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\$100,000 reward to find killers of AC/DC manager Crispin Dye

Rick Feneley and Megan Levy

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Jean Dye is 91, so the \$100,000 reward for information leading to her son's killers - almost 21 years after he was brutally bashed and robbed - has not come soon enough.

Crispin Dye was a long-term manager of the Australian rock greats AC/DC and worked with the Easybeats and Rose Tattoo.



Reward for information: Crispin Dye died in 1993 after being bashed in Little Oxford Street, near Taylor Square.

He was also a singer-songwriter and had been out celebrating the release of his own CD, *A Heart Like Mine*, in Surry Hills and Darlinghurst on the night that three young men of Pacific Islander appearance were seen standing over him in Little Oxford Street, near Taylor Square, about 4.30am on December 23, 1993.

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Dye had been bashed, robbed of his wallet and left lying unconscious. He died two days later - on Christmas Day - in St George Hospital in Sydney. A coronial inquest was held in 1995, but no charges have ever been laid.

Now, NSW Police Minister Stuart Ayers has announced a \$100,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for his death.

"There are people out there who know those responsible for Mr Dye's death and we're hoping this reward may prompt them to get in touch with police," Detective Superintendent Mick Willing, the commander of the Homicide Squad, said.

Police files at the time had listed the attack on Dye as a possible gay-hate crime following a spate of assaults and murders of homosexual men in the preceding years. However, at a press conference on Wednesday, Superintendent Willing, while confirming that Dye was gay, said "all the circumstances" pointed to robbery as the motive for the attack, given there were other attacks around the same time by people matching the description of the suspects.

Jean Dye told Fairfax Media last year she was not convinced that gay-hate was the motive, although she could not rule it out.



Crispin Dye pictured with Malcolm Young from AC/DC.

He had many girlfriends, his mother said, though he had told her: "People say I'm gay, Mum, but I don't know what I am."

After the inquest, a policeman had told Mrs Dye that a prisoner had been captured in a secret recording saying that he had "knocked off" Dye. But that lead came to nothing.

Mrs Dye was then unhappy to learn that a police reward for information had long since lapsed. "Somebody out there knows what happened," she said.

Her son's case featured in a Fairfax Media series a year ago on the unsolved murders of about 30 men who former police gay liaison officer Sue Thompson and criminologist Stephen Tomsen believed might fit into the gay-hate category.

But Superintendent Willing said: "We assessed those 30 or so cases and we are able to definitively say that, of the 30 cases, eight of them involve some sort of gay-hate bias."

Ms Thompson responded: "Perhaps we are talking about differing definitions of what is a gay-hate homicide. It is one thing to say that eight cases are definitively gay-hate homicides but another to say that the remaining 20-something cases are definitively not gay-hate homicides.

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"It is possible that the police nowadays have a more narrow definition than they did when I was there.

"The list of gay-hate homicides that I compiled for 1989-1999 was thoroughly reviewed by the Australian Institute of Criminology [AIC] using their National Homicide Monitoring Program data. "They verified 37 cases as gay-hate homicides in that 10-year period alone. Eight cases remain unsolved from that 10-year period.

"Professor Stephen Tomsen conducted a six-year study into 20 years of gay-hate homicides from 1980-1999. He identified 74 cases over that 20 years. I can't say at this moment exactly how many of those remain unsolved."

Superintendent Willing also revealed rewards had been approved and would be announced, pending consultation with the coroner, for some gay-hate killings.

Last year he told Fairfax Media that rewards would be considered following reviews of three deaths of gay men on the Bondi-Tamarama cliffs in the late 1980s, which police had dismissed as accidents or unexplained disappearances but which Coroner Jacqueline Milledge found in 2005 were murders.

She found John Russell, 31, was thrown to his death from a cliff at Marks Park in Bondi and that the police investigation had been "naive" and "lacklustre"; that missing television newsreader Ross Warren, 25, died the same way and that the police inquiry had been "grossly inadequate and shameful"; and that missing Frenchman and Bondi resident Gilles Mattaini, 34, was likely murdered in the same fashion.

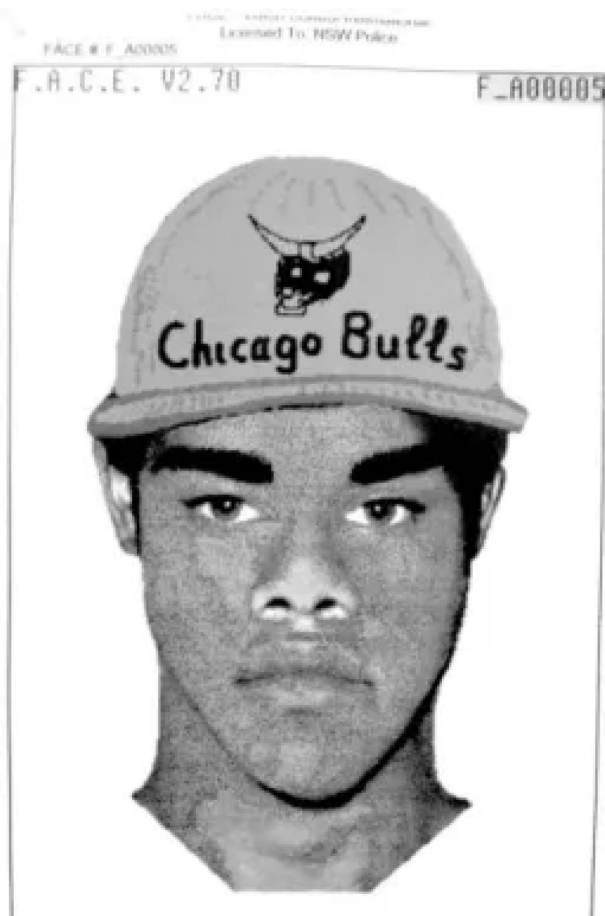
The president of the victims' help group Support After Murder, Peter Rolfe, told Wednesday's news conference that he knew Crispin Dye well as a "fun-loving" man.

"His mother is very frail and she is just hoping that this will be solved and she can have some peace."

Dye had spent seven years managing AC/DC, during which he helped the group become one of the world's biggest rock bands.

A gold record he received for his work on the band's 1985 album, *Fly on the Wall*, hung in the lounge room of his winter home in Cairns at the time of his death. He lived the remaining half of the year with his mother in Willoughby.

On the night he was attacked, Dye had left Gilligan's nightclub at Taylor Square about 1am to go to the nearby Flinders Hotel. He was last seen there about 3am before going to the



A NSW Police identikit image, released at the time, of one of the suspects in the 1993 killing of Crispin Dye.

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Courthouse Hotel, where he was refused service by bar staff shortly after 4am. He was found unconscious in Little Oxford Street about 4.35am suffering major head injuries. A witness told police he saw three men, aged in their late teens to early 20s and possibly of Pacific Islander appearance, standing over Dye and rifling through his wallet as he lay bleeding in the dark lane, before they ran north towards Goulburn Street.

Two of the men were wearing baggy long pants and T-shirts, while the third man was dressed in baggy knee-length shorts, a white T-shirt, joggers with white socks and a dark baseball cap.

Police have urged anyone with information to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or visit the Crime Stoppers online reporting page.



The cover of Dye's album, *A Heart Like Mine*, released under the stage name Cris Kemp. He was out celebrating its release the night he was attacked.