

**Steve Marshall**  
Alabama Attorney General



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## **Attorney General Steve Marshall Announces Court of Criminal Appeals Upholds Murder Conviction in Etowah County**

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Steve Marshall announced that the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals affirmed the conviction of Hunter Dewayne Bellew, age 23, of Gadsden, for capital murder. Bellew was convicted in the Etowah County Circuit Court on April 22, 2022, for the capital murder of Tony McCartney.

The evidence at trial showed that the Mr. McCartney lived by himself on forty acres of property in Etowah County. The victim owned numerous guns and was also known to keep large amounts of cash. The defendant, Bellew, had previously visited McCartney's home because Bellew's father was best friends with the victim. On November 5, 2016, Bellew and a friend were dropped off near the victim's residence, but the friend refused to join in the crime that Bellew had planned and walked away. When police later performed a welfare check at Mr. McCartney's home, they found him fatally wounded. Bellew stole several weapons from the victim and later sold them for drugs. When confronted by police investigators, Bellew confessed to burglarizing the victim's home, killing him, and stealing one of his vehicles.

Etowah County District Attorney Jody Willoughby's office successfully prosecuted this case and obtained a guilty verdict. Bellew was sentenced to life imprisonment without the possibility for parole. Bellew sought to have his conviction reversed on appeal.

The Attorney General's Criminal Appeals Division handled the case during the appeals process, arguing for the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals to affirm Bellew's conviction. The Court did so in a decision issued Friday, February 3, 2023.

Attorney General Marshall commended Assistant Attorney General Marc A. Starrett for his successful work on this case and thanks District Attorney Jody Willoughby and his staff for their valuable assistance in defending the capital murder conviction.

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