Sister of murdered Labrador woman still struggles to understand why she died

Regula Schule (right), shown with her daughter Susie in 2016. Schule was killed in Happy Valley-Goose Bay the same year. Jonathan Henoche, 33, the man charged in her death, died in custody at Her Majesty's Penitentiary in St. John's this week. His trial was set for June 2020 at Newfoundland Supreme Court in St. John's. - File photo

The news that her sister’s suspected killer died behind bars didn’t come as a shock to Elisabeth Schule. She just didn’t think it would be this soon.

“I somehow did expect that he would die (in jail),” she said during a phone interview from her home in Bern, Switzerland. “I knew he would be punished and thought he would stay in jail for many, many years.”
Jonathan Henoche, 33, died Wednesday while incarcerated at Her Majesty’s Penitentiary (HMP). Reports have indicated it happened during the lunch hour following an altercation with corrections officers. The RNC and the Chief Medical Examiner are looking into the incident.

Henoche was facing a first-degree murder charge in the July 2016 death of 88-year-old Regula Schule of Happy Valley–Goose Bay, who was originally from Switzerland. He was also charged with robbery, break and entry, arson with disregard for human life and arson with property damage.

Henoche had been transferred to HMP on remand awaiting his trial, which was set for June 2020 at Newfoundland Supreme Court in St. John’s.

Speaking in English, which is not her first language, Elisabeth Schule said it’s been a difficult time for her since her sister’s murder.

"My emotions go up and down," she said. "It was hard to hear she had died. It was especially hard the way I lost her. It’s hard to accept she was murdered ... It was a shock."

She said she had heard that the day of the murder, Henoche had come to her sister’s house looking for food and money. Her sister — a missionary in community — was a respected teacher who helped many.

"I can’t understand it. Why would someone want to hurt her?" said Schule, who said her sister wanted to work in a community of First Nations.

"She was such a good person. She was very interested in people. She was always ready to help if somebody needed it."

Schule, who will turn 90 next month, said she and Regula were very close, having been just one year apart in age difference.

"I think about her very often," said Schule, who said they grew up Erlenbach, a small village in the district of Meilen in the canton of Zürich.

"I have photos of her around (the house). ... So many very happy memories."

Schule, who visited Labrador a few times after her sister moved there, said she hasn’t spoken to Regula’s daughter, Susie, in many months, as there always seemed to be problems with the phone connection.

"I really ought to write her, though," Schule said.

Schule had hoped the trial would provide the family with some answers about what happened to Regula, and when asked about Henoche’s death, she admitted she didn’t know how to feel about it.

"I don’t know how I feel," she said. "I’m still absorbing it."

The Telegram’s requests to Happy Valley–Goose Bay town councillors for comment on Regula Schule were turned down.

rosie.mullaey@thetelegram.com

Twitter: @TelyRosie

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