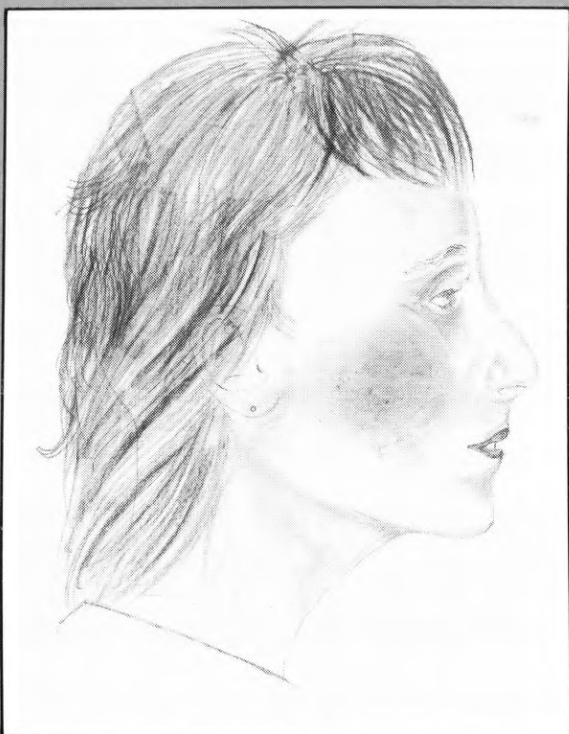


MURDERED WOMAN

DO YOU KNOW HER?



• A retouched photo of the dead woman.



• Artist's sketch of the dead woman's profile.

by Philip Castle

AT the time of publication, ACT Region detectives were still trying to identify a naked woman found strangled near the popular Cotter River reserve at about 4 pm on Sunday 25 January of the Australia Day long weekend.

Despite many promising leads her identity remains a mystery. Detective Senior Sergeant Don Bailey is in charge of the case. He said the best chance was now through her dental records. Investigating police believe she may have been visiting Canberra from interstate or possibly from overseas.

The attractive slim built woman aged in her late teens or early twenties was found by sightseers, face down in some rocks about 5 metres down an embankment, at a lookout about 2 kilometres from the Cotter Reserve on the Brindabella Road. It was apparent she had been manually strangled and left somewhere else before being dumped. She had been sexually assaulted using unnatural acts.

Detective Chief Inspector Rick Ninness of the Canberra CIB said that until her identity was known it was difficult to establish where she had been attacked and murdered. He said there could be a link with two other young women missing in the ACT and two unsolved local murders. He appealed for anyone to come forward with any information.

She was about 5' 7" (169cm) tall, with blonde to light shoulder-length hair, blue-green eyes, and was wearing silver plated stud earrings in pierced ears with clear purple imitation stone. She had been dead between 14 to 24 hours. Her most likely time of murder was on Saturday night.

"Her naked body appeared to have been rolled out from a blue and green tartan rug and left about five metres down an embankment," Detective Chief Inspector Rick Ninness said.

"Investigating police believe it is a case of a decent girl who has been outraged.

"Our medical examinations have been extensive and show that she was in good health before her death, had well manicured hands, was slim and was an attractive young woman.

"When found she was wearing two earrings. She had been manually strangled. After her death she had been left for some time on her back before her body was dumped near the look-out. It is also apparent that she had been sexually attacked using unnatural acts. Since then despite extensive inquiries locally and interstate using a number of leads police have not established her identity.

"On Friday, January 30, police found a pair of black shoes on the Brindabella Road, two kilometres from the body's location which we believe almost certainly came from the dead woman.

"We have had her fingerprints checked and her dental work is being checked with every dentist in Canberra. Dental charts are being circulated throughout

Australia. We are also checking any links to her blood group, A(RH)+, which is somewhat unusual. Police have conducted over 300 inquiries in this case and all have so far proven to be fruitless.

"While we are not totally discounting that she was a local woman we would have thought some one locally would have reported her missing by now.

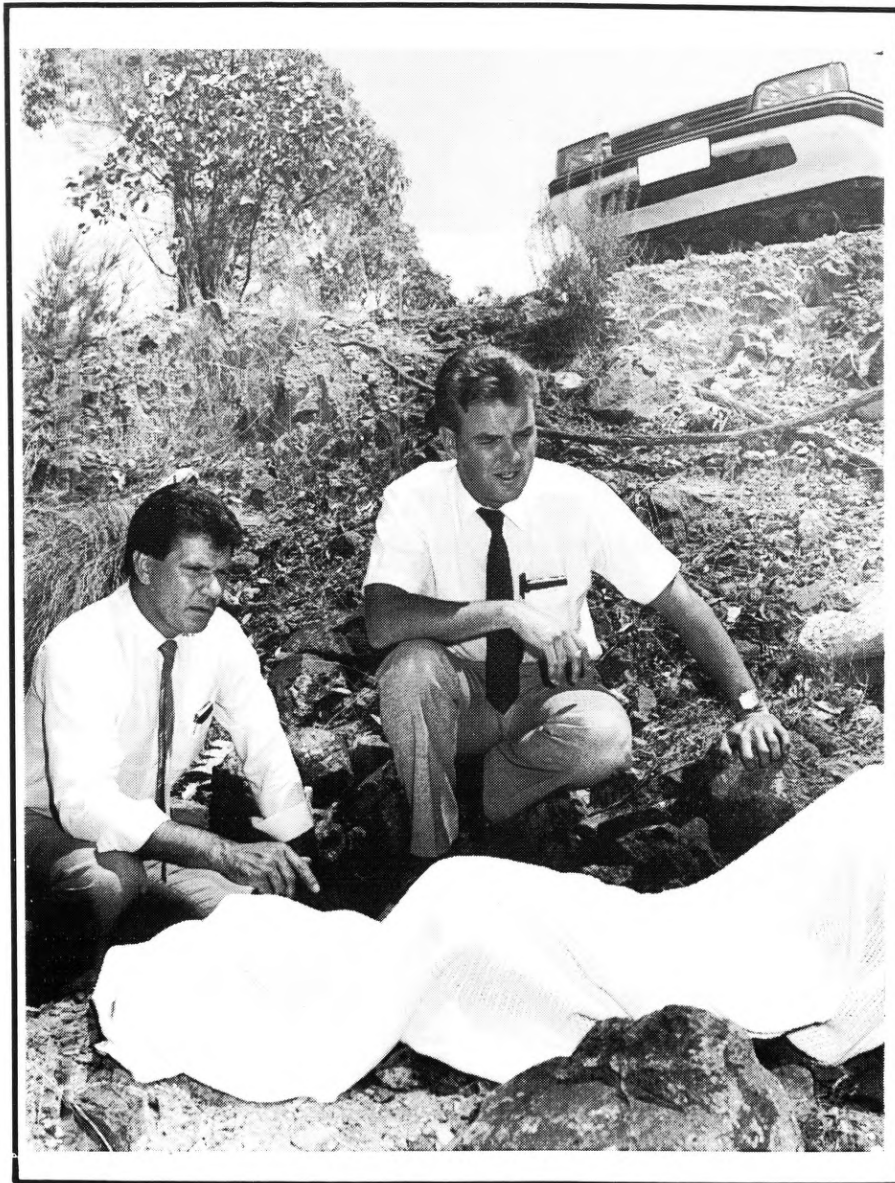
"It is quite possible that she was from interstate or even overseas. We have asked other police forces and Interpol to assist and they have been most cooperative but so far nothing firm.

Detective Sergeant Bailey said, "She seemed to be a lady who kept herself well presented. She appeared not to be the average tearaway".

Detective Chief Inspector Ninness said that police had not discounted a link between her murder and the disappearance of 17 year-old Megan Mulquiney at the Woden Shopping Square on 28 July 1984, Elizabeth Herfort, 18, last seen on Friday 13 June 1980 in Civic and the murders of Keren Rowland, 20, in February 1971 and of Mary Bertram, 27, found in New South Wales on the Sutton Road near the ACT border and believed murdered, possibly on 31 March 1974.

Anyone with any information, particularly if anyone recognises the young woman, should contact the AFP on 062-497444 or their nearest police station.

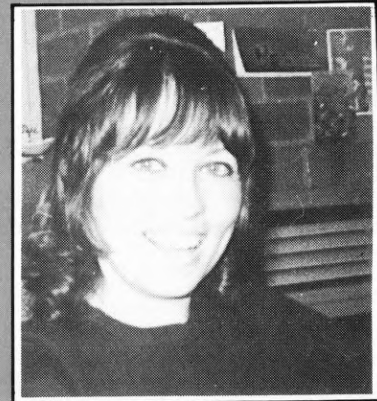
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• Detective Senior Sergeant Don Baily (left) and Detective Senior Constable Warren Williamson examine the scene where the murdered woman's body was found.



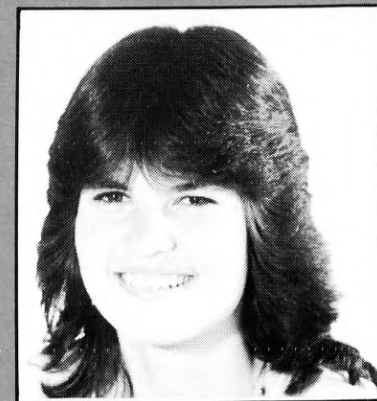
• Mary Bertram — murdered



• Keren Rowland — murdered



• Elizabeth Herfort — missing



• Megan Mulquiney — missing