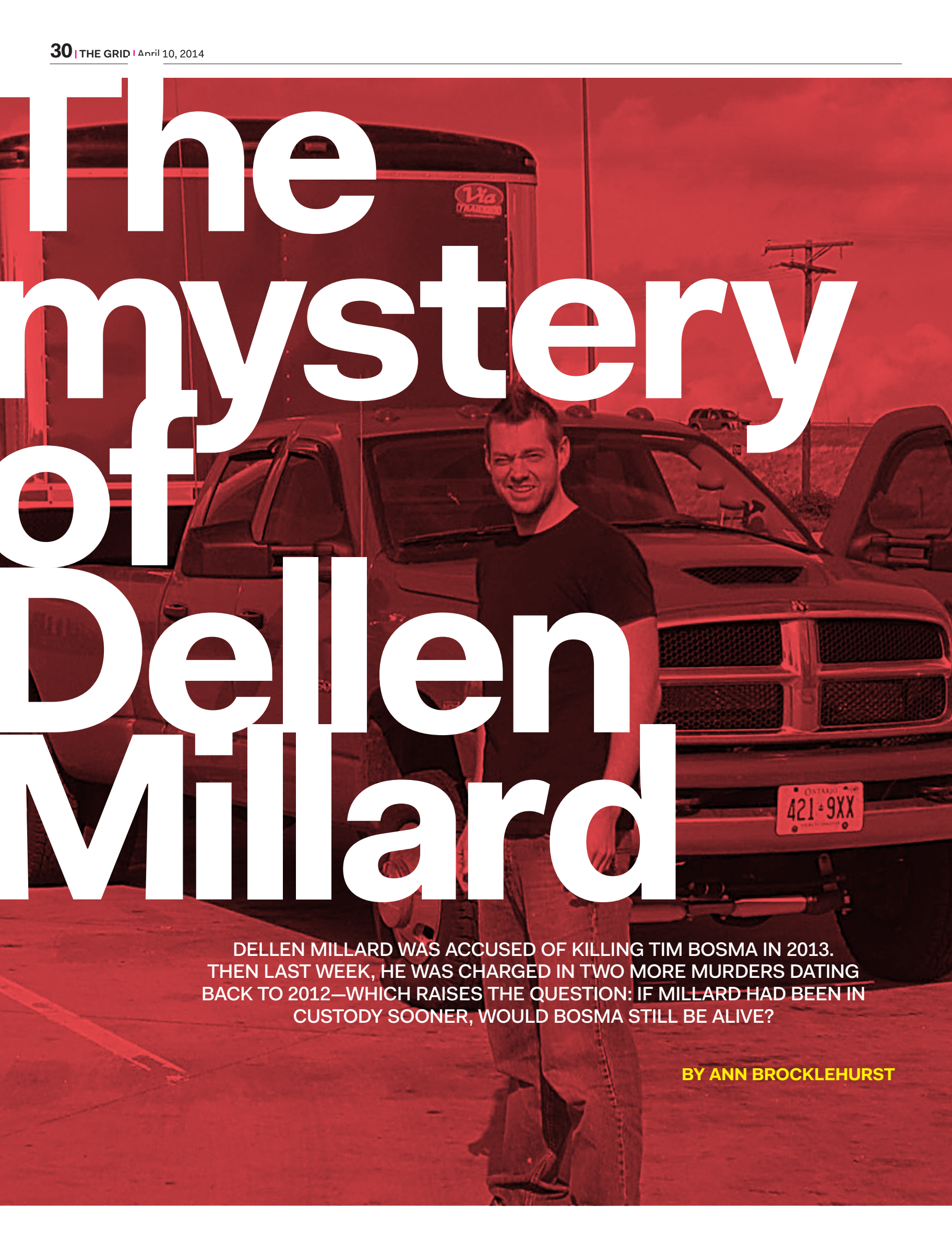


The mystery of Dellen Millard

A man with short hair, wearing a dark t-shirt and jeans, stands in front of a large truck. The truck has a 'Via' logo on its side and an Ontario license plate that reads '421-9XX'. The entire image is overlaid with a red tint.

DELLEN MILLARD WAS ACCUSED OF KILLING TIM BOSMA IN 2013. THEN LAST WEEK, HE WAS CHARGED IN TWO MORE MURDERS DATING BACK TO 2012—WHICH RAISES THE QUESTION: IF MILLARD HAD BEEN IN CUSTODY SOONER, WOULD BOSMA STILL BE ALIVE?

BY ANN BROCKLEHURST

THIS PAST THURSDAY, there was a major breakthrough in the puzzling murder case of Tim Bosma, the Ancaster, Ont., man who put his Dodge Ram truck up for sale online last spring, went for a test drive with two prospective buyers, and never returned. The young father's tragic death was one of the biggest stories of 2013, but for months there had been almost no news. The accused killers—Dellen Millard, the heir to an aviation company, and his friend Mark Smich—had both pleaded not guilty; the case was slowly winding its way through the courts.

Those who have been closely following the case weren't expecting to hear much more until the trial begins in 2015. I had become increasingly pessimistic about whether two linked investigations by Toronto police involving Millard would ever yield results. So it was a huge surprise last Thursday when he was charged with two more first-degree murders: that of his father, Wayne, whose 2012 shooting death had been initially ruled a suicide; and that of Laura Babcock, a friend of Millard's who went missing in 2012. (Smich is also facing a first-degree murder charge in the death of Babcock.)

While the Hamilton Police have been handling the investigation into Bosma's death, Toronto Police Services has jurisdiction in Babcock's disappearance and Wayne Millard's death. Family and friends of Babcock have voiced concerns about how TPS dealt with her case. Journalists have also been critical. Even the typically cop-friendly *Toronto Sun* criticized homicide detective Mike Carbone for praising the Babcock investigators as "thorough" and "very diligent," given the evidence of delays and confusion in the investigation.

Since last May, when I started covering the story of Dellen Millard, I have spoken extensively with friends and relations of his alleged victims and filed several access to information requests to better understand the process the police undertake when dealing with missing persons and suicides. My research raised serious questions about the investigations, whether basic protocols and procedures were followed, and, more significantly, whether Bosma's death could have been prevented.

LAURA BABCOCK, a 23-year-old recent graduate from the University of Toronto, disappeared in the summer of 2012. In the months before her death, her life started falling apart. Friends say she was struggling with mental illness, using recreational drugs, and moving from one couch to the next. According to police, she had also begun advertising her services online as an escort. In late June, she met up with her ex-boyfriend Shawn Lerner, who loaned her his iPad so she could look for work, and he paid for her to stay at a west-end hotel. Then, in early July, she went silent. Lerner reported her missing to Toronto police on July 14; her parents followed up not long after.

Last December, I met up with Lerner at a north Toronto food court. He stressed to me that from the time he walked into the 32 Division police station near Yonge and Sheppard to report Babcock missing, no one seemed to care—allegations he's made previously in the media. The

officer on duty agreed to take the report, but Lerner says that he laughed at the suggestion that it might be possible to trace the iPad loaned to Babcock and accused Lerner of playing *CSI*. Then Lerner brought up the fact that Babcock had been using drugs. "As soon as they heard about the drugs, that's when they just wrote her off," Lerner said.

Babcock's cellphone bill shows that the last eight phone calls she made after she disappeared were to Dellen Millard. Babcock's parents and Lerner have repeatedly stated that they gave the bill to police. They also followed up with Sgt. Stephen Woodhouse, the officer in charge of the investigation, but Lerner says the officer did not return his emails and that his voicemail was often full. (In a May 2013 *National Post* story, Woodhouse said that the original investigators were not aware of the relationship between Babcock and Millard, and that her phone records were not brought to their attention at the time.)

Dismayed by the lack of response, Lerner, who has acted as a kind of unofficial spokesman for the Babcock family, contacted Millard himself. Lerner still has the text messages he sent to the accused killer, who he knew casually through Babcock. In one text, Lerner wrote that he was not making accusations but trying to get information. Millard responded almost immediately to suggest a meeting.

When the two men met for coffee the next day, Lerner said that Millard initially denied having spoken with Babcock. But after Lerner produced the phone bill from his bag, Lerner said that Millard changed his story, saying Babcock had contacted him looking for drugs. Lerner says he passed this information on to Woodhouse.

By spring of 2013, the investigation into Babcock's disappearance had pretty much stalled. Woodhouse had been transferred to another position. When asked about the case by the *National Post* in May of that year, he said, "In a city of three million people, where do you start? We did the standard press release and put her picture out there.... We followed the leads that we had."

In early June 2013, shortly after he was put in charge of the Babcock and Wayne Millard cases, homicide detective Mike Carbone spoke at a press conference. He made no mention of the major case management (MCM) system, which was implemented in Ontario in the late '90s in response to the policing and communications failures revealed in the wake of the Paul Bernardo case. According to the TPS Policy and Procedure manual, the relevant pages of which were obtained through a freedom of information request, in any missing-persons case where foul play is suspected, the officer in charge must ensure that "a Major Case Manager is assigned to conduct the investigation in compliance with the Ontario Major Case Management Manual." Police appeared to have not suspected foul play in the disappearance of Babcock, despite the fact she'd been missing for months, had left her passport with her parents, and had not made any financial transactions nor used her health card or phone since June 2012.

To the astonishment of reporters at the news conference, Carbone said that officers had only become aware of Babcock's phone records in May 2013 as a result of the arrest of Millard for Bosma's murder. Carbone later contradicted himself, saying that "at some point [during the investigation into Babcock's disappearance] the officers from

22 Division would have conducted searches on her telephone and discovered those records.” When a reporter then asked if officers had ever spoken to Millard, Carbone replied: “I don’t believe the police interviewed Millard at the time.” I contacted Carbone a few weeks after the news conference and asked him to clarify this point, but he declined to comment due to the ongoing nature of the investigation.

On Nov. 29, 2012, 22 Division police in Etobicoke were alerted by a 911 call to investigate the shooting death of 71-year-old Wayne Millard at the home he shared with his son, Dellen. Just before he died, Wayne had completed the building of a new, multimillion-dollar Millardair operation at the airport in Waterloo, Ont. A pilot by training, he had inherited the family aviation business and planned on running the new venture, which he called Dellen’s project, with his only child.

Until last week, police had released scant information about his death. At the Babcock news conference in 2013, Carbone declined to answer questions about who had phoned 911 or found the body. He also refused to confirm newspaper reports that Wayne had been shot in the eye. He did, however, praise the police who looked into the death and classified it as a suicide for their “very thorough” work.

The Toronto Police Service protocols for investigations of suspected suicides emphasize “the need to remain vigilant for the possibility of foul play...[when] the only witness or person present at the time of death or finding of the body is an intimate partner past or present.”

Again, foul play does not appear to have suspected. Investigators never contacted executives at Millardair, according to Al Sharif, a consultant to the business. And the only relatives who appear to have

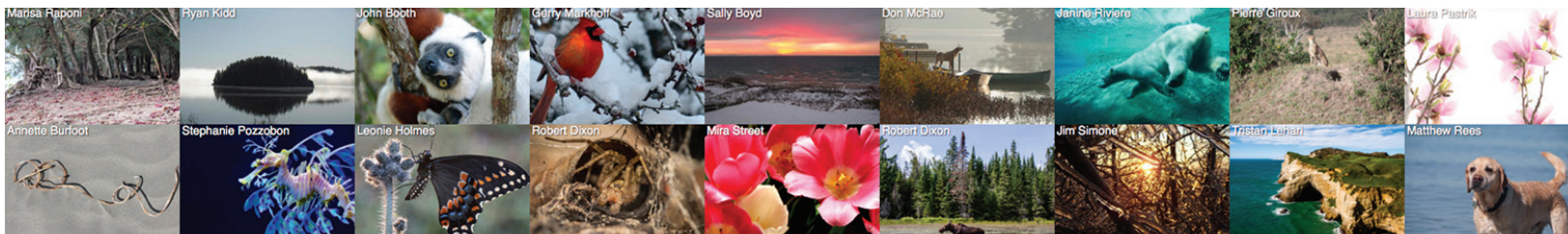
spoken to police are Dellen and his mother. Wayne’s aunt, June Neill, wrote a comment on his online obituary that she had not been told about her nephew’s death or about the reception in his honour. (She died in February 2014.)

Complicating matters is the fact that the people Dellen did inform about Wayne’s death were told that he had died of an aneurysm. They only learned that it was a suspected suicide after the Bosma murder. I’ve spoken to more than a dozen people about Wayne, and not one has said they could imagine him killing himself.

The Babcock disappearance was not the first time Dellen Millard’s name had been brought to the attention of authorities. But since TPS has released only the barest details about their investigations into the deaths of Babcock and Wayne Millard, it’s not known whether they checked for and knew about Dellen’s previous contacts with police, or just didn’t see them as significant.

In 2009, a former tenant at Dellen’s west-end Toronto rental property—who was engaged in a dispute with him before the Landlord Tenant Board at the time—reported to police that she had found Millard and his friends tampering with the engine of her car the night before her hearing. A few years back, a neighbour of the Millards (who asked not to be identified) complained to police that Dellen and his buddies sped dangerously down the child-filled street. (Nothing came of these complaints.) According to a November 2013 article in the *Toronto Star*, Millard had once been stopped by police and issued a contact card—the tattoo on his wrist that read “ambition” was recorded at the time, a detail that led police to him in the Bosma case.

HIS PAST SEPTEMBER, on a fine Monday morning, police descended once again on Dellen Millard’s farm, near Cambridge, Ont., where



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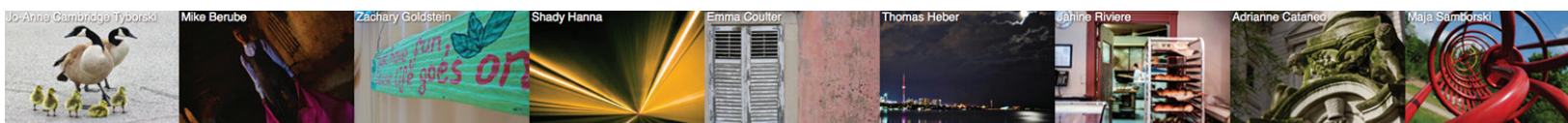
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T Bosma's remains had been found months earlier. This time, though, they were searching for evidence related to the disappearance of Babcock. There were Toronto homicide detectives, uniformed officers from the local Waterloo force, forensic technicians in lab coats, and an OPP HAZMAT team with oxygen tanks strapped to their backs and gas masks covering their faces. The road was lined with fire trucks, buses, and vans carrying television news crews.

Soon after this search, the OPP took over the three Millard-related investigations under the auspices of the major case management system. As part of their responsibilities, they also began dealing with the press. In November, lead Det. Insp. Dave Hillman spoke to me frankly and openly about how major case management works and why everything crime- and justice-related seems to drag on for so long. But he declined then to provide any new information about the state of the individual investigations, which continue to be run by the Toronto and Hamilton police.

When I visited Toronto police headquarters in February to pick up some documents, I dropped by the media office to try once again to find out if there was anything at all they could tell me about the initial handling of the Babcock and Wayne Millard investigations. Would it be possible, for example, to say whether detectives looking into Wayne's death knew about Dellen allegedly messing with his tenant's car? Or could police explain why Wayne's body was released for cremation when the coroner's office said in May that the investigation into his death was still open?

Spokesman Mark Pugash politely explained that it simply wasn't



TWO OF DELLEN MILLARD'S ALLEGED VICTIMS: LAURA BABCOCK (LEFT) AND TIM BOSMA.

possible to provide answers. If a review of a criminal investigation is ever deemed necessary, it doesn't take place until the criminal investigation is settled. Disciplinary actions don't run concurrently.

There is little doubt the developments of the past week will have an impact on this story. Now that Millard has been charged with the murders of his father and Babcock, both cases are back in the headlines. It will be difficult to ignore any irregularities in the investigations. Was standard protocol followed? If not, will anyone be held accountable? And what are the Toronto police doing to ensure oversights don't occur? The families and friends of the victims, and all the people of Toronto, have a right to know.



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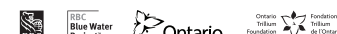
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