

# MUM, CHILDREN DIE

## Three victims brutally bashed

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Sgt Sharkey said investigations by a medical team from Glebe Coroners Court revealed the brutality of the crime.

"At first we were under the impression that they suffered gunshot wounds but we now realise they have severe head wounds as a result of being hit by a blunt instrument or something similar," Sgt Sharkey said.

He said it was believed the family had been attacked some time after 3pm on Tuesday.

Matthew is believed to have spent Tuesday night at his girlfriend's house, before returning to the family home yesterday morning.

After his shocking discovery, he was rushed to Shellharbour Hospital by ambulance for counselling.

Police took several hours to track down the victims' husband and father, Wayne De Gruchy, a company executive who was working in Sydney.

He travelled to the area but was too distressed to return to his family home, where the bodies of his wife and children remained throughout the day.

Describing the crime scene as horrendous, Sgt Sharkey said it appeared the two women had not struggled against their attacker.

It appeared at least one electrical appliance was missing from the home and robbery was a possible motive for the vicious triple murder.

"Robbery has been suggested and we are looking at that aspect," he said. "We are following a number of lines of inquiry and we can't rule that out.

"We are remaining open-minded."

As shocked neighbours comforted each other, about 30 State Emergency Service and Bush Fire Brigade volunteers began searching the grassland and swamp behind the home for the murder weapon.

Mrs De Gruchy's brother, Ray Halliwell, who arrived at the Macquarie Shores estate late in the afternoon, collapsed with grief as he walked towards the home with his wife.

Mr Halliwell said he spoke to his sister Jennifer at 9pm on Tuesday and she seemed happy.

He was met by his distraught elderly mother, Dot, who had been at the scene for several hours in the care of police grief counsellors and neighbours.

"I just hope they find the people who did this," she said.

Both Mr Halliwell and his mother were taken to Shellharbour Hospital by ambulance where they were treated for more than an hour before being released.

Police last night said Wayne and Matthew De Gruchy had been interviewed by detectives and had given statements before being allowed to leave.

The victims' bodies were removed from the house late last night.



Dean Lee, rollerblading mate of murdered Adrian De Gruchy, is devastated by the shortness of their last words.

## School mates shared a passion for rollerblading

'If I had known I wouldn't see him again . . .'

By LIZ HANNAN

Dean Lee is devastated that the last words he shared with his great mate, Adrian De Gruchy, were so short and too shallow.

The Year 9 Albion Park High School mates, the odd couple who shared a passion for rollerblading, could not have known that

their brief encounter on Tuesday afternoon would be their last.

"We passed and he yelled out 'Ehhh, Boobs' - that's what he called me," 14-year-old Dean said hours after learning Adrian had been bludgeoned to death.

"And I said 'Ehfh, De Grooot-zee' then I had to keep going.

"That was the last thing I said to him.

"If I had known I wouldn't see him again I would have thought of something else."

Dean's world crumbled shortly after 9am yesterday when he heard a radio report that a 40-year-old woman and two teenagers had been killed in a

Shearwater Boulevard home.

Somehow he knew it was his mate.

He hurried across to find the De Gruchys' quiet suburban home had been cordoned off as a crime scene and the friend with whom he spent a part of every day, the mate who loved computers, was dead.

"He was always 'Yeah, yeah'. He would laugh at anything I said," Dean said.

"He was heaps friendly and polite and very big and strong."

"We would play stacks on. He would get someone down for us to stack on top of - it was fun."

Another mate, 14-year-

old Daniel Cooper, of Albion Park, first met Adrian at Thursday afternoon school sport.

He will always remember that Adrian invited him to rollerblade with him even though he was a year younger.

"Once I asked what sort of (rollerblade) bearings he had and he didn't go 'Der, stupid' like most guys do, he just explained it," Daniel said, his eyes filling with tears.

"He didn't even get a chance to grow up and grow old and have grandkids and that sort of stuff."

"I hope they find whoever did this 'cause he would never have hurt anyone."

Picture: WAYNE VENABLES



Shocked neighbours of the De Gruchy family.

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