



Witness recounts details of Douglas Minty's death

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A witness who watched as police shot and killed Douglas Minty in Elmvale in 2009 testified today at the inquest into Minty's death.

The salesman who took the stand today was a colleague of the man who made the initial 911 call the night 59-year-old Minty was shot five times by a police officer. Minty was developmentally delayed and the witness saw much of what happened from a distance.

The witness testified there was a group of salespeople knocking on doors that night in Elmvale selling water heaters. He said they were assigned to different areas.

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Douglas Minty is seen in this undated photo. (Handout)

He said just after 8 p.m. he got an urgent call from a colleague and went to the street that colleague was on. The witness said when he got there he saw a police cruiser pull up and at one point saw Minty come out of his house.

"I only started paying attention to Mr. Minty when he was 10 feet from his house," the witness testified. "He started walking slowly with one arm extended. I looked a little closer and it looked like a blade was in his hand."

The witness also testified today that he heard the officer yell something at Minty about asking him to “drop your knife,” though he was unsure of the exact words.

The lawyer for the Minty family questioned how the witness knew there was an open blade

“Well he said he assumed it was an open blade based on things he was told,” says lawyer Julian Roy. “After the shooting he had a conversation with another witness, he had a conversation with an officer involved. He readily conceded that he may have just filled in the gaps in his perception.”

Roy says the witness was also very far away.

“It was pretty clear from his evidence he was more than a 100 feet away,” Roy says. “He was a 120 to 130 feet away. There was a real question about whether he was able to see something two inches long from that distance.”

The lawyer says there is no question a folding pen knife was recovered from the scene. But there is a question as to whether it was open or closed.

This inquiry was called to look into the circumstances surrounding the death of Minty.

The Special Investigations Unit investigated after the shooting and cleared the officer who shot Minty. This inquest will consider questions about how the whole incident was handled.