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Victoria Police Renew Hunt for 1974 Rape Fugitive

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– Categories: Crime



Victoria Police have launched a fresh appeal for information to locate George Karakis, a man wanted for more than 50 years over the rape of a woman in her Fitzroy home in 1974.

The then 30-year-old victim was asleep when she was awoken in the early hours of 22 July 1974 and attacked by a stranger in her bedroom. Police arrested and charged Karakis, then 27, with rape, burglary and indecent assault nine days later.

Karakis was granted bail on a \$1,000 surety provided by his wife and was due to face the Fitzroy Magistrates' Court on 9 October 1974. However, he failed to appear and has been on the run ever since.

Originally from Turkey, Karakis required a Greek interpreter during his police interview. He was last recorded as living in Gore Street, Fitzroy, with his wife, sister and brother-in-law. He was described at the time as about 162 centimetres tall, with brown eyes and a 2-centimetre scar above his left eyebrow.

Police believed they had tracked him to Sydney's eastern suburbs in 1990, but he escaped before a warrant could be served. A further appeal in 2015 also failed to locate him.

Now aged 78, Karakis's original 1974 mug shot is being released alongside a digitally generated image showing what he might look like today.

Detective Senior Constable Ruby Roberts from the Yarra Crime Investigation Unit said the case continues to weigh heavily on the victim, now in her 80s.

"Our victim survivor has been forced to live most of her adult life knowing this man has not faced court for the brutal crime he is accused of," she said.

"This crime changed her life forever, and 50 years is a long time to live without the justice we would so dearly like to give her.

"There will absolutely be people out there who know where Karakis fled and may even know where he is now residing. Given the length of time, there is also the possibility he has passed away – we just want to find answers so we can close this chapter in our victim's life."

Police are urging anyone with information on Karakis's whereabouts or fate to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or submit a confidential report online.