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November 12, 2005

Two caught in murder trial spotlig

Two men in the hot seat over the disappearance of Susan Christie faced each other across a tense courtroom on Wednesday.

In the witness box was a Darlington doctor, and sitting a few metres away in the dock was Mrs Christie's ex-husband Rory Christie (36), who is facing trial for her murder in Daglish in November 2001.

Dr Andrew Dunn (51) sometimes became heated as he answered questions from Mr Christie's lawyer, Tom Percy QC.

Dr Dunn was questioned vigorously by Mr Percy about two missing women – Susan Christie and a former patient of Dr Dunn, missing Parkerville woman Sarah McMahon (20).

Ms McMahon was last seen five years ago in Claremont and her car was found at Swan Districts Hospital in Midland.

Dr Dunn said he knew the McMahon family as patients and they had bought his Parkerville house.

He had treated Sarah about six times, including when she fell from a horse.

He had returned once to the house and slept in it after it was re-sold.

He said he did not work at the Swan Districts Hospital.

His former wife, Pauline Vigus,

By BRET CHRISTIAN

told the court that Dr Dunn had not attended patients there since the late 1980s.

Justice John McKechnie rebuked Dr Dunn about six times when he raised his voice to Mr Percy, asked him questions and passed comments.

"Try not to trap me with your clever words," Dr Dunn said to Mr Percy

He said it was "absurd and untrue" to suggest that he had been drinking bourbon with Mrs Christie on the afternoon of the last day she was seen alive.

I have no need to construct alibis about anything," Dr Dunn said when questioned about trip Rottnest trip the weekend after Mrs Christie disappeared.

He accused Mr Percy of "creating a smokescreen that doesn't exist".

Dr Dunn's cross-examination began with questions about a letter and two videos of evidence he had sent to the Queen at Buckingham Palace in the early 1990s

It involved child abductions, pornography and occult happenings, a Mundaring stabbing victim, alleged threats to the royal family if they visited



Rory Christie

Australia, and Australia's governor general.

"I didn't have any definite information," Dr Dunn told the court.

Dr Dunn said he had met Susan Christie only twice, fleetingly.

He did not know where she



Dr Andrew Dunn

lived, and there had been no other contact.

He said the first meeting was at the 40th birthday party of Darlington architect Andrus Budrikis.

He had met Mr Budrikis at the UWA Karate Club 20 years ago, and in 2001 they were living close to each other in Darlington. There were about 120 people at the party at Darlington Town Hall and he struck up a conversation with Mrs Christie while lining up at the bar.

The conversation lasted between 30 and 120 seconds, and he could recall nothing of it, except that they had exchanged names.

He next met Mrs Christie at Subiaco Markets, where she was with Kelli Budrikis, wife of Andrus.

Dr Dunn was with his then girlfriend, Maree Bullard.

He could not recall talking to Mrs Christie, but remembered chatting with Mrs Budrikis, who he described as "ebullient, extroverted and probably bombastic'

He said he could remember "no exchange of communication" with Mrs Christie.

He said that at the party, Maree Bullard had not made a scene about his attention to Mrs Christie, but about his conversation with a group of three other women.

"I was not flirting with Susan Christie," he said. "I only saw her twice, in tran-

sient chance meetings.

"I never saw Susan again, I • Please turn to page 73

• More reports, pictures pages 8 & 9.

Ban those unhelpful TEE tables'

"League tables" that com-pare schools' TEE performance should be made illegal, says Garth Wynne, principal of Christ Church Grammar School.

In a letter to the POST, he said: "I challenge the state government to ban and/or make illegal publication of tables that compare individual schools.

"Such tables, which have unfortunately already led to public money being misdirected, are shallow and unhelpful and add nothing to the quality of educational outcomes for the students of WA.'

His total opposition is an extraordinary public statement by the man who leads a school with 1200 boys.

He said: "I write on the eve of the 2005 TEE exams from the privileged position of being the principal of one of Australia's leading independent schools and also as a parent of a current

"The issue of league tables and the associated public comparisons of individual school performance that will occur in early January 2006 are of great concern.

"Such league tables completely fail to represent my daughter's total school experience of the past 12 years and the quality of the experience of her current school.

"The league tables will inappropriately compare the supposed 'performance' of the school that I lead, the one that she attends and every other school in the state.

"The measures used fail to take into account the particular circumstances of individual schools and their communities and are completely unrepresentative of much of what is truly important in education.

'Publication of league tables has led to the unfair criticism of teachers and school administrations across all education sectors.

"Most recently, the comparisons have seen the spending of public money on programs that have no intent other than to ensure that some schools appear in the top part of these invalid comparative tables.

"The statistical material collected at the end of each school year by the Curriculum Council is highly valuable. It is important for the future planning of schools in whatever context. School administrators can use these performance measures in both TEE and Wholly School Assessed courses, to plan for improvement and to assess the success of innovations over time.

'Individual schools can set this information against their particular circumstances and evaluate their performance against realistic goals.

"The data also allows for individual students to be rewarded for their performance through the highly respected

Curriculum Council Awards.

"These wonderful young people deserve nothing less and these awards are a celebration of excellence, which all schools applaud.

A portion of this same material is completely misused when creating the league tables that compare individual schools with each other.

"These tables present a confused message to the community of what is 'valuable' in education and are an exploitation of public information.

I know that my daughter, her school, the school that I lead and all schools in our state, are each in a 'league of their own' because they are distinctive and unique."

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Claremont dumps Multiplex

Claremont has thrown out Multiplex/Hawaiian's latest bid to build a big shopping complex in the town centre instead of the previously proposed urban village.

The plan, which includes a tunnel that one councillor said would create a "black hole", is the fourth in seven years to be considered by the council.

Eight of the nine councillors at a special council meeting this week voted against the \$125 million plan – a two-storey, scaleddown version of the "urban village" but with no apartments and extra shop space and parking.

Councillors objected to the increased retail space, a central mall that would trap shoppers inside a big complex, a smaller town square - and mostly to a 50m tunnel formed by shops spanning over a new road through the western end of the shop block.

They also said they wanted a residential component to invigorate and help improve safety and security in central Claremont.

Councillor Diana Christian said the plan was "like transplanting a Booragoon or Karrinvup box into the middle of the town".

"It has no architectural merits and the tunnel will encourage crime," Ms Christian said.

Councillor Wendy Stephens said: "We have been talking about an urban village but have been asked to agree to a shopping centre.

Describing the western end of the town as "moribund" and in need of revival, councillor David

• Please turn to page 73

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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 mustardcoloured 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.

Two caught in murder trial spotlight

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-greyed, and windowshopped.

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 night at Tentland.

account.

the house.

her a "useless junkie"

was trying to matchmake.

bon," said the witness.

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

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.³

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 patients there when families can't cut it anymore.

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.

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

public's money.

"Without easy access to that,

many families may not be able

Refurbishing the Cottage

"I'm not here to waste the

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.

Notice Of Special

Council Meeting

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

When drunk, Mrs Christie would become

Her boyfriend did not want Mrs Christie in

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 Budrikis

"She explained that he had been over that af-

"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

The woman said she had previously bought

The witness's boyfriend said he had heard a

'couple of thuds" coming from Susan's unit the

"They were two solid thumps with a split-sec-

"I did nothing to investigate – I didn't like her

He said he had picked her up from the floor

He agreed she had called the couple "f-

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some cocaine for \$130 and shared half with Mrs

Christie. They used it in the witness's unit.

- he'll probably have to get a taxi.'

night Mr Baird came around.

ond between them," he said.

low-life junkies"

it was her problem," he said.

of her toilet a couple of weeks before. He said he did not like her company.

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ternoon and had drunk a whole bottle of bour-

abusive about the money she was owed, and call

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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.

Killer disease

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 in-digenous 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.



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 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



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