



EPISODE 07: Who Killed Mallory Beach? Part 3

Mandy Matney 00:00

I believe I know who killed Mallory beach. And now that more evidence has come to light. I'm troubled by what we know happened during the investigation of her death. My name is Mandy Matney. I'm the news director for FITSnews.com. And I've been investigating the Murdaugh family for more than two years now. This is the Murdaugh Murders Podcast. So before we start this episode, I want to give a quick shout out to all the Lowcountry locals who have supported us with this podcast. We've been fortunate to receive feedback from people literally all over the world. But the support we have from our own backyard means the most to us from the very beginning. We've been sponsored by a local law firm, the Bannon Law Group. And so many businesses have helped us with little things along the way. If you've noticed our theme song got a little facelift this week, thanks to our new friends at a local business called October Genius Music. We've also been featured in the Celebrate Hilton Head September issue, also known as CH2 magazine, so be sure to check that out. Finally, I want to thank my company, FITSnews.com, for supporting me 100% during this podcast endeavor. When I first started reporting on the story in 2019, I was working for a soulless corporate news organization. For employers that didn't care about me this story or any of my sources, I almost quit journalism and 2019 and I am forever thankful of my boss Will Folks for offering me a job when I knew I had to leave the Island Packet and for encouraging me and always having my back wall reporting on this story. And thank you to every single person who subscribes to FITSnews and believes in our mission investigative journalism is not dead. And I believe our company is the future of news. So for all updates on this case in the best news in South Carolina, check out FITSnews.com. In the two months since Paul Murdaugh and his mother, Maggie Murdaugh were murdered on their hunting property about 60 miles west of Charleston, South Carolina. We've learned a whole lot about the 2019 boat crash that killed Mallory Beach for a recap. When Paul Murdaugh was murdered. He stood accused of three felony boating under the influence charges in the boat crash on February 24, 2019. He allegedly crashed a 17 foot center console fishing boat into a piling just outside of Parris Island, South Carolina. While the criminal investigation of Paul Murdaugh ended with his death. Authorities are now looking into obstruction of justice allegations involving his powerful family members. According to FITSnew's sources and attorneys representing boat crash victims in the weeks since Paul's murder officials and attorneys have released amount of information and the case that information has been released for two reasons. One because the criminal investigation is over and two because one of the passengers on the boat Connor Cook recently filed a bombshell petition alleging that law enforcement officers conspired against him before Paul Murdaugh was charged. And in the last few weeks, we've learned so much we've read hundreds of pages of depositions from officers who responded to the scene. We've watched hours of dashcam footage from the scene and listen to horrific audio we've read shocking affidavits from hospital staff members who watched Alex Murdaugh and his father, who was a solicitor for decades, moved from room to room and allegedly orchestrating a plan. And we've read heartbreaking statements and the survivors on the boat who



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witnessed Mallory Beach's last few moments but this week, the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office released more than an hour of video, a huge missing piece in this puzzle. The recently released dashcam videos raise questions about the alleged conspiracy between the Murdaugh family and their law enforcement connections. The videos released in response to a FITSnews Freedom of Information Act request further confirm what attorneys have previously alleged in depositions that Mallory Beach's boyfriend Anthony Cook, who was also Connor Cook's cousin, was very clear with officers who was driving the boat. The audio from the dashcam is gut wrenching.

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 04:36

(incoherent.) The civilians are underneath the bridge. The most severe are the injured (incoherent) to walk down to

Mandy Matney 04:41

here Anthony Cook is sobbing as he speaks to Stephen Domino, a Beaufort County Sheriff's deputy. He's in disbelief that his girlfriend has gone and he's hesitant to get in the backseat of a cop car when he's instructed Domino reassured Anthony that he's not in trouble, but he wants him to calm down.

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 04:58

I'm not closing the door. I'm gonna get you a secret Sit right there. Sit right here. Got everybody coming out here. (incoherent). Listen. Listen, I'm here for you All right. We're chilling. I'm understand your upset I am about to sit down, calm down.

Anthony Cook 05:33

My mom works for SLED, I need to call her, I need to call her.

Mandy Matney 05:43

so that's Anthony saying that his mother works for the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division. This is interesting that he feels the need to say that in that moment so on the phone Anthony tells his mother what happened.

Anthony Cook 05:57

Y'all need they come here quick. We them we hit a bridge in the boat. Connor's fucked up. Conner's messed up bad. We can't find Mallory. Morgan's messed up bad. We can't find Mallory. Where are we at?

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 06:28

Parris Island



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Anthony Cook 06:37

(Incoherent). I don't know mom. There's 50 cops out here. Everybody showed up. I said there's 50 cops out here. And one of the cops nice enough let me call you. Mom there's 50 cops here, Coast Guard everything we can't find Mallory. It's been 30 minutes you probably need to call (Incoherent).

Mandy Matney 07:26

He's telling his mom to call Mallory's parents and tell them the news. So here Domino takes the phone and speaks to Anthony's mother

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 07:34

We'll let you come down this way, we don't have no problem with that. He told me you're in law enforcement. Yes, ma'am, we're here. Like I said, I'll let you come see him when you get here.

Anthony Cook 08:01

I got him pretty much as calm as I can get him to understand so me and him were, I'll be hanging out with him just just Google Parris Island Yeah, just just Google Parris Island the main entrance gate around the main roads when we will we will not miss it, yep the Marine Corps base.

Mandy Matney 08:32

So while Domino was on the phone with Anthony's mother, Paul Murdaugh apparently walked past Domino's car according to the dash cam recordings.

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 08:40

We're on the main road and you won't miss it.

Anthony Cook 08:42

Get that motherfucker right there away from me.

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 08:47

Yes Ma'am we'll be here, (Incoherent.) with no shirt on do not I don't want you to get into trouble you hear me? Listen get in no trouble. You hear what I said?

Anthony Cook 09:04

(Incoherent) That motherfucker needs to go to fucking prison. (To Paul Murdaugh) Bro you fucking smiling? Its not fucking funny. My fucking girlfriend's gone and you think its fucking funny,

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 09:35

Sit down sit down (Incoherent) I got you. He's going away.



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Mandy Matney 09:58

On another Beaufort county dashcam video you can hear officers speaking to Paul Murdaugh and they are not at all treating him like a suspect

Beaufort County Officers 10:19

bridge did ya'll beach the boat up at the side of the bridge or is just that where it ended up.

Paul Murdaugh 10:25

That's where it ended up.

Beaufort County Officers 10:27

at one of the markers in the beginning of it?

Paul Murdaugh 10:31

Can I use your phone? Can I use your phone?

Beaufort County Officers 10:38

You dropped yours in the grass right back there. Have you've been checked out? which I'm sure we picked out right off the road. Whats your last name buddy?

Paul Murdaugh 11:03

Murdaugh M U R D A U G H

Beaufort County Officers 11:03

Can I get your first name?

Paul Murdaugh 11:03

Paul P A U L

Beaufort County Officers 11:04

They're down there looking right now. Yep they got a good team they got a good team looking for her. I don't have my phone on me brother. Stay right here I'm gonna go get that one that you dropped from the ground back there alright.

Paul Murdaugh 11:26

Can I use your phone?

Beaufort County Officers 11:38

You got it? Where you see the boat before, young lady, young lady got ejected she still has not been found. Todd's going out and we tried walking down the market but the young lady



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down there that are the people that we have, we got five total (incoherent) and they were running this way when they hit the bridge so she probably got ejected in the current here.

Mandy Matney 12:16

So while sitting in the back of Domino's police car Anthony Cook told Domino's what happened that night.

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 12:23

What about who was driving the boat, is he 21?

Anthony Cook 12:25

No

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 12:27

Everybody on the boats been drinking?

Anthony Cook 12:28

Yeah Especially the driver?

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 12:30

The driver, how much has he had to drink?

Mandy Matney 12:35

Anthony then told Domino that most of the group wanted to go home after the oyster roast on Paki Island around midnight.

Anthony Cook 12:44

I can tell you this much we left I don't know where the fuck we were. We left and stop in downtown Beaufort and me and him about fell on the fucking dock because I told him not go up here to the fucking bar that we need to be going home not downtown.

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 12:59

How was ya'll drinking down there and none yall 21.

Anthony Cook 13:01

Hell and whatnot I stayed on damn boat. But he went he was drinking actually at the bar. I reckon I didn't go.

Mandy Matney 13:11

The group left downtown Beaufort around 1:17am on February 24 2018.

Anthony Cook 13:18

So y'all came from downtown through the creek and that's when.



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Mandy Matney 13:24

So seconds before the crash GPS data show that the boat was traveling at around 29 miles per hour, which is very fast for a boat as it approached the narrow winding waterway of Archers Creek.

Anthony Cook 13:37

I don't even know I finally got to a point I grabbed my girlfriend and put her in my lap in the bottom of the boat and was holding on with my eyes closed and next thing I know I'm in fucking water.

Mandy Matney 13:48

Paul, Mallory and Anthony were ejected into the water. Connor Cook and Paul's girlfriend were severely injured and taken to the hospital while Anthony who dislocated his shoulder stayed on scene. Anthony Cook sensed that the Murdaugh family influence would play a role in the investigation. Anthony, a Hampton County native who grew up with Paul Murdaugh knew of the Murdaugh's power in the low country criminal justice system. Three generations of Murdaugh's all served a solicitor's, which is South Carolina's version of a district attorney over a five county region in the low country from 1920 to 2006. This enabled the family to amass hundreds of political prosecutorial and law enforcement connections.

Anthony Cook 14:40

Y'all know Alex Murdaugh? That's his son.

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 14:46

The one driving the boat?

Anthony Cook 14:47

So good luck

Mandy Matney 14:52

Here Domino rejected this assumption that good ol boy politics would play a role in this investigation. He said Well It doesn't matter who you know to Anthony. Here Domino asked Anthony one more time who was driving the boat

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 15:10

Driver is the one with no clothes on correct?

Anthony Cook 15:15

To be honest with you

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy 15:16

The one you were getting mad at back there, he was in his drawers.



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Anthony Cook 15:19

He was the last one driving whenever I got down in the floor of the boat.

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy

(Incoherent) he's got still got clothes on correct?

Anthony Cook

Yeah

Stephen Domino Sheriff's Deputy

Alright so yeah, they're good. Everybody's good physical wise, first. Okay, but I just wondered we need to know exactly who was driving and that's you says the last one you saw so that's why I told them because he's has to be responsible. Me, don't worry about that. We're gonna handle on that end. Okay. All right.

Mandy Matney 15:57

So several minutes after talking to Domino, Austin Pritcher who was the first officer from the lead investigating agency SCDNR ask Anthony Cook who was driving the boat

Austin Pritcher SCDNR 16:09

Hey I'm with the Department of Natural Resources. Who was driving the boat?

Anthony Cook 16:16

The last time I grabbed my girlfriend got down on the bottom of the boat I begged and begged and begged and begged to let me drive.

Austin Pritcher SCDNR 16:27

Where were all coming from?

Anthony Cook 16:32

Paul

Austin Pritcher SCDNR 16:33

Okay and Paul was driving? Not Conner?

16:37

If Connor was driving (Incoherent)

Austin Pritcher SCDNR 16:42

They were both sitting in the front seat. You were laying on bottom of the boat before you hit ?



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Anthony Cook 16:53

Yes

Austin Pritcher SCDNR 16:54

Okay. And Paul and Connor were sitting on right behind the console?

Anthony Cook 16:58

Yes. Fought with both of them for about 30 minutes to let me drive. And both of them thought it was fucking funny.

Austin Pritcher SCDNR 17:07

Yeah. Okay. Well, we all going to do everything we can find to find her. Okay.

Anthony Cook 17:17

Appreciate it.

Mandy Matney 17:21

But Pritcher did not write this in his scdnr report. Instead, he wrote that Anthony quote, did not know unquote, who was driving the boat Pritcher wrote in his report that other officers who arrived on scene before him thought it was Connor Cook or Paul Murdaugh driving the boat yet in all of the police report. There is no evidence of any witnesses on scene telling law enforcement that Connor was driving. On the other hand, Domino's Beaufort County Sheriff's Office report reflected exactly what Anthony Cook told him. Domino was the only deputy on scene who identified Paul Murdaugh as the driver. Corporal Jack Keener, a deputy who had connections to the Murdaugh law firm offered a different assessment of the situation. At the time of the crash. The sheriff's office had said it was merely assisting SCDNR The lead agency in the investigation in Beaufort County deputies who arrived on scene before SCDNR laid the groundwork for the entire investigation and Keener wrote in his report that it was unclear who was driving the boat, but he admitted in his deposition that this assessment was his personal opinion and that no one else had said anything to him. That would indicate Connor Cook may have been driving the boat. Specifically when he was asked if anyone told him if Connor Cook may have been driving the boat Keener gave a strange answer about how he didn't think girls could handle driving the boat. And that's how he basically deduced it to either Paul or Connor. He said I personally ran this creek. I was born and raised here. It can get narrower and skinny at some times and the tide was going out. I don't think any of the girls were driving the boat. I don't know what kind of experience they may have. But it has to be one of the three boys Missus Beach's boyfriend was mad. He just said he wasn't driving the boat and then he's mad at Paul Murdaugh. Also keep in mind that the Murdaugh law firm previously represented Keeners family and a \$2.5 million lawsuit. In Keener's dashcam video that was recently released, there is no indication that he ever questioned any of the other passengers about who was driving the boat. Keener's two driver theory was subsequently passed to SCDNR. Austin Pritcher, the SCDNR officer who is accused of manipulating his reports to favor Paul Murdaugh only offered Connor Cook a field sobriety test that night.



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SCDNR never sought a warrant to compel To the hospital to draw Paul's blood that night, but the hospital did anyways because he was perceived as behaving so erratically. They were worried that he had a head injury. However, in the last few weeks SCDNR has revealed at Paul Murdaugh's blood at 4am on February 24 2019, was about 3.5 times over the legal limit. But you have to think about it if the hospital had not taken it upon themselves to obtain Paul's BAC, who knows of SCDNR would have had enough to file charges. Three weeks after the boat crash. The Beaufort County Sheriff's Office recused itself from the investigation due to its long standing relationship with the Murdaugh family. Still, its involvement prior to this recusal clearly impacted the direction of this investigation. And because of the initial confusion in the investigation. It took two months for authorities to charge Paul Murdaugh with three felony voting under the influence counts. And unlike the vast majority of felony DUI cases, Paul Murdaugh never stepped foot in jail. At the time of his death. He was facing 25 years in prison for the charges. And I want to talk about those charges for a minute because it's another story yet most of the media and the public is just not understanding. The Attorney General's office told a local newspaper last week that they were dropping charges against Paul Murdsugh, that is not at all to say that they're clearing his name or that the charges wouldn't have stuck had he been alive. They are dropping the charges simply because you can't have a trial for a dead person. While the investigation of Paul Murdaugh ended with his death, authorities are now looking into obstruction of justice allegations involving his powerful family members. According to both FITSnews sources and attorneys representing boat crash victims. Soon a judge should decide on Connor Cook's petition, which asks the court for permission to depose several law enforcement officers in connection with a potential lawsuit. According to the petition, the officers may have information of a collusion or a civil conspiracy to shift the blame of the boat accident away from Paul Murdaugh by wrongfully shifting the focus to Connor Cook in the explosive depositions attached to that petition. Attorneys questions suggests that several pieces of evidence appear to be missing, including Paul's phone, which was picked up by another officer on scene, which you heard in the audio earlier. Also DNA swabs from the boat and photographs of DNA processing, which could have proven where Connor was positioned in the boat at the time of the crash, considering a pool of his blood was on the right side of the boat, and an audio recording of Anthony Cook telling Michael Brock that Paul Murdaugh killed Mallory Beach, Michael Brock has a long list of personal ties to the Murdaugh family. Yet he was named as a lead investigator in the case Brock spoke with Anthony Cook on scene on February 24 2019. Later that day, he said that Paul Murdaugh killed his girlfriend according to a Parris Island military police officers sworn affidavit, but Brock didn't write that in his report. Instead, Brock wrote that Anthony flipped out and was yelling at Paul failing to note why he was angry at Paul Murdaugh and the aftermath of Mallory Beach's disappearance. And Mallory Beach, the beloved bubbly 19 year old who lit up every room she walked into. Unfortunately, gets lost in the chaos of the story. Anthony refused to leave Archers Creek Bridge on the day she went missing.

Anthony Cook 23:47

Is anybody in the water looking for her?



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Beaufort County Officers 23:50

Yes, we got Morrow we got DNR fire departments got their boats in the water. Coast Guard is on the way with the chopper view. North in route all right.

Anthony Cook 24:01

Is she in the bottom? Or (Incoherent)

Beaufort County Officers 24:04

Look, they're gonna have a dive team. We got a dive team. We got a bunch of resources. Regardless, like I told you, of the outcome we'll find her, gotta keep faith that she is somewhere on the bank. You see what I'm saying?

Mandy Matney 24:24

Beach's body was found a week later by two men in a boat about five miles from the crash site Beaufort County Coroner Ed Allen determined that she died of blunt force trauma and drowning. The three officers who are accused of falsifying their reports Michael Brock, Jack Keener, and Austin Pritcher still work in law enforcement Domino, the officer who showed kindness and compassion to Anthony and identified Paul Murdaugh, as the driver of the boat in his report was fired from the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office for alleged drug use in July 2020. However, he was never charged. So a few days after we said we were going to be taking a break the Beaufort County Sheriff's Office suddenly filled our Freedom of Information Act requests and gave us hours of audio, which is what you heard in this episode. We didn't get much of a break and we still need it. My wonderful fiance David Moses has a busy couple months ahead of him as he is spearheading the Savannah Seafood and Spirits Festival at the end of August and the Polo for heroes event in Bluffton this October. So check both of those events out at-

DAVID MOSES 25:32

seafoodandspirits.com and polo4heroes.com. Those events and others help us support organizations making the world a better place. They assist with children that have nowhere to go victims of violence, wounded military, first responders and much much more. Check out the links in the descriptions and we hope to see you there.

Mandy Matney 25:53

Thank you, David. So while David is busy, I have a lot of reporting, digging and FOIA requesting to do on this case, I need some time for that. But again, as we plan if anything major breaks, we will be back and we can promise you that be sure to subscribe to the Murdaugh Murders Podcast in the meantime, so you don't miss an episode and follow me on Twitter at Mandy Matney, or on Instagram at Mandy underscore in underscore Hilton Head for updates on the latest episodes. And in the meantime, to support this podcast visit murdaughmurderspodcast.com. And thank you all for all of the support we've had over these last few crazy weeks. Thank you to everyone who gave us a five star review. Thank you to



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everyone who shared this podcast on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, all of it. We so appreciate you and thank you. We will be back soon. So stay tuned. The Murdaugh Murders Podcast is created by me Mandy Matney and my fiance David Moses, produced by Luna Shark Productions.

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