

New South Wales Police

STATEMENT in matter of: Place: Manly Police Station,
Coronial Inquest into the death 28th. May. 1976.
of Mark STEWART @ SPANSWICK. Date: _____

Name: John SPANSWICK
(Surname in capitals)
Address: Unit [REDACTED] Papakura, South Auckland. N.Z.
Occupation: Ironmonger. STATES:—

I am a married man and I live at the above address with my wife. We have been married for 26 years and we have had three children during this time, Phillip John 25 old, Mark (the deceased), 18 old and Leah 17 old. Mark was born at the European Hospital, Port Moresby on the 18th. July, 1957. At that time I was working with Burns Philip at Port Moresby. We then moved to Australia, thence to England and then to Fiji and arrived there in 1962. I had employment in Fiji and all my children lived with me there. Mark attended school in Fiji until he was about 13-14 years of age and I then sent him to College in Masterton, New Zealand. Whilst at this school Recruiting Officers from the Royal New Zealand Navy attended on a recruiting drive and he sought and received my wife's and my permission to join the navy. He ultimately entered as a Cadet, then being 16 years of age and was stationed to Training College at Devonport, New Zealand. During this time we received regular correspondence from him and at the latter stages, his letters indicated that he had become disenchanted with the life. He sought permission from me to resign from the navy but I asked that he wait until he arrived home on leave and we would discuss it then. However, in August 1974 a communication from the Navy was received by me at Fiji and this revealed that Mark had apparently deserted, and was absent without leave.

My wife and I had intended to leave Fiji and emigrate to New Zealand and because of Mark's disappearance we put this forward and moved to ~~Hokitika~~ Hokitika on the west coast of the south island of New Zealand in December, 1974. Mark would not have known that we had moved from Fiji. When in New Zealand my wife and I made extensive inquiries in an effort to locate Mark but to no avail. Our next knowledge of his whereabouts came about the middle of 1975 when I received a telephone call from my previous place of employment in Fiji. Mark was there and I spoke with him. As a result of this he flew to New Zealand and he came and stayed with us for a couple of days. At this time he looked very well, clean, neat and tidy. Mark told us that he was unable to stay for more than a couple of days as he had an appointment in Brisbane. He did not tell us what the appointment was about, nor were we able to find out where he had been working or what he had been doing. I drove him to Christchurch where he caught a flight to

Witness: _____

Signature: _____

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STATEMENT (continued) in matter of: Inquest concerning Mart STEWART @ SPANSWICK.Name: John SPANSWICK

(Surname in capitals)

Brisbane. Prior to him leaving I implored him to send a card to his mother when he arrived and to write occasionally. We only received one card from Brisbane within a few days of him arriving there and it only said that he had arrived safely, got a job and everything was O.K. That was the last we heard of him.

I was not aware that Mark had changed his name by Deed Poll from Spanswick to Mark Stewart but I can only assume that he did this in an effort to avoid detection by the New Zealand Navy. I have no idea of what he did whilst in Australia or where he may have lived.

I have been informed that he was found on rocks in the Fairy Bower, North Head area. Mark did know this area fairly well as we had holidayed in Manly on at least three occasions from Fiji, and would have been here for periods of up to 6-7 weeks each time. Mark loved the walk around by Shelley Beach to Fairy Bower and he loved climbing rocks, and going for walks. I cannot offer any reason or explanation as to why he would be there at that time of the day nor is there anything to my knowledge that would cause him to take his own life.

About 11.45am on the 28th. May, 1976 I attended the City Morgue, Parramatta Road, Glebe where I saw and identified the deceased as my son Mark Spanswick also known as Mark Stewart, to Constable Ure.

Witness: Signature: 