

News

SOMERTON MAN

The Somerton Man, one of South Australia's most intriguing cold cases, is back in the news. Researchers believe they are one step closer to identifying a man found dead on Adelaide's Somerton Beach in 1948.



At the time, SA Police were unable to put a name to the victim or ascertain how he died. A coded message, which has never been cracked, may contain clues to his identity and the reason for his death.

In November 2013, Rachel Egan told "60 Minutes" that she believes the Somerton Man was her grandfather, who had an affair with her grandmother, Jessica Thomson, who lived close to where the body was found. Jessica Thomson's phone number was found written in a book belonging to the victim, along with the code message, but when questioned by police at the time, she denied knowing the man.

Her daughter, Kate Thomson, who also appeared on the program, said that her mother confessed that she did know the identity of the man.

Professor Derek Abbott, who has reinvestigated the case, says the dead man's ears and teeth have an unmistakable familial link to Rachel Egan's father, who was the product of the affair between the Somerton Man and Jessica Thomson.

Professor Abbott is currently lobbying the South Australian Government to have the Somerton Man's body exhumed for DNA testing. In a letter to the South Australian Attorney-General, he suggested, "The imperative to identify this unknown man is on par with the current practice of identifying unidentified WWI and WWII graves for the bringing of closure to their families, and there is a considerable general public interest in the case to do so."

SUBURBAN NOIR

The Museum of Sydney is presenting a new exhibition - Suburban Noir - which explores the raw, half-built Sydney of the 1950s and early 60s through recently uncovered crime-scene images from the NSW Police Forensic Photography Archive, as well as contemporary artworks. The exhibition breaks with the tradition of presenting Sydney as a visual splendour, finding instead a more reserved city. The police photographs capture the spaces left behind: a moody catalogue of vacant lots, empty roads, desolate interiors and everyday fragments of life in these hard-bitten slices of Sydney.

The Museum of Sydney is located at the corner of Phillip and Bridge Streets, Sydney.

<http://www.hht.net.au/museums/mos>