

Last words 'told of visit by doctor'

The last known words of Susan Christie were that a doctor she had been drinking with that afternoon was coming back to see her, a witness told the Supreme Court.

The witness said the words were spoken outside de Soto Rise, a block of units in narrow Currie Street, Daglish.

Her friend Mrs Christie had laughed when advised to practise safe sex that night.

The friend and two other witnesses told of hearing two heavy, distinct thumps coming from Mrs Christie's flat later that night.

She was never seen again.

"When Susan was sober she was a lovely person - we got along and she was a good friend," the neighbour from the Currie Street flats told the Supreme Court.

"When she had drunk one too many she was abusive, aggressive, very rude and used foul language."

She often drank on an empty stomach and got tipsy after one bottle of wine, the witness said.

"After the second she was drunk," she said.

She would yell abuse about \$500 the neighbours had borrowed.

"She would say: 'Give me back the money - I can't have my kids'."

The neighbour said she had met Susan when she knocked on her door and asked to borrow coffee.

"She talked about her kids all the time, but 'loathed and despised' her second husband, Rory Christie," the witness said.

"She said he was a good-looking man who was very evil on the inside," said the witness, whose

name was suppressed by the court.

"She almost spat his name."

The couple had fallen out badly over custody of their then four-year-old son, the witness said.

Mr Christie was awarded full custody and Mrs Christie granted supervised access.

Before a final Family Court judgment over custody, Mr Christie had visited Susan.

"She said: 'The bastard's running scared. He wants to make a deal,'" the witness told the court.

After the court decision, "you could cut the air with a knife" when Rory dropped off the child, she said.

They were civil to each other when the child was present.

The witness said she had advised Mrs Christie to bite her tongue and not instigate any arguments when Mr Christie was present if she wanted to regain custody of her son.

"She was desperate to see her son," the witness said.

"Sue was determined to maintain absolute civility towards him and not commit any breach of the Family Court order."

"She didn't want to do anything to jeopardise that."

"As a friend, it was the best advice you could give her - bite your tongue and bide your time."

Mrs Christie had always expected to have the boy for Christmas Day in 2001. She disappeared on November 15 that year, the witness said.

In the week before she disappeared, Mrs Christie, when drunk, had abused the witness's boyfriend, whose name



Dr Andrew Dunn outside the Supreme Court.

has also been suppressed.

As a peace offering, Mrs Christie had bought him a bottle of Jim Beam.

"He told her to shove it up her arse and said: 'Go f— yourself,'" the witness said.

Mrs Christie kept the bourbon in her fridge, but did not drink spirits, the witness said.

On the evening Mrs Christie was last seen, the neighbour called in for a drink of bourbon.

"I was shocked to see it was all gone. The bottle had been drunk," she said.

"She said she had someone over that day and this person had drunk the Jim Beam. She had drunk the wine."

"She said it was a doctor she

had met at a friend's party."

The mutual friend was Kelli Budrikis.

"She had told me a mutual friend was going to match-make, or something along those lines," the witness said.

She said the doctor was never given a name.

"He was just 'the doctor'," the witness said.

The witness said that that night she and her boyfriend contacted a drug dealer and caught a taxi to their house, where they bought amphetamines, which they injected.

They phoned a man, a stranger, whose advertisement and photo appeared in a swingers' magazine.

He had turned up with a video

player and some "rude movies".

About 10.15pm she and the man, Gregg Baird, left the front of the units to drive to the Wembley Hotel to buy alcohol.

Mrs Christie had got out of a taxi with a bottle in a brown bag. She was wearing a red Chicago Bulls T-shirt, white shorts and flat shoes.

The witness said: "The doctor is coming over. I don't know how he is going to get here - he's too pissed to drive."

"I said: 'Make sure you practise safe sex'."

She said both women had laughed.

When she and Mr Baird had returned from the hotel, Mr Baird parked his utility at the rear of the flats.

The witness said that around midnight she heard two distinct thuds from Mrs Christie's flat, directly below her lounge room.

They had sounded like a heavy armchair being knocked over on to a carpeted floor. They were a split-second or a second apart.

"I said: 'The alcoholic bitch has fallen off the toilet again'," the witness said.

The couple tried to buy more drugs then went to The Bog nightclub, arriving home about 6.30am.

"I didn't see Sue that morning - I was trashed after a big night out," the witness said.

She never saw or heard from Mrs Christie again.

Under cross-examination from Rory Christie's lawyer Tom Percy QC, the witness said she did not have a key to Mrs Christie's flat,

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Invitation for public comment

Land development on the corner of Kalinda Drive Et The Boulevard, City Beach (formerly City Beach Bowling Club /Scout Hall land)

Public comment is invited on a proposed Outline Development Plan prepared for the residential land on Lot 723 and Lot 724 The Boulevard in City Beach.

The 4.8 hectare site is zoned residential R30/40 under the Town of Cambridge Town Planning Scheme No. 1. The Plan is available for viewing on line at www.cambridge.wa.gov.au or at the Town of Cambridge Library.

The comment period closes 2 December, 2005. Comments can be submitted by:
Mail: Kalinda Drive /The Boulevard Project, PO Box 448, Leederville WA 6903.

Lodged: Town of Cambridge offices, 1 Bold Park Drive, Floreat or Town of Cambridge Library, 99 The Boulevard (Floreat Forum Shopping Centre).

For more information on the development please telephone free call 1800 233 899, visit www.cambridge.wa.gov.au or email kalinda@millswilson.com.au
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Two caught in murder trial spotlight

• From page 1

never contacted her and she never contacted me.

“Kelli had made some mention of having some people around for drinks, which never actually happened.”

He said he was surprised when he saw pictures of Mrs Christie after she disappeared.

He said he would probably have assumed she did not come from the Hills.

He said that in 2001 he had a 1978 repainted mustard-coloured Series 11 Jaguar,

with a Holden V8 engine.

On Thursday, November 15, 2001, he slept overnight in the study of a friend's house in Cottesloe and drove her and her sons to the 9am Rottnest ferry.

It was not unusual for him to sleep over at friends' houses in the western suburbs.

He said he drove to North Cottesloe beach, where, in the surf, he met an Austrian tourist named Andreus Handel.

He and Andreus had breakfast at the North Cott

Cafe, then Andreus showed Dr Dunn his youth hostel accommodation at the Ocean Beach Hotel, as well as his surfboard and car.

Dr Dunn invited Andreus home for dinner the next night.

He said he then walked to the Eric Street shopping centre, where he bought fruit and a newspaper and studied a big aerial photograph at an upstairs real estate agent's office.

He then walked back to his car and drove straight to Midland Gate shopping centre, leaving Cottesloe at

1pm at the latest.

At Midland, he possibly had a haircut and his hair de-greayed, and window-shopped.

He used an ATM about 5.45pm and drove to the house of a friend, Colleen Ross, between 6.15 and 6.30pm. He invited her to dinner the next night.

When Mr Percy said that the times between 2pm and 5.30pm were unaccounted for, Dr Dunn replied: “You are completely carrying on the scare.”

He said he stayed all

Thursday night with his three children at Darlington.

He denied “absolutely” that his car could have been seen at Susan Christie's house.

During the weekend, he went alone to Rottnest to try to find the woman he had stayed with on the Wednesday night.

He walked around the cottages hoping to see her because the island authorities would not release accommodation details.

He slept the Saturday night at Tentland.

Claremont dumps Multiplex

• From page 1

Leith said a big overhead tunnel surrounded by loading docks would worsen the situation.

Mr Leith said it was preferable to try to resolve sticking points with the previous development plan.

The previous application – presented by developers in March – which included two levels of shops, capped with 160 apartments rising to six levels in places, is stalled at the State Administrative Tribunal until November 29 while these latest plans are considered.

Councillor Paul Kelly said: “The tunnel is a 50m disaster – it's a black hole.”

He said this plan had too much retail space and needed to include residential options.

“A lot of issues with respect to safety, vandalism and noise control could be ameliorated if there were people living in the town centre,” he said.

Councillor Clem Edwards, also opposing the latest plan and objecting to the tunnel, said the high amount of shop-floor space would approach the total allowed in the whole central business area, which would limit opportunities for other businesses.

Councillor Carolyn Marshall said the plan's lack of residential space was its biggest problem.

Councillor Dick Maisey said: “We need to maintain an active town centre and not trap people inside a mall.”

Councillor Jock Barker said: “I couldn't support a project if I couldn't tell my grandchildren I was proud of it.”

Councillor Rick Camins, the only one to support the proposal, said it substantially complied with all requirements.

Mayor Peter Olson said the project would have a lifespan of at least 40 years and the council was committed to “getting it right”.

“This plan does not fit in

with the amenity of the town – especially the tunnel,” Mr Olson said.

Multiplex manager Marcus Le Messurier, said the joint-venture partners would lodge an appeal, as they considered this latest plan conformed with Claremont's development guidelines.

The other option was to seek a ruling from the State Administrative Tribunal on the previous application at a directions hearing on November 29.

He said the development partners remained committed to delivering a workable solution to Claremont.

Nurses condemn closure

• From page 13

“It's very different looking after people at the end-of-life in terms of symptom management, communication and addressing issues that arise.”

Former hospice nurses, who now work in home-based palliative care, said people like her, from all over the northern suburbs, used the hospice to provide respite care when “home carers were on their knees and needed a break”, or to get symptoms under control in a crisis.

Karen Thompson, who worked at the hospice for 11 years, said: “I send my pa-

tients there when families can't cut it anymore.

“Without easy access to that, many families may not be able to keep their loved ones at home in their final days.”

North Metropolitan Area Health Service chief executive John de Campo said the decentralisation of the government-funded beds would take the expertise of the Cottage Hospice to three areas around Perth, closer to where people lived.

Refurbishing the Cottage Hospice and keeping it open was not an option, he said.

“I'm not here to waste the public's money.”

60 staff to go as axe falls on hospice

• From page 13

Ms Rooney said the plans had been made in partnership with the Health Department.

North Metropolitan Area Health Service chief executive John de Campo had supported moves to redistribute the hospice's 14 public beds.

Ms Rooney said an upgrade to Kalamunda Hospital would provide between six and 10

beds in a palliative care wing.

Bethesda Private Hospital in Claremont was about to set up a palliative care unit and had funding to make four beds available for public patients.

Hollywood Private Hospital, which already provided seven public beds, would add another two.

The number of beds at the hospice would be gradually phased down between now and April

next year.

Amanda Leigh said staff, including 35 nurses, would be offered redeployment, although given no guarantees.

Liberal MP for Cottesloe, Colin Barnett, said while the hospice's closure would limit the choice of setting for palliative care, he was confident local people would find their needs being well met at Bethesda.

Killer disease hits King's Park

• From page 3

The councils are being asked to contribute \$21,000 each over three years to trigger a \$420,000 government grant.

Dr Dixon said research so far had been in South Australia.

“The disease has slowly but intractably been decimating remnant urban trees in the Perth metropolitan region,” he said.

“Without research, it is likely to permanently change the social, economic and biodiversity associated with our remnant indigenous trees,” Dr Dixon said.

The disease could be caused by bore water used in reticulation.

“Bore water is of much greater alkalinity than rainwater,” Dr Dixon said.

“This alkaline water may inhibit the ability of the tree to absorb iron, which is very important as it is required for photosynthesis.

“Without iron, trees cannot feed and eventually die.”

The disease is named after the place it was discovered – Mundulla in South Australia.

Notice Of Special Council Meeting

A special Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, 16 November, 2005 at 7.00pm in the Council Chambers, Cottesloe Civic Centre, 109 Broome Street, Cottesloe.

The purpose of the meeting will be for Council to consider:

- (1) The draft Town Planning Scheme and Council's response to same.
- (2) The outcomes of the SAT compulsory conference (Cottesloe Beach Hotel) to be held on the same day and Council's response to same.

The agenda will be available at the office of the Council, 109 Broome Street, Cottesloe and on Council's website: www.cottesloe.wa.gov.au

STEPHEN TINDALE
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Last words 'told of visit by doctor'

• From page 8

but Mrs Christie sometimes lent her a key so she could use her phone.

Mrs Christie had given her a keycard and pin number so she could go to the bottle shop for her.

A man named James Brodie had abused Mrs Christie's card and taken \$1000 from her account.

When drunk, Mrs Christie would become abusive about the money she was owed, and call her a “useless junkie”.

Her boyfriend did not want Mrs Christie in the house.

The witness agreed that she had made a true statement to police that said Mrs Christie had told her she had met a doctor at a party at Kelli's.

She said Mrs Christie told her Mrs Budriks was trying to matchmake.

“She explained that he had been over that afternoon and had drunk a whole bottle of bourbon,” said the witness.

“Sue said: ‘Like all doctors, he's a piss-tank.’”

She agreed that she had also said that Mrs Christie had told her at the front of the units on that last night: “Guess who's coming back around tonight? I don't know how he's going to get here – he'll probably have to get a taxi.”

The woman said she had previously bought some cocaine for \$130 and shared half with Mrs Christie. They used it in the witness's unit.

The witness's boyfriend said he had heard a “couple of thuds” coming from Susan's unit the night Mr Baird came around.

“They were two solid thumps with a split-second between them,” he said.

“I did nothing to investigate – I didn't like her – it was her problem,” he said.

He said he had picked her up from the floor of her toilet a couple of weeks before.

He said he did not like her company.

He agreed she had called the couple “f— low-life junkies”.

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