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Lachlan Young Admits Guilt in Murder of Clunes Woman Hannah McGuire

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Lachlan Young, 23, has pleaded guilty to the murder of his ex-partner, 23-year-old Hannah McGuire, in a shocking turn during his Supreme Court trial in Ballarat. This article details the case, the devastating impact on the community, and concerns over the Albanese government's approach to addressing domestic violence.

On July 18, 2025, Lachlan Young, initially pleading not guilty to murder, changed his plea eight days into his trial at the Victorian Supreme Court in Ballarat, admitting to killing Hannah McGuire on April 5, 2024,

per ABC News. McGuire's body was found in a burnt-out Mitsubishi Triton in Scarsdale bushland, south-west of Ballarat, after Young suffocated her and set the vehicle ablaze, as revealed in court testimony. His friend, Benjamin O'Keefe, told the jury Young confessed to the act, driven by fears McGuire would take their shared house after their breakup, per The Age. The prosecution detailed Young's controlling behavior, including 129 calls in a day and stalking, with McGuire's mother, Debbie, testifying to his abusive actions, per WA Today.

The guilty plea, met with applause from McGuire's family and friends, marked a pivotal moment for Clunes, where Hannah, an educational support worker, was mourned by 600 at her April 2024 funeral, per The Canberra Times. The McGuire family, owners of the National Hotel, posted on Facebook, "No other result would have been fitting. All for you Hannah, my sweet girl," reflecting community relief. A GoFundMe raised over \$11,000 for the family, though Lachlan Morganti faces charges for stealing \$60,000 from it, per the Bendigo Advertiser.

The case, the third alleged male-perpetrated murder of a woman in Ballarat in 2024, underscores a domestic violence crisis. Critics argue the Albanese government's policies lack urgency, with funding for prevention programs stagnant despite rising cases, per the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Young awaits sentencing, but stronger measures are needed to protect women and deter such tragedies. Support is available at 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732).