



CORONERS INQUESTS



Graham Bailey of Stratford Sub Castle

Helicopter Display 'Endangered Crowd'

Four helicopters taking part in a flying display should not have flown over the heads of a crowd at a regatta, a policeman told the Christchurch, Hants, Coroner, yesterday.

PC Ian Millis was giving evidence on one of the pilots, who died when two of the helicopters crashed at Christchurch.

"The collision could have occurred directly above the crowd with considerable loss of life." he said.

A verdict of misadventure was returned on Mr. Graham Bailey aged 22, of Shakespeare Road, Stratford Sub Castle, Salisbury, Wiltshire.

He was a civilian coach with the Blue Eagle helicopter team.

PC Millis who was off duty at the time, said "The team had completed the display and began their final fly past directly over the crowd at a height of not more than 300ft. As they passed over me in diamond formation the rearmost pilot appeared to have engine trouble and dropped four to six feet. The blades of his rotor touched the blades of his companions on the right hand side"

The helicopters crashed into gardens of houses a short distance from the 5,000 crowd. One house was damaged.

PC Millis added "In my opinion the helicopters should not have passed over the crowds as in this tragic crash.

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