

THURSDAY JANUARY 20th 2005

SUMMING UP DUE IN SARAH CAMPBELL INQUEST – DEATH IN HMP STYAL

HM Coroner Mr N L Rheinberg

Sitting at:

Warrington Town Hall,
Sankey Street,
Warrington,
Cheshire,
WA1 1UH

At 10 am on Friday 21 January the coroner in the Sarah Campbell inquest is expected to begin his summing up of two weeks of evidence.

The inquest has heard evidence from a total of 39 witnesses.

A press conference will be held at the conclusion of the inquest with Pauline Campbell, Sarah's mother and Deborah Coles co-director of INQUEST.

Note to Editors

Sarah Campbell was an 18-year-old woman who died on 18 January 2003 while in the care and custody of Styal prison. She had a long history of mental health problems which were well known to HMP Styal and at the time of her death she was on suicide watch. Sarah had also been a drug user since the age of 16, though she had been drug-free for eight months at the time of her death. She had been on remand in Styal for six months and then spent two months on bail living with her mother. On 17 January 2003 she was sentenced and returned to Styal. The following day she is believed to have swallowed a large amount of prescription tablets and was taken unconscious to hospital where she died later that evening.

Sarah was one of six women in HMP Styal to die in a twelve-month period between August 2002 and August 2003. Prison Inspectorate reports on Styal prison have identified systemic failings in the treatment and care of women withdrawing from drugs and this inquest will again raise concerns about the treatment and care of women with drug and mental health problems.

Pauline Campbell will be represented by INQUEST Lawyers Group members Richard Hermer, Doughty Street Chambers instructed by Mark Scott, Bhatt Murphy, Solicitors.

INQUEST is working with a number of families of the women who died at HMP Styal and continues to be shocked by the rising death toll of women in prison. Last year there were 13 self-inflicted deaths of women in prison. In 2003 there were 14 self-inflicted deaths of women in prison.

INQUEST is the only non-governmental organisation in England and Wales that works directly with the families of those who die in custody. It provides an independent free legal and advice service to bereaved people on inquest procedures and their rights in the coroner's courts.

Deaths of Women in HMP Styal August 2002 - August 2003							
Name	Classification	Establishment	Ethnicity	Age	Status	Cause	Date Of Death
Julie Bernadette Walsh	Self-Inflicted	HMP Styal	UK White	39	Convicted	Overdose	12/08/2003
Hayley Williams	Self-Inflicted	HMP Styal	UK White	41	Convicted	Hanging	04/06/2003
Jolene Willis	Self-Inflicted	HMP Styal	UK White	25	Convicted	Hanging	20/04/2003
Sarah Campbell	Self-Inflicted	HMP Styal	UK White	18	Convicted	Overdose	18/01/2003
Anna Baker	Self-Inflicted	HMP Styal	UK Black	29	Remanded	Hanging	26/11/2002
Nissa Ann Smith	Self-Inflicted	HMP Styal	UK White	20	Remanded	Hanging	10/08/2002

Source: INQUEST Casework and monitoring