

Lighthouse Beach on the morning of the attack



ACTIVITY: Body boarding

CASE: [GSAF 2008.04.08.a](#)

DATE: Tuesday April 8, 2008

LOCATION: Lighthouse Beach, Ballina, New South Wales, Australia.

NAME: Peter Edmonds

DESCRIPTION: He was a 16-year-old male from Wollongbar.

BACKGROUND

WEATHER: At 09h00, Ballina recorded air temperature and dew point of 61°F [16°C], 100% humidity, sea level pressure 30.17 inches [1022 hPa], and wind direction was SW at 9.2 mph [14.8 km/h]. At the time of the attack, there were “strong southerly winds” at Lighthouse beach.

MOON PHASE: Waxing Crescent, 6% of the Moon was illuminated. New Moon, April 6, 2008.

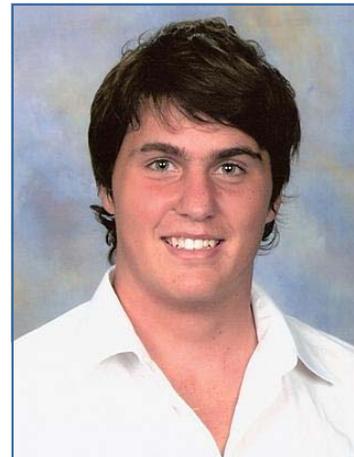
SEA CONDITIONS: Heavy rain the day before the incident reduced visibility. "The water was dirty and murky," reported local lifesaver Stephen Leahy.

ENVIRONMENT: The beach is near the North Wall, a breakwater at the entrance to the Richmond River. It is popular with surfers, but it is also a feeding area for sharks. A worker at a nearby caravan park said bull sharks had also been recently spotted swimming in the Richmond River.

DISTANCE FROM RIVER MOUTH: 60 metres

DISTANCE FROM SHORE: 50 metres (164 feet)

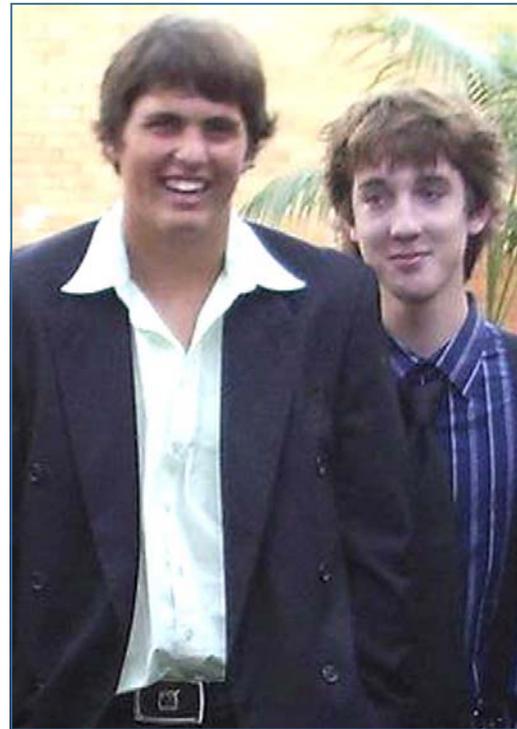
TIME: 08h05



Peter Edmonds

Source: Supplied

NARRATIVE: The surf lifesaving duty officer for the far north coast, Gary Meredith, reported there were only two people in the water at the time of the attack. Peter Edmonds and Brock Matthew. The pair took their bodyboards to the southern end of Lighthouse Beach, next to a breakwater alongside the mouth of the Richmond River known as North Wall, a good spot for bodyboarders. Brock headed for shore a little after 08h00 when it started raining to move their belongings to shelter. As he returned to the surf, he heard Peter yell, and saw he was in trouble. He went back into the water to help, and saw a "large dark shadow" moving away from his friend and as he approached he saw the water was beginning to turn red. "As I headed towards him it looked like he was catching a wave and was heading back to shore," said Brock. "Then I saw him on his back with his head above the water so then he turned so he was face down. I thought he was only joking, so I went over to him and as I flipped him over I saw his leg."



Peter Edmonds (L) with Brock Curtis-Mathew, who tried to save him. Curtis-Mathew received a Royal Lifesaving Society bravery award for his efforts.

Surf Life Saving NSW spokesman Stephen Leahy said Brock found Peter unconscious in the water. "He helped his mate back to shore, which was obviously quite a struggle due to the injuries of his friend." Leahy said the teenager sprinted to the nearby Coast Guard tower where Triple 0 was called. "He went back and dragged his mate further up the beach and attempted to provide whatever assistance he could to him," he said. NSW Ambulance Spokesman Patrick Cantwell said paramedics responded to North wall Beach about 08h15 with multiple crews and a helicopter, but the teenager was dead on their arrival. Peter Edmonds died of massive blood loss on the beach shortly after 08h15.

INJURY: Fatal. The boy sustained two large bites to his upper and lower leg. "He was unconscious and the lifeguards and ambulance officers had some severe haemorrhage to deal with," said Surf Lifesaving spokesman Craig Roberts. Roberts later said the two bites were to the leg and the body.

FIRST AID: Police from Richmond Local Area Command and NSW Ambulance responded to the scene but attempts to revive the teenager were unsuccessful. The boy's body was conveyed by ambulance to Ballina Hospital.

SPECIES: It is not known what species of shark was involved in this attack but John West,

an expert at Taronga Zoo in Sydney, said that it was likely to have been a bull shark.

SOURCES: New South Wales Government, NSW Police Force; The Age.

CASE INVESTIGATOR: Terry Peake, Global Shark Accident File



Lifeguards in the Ballina Shire Council area closed local beaches

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