



### VERDICT AT CORONERS INQUEST

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS AS A RESULT OF THE CORONER'S INQUEST PURSUANT TO SECTION 38 OF THE CORONERS ACT, [SBC 2007] C 15, INTO THE DEATH OF

**Gauthier**

SURNAME

**Lindsey Harvey**

GIVEN NAMES

An Inquest was held at The Burnaby Coroners Court, in the municipality of Burnaby

in the Province of British Columbia, on the following dates: February 1, 2021 to February 5, 2021

before: Tiara Stiglich, Presiding Coroner.

into the death of Gauthier Lindsey Harvey 45  Male  Female  
(Last Name) (First Name) (Middle Name) (Age)

The following findings were made:

Date and Time of Death: April 6, 2016 8:16am  
(Date) (time)

Place of Death: Chilliwack General Hospital Chilliwack, BC  
(Location) (Municipality/Province)

Medical Cause of Death:

(1) Immediate Cause of Death: a) The toxic effects of cocaine and methamphetamine

Due to or as a consequence of

Antecedent Cause if any:

b)

Due to or as a consequence of

Giving rise to the immediate cause (a) above, stating underlying cause last.

c)

(2) Other Significant Conditions Contributing to Death:

Hypertensive and atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease

Classification of Death:  Accidental  Homicide  Natural  Suicide  Undetermined

The above verdict certified by the Jury on the 5 day of February AD, 2021

Tiara Stiglich  
Presiding Coroner's Printed Name

[Signature]  
Presiding Coroner's Signature



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**PARTIES INVOLVED IN THE INQUEST:**

Presiding Coroner:	Tiara Stiglich
Inquest Counsel:	John M. Orr, QC
Court Reporting/Recording Agency:	Verbatim Words West Ltd.
Participants/Counsel:	Robert Gibson, counsel for RCMP

The Sheriff took charge of the jury and recorded 6 exhibits. 25 witnesses were duly sworn and testified.

**PRESIDING CORONER'S COMMENTS:**

*The following is a brief summary of the circumstances of the death as set out in the evidence presented to the jury at the inquest. This is to assist in understanding, but does not replace, the jury verdict and recommendations. This summary is not evidence.*

On April 6, 2016, between approximately 12:00 a.m. and 12:30 a.m., Chilliwack RCMP received a 911 call from a 7/11 convenience store reporting a male behaving erratically and causing a disturbance. The male was Lindsey Harvey Gauthier (Mr. Gauthier).

A local security company, Griffin Security, who held a general security services contract for the downtown Chilliwack area, also received this report and request for assistance. Upon the arrival of the security guard, Mr. Gauthier was observed to be walking around outside the 7/11 convenience store in circles, "shadow boxing" and acting in an agitated manner. Mr. Gauthier then suddenly ran away from the security guard and down the street.

At approximately 12:44 a.m., Chilliwack RCMP were dispatched to a residence for a report of a break and enter. The first RCMP officer to respond (Officer 1) was informed by the people in the home that the individual who broke into the residence was behaving erratically and believed people were chasing after them. Upon arrival of the RCMP, it was determined that Mr. Gauthier was the individual who had broken into the residence. Officer 1 stated that when they went to handcuff him, Mr. Gauthier suddenly grabbed his chest and appeared to be short of breath and sweating profusely. Paramedics were immediately called.

Mr. Gauthier informed the paramedics of his medical history of high blood pressure and a previous heart attack. He also stated he had consumed alcohol. His heart rate was high, so he was taken to Chilliwack General Hospital. A second RCMP officer (Officer 2) followed the ambulance to the hospital as Mr. Gauthier was in custody. Officer 2, while still at the residence, witnessed Mr. Gauthier "go through some episode, whether mental health or drugs." Officer 1 stated that she was aware that Mr. Gauthier was the subject of the complaint at the 7/11 convenience store, prior to attending to the break and enter.

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Upon arrival at the hospital, Mr. Gauthier had chest pains and was short of breath. The attending physician was informed that Mr. Gauthier had been running after being involved in a break and enter. He was assessed and it was determined that the chest pain was likely due to exertion. At the hospital, Mr. Gauthier was calm, cooperative, remorseful, and understanding of what had occurred that early morning.

Officer 1 testified that the state of paranoia Mr. Gauthier was in at the house was no longer present at the hospital. He was deemed to not be a danger to himself or the public and as he agreed to remain at the hospital to await his test results, the RCMP released him on a Promise to Appear/Undertaking to Appear at approximately 5:00 a.m. The RCMP did not discuss concerns surrounding Mr. Gauthier's mental health or possible drug use with hospital staff.

Shortly after the RCMP left, Mr. Gauthier admitted to the attending physician that he "took something" but would not specify what. A urine drug screen analysis confirmed that Mr. Gauthier had cocaine and amphetamines in his system. Mr. Gauthier requested to be released from the hospital and, while the attending physician could not remember if the drug screen analysis results became available before or after Mr. Gauthier's request to leave, as he had been assessed and his chest pains had cleared, he was released. The attending physician stated that while he did not have any concerns surrounding Mr. Gauthier's behaviour, had he been informed about Mr. Gauthier's behaviour that evening prior to attending the hospital and the possible concerns surrounding his behaviour, it would have been reasonable to have held Mr. Gauthier in the hospital to see if a mental health assessment was appropriate.

Mr. Gauthier's medical history included long standing chronic cocaine use with a more recent methamphetamine use. It also included numerous admissions to hospital due to drug induced psychosis. Mr. Gauthier's spouse confirmed that Mr. Gauthier had struggled with illicit drug use for many years and when he would use illicit drugs, he would become paranoid and suffer from hallucinations. His spouse also confirmed that for the six days prior to his death, he had been on a drug binge.

At approximately 7:15 a.m. on April 6, 2016, Mr. Gauthier walked into the Uptown Grill in Chilliwack. Staff at the Uptown Grill phoned Griffin Security and 911 due to Mr. Gauthier's behaviour. Mr. Gauthier was witnessed to pick up and swing around chairs, throw chairs, knock things over and pace around the restaurant in an agitated manner. When one of the waitresses attempted to speak with him, he was nonresponsive. The witnesses stated that he was fixated on a mirrored frame on the wall, which had a reflective surface, and he began to yell "go away" and yelled for someone to call the police.

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The same Griffin Security guard from earlier in the morning arrived and attempted to speak with Mr. Gauthier in a calm manner. The security guard and Mr. Gauthier left the restaurant and multiple witnesses described Mr. Gauthier as running around the middle of the roadway, repeatedly losing his balance and falling, and yelling for someone to phone the police. Mr. Gauthier repeatedly attempted to grab the security guard, as a way of keeping his balance, but not in a threatening way. Multiple witnesses stated that there was no physical assault (i.e. punches, kicks, etc.) between Mr. Gauthier and the security guard.

Two Chilliwack RCMP officers arrived in separate vehicles at approximately 7:36 a.m. Officer 4, who arrived just moments after Officer 3, witnessed the Officer 3 attempt to speak with Mr. Gauthier while Mr. Gauthier was on his hands and knees, yelling, and rolling around on the ground. Officer 3 then began to initiate Mr. Gauthier's arrest and Officer 4 went to assist. Officer 4 and the security guard stated that Mr. Gauthier was actively resisting, pulling away and not allowing the handcuffs to be placed on his wrists. The two officers, with the assistance of the security guard, brought Mr. Gauthier from his hands and knees all the way down to his stomach, flat on the ground. Officer 3 placed his knee on Mr. Gauthier's shoulder, while one of the two other individuals placed their knee on the lower side of Mr. Gauthier's back. Officer 3 stated that a brief amount of small pressure was used, but not full weight or excessive pressure, due to Mr. Gauthier's resistance. Multiple witnesses stated that no weapons or hard techniques (i.e. punches, kicks, etc.) were used.

Other RCMP officers had arrived while this occurred. After securing Mr. Gauthier on the ground, Officer 5 commented that she felt Mr. Gauthier had stopped breathing. Officer 4 stated he turned Mr. Gauthier over and immediately began chest compressions. In the meantime, Officer 6 stated he had gotten an automated external defibrillator (AED) from a police vehicle, requested another officer remove the handcuffs from Mr. Gauthier, cut Mr. Gauthier's shirt and applied the AED pads to his chest. The AED indicated "no shock advised", so one of the police officers continued chest compressions. Paramedics arrived at that moment and took over resuscitation efforts.

Upon paramedic assessment, Mr. Gauthier showed no signs of life. He was immediately taken by ambulance to Chilliwack General Hospital. Upon arrival at hospital, life saving measures continued, however, were unsuccessful. Mr. Gauthier was declared deceased at 8:16 a.m.

Two separate toxicological analyses were conducted; one on samples obtained from Mr. Gauthier's first hospital admission and one on samples from his second hospital admission. Mr. Gauthier's first hospital sample had recreational levels of benzoylecgonine, a metabolite and breakdown of cocaine, and methamphetamine, as well as its metabolite, amphetamine. The later sample contained the same illicit substances, except no amphetamine and a higher level of benzoylecgonine. A forensic toxicologist stated that the differences between the two samples indicated that Mr. Gauthier consumed more cocaine after he was released from the hospital just after 5:00 a.m. on April 6.



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An autopsy determined the cause of death to be the toxic effects of cocaine and methamphetamine use. The use of stimulant drugs, such as cocaine and methamphetamine, increases blood pressure and heart rate which increases the risk of sudden death by a variety of mechanisms, including abnormal heart rhythms. The autopsy also revealed cardiomegaly (enlarged heart) and moderate to severe coronary artery disease (narrowing of the arteries which prevents and blocks blood flow to the heart), both of which also place the heart at an increased risk of an abnormal heart rhythm. Therefore, hypertensive (high blood pressure) and atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (thickening or hardening of arteries) are contributing factors.



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*Pursuant to Section 38 of the Coroners Act, the following recommendations are forwarded to the Chief Coroner of the Province of British Columbia for distribution to the appropriate agency:*

### JURY RECOMMENDATIONS:

**To: E-Division RCMP  
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General  
BC Emergency Health Services  
Minister of Health**

1. To develop a standardized form of documentation to ensure the full transfer of information of circumstances of why an individual is brought to the emergency room in order to ensure that the attending physician has all the relevant background information

**Presiding Coroner Comment:** *The jury heard evidence that a lack of information sharing between the RCMP and the attending Emergency Doctors/Nurses hindered the Doctors/Nurses from assessing Lindsey Harvey Gauthier's mental state at time of first arrest.*