

MAGISTRATES COURT *of* TASMANIA

CORONIAL DIVISION

Record of Investigation into Death (Without Inquest)

*Coroners Act 1995
Coroners Rules 2006
Rule 11*

I, Robert Webster, Coroner, having investigated the death of Jake Daniel Anderson-Brettner

Find, pursuant to Section 28(1) of the Coroners Act 1995, that

- a) The identity of the deceased is Jake Daniel Anderson-Brettner (Mr Anderson-Brettner);
- b) Mr Anderson-Brettner died as a result of homicide at the hands of Jack Harrison Vincent Sadler;
- c) Mr Anderson-Brettner' s cause of death was gunshot wounds to the torso; and
- d) Mr Anderson-Brettner died on 15 August 2018 at Riverside in Tasmania.

Introduction

Mr Sadler pleaded not guilty to the crime of murder but was found guilty of that crime by a jury on 20 May 2021. He was sentenced, on 28 May 2021, by Justice Pearce to a period of 32 years' imprisonment and it was ordered he not be eligible for parole until he had served 20 years of that sentence. The sentence was backdated to 18 August 2018 which was the day on which Mr Sadler was taken into custody.

Mr Sadler filed an appeal against that sentence; the single ground being both the head sentence of 32 years and the non-parole period of 20 years were manifestly excessive. That appeal was heard by the Court of Criminal Appeal on 30 August 2022 at which time the Court unanimously dismissed the appeal. The Court of Criminal Appeal published its reasons for dismissing the appeal on 2 September 2022¹.

¹ *Sadler v Tasmania* [2022] TASCCA 9.

Prior to Mr Sadler's trial his then fiancé, Gemma Clark, pleaded guilty to failing to report a killing and to being an accessory after the fact to the murder of Mr Anderson – Brettner. Justice Pearce sentenced Ms Clark to imprisonment for 5 ½ years from 18 August 2018 which was the day she was taken into custody. He also ordered she not be eligible for parole until she had served 3 years of that sentence.

On 13 January 2023 after an enquiry by my associate she was advised the files containing the evidence in this case were in the possession of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions in Launceston. On that day that office was to contact the investigating officer who would retrieve the files and prepare them for submission to this office. The files were received by my office on 11 May 2023. The delay has not been explained. The files consist of in excess of 9 ring binders of evidence. I have considered all of that evidence in making the findings in this case which includes:

- Police Report of Death for the Coroner;
- Subject Report of Detective Sergeant Peter Roberts of the Northern Criminal Investigation Branch of Tasmania Police together with his affidavit;
- Report of the forensic scientist Carl Grosser of Forensic Science Service Tasmania with respect to identity;
- Dental records;
- Affidavit of the forensic pathologist Dr Christopher Lawrence;
- Affidavit of the forensic scientist Ms Miriam Grist of Forensic Science Service Tasmania with respect to toxicology;
- 3 video recorded interviews with Mr Sadler together with transcripts of those interviews;
- 4 video recorded interviews with Ms Gemma Clark together with transcripts of those interviews;
- Video recorded interview with Mr Michael Jenkins together with transcript;
- Video recorded interview with Mr Christopher Fratengelo together with transcript;
- Photographs, forensic evidence, electronic evidence, reports, intelligence and a floor plan;
- Statutory declarations of Ms Katlyn Roney;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Adrian Hall;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Jaiden Clinton;
- Statutory declarations of Mr Thomas Larrissey;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Ashley Tiffin;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Anna Langston;

- Statutory declaration of Mrs Helen Hinds;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Victor Hinds;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Alan Piscioneri;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Brett Scott – Aitken;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Shari – Anne Lockett;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Joye Harris;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Andrew Eastman;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Kirsty Inches;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Raymond Heald;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Caleb Galea;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Jillian Fraser;
- Statutory declaration of Mr James Gluskie;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Zachary Shepherd;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Jamie Myatt;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Shelly Jago;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Matthew Edwards;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Michael Acquarola;
- Statutory declarations of Mr Matthew Barron;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Andrew Waite;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Maxwell Lumsdry;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Phillip Wanders;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Michael Cleaver;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Miriam Flores;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Jasmine Poole;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Iain Perrie;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Daniel Walton;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Tim Kulhanek;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Kara Littlejohn;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Janet Stevenson;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Dwayne Crawford;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Rachel Streets;
- Statutory Declaration of Mr Benjamin Gourlay;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Mitchell Chugg;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Paul Bennett;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Sheryl Deehan;

- Statutory declaration of Detective First-Class Constable Olivia Eldershaw;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Senior Sergeant Craig Fox;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Sergeant Peter Roberts;
- Statutory declarations of Detective Senior Constable Joshua Hayes;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Constable Leighton Riggall;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Senior Constable James Scicluna;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Sergeant Darren Turner;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Constable Jason Bolton;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Sergeant Jonathan Riley;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Senior Sergeant Robert Baker;
- Statutory declarations of Detective Constable Amanda Munro;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Senior Constable Ashley Reinkowsky;
- Statutory declaration of Senior Constable Emma Baker;
- Statutory declaration of Senior Constable Dean Logan;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Senior Constable David Gammon;
- Statutory declaration of Constable Tim Watson;
- Statutory declaration of Senior Constable Skye Carey;
- Statutory declaration of Senior Constable Troy Smith;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Senior Constable Glenn Hindle;
- Statutory declaration of Constable Matthew O'Neil;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Constable Sarah Campbell;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Senior Constable Alison Logan;
- Statutory declaration of Senior Constable Sharee Smith;
- Statutory declaration of Constable Thomas Summers;
- Statutory declaration of Constable Casey Wood;
- Statutory declaration of Constable James Heron;
- Statutory declaration of Constable Veronique Smith;
- Statutory declaration of Sergeant Gavin Chugg;
- Statutory declaration of Senior Constable Gavin Spencer;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Ian Fisher;
- Statutory declaration of Senior Constable Peter McCarron;
- Statutory declaration of Senior Constable Rodney Walker;
- Statutory declarations of Senior Constable Marcus Williams;
- Statutory declaration of Senior Constable Maree Fish;
- Statutory declaration of Tracey Tobin;

- Statutory declarations of Constable Matthew Streat;
- Statutory declarations of Senior Constable Jonathan Frankcombe;
- Statutory declaration of Detective Sergeant Glenn Evans;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Mary- Ann Lang;
- Statutory declaration of Senior Constable Antony Latham;
- Statutory declaration of First Class Constable Giuliano Ercole;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Gemma Clark;
- Statutory declaration of Mr Daniel Mills;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Divinia Hart;
- Statutory declaration of Senior Constable Tracey Lincoln;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Elizabeth Summers;
- Statutory declaration of Ms Jayne Watson;
- Statutory declarations of Senior Constable Donna Stafford;
- Statutory declaration of Senior Constable Simon Taylor; and
- Statutory declaration of First Class Constable Jonathan Morffew.

Background

At the date of his death Mr Anderson-Brettner was aged 24 (DOB 24 October 1993), engaged to Ms Roney and he was employed as a shift worker at Comalco. He had no children. Mr Anderson-Brettner was born in New South Wales. His parents separated when he was young and his mother moved to Tasmania with him and his younger brother. She subsequently moved back to New South Wales however both her sons remained in Tasmania.

Mr Anderson-Brettner and Ms Roney had been in a relationship since in or about 2007 when they met at Queechey High School. They did separate for approximately 2 years from 2013 until 2015 and during that time Mr Anderson-Brettner moved to New South Wales and worked at an abattoir. On his return he resumed his relationship with Ms Roney and they became engaged on Boxing Day 2017.

On 29 April 2018 Mr Anderson-Brettner told Ms Roney he did not know whether he wanted to remain in a relationship with her so she moved out of their house which they had been renting for about 2 years. Neither of them told anyone they had separated and when they subsequently went to the funeral of a good friend, other friends commented on what a great couple they were and it was at that time they decided they needed to be together. Since then Ms Roney said her relationship with Mr Anderson-Brettner was very good. He had made an offer to purchase a property at Youngtown which had been accepted and they went out for dinner to celebrate.

Ms Roney says to her knowledge Mr Anderson-Brettner never suffered from depression and never talked about self-harming. He had no known medical conditions she was aware of. Ms Roney says he had a close group of friends.

Circumstances Surrounding Death

On 15 August 2018 Mr Sattler resided with Ms Clark at a property in Riverside. Mr Anderson-Brettner arranged with Mr Sadler to meet at his house and he arrived at about 7:30 pm. Not long afterwards Mr Anderson-Brettner was taken into a small room in the house which Mr Sadler used to store his shoes. Once inside that room Mr Anderson-Brettner was shot by Mr Sadler with a self-loading pistol with a silencer at least 3 times. Each of the 3 shots entered Mr Anderson-Brettner's upper torso. One shot entered through Mr Anderson-Brettner's back while 2 shots caused damage to his heart. Justice Pearce, in sentencing, indicated he was satisfied one of the shots was fired when Mr Anderson-Brettner was lying on the ground. He went on to say the fact he was shot from within the room, the number and location of the bullet wounds, and the evidence that one of the shots was fired when he was on the ground led him to conclude there was no room for any doubt Mr Anderson-Brettner had been shot by someone who intended to kill him.

Justice Pearce noted the jury rejected Mr Sadler's claim Mr Anderson-Brettner was shot by one of 3 Victorian drug dealers who he did not identify and who he said had come to his home to meet with Mr Anderson-Brettner about a very large drug debt but then left without a trace.

Justice Pearce said he was satisfied beyond reasonable doubt this "*was a planned, intentional, execution style killing*". This was because Mr Sadler had arranged for Mr Anderson-Brettner to come to his home and he had emptied the room in which he kept his shoes and lined the walls and floors with builders' plastic which Ms Clark had purchased at his request the day before. During that day Mr Sadler also arranged for Ms Clark to purchase bleach, firelighters, disposable gloves, disposable overalls, safety glasses, a saw, more gloves, cling wrap, vinegar, reusable bags, cayenne pepper and chili powder. After she last went to the shops, which was at about 6:45 PM, Mr Sadler asked Ms Clark to park away from the house so she would not be seen by Mr Anderson-Brettner. He then asked her to wait in the main bedroom with her dog out of sight. From that room she heard Mr Anderson-Brettner arrive and 2 men enter the room next to where she was whereupon she heard Mr Anderson-Brettner say words like "please man, don't", which his Honour found was a plea for Mr Anderson-Brettner's life and then the sound of gunshots.

Once Mr Anderson-Brettner was murdered Mr Sadler dismembered and disposed of his body. He involved Ms Clark in that process but it was not suggested by the prosecution she was part of the

plan to kill Mr Anderson-Brettner. Most of the items she had purchased were used. During this process Mr Sadler wore gloves and one of the disposable suits and had Ms Clark wait outside the door to the room with large plastic garbage bags which she held open and in which Mr Sadler placed body parts. A mixture of vinegar, baby oil, pepper and chili powder was added in order to disguise any odour. Mr Anderson-Brettner's torso was wrapped in sheets and a mattress protector and loaded into the back of a vehicle which was lined with plastic bags. Ms Clark drove, while Mr Sadler was a passenger, to a location on the Tasman Highway about 40 km from Launceston. During that journey they stopped and bought petrol and drinks and more garbage bags and once at the site the torso was removed from the vehicle and deposited down a steep bank. Once they returned to Launceston they checked on the internet to see where household rubbish was to be collected the next morning and they then drove to places in and around Launceston depositing bags containing body parts into bins. On their return to Riverside Ms Roney arrived at Mr Sadler's home looking for Mr Anderson-Brettner. Mr Sadler lied to her saying Mr Anderson-Brettner had not visited his home and that he had in fact been out looking for him.

Mr Sadler and Ms Clark then burnt evidence of the murder in the wood heater, cleaned the house with bleach, either burned curtains and carpet from the room or put that material into garbage bags which was also deposited in domestic roadside rubbish bins. The pistol was vacuum packed and concealed in the garden of the home whereas ammunition and the silencer were taped into a piece of PVC pipe and hidden over a fence. Fired cartridge cases were put in a bag and into a drain at the front of the house and the key to Mr Anderson-Brettner's car was put into a different drain at one of the locations in which bags were put into roadside rubbish bins. Mr Anderson-Brettner's motor vehicle had earlier been removed from Mr Sadler's home and parked over a kilometre away.

Investigation

Investigating police soon realised Mr Anderson-Brettner had been harmed. Ms Clark was interviewed and eventually told police what had occurred. She accompanied police while they recovered Mr Anderson-Brettner's torso. However because of the delay police were unable to recover those parts of Mr Anderson-Brettner's body which were deposited in the domestic roadside rubbish bins. This was despite very extensive searches being conducted by police, emergency services volunteers and Council staff. Both Ms Clark and Mr Sadler were subsequently charged and remanded in custody.

Justice Pearce indicated he was not able to determine with certainty a motive for this crime. He said the evidence established during the period leading up to the murder that Mr Sadler was angry with Mr Anderson-Brettner despite their previous friendship. He thought it very likely the disagreement arose from mutual dealings with illicit drugs. His Honour indicated he was satisfied Mr Anderson-

Brettner was involved in the sale of illicit drugs to some extent, but the nature and extent of his involvement was not able to be determined.

Justice Pearce found no accompanying mitigating circumstances for this crime. In addition there was no expression or demonstration of remorse and he said Mr Sadler's conduct after the murder was strongly indicative of the absence of remorse. That conduct significantly aggravated an already very serious crime.

Comments and Recommendations

The circumstances of Mr Anderson-Brettner's death are not such as to require me to make any comments or recommendations pursuant to Section 28 of the *Coroners Act 1995*.

I convey my sincere condolences to the family and loved ones of Mr Anderson-Brettner.

Dated: 27 June 2023 at Hobart in the State of Tasmania.

Robert Webster
Coroner