**Beat: Travel**

# 2 Australian men arrested 40 years after triple homicide

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**USPA News -** Police in northeastern Australia have arrested two elderly men on suspicion of rape and murder in connection with the disappearance of a Queensland mom and her two young daughters more than 40 years ago, officials announced on Saturday. Barbara McCulkin, 34, and her two daughters, Vicky and Leanne, ages 13 and 11, were last seen at their home in Highgate Hill, a suburb of Brisbane, on January 16, 1974. They were reported missing by the mother`s estranged husband, gangster Billy McCulkin, on January 19 after they failed to make arrangements with friends on January 17. Although the family has never been found, authorities have long believed that they were murdered.

Two men, a 76-year-old man from Warwick and a 67-year-old man from Torbanlea, were arrested on Saturday morning after a renewed investigation was launched in January and uncovered "compelling new evidence" about the case. Both men were charged with three counts of murder, three counts of deprivation of liberty and two counts of rape, police said. "This has been a full and thorough investigation and review. Many investigators and specialist police over the years have contributed to the evidence in support of these arrests and we are pleased with today`s arrests," Detective Superintendent Steve Holahan said. "The renewed investigation and use of coercive powers has gathered significant evidence without which the arrests would not have been possible." Numerous people believed to have information or evidence were called to a series of Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) hearings earlier this year, resulting in the execution of search warrants at two rural properties in the Warwick area in August. Detectives also interviewed witnesses across Queensland, New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria over the past few months. Police have released few details about the evidence that led to Saturday`s arrests, but investigators said earlier this year that they had identified several possible motives. "Barbara McCulkin may have had knowledge about serious crimes and the young McCulkin girls may have been sexually assaulted," Holahan said in August. One theory is that the mother may have had information about the firebombings of two nightclubs in 1973, including one at the Whiskey Au Go Go nightclub in Brisbane in which 15 people died. The two men arrested on Saturday, whose names were not immediately released, are expected to appear in court on Monday.

**Article online:**
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