

**INQUIRY INTO UNSOLVED MURDERS AND LONG-TERM
MISSING PERSONS CASES IN NEW SOUTH WALES
BETWEEN 1965 AND 2010**

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Partially
Confidential

Submission in relation to Jeanette Marie Hannington

I am writing to you regarding Jeanette Marie Hannington. You will note that Jeanette is listed on the parliamentary published list of unsolved murders which the house is reviewing.

I am making a submission as Jeanette's first cousin, and I wanted to share Jeanette's story. A story the world does not want to hear about. There are only a handful of public references regarding this terrible crime.

Jeanette was a 14 year old schoolgirl who was raped and murdered in 1973. Jeanette's body was found at Grays Point, Gympie, Sydney on Sunday the 28th of September 1973. The last sighting of Jeanette was the evening before at 10.50pm.

Throughout my submission you will hear about a common theme as to how Jeanette has been let down since her brutal death. I would like the house to consider possible failings in the system. From the dreadful Coroner insult and the lack of enthusiasm in solving her murder by the system, in so far as key evidence of semen samples were misplaced by NSW police.

I am hoping that Jeanette's story will be heard with the hope that one day this dreadful murder will be solved.

Who was Jeanette?

My father and Jeanette's father are brothers. Jeanette and I shared beloved grandparents.

Jeanette and I are cousins. I never met Jeanette so I cannot tell you firsthand what she was like, but what I have heard is that she was wonderful, funny, bright, creative and most of all loved.

Jeanette was born in the UK and emigrated to Sydney Australia with her parents, brother and sister. Jeanette's wider family, including myself are UK based.

Jeanette was a 14-year-old catholic schoolgirl, a keen horsewoman. She was from a good family. My family.

From a very early age I have always known about what happened to Jeanette. I think from the age of 6 I understood the words and concepts of murder and serial killer.

When Milat was arrested in the 90s there was a glimmer of hope that Jeanette's murder could be solved. But this wasn't the case. Jeanette's murder has been an evil presence in my family for the last 50 years. She is often remembered and is loved.

I always remember at my grandparents' house in London, they had cherished photographs of all of their grandchildren on the side of each wall and Jeanette's photograph was in the centre of the wall. In prize position. In memory to their darling granddaughter. The photograph of Jeanette that hung on my grandparents feature wall for over 20 years is attached as Appendix 1.

Jeanette was a beautiful young girl with spirit who had her whole life ahead of her and she deserves justice.

Jeanette didn't do anything to deserve this, horrific end. Jeanette was innocent and suffered greatly in death and after her death and in my opinion, Jeanette has been let down.

This is Jeanette's story.

Coroner's Report

Jeanette's name was tarnished in the City Coroners report. Please see the link below:

<https://share.google/knYvRKKouTQtinB5T>

As you will note there is an abundance of victim shaming by a public official. The Coroner Mr Goldsmith said that Jeanette had "gone her own way" and had a "foolhardy belief" in her ability to look after herself. It also negatively said she was in defiance of parental discipline. Jeanette was not a fool she was just walking home. Jeanette had snuck out of her bedroom at night to meet friends something she had frequently done, but whatever she did being abducted and murdered wasn't her fault. She didn't deserve to be raped and murdered and discarded in a creek.

Lack of public exposure of Jeanette's unsolved murder by the police

Jeanette's name has been silenced. There are only a handful of online resources about Jeanette's awful murder. A Facebook post, a coroner's report and a couple of newspaper links from the time and a newspaper article in 2017 where key evidence was lost by NSW police.

If you search Jeanette Hannington online there isn't any reference of this brutal crime national or NSW police website.

The committee is reviewing how the police are solving murders. How can Jeanette's murder have a chance of being solved if no one knows her name or what happened to her. How can Jeanette's murder ever be solved or linked to another murder/serial killer if the facts or information about this crime are not publicly available. It's as though before the committees review that this terrible crime didn't happen.

1973 Newspaper article

Please see the newspaper article attached as Appendix 2. It is very apparent that policing was very limited in 1973, The advances in digital or forensic science of today may have made it possible to solve now but not in 1973. The police did remarkably interview over 500 people. It is unknown if these statements are still held or whether names have been cross referenced to other unsolved murders.

The newspaper at the time makes reference to a possible abduction site at Searl Road.

Is there a possibility that there is a geographical similarity to another local unsolved murder? I do have newspaper articles where Bronwyn Richardson's tragic murder is also reported on the same page. Could this or any other crimes be connected? Unfortunately, this is unknown as there isn't any record on any police or government website to remind people of this or ask for specific information/details of this dreadful crime.

Telegraph newspaper article reporting lost DNA evidence.

In 2017 it was publicly announced in the Telegraph newspaper that key DNA evidence was misplaced. Unfortunately, the evidence from Jeanette's crime scene was misplaced.

There were apparent semen samples taken from Jeanette's crime scene and in today's advances in DNA evidence, her murder may have been solved if this was available. It is very frustrating that crucial evidence has been misplaced. How does this happen? Is there any possibility that evidence could be recovered.

Red heart Facebook Campaign and Removed comments

There is a Redheart Facebook campaign and over the years people have commented on the post. There was a post that did stick out although it has since been deleted. A screenshot of the post was taken before this was removed and this was forwarded to me - if required I can ask the lady that forwarded the message to me to contact you. I am not sure if there is any substance to this man's hearsay comments, but I believe should be investigated further. An extract of the post is attached as Appendix 3.

If these comments are true, how can the person posting be encouraged to be report this to the police if the crime itself isn't commonly known.

One post within the Redheart campaign said they believe that the _____ were responsible for Jeanette's death.

_____ would have been Jeanette's age bracket and there is a reference to a Holden car in the deleted post by _____

Is it possible that the _____ could be involved?

Recommendations for committee

There are a considerable high reported number of unsolved murders or missing persons in NSW, spanning from the 1960s to today.

I do believe that Milat was responsible for a considerable number of these deaths but not all. It would be naive to think any different with the sheer volume of murders. There is an issue and there should be an easily accessible national database where all public information is shared regarding a cold case.

The considerable number of murders should be high priority. There should be common place for information to be reviewed or shared.

If I am able to do so I would like to attend the committee hearing because I want Jeanette to be remembered and for someone to try and seek justice. There has to be change. There should be a public official online page reporting all unsolved murders.

Jeremy Buckingham has opened your eyes. The system needs to follow and try to seek justice to the end does not give up. I hope that Jeannet's murder will be investigated and one day solved.

If you do need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Louise Eccott (I wish to be contacted and permission given before my name is publicly shared)