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Convicted Killer Bradley John Murdoch Dies at 67, Taking Secrets to the Grave

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Bradley John Murdoch, the man responsible for one of Australia's most notorious murders, has died at the age of 67 following a battle with terminal throat cancer. His death brings an end to a dark chapter in Australian criminal history, although the most haunting question remains unanswered: the location of British backpacker Peter Falconio's body.

Murdoch was convicted in 2005 for the murder of 28-year-old Falconio and had been serving a life sentence at Alice Springs Correctional Centre. Diagnosed with terminal cancer in 2019, he was transferred to palliative care at Alice Springs Hospital last month and died

overnight. Despite years of investigation, Falconio's remains were never found. Murdoch carried that knowledge with him to the grave.

The crime occurred on July 14, 2001, along a remote stretch of the Stuart Highway, roughly 208 kilometers north of Alice Springs. Falconio and his girlfriend, Joanne Lees, were backpacking across Australia in a Volkswagen Kombi van when they encountered Murdoch. He flagged them down, falsely claiming their vehicle was sparking. When Falconio stepped out to investigate, Murdoch pulled a gun and shot him. He then abducted Lee, restraining her with cable ties and forcing her into his Toyota Land Cruiser.

Lees managed a miraculous escape, hiding for hours in the sparse desert scrub before she was able to flag down a passing truck. Her survival and testimony were critical to Murdoch's conviction.

Murdoch was later arrested after forensic evidence, including DNA found on Lee's clothing, linked him to the attack. During the trial, prosecutors described how Murdoch likely disposed of Falconio's body somewhere along the vast, rugged stretch of land between Alice Springs and Broome, a distance of nearly 2,000 kilometers.

Chief Justice Brian Martin of the Northern Territory Supreme Court described the ordeal as "close to the worst nightmare imaginable" and emphasized the terror inflicted on Lees. Murdoch received a life sentence with a non-parole period of 28 years.

Former NT Police Assistant Commissioner John Daulby once said, "The case isn't closed until they find Peter," underlining the lasting grief experienced by Falconio's family and the enduring mystery surrounding the crime.

While Murdoch's death may close the legal file, it does not end the emotional toll or the unanswered questions. The Falconio case remains a stark reminder of the risks in Australia's remote regions and the chilling possibilities that still exist in its vast and unforgiving landscapes