

# Body exposed for two hours before burial: murder trial

By LISA CARTWRIGHT  
The Champion

The maggot larvae found around the remains of Stephen Andreopoulos had nothing to do with the victim at all, defense lawyer Robert Nuttall told a Crown witness Friday during a first-degree murder trial.

"You are assuming those maggots are associated with Stephen Andreopoulos' body," Mr. Nuttall told Dr. Neal Haskell, an expert forensic entomologist from Indiana in Superior Court in Milton.

"If the body rolled on something it could have picked anything up," he stated.

Not true, said Dr. Haskell, who's an entomologist consultant for the chief coroners' office in Ontario.

Court heard Dr. Haskell has testified at many high-profile trials both in Canada and the United States including the Paul Bernardo and Guy Paul Morin cases.

Mr. Nuttall asked the doctor whether he knew how the police found and preserved the burial site.

Mr. Nuttall asked whether the doctor knew officers placed a pole about three feet down into the ground to allow the ground to breathe. Dr. Haskell said he didn't.

Since the beginning of the trial, Mr. Nuttall has said doing that

would push debris, or bugs, to the body.

He also asked whether the doctor knew the officers discovered a sole of a shoe late in the afternoon of February 13, 1998. The jury has heard the officers covered the site with a tarp and left it until the next day.

Dr. Haskell agreed that he did. But that would allow bugs, including maggots and minute pirate flies, to wash to the remains, contaminating the site, he said.

Dr. Haskell was firm in his opinion that the body was exposed for a couple of hours prior to burial.

On Thursday, the doctor told Crown attorney Brian O'Marra that OPP detectives sent him the dried remains of several maggot larvae that were found in the mud near the upper back area as well as attached to the shirt the deceased was wearing.

"These were larva of a blowfly," he said.

In Mr. Nuttall's all-day cross examination Friday, Dr. Haskell, who spoke directly to the jury, explained the life cycle of the blowfly.

The female blowfly will lay her eggs on a dead animal. Depending on the species and the temperature, the eggs will hatch in a few hours or a couple of days. This is called the first stage, or in-star larvae.

In the first stage, the maggot will

eat until it grows and stretches in size to the second stage.

During the third stage the maggot goes into a ravenous feeding frenzy, taking in as much energy as it can. It's then that the maggot enters its migration faze, crawling off the remains and burying itself in the soil. Afterward, the maggot shrinks and hardens, hatching a few days later into a fly.

A pirate bug was also found on the remains, but Dr. Haskell said that it didn't represent any forensic evidence. The bug is consistent with summer-time temperatures.

The small number of bugs found on the remains shows the body wasn't exposed for long, Dr. Haskell told the jury.

Mr. Nuttall asked the doctor whether he thought that because of evidence or whether the OPP detectives told him that.

During re-examination, Mr. O'Marra asked whether the doctor would support police theories even if entomologist evidence didn't support them.

"I often shoot police theories down," he said.

David Fiorino, 27, is charged with the death of Mr. Andreopoulos, 36, of Barrie.

The victim was last seen with the accused July 2, 1996. His body was discovered 18 months later on a Derry Road property.

The trial will continue June 26.

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