



VERDICT AT CORONER'S INQUEST

File No.: 2007: 274:0878

An Inquest was held at The Coroner's Court, in the municipality of Burnaby

In the Province of British Columbia, on the following dates November 4, 2008

before Scott Fleming, Presiding Coroner,

into the death of HONG-ROSS Daniel 44 Male Female
(Last Name, First Name) (Age)

Date and Time of Death: 2 September, 2007 at 1340 hours

Place of Death: St. Paul's Hospital Vancouver, B.C.
(Location) (Municipality/Province)

Medical Cause of Death

(1) Immediate Cause of Death: a) Methamphetamine Intoxication
DUE TO OR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF

Antecedent Cause if any: b)
DUE TO OR AS A CONSEQUENCE OF

Giving rise to the immediate cause (a) above, stating underlying cause last. c)

(2) Other Significant Conditions Contributing to Death:

Classification of Death: [X] Accidental [] Homicide [] Natural [] Suicide [] Undetermined

The above verdict certified by the Jury on the 4th day of November AD, 2008.

SCOTT W. FLEMING

Presiding Coroner's Printed Name

Presiding Coroner's Signature



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FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS AS A RESULT OF THE INQUEST INTO THE DEATH OF

FILE No.: 2007: 274:0878

HONG-ROSS

SURNAME

Daniel

GIVEN NAMES

PARTIES INVOLVED IN THE INQUEST:

Presiding Coroner: Scott Fleming

Coroner Counsel: Steven Boorne

Court Reporting/Recording Agency: Verbatim Words West Ltd.

Participants/Counsel: Catherine Klnahan, Counsel for the Vancouver Police Department

The Sheriff took charge of the jury and recorded six exhibits. Seven witnesses were duly sworn in and testified.

PRESIDING CORONER'S COMMENTS:

The following is a brief summary of the circumstances of the death as set out in the evidence presented to the jury at the inquest. The following summary of the evidence as presented at the inquest is to assist the reader to more fully understand the Verdict and Recommendations of the jury. This summary not intended to be considered evidence nor is it intended in any way to replace the jury's verdict.

Mr. Hong-Ross had resided in a downtown residential hotel for just over three years. He was well known to the manager of the hotel as being a user of illicit drugs. The manager of the hotel described a number of instances in which Mr. Hong-Ross would become agitated and throw things around his room, and acted in an aggressive and menacing manner towards other tenants of the hotel. These episodes would typically occur when Mr. Hong-Ross was thought to be under the influence of illicit drugs.

On Sept 2, 2007 at approximately 1200 hours, an employee of the hotel heard loud noises coming from inside Mr. Hong-Ross' room. The noises sounded as if the person inside was destroying the contents of the room. Incoherent sounds and moans were also heard coming from the room. The hotel manager was called and subsequently placed a call to 911 to request emergency assistance. The hotel manager had known from his past dealings with Mr. Hong-Ross that the situation could be dangerous, hence his decision to request emergency assistance.

Two uniformed Vancouver Police officers responded to the call for assistance. An ambulance had also been dispatched to the hotel and was waiting at a nearby location until police first attended the hotel room and ensured that it was safe for the ambulance paramedics to assess Mr. Hong-Ross.

Both officers testified that after receiving a short description of the situation from the hotel manager and listening to the sounds coming from the hotel room they decided to call for a "less lethal" unit to attend the scene. Both officers thought it likely that Mr. Hong-Ross was under the influence of illicit drugs and in a state of excited delirium. The attendance of this specialized "less lethal" unit was to allow for the safe arrest of Mr. Hong-Ross without the necessity of deploying greater force should it be necessary. A police officer from the "less lethal" unit arrived approximately five minutes after the request was made.

The three officers then assessed the situation and determined that one officer would open the door using a key provided by the hotel manager, the "less lethal" officer would have a bean-bag shotgun ready and the third would provide back-up to the "less lethal" officer. After knocking on the door, announcing police presence and receiving no response, the door to the room was opened. Mr. Hong-Ross was found lying on the floor behind the hotel room door in a supine position. He was described by the officers as writhing and



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kicking, and moving about the floor while groaning and speaking in incoherent words. Mr. Hong-Ross was described as behaving in a manner that suggested to the officers that he was under the influence of illicit drugs.

A police officer entered the room and rolled Mr. Hong-Ross onto his stomach, pulled his hands behind his back and applied handcuffs in order to control his behavior. A second officer assisted by grabbing Mr. Hong-Ross by the ankles and pulling him outside of the small room so that he could be assessed by the ambulance paramedics who were now at the hotel. The officer described Mr. Hong-Ross as continuing to struggle, kick and act violently as he was pulled out into the hall. A knife was found under Mr. Hong-Ross as he was moved out of his room. Several other knives were observed by police to be lying on the floor next to Mr. Hong-Ross in his room and in a nearby small sink.

An ambulance paramedic assessed Mr. Hong-Ross as he lay restrained in the hallway. He was noted to be breathing, his eyes were open, and he was responsive to only pain stimuli. He was moaning and straining against the handcuffs and the manual restraint being applied by the police officers. An additional "hobble" restraint was then applied to his ankles in order to stop him from kicking.

As it was not possible to get an ambulance stretcher up the narrow and confined hallways of the hotel, it was decided that Mr. Hong-Ross would be carried down the single flight of stairs to the main lobby of the hotel for a more complete assessment and transfer to a nearby hospital. The three officers carried Mr. Hong-Ross down the hallway, and then down the narrow stairway. All witnesses testified that Mr. Hong-Ross did not strike any portion of the stairway while being carried down by the three officers. The ambulance paramedic, who followed behind the officers, testified that Mr. Hong-Ross continued to maintain his airway as he moaned and struggled against the restraints which had been applied.

In the hotel lobby Mr. Hong-Ross was placed on his side on an ambulance gurney. The police concluded that Mr. Hong-Ross was a danger to himself and others as a result of his behavior which was believed to be as a result of illicit drug use. He was arrested by police under the provisions of the Mental Health Act, and transported a few blocks by ambulance to nearby St. Paul's Hospital. During the one minute ambulance trip an ambulance paramedic and police officer were with Mr. Hong-Ross. Mr. Hong-Ross was noted to have a high respiration rate and was administered glucose and Narcan.

On arrival at the hospital Mr. Hong-Ross was quickly triaged by a trauma nurse and then sent to a nearby bed. While being wheeled in the stretcher to the assigned bed, an ambulance paramedic noted that Mr. Hong-Ross had stopped breathing. She instructed a police officer to quickly remove the handcuffs as Mr. Hong-Ross was quickly taken to a nearby trauma room.

The emergency physician who treated Mr. Hong-Ross knew the patient from previous admissions. It was determined that Mr. Hong-Ross was in full cardiac arrest. A standard full resuscitation protocol was conducted, however Mr. Hong-Ross was pronounced dead at 1340 hours. The emergency physician noted that "coffee ground" fluids were noted during the intubation of the patient suggesting that there had been an aspiration of stomach contents. The physician was of the opinion that this aspiration did not occur prior to arrival at hospital. He was also of the opinion that the position that Mr. Hong-Ross was carried in while being removed from the hotel room, or while being transported to hospital, likely played no role in his death.

The pathologist that conducted the autopsy of Mr. Hong-Ross testified that there was no anatomic cause of death. There were no injuries or diseases which caused or contributed to his death. Minor abrasions and bruises were observed, but were non-contributory to the cause of death. Postmortem toxicological analysis determined that Mr. Hong-Ross had a very high concentration of methamphetamine in his blood at his time of death. Other illicit and over-the-counter drugs were also detected, but considered to be non-contributory. The cause of death was determined to be methamphetamine intoxication. The described behavior of Mr. Hong-Ross at the hotel is consistent with stimulus abuse such as methamphetamine or cocaine.



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Pursuant to Section 38 of the Coroner's Act, the following recommendations are forwarded to the Chief Coroner of the Province of British Columbia for distribution to the appropriate agency:

JURY RECOMMENDATIONS:

No Recommendations