



WITNESS, PAGE 3

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Estcourt farmer murdered

Man calls wife after being shot by intruders and later dies after medics attend to him



Slain Estcourt farmer Malcolm 'Stick' Green. PHOTO: SUPPLIED



While police investigators combed the murder scene, the summer sun beat down on the sign at the entrance to the Greens' farm in Estcourt. PHOTO: JEFF WICKS

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MURDERED Estcourt farmer Malcolm "Stick" Green uttered his last words to his son moments before succumbing to a single gunshot wound inflicted during a farm attack in the early hours of yesterday morning.

The well-known Green (69) was wounded during a confrontation with four men who had forced their way into his farmhouse.

As he lay prostrate and bleeding, his attackers fled with electronic appliances in his bakkie, which was later found abandoned near Ladysmith.

Clutching his bleeding gunshot wound, Green called his wife, Ruth, who was on holiday at the coast and who raised the alarm.

After he slipped into unconsciousness, a team of medics from Nsele Ambulance Services, Ntcare911 and

Emergency Medical Services tried desperately to resuscitate him for nearly two hours before he was declared dead on the lounge floor of his farmhouse.

Seven years ago, his cousin David Green was also slain in a farm attack at Estcourt.

Yesterday, yellow police cordon tape fluttered in the hot breeze, stark against the house's ivy-clad walls.

Bloodstains stretched from Green's bedroom through a passage and into his lounge, showing the path he struggled along to where he finally collapsed.

Ruth recounted the frantic minutes after she was roused by a call from her husband.

"I got a call from our guard and it took a while to make out what he was trying to say. When he gave the phone to Malcolm, he told me that he had been shot and asked me to call the police," she said.

After Green raised the alarm, she called her husband back.

"The second time I phoned him, his voice sounded panicked and it sounded like he was starting to lose his grip. I was frantic after I heard the tenor of his voice and I started to get anxious. I had no idea where he had been shot or how bad it was until after he was gone," she said.

"We still don't know how things unfolded. My son, Stafford, arrived and was trying to stop the bleeding before the paramedics arrived. He just lost too much blood.

"We have a guard here because there has been so much theft, but that is the case with any farm; speak to any of our neighbours and they will tell you.

"He was so special to me. He wrote children's stories for his grandchildren," she said amid tears.

"I want the death penalty for those who did this, if I am speaking honestly."

The couple had been married for 45 years.

Green was born in Estcourt and was well known in the farming community.

Oxsons Security head Hayden Smith was one of the first at the scene.

"I rushed out there after I got a call from Ruth, saying her husband had been shot.

"When I got there, Malcolm was lying on his back in the lounge, holding his wound. He was able to talk and he told me that four guys had come onto the farm, but they had already fled in his bakkie," he said.

"I called my contacts in the dog unit in Ladysmith, and got the ambulances and everything on their way when Malcolm's son arrived and started speaking to him.

"The car had a tracker unit and at

9 am we found it in Ezakheni township near Ladysmith," Smith said.

"Farmers are under threat and the crime situation is concerning. Malcolm had been renovating one of the farm houses and they repeatedly had copper stolen; that is how I came to know him," he said.

Community Safety and Liaison MEC Willie Mchunu condemned the killing.

"I am deeply shocked by this farm killing incident. Such incidents should be strongly condemned. I am assured that members of the police are working around the clock to ensure that those who are responsible for this cold-blooded murder are brought to book as soon as possible," he said.

Police spokesperson Captain Thulani Zwane said no arrests had yet been made.

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FARMERS OFTEN KNOW KILLERS

KOOS Marais of the KwaZulu-Natal Agricultural Union's security desk said he believes that farmers are murdered when the perpetrator is known to them.

"In the last 30-odd farm murders, there has been an arrest in each case because the culprits are known. KwaNalu calls on the MEC for Community Safety and Liaison to urgently attend to the safety of farmers. We can't afford to lose our food producers and with every murder there is a real risk of job losses."

He said it was notable that Green was alone on the farm at the time of his murder and that his wife was away.

"We call on farmers to step up their security around their homes."

Marais said KwaNalu was concerned about the murder despite increased policing over the festive season. "We are also concerned about the general lack of policing in rural areas. We understand there are several leads and we are confident there will be arrests soon."

Farmer Mdu Mlangeni, one of Malcolm Green's neighbours, echoed the sentiment that local farmers were under threat.

"Malcolm was an amazing man and what has happened is terrible. I still can't believe it," he said.

"When things like this happen, they tend to be politicised along the lines of race, but the truth is we are all under threat as farmers.

"I live on my own and I know what it is like to be isolated. I had to fire one of my workers, and now I will look over my shoulder waiting for him to come and exact revenge. When my dogs are poisoned, I know that he will be coming for me. It's not about black on white violence; we are all victims," Mlangeni said.