

MORE ANCIENT BONES FOUND

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Another ancient Aboriginal thigh bone has been found on a Tasmanian beach, this time in a rock pool at Carlton Beach.

It's the second time in just two weeks a coroner has reported the extraordinary discovery of pre-European human remains on the Tasmanian coastline – albeit not without controversy.

On April 24, a coroner reported a left and right femur and a right radius bone had been found by a fisherman at the Shank, near Low Rocky Point, back in 2016.

In 2023, scientific testing revealed the bones belonged to an Aboriginal person who was alive between 772 and 890AD.

When the coroner released his findings last month, [Tasmanian Aboriginal leader Nala Mansell reacted with fury, saying the Aboriginal community should have been contacted “immediately” back in 2016.](#)

She lashed authorities for taking the remains away from their homeland and for subjecting them to scientific testing without community permission.

Regarding the new discovery, Coroner Simon Cooper said a left femur was found at Carlton Beach by a member of the public in July 2022.

He said the thigh bone was handed in to police at Sorell, with a coronial investigation then taking place.

Forensic anthropologist Anne-Marie Williams noted the bone was “very weathered” from long exposure to the water and environment – and that it was impossible to determine the person’s sex or ancestry.

She said the person would have died “at least 10 years ago”, and likely decades earlier.

Mr Cooper said at that point, further identification or cause of death was impossible to determine.

He said the bone was tested to see if it matched any missing persons in

Tasmania, but it did not.

In September that year, it was tested in the national laboratory of the National DNA Program for Unidentified and Missing Persons, with radiocarbon testing finding the bone actually dated back to between 772 to 991AD.

Mr Cooper said he received the updated information last Thursday and immediately referred the matter to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre.

Ms Mansell has been contacted for comment.