemed all right for a while ... but we couldn't stop the bleeding because the leg was severed so high up".

Mastrosavas continues, "I ran down the jetty with him in



Shark Kills Boy Swimmer

SYDNEY (UPI) — A white pointer shark attacked and killed an 11-year-old boy before the eyes of his mother Saturday while the victim was swimming near a south Australian beach, police said.

The seven-foot shark tore off Wade Shipard's right leg while he was swimming to a fishing trawler to get fresh crayfish. His mother, Mrs. Aileen Shipard, 34, watched horrified from the beach.

my arms, and his mother asked me to drive their car because of the state she was in. We drove like mad towards Ceduna, and after a while the lad sorta sat up. He called out, 'Mum!' And that was the end - he died in the car."

INJURY: Fatal. The boy's right leg was severed high on the leg which suggests that his femoral artery was severed.

SPECIES INVOLVED: The incident a white shark about three metres total length.

NOTE: Mastrosavas says he always loved fishing, and began catching white sharks that were wrecking his offshore set-lines in 1958. There were so many whites around then, you'd see at least one every day ... and the strange thing is that when whites were so plentiful, you hardly ever heard of an attack." Mastrosavas estimates he killed 100 white sharks over the years. "But there was no real market for whites until the *Jaws* movie came out," he says. "That's when the demand for their jaws and teeth began ... the first I knew of it was when a bloke from Sydney offered me \$4,000 for five sets of jaws."

Mastrosavas, now retired, still blames himself for the death of Wade Shipard. It was our fault," he says. "It should never have happened. We caused it." Mastrosavas says after Shipard was killed he received letters saying that it should have been him "lying on the beach with my guts cut open". He took the letters to his fishing partner, and they had a fight during which he was hit repeatedly beaten over the head. Mastrosavas believes the blows induced a return of the schizophrenia he had suffered as a teenager. A few years later - obeying voices in his head - he drove his car into an approaching motorbike, killing its rider and passenger. "I was committed to a psychiatric ward in Adelaide," he says. "I stayed in there 10 years."

SOURCES: Sharnell Shipard

Alan Sharpe, pp.124-125

The Modesto Bee And News-Herald, February 9, 1975

Sydney Morning Herald, February 3, 2001

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/0102/03/features/features1.html>)

