



VERDICT AT CORONER'S INQUEST

File No.: 2007:0666:0051

An Inquest was held at Provincial Court, in the municipality of Fort St. John

In the Province of British Columbia, on the following dates October 22nd, 23rd, and 24th, 2008

before Shane DeMeyer, Presiding Coroner,

into the death of McPherson Larry, 31, Male Female

and the following findings were made:

Date and Time of Death: August 28, 2007, 0215 hours

Place of Death: Fort St. John Hospital, Fort St. John, B.C.

Medical Cause of Death

(1) Immediate Cause of Death: a) Cocaine induced sudden death
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 24th day of October AD, 2008.

SHANE DEMEYER
Presiding Coroner's Printed Name

[Handwritten Signature]
Presiding Coroner's Signature





VERDICT AT CORONER'S INQUEST

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

FILE No.2007;0666;0051

McPherson

SURNAME

Larry

GIVEN NAMES

PARTIES INVOLVED IN THE INQUEST:

Presiding Coroner: Shane DeMeyer

Inquest Counsel: Mr. Mitch Houg

Court Reporting/Recording Agency: Ms. Pat Jane/Verbatim Words West

Participants/Counsel: Department of Justice, Mr. Andrew Kemp

The Sheriff took charge of the jury and recorded 5 exhibits. 13 witnesses were duly sworn in and testified.

PRESIDING CORONER'S COMMENTS:

The following is a brief summary of the circumstances of the death as presented to the jury at the inquest. The summary and my comments respecting the recommendations, if any, are only provided to assist the reader to more fully understand the Verdict and Recommendations of the jury. This summary is not intended to be considered evidence nor is it intended in any way to replace the jury's verdict.

On the evening of August 27, 2007, Mr. Larry McPherson was observed by his roommate using both cocaine and alcohol. The roommate stated that Mr. McPherson had suffered from paranoia when he had used cocaine on previous occasions.

At approximately 0050 hours of August 28, 2007, a man, later identified as Mr. Larry McPherson, was seen running from a motel by a local private security guard. Mr. McPherson was yelling for help, but ran away from the security guard when he attempted to offer assistance.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Dispatch received a call of a disturbance by the Grand Hotel. Two Fort St. John RCMP members, while in separate marked police cruisers, located Mr. McPherson on 100th Street. While in his police cruiser, one member noted that Mr. McPherson had large rocks in either hand. This Constable directed him to drop the rocks and he complied.

When the Constable exited his cruiser, Mr. McPherson started to walk away in the direction of the second RCMP member. At this time, he demanded to see badges proving they were RCMP members. Both members noted this was an odd request as they were in marked police cruisers when they arrived. At this point, Mr. McPherson started to run away as he was being advised he was under arrest for Mischief.

The two Constables followed after Mr. McPherson and were able to get him to the ground. Subsequently, three other members of the RCMP attended the scene and they attempted to place him into a police cruiser while he continued to actively resist.

While transporting him to the vehicle, Officers noted Mr. McPherson had become unresponsive so he was placed back on the ground and the British Columbia Ambulance Service (BCAS) was called. Soon after being placed on the ground, Mr. McPherson appeared to start "seizuring" so he was placed in the recovery position awaiting the



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arrival of BCAS staff. After a brief time Mr. McPherson appeared to regain consciousness and he started to fight with RCMP members again.

BC Ambulance personnel arrived at 0111 and witnessed RCMP members attempting to restrain Mr. McPherson who was exhibiting a great amount of strength and energy in continuing to fight. Mr. McPherson once again became unresponsive and BCAS personnel moved him to a stretcher where they performed CPR. They then proceeded to transport Mr. McPherson to Fort St. John General Hospital.

At 0129 hours BCAS arrived at the hospital with Mr. McPherson. Further attempts at resuscitation were made without success. At 0215 hours of August 28, 2007, Mr. Larry McPherson was pronounced dead.

Toxicological testing indicated that Mr. McPherson was intoxicated by cocaine and influenced by a low level of alcohol at the time of his death.



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

JURY RECOMMENDATIONS:

To: Deputy Commissioner Gary Bass
Royal Canadian Mounted Police, "E" Division
657 West 37th Avenue
Vancouver, British Columbia
V5Z 1K6

Sue Conroy, Chief Operating Officer
BC Ambulance Service
PO Box 9600 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, British Columbia
V8W 9P1

Becky Denlinger, Fire Commissioner
Office of the Fire Commissioner
PO Box 9491 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, British Columbia
V8W 9N7

1. Ensure that all relevant information is communicated to responding emergency service providers before they arrive at the location, so as to ensure an effective and fully informed response.

Coroner's Comments: The jury heard evidence that British Columbia Ambulance Service personnel were not aware of the nature of Mr. McPherson's medical condition prior to their arrival.

To: Minister of Education
Ministry of Education
PO Box 9770 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, British Columbia
V8W 9H1

Minister of Children and Family Development
Ministry of Children and Family Development
PO Box 9600 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, British Columbia
V8W 9P1



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- 2. Funding and resources be provided to raise awareness and provide resources to children with learning disabilities.

Coroner's Comments: The jury heard evidence that Mr. McPherson suffered from learning disabilities and was unsuccessful in school as a result. This difficulty in school started a string of behavioural problems that led to his subsequent use of illicit drugs as a means of self-medicating.

To: Deputy Commissioner Gary Bass
 Royal Canadian Mounted Police, "E" Division
 657 West 37th Avenue
 Vancouver, British Columbia
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Sue Conroy, Chief Operating Officer
 BC Ambulance Service
 PO Box 9600 Stn Prov Govt
 Victoria, British Columbia
 V8W 9P1

Becky Denlinger, Fire Commissioner
 Office of the Fire Commissioner
 PO Box 9491 Stn Prov Govt
 Victoria, British Columbia
 V8W 9N7

Ms. Cathy Ulrich
 Chief Executive Officer
 Northern Health Authority
 600 – 299 Victoria Street
 Prince George, British Columbia
 V2L 5B8

- 3. Provide training for emergency service responders in recognizing and responding to people suffering from, or in a state of excited delirium.

Coroner's Comments: The jury heard evidence that Mr. McPherson was suffering from a state of excited delirium while engaged with members of the RCMP and medical staff.