

Cold case review to reinvestigate Corryn Rayney murder

EIGHT years after mother-of-two Corryn Rayney was found buried upside down in a family park, police are hoping “a fresh pair of eyes” might solve her murder.



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Corryn Rayney was found dead in August 2007.

EIGHT years after mother-of-two Corryn Rayney was found buried upside down in a family park, police are hoping a fresh review led by “a fresh pair of eyes” might finally be able to determine what happened to the Perth legal figure.

Mrs Rayney, a Supreme Court registrar leading a seemingly comfortable life in Perth, disappeared on August 7, 2007 after attending her weekly bootscooting class.

Her car was found abandoned a week later and a trail of oil from the vehicle led police to her shallow grave.



Bush grave ... the Kings Park site where Corryn Rayney's body was found.

In the bushland of Kings Park, Mrs Rayney's body was found buried head down, her dancing boots damaged from apparently being dragged along the ground.

Detectives were unable to determine a cause of death at the time, but they had only one suspect — Mrs Rayney's high profile barrister husband.

Lloyd Rayney and his wife had been going through a bitter marriage breakdown. They had been sleeping in separate rooms and had been due to discuss their divorce on the night she disappeared. She was found dead nine days later.

Despite being named as the police's sole suspect, it took three years before they eventually charged him with her murder. He was eventually acquitted after a trial in 2012 and a subsequent appeal was dismissed.



Former Perth barrister Lloyd Rayney has called for a review.

But that wasn't the end of it. Police then charged Mr Rayney with tapping the family home to listen in on his wife's conversations.

A separate trial revealed the pair exchanged accusatory and uncivil emails after their marriage soured, but Mr Rayney was ultimately acquitted of the fresh charges just last week.

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Despite twice being cleared, he is still being targeted. While on trial for phone tapping, his home was egged and a dead crow left on his driveway — the ninth such incident.

Mr Rayney believes he has been treated unfairly and has lodged a multimillion-dollar defamation claim after being named the prime and only suspect in his wife's murder.

In a [TV documentary aired late last year](#), Mr Rayney described the events since his wife's death as "a nightmare" for himself and the couple's two daughters.

"The impact ... was felt by me immediately in every different way imaginable, professionally, personally, every aspect of my family's life," Mr Rayney said.

"Seven years on, the impact is still there."

He has repeatedly called for a cold case review conducted by independent investigators, and today Western Australia police announced a review would go ahead, reinvestigating Corryn Rayney's now eight-year-old murder.



Police commissioner Karl O'Callaghan announced the cold case review today.

WA Police Commissioner Karl O'Callaghan confirmed he has ordered a review of the death of Mrs Rayney.

“The main aim is to find out who killed Corryn Rayney for her loved ones and for her family,” Mr O’Callaghan told reporters in Perth.

Alternative theories to previously emerge [include a possible sex attack](#), after it was revealed Mrs Rayney was found buried with her fly undone, her belt removed and her shirt torn.

Former British detective and forensic expert Robin Napper, who worked with Mr Rayney’s defence team, has said that two violent criminals who lived near the Rayneys at the time of the murder should have been investigated as thoroughly as Mr Rayney himself was.

He said one man had convictions for assault and indecent assault but was not interviewed for four months and another man had convictions for sex attacks on a girl aged 11 and a woman, 29. One of the pair had been pulled over by police in the vicinity of the Rayney home on the night Mrs Rayney disappeared.

During the murder trial it was revealed a cigarette butt found on the verge outside the Rayneys’ Como home contained the man’s DNA.



An alternative theory includes a possible sexually-motivated attack on Mrs Rayney.

Assistant Commissioner Gary Budge has been appointed to head a new team of investigators, recruited from interstate and overseas to conduct the review.

“I have chosen to act now irrespective of legal advice as this is an important matter for us to try to resolve for Corryn Rayney’s family and loved ones,” Mr O’Callaghan said.

Mr Rayney’s lawyer Martin Bennett has also called for an independent inquiry into the original investigation.

“I really do think it can be solved,” Mr Rayney said last year.

“The name doesn’t matter, call it a cold case, call it whatever you want but there needs to be an investigation conducted.

“Not by the same investigators who stuffed this up. It needs to be new blood, new people with sufficient experience to get it right ... They owed it to my children.

“They owed it to everybody that knew and loved Corryn and they didn’t do it, and I find that really hard to forgive, all of the things that they should have done and didn’t do.”

The new investigation team will be independent from the previous one and will report directly to Mr O’Callaghan.



Corryn Rayney was found dead in August 2007.