

Sexual dalliances began at local bars

The boozy, chaotic lives of Susan Christie and her drinking companions, who were her sometimes sexual partners, swirled around the hotels and bars of Subiaco, Shenton Park and Wembley.

Glenn Ratchford, who said he had visited Mrs Christie's unit in Dalglish, described another fellow drinker, Ron Lange, as a malicious gossip.

Mr Ratchford said he had met Dennis Austin, who has also told the court that he met Mrs Christie in a local bar and had a sexual relationship with her.

Mr Lange (56) gave evidence that he was an acquaintance of Mrs Christie, Mr Ratchford and Peter Finn, originally meeting at the Shenton Park Hotel before seeing her at other bars.

He said he had had no sexual relationship with her.

After Mrs Christie disappeared, Mr Lange said Mr Ratchford, when drunk, told him that he had told his psychiatrist that he had killed Susan Christie.

"He was pretty drunk - on his way to a new world record, I think," Mr Lange said, "I didn't take it seriously."

Mr Ratchford denied ever making the admission and said he would never discuss anything meaningful about his life with Mr Lange.

A stand-up comic, Carl Sivalingham, said he was fond of Susan Christie and had known her for about six years.

He had had a sexual relationship with her the night they met about six years before she disappeared. When that ended they remained friends.

The last time he saw her, they were drinking in the flat above hers, about eight days before she disappeared.

They shared a shepherd's pie and the discussion was good-natured, but became explosive about 20 minutes after dinner.

He said Mrs Christie had words with the male neighbour.

Mr Sivalingham twice visited the neighbours after Susan went missing to see if they knew anything.

He had driven Mrs Christie to a 40th birthday party in Darlington for Andrus Budrikis, in mid-2001, where he was asked to take her home because she "was in a very bad way".

Another guest at the party, Geoffrey Donaldson, said he had given Mrs Christie, a stranger, a lift from the party.

He said that Kelli Budrikis, wife of the host, had said: "Take her home before she gets all my married friends."

After that, he had visited her at her flat four times. They talked about philosophy. "It was a platonic relationship - a very small part sexual," he said.

His girlfriend had also visited. He met Mrs Christie's upstairs neighbours and they shared some drugs.

He said Mrs Christie told the neighbour she was seeing a doctor socially.

Mr Donaldson, who was studying for a doctorate in philosophy before he was badly injured in a car crash, said he did not drink alcohol.

"I'm wise to it," he said.

Mr Donaldson said that two weeks before Mrs Christie disappeared, Mr Austin had found him with her in a sexually compromising position, and she had yelled at the other man and thrown him out.

He said that after Mrs Christie disappeared, he phoned her home and visited the units to try to locate her, without success.



Geoffrey Donaldson leaves court.

Multiplex green light

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the developers appealed against.

The major conditions asked for building heights to be reduced from six to four storeys and to increase street-fronts and residential setbacks along St Quentin Avenue to reduce overshadowing.

Developers were also asked to fund roadworks around the area.

But until last night's meeting, both parties had failed to resolve their differences in four sessions of mediation since July and looked to be heading for a ruling at a tribunal directions hearing on November 29.

After the council's resounding rejection of the joint developers' second option, Multiplex manager of developments Marcus Le Messurier said building a residential component, as outlined in the previous proposal, was no longer financially viable, due to rising building costs, unless the council allowed greater flexibility for setbacks, height and density.

Hawaiian general manager of property development Stuart Duplock said the joint-venture partners would now have to grapple with the cost issues.

Developers might choose not to proceed or to present further plans.

"But we are keen to see development go ahead in the town centre," Mr Duplock said.

Multiplex, Hawaiian and Coles Myer own the 26,000sq.m super block between Guger Street and Bay View Terrace that includes Target Country and the Claremont Arcade.

Daily library date

Rory Christie turned up smartly dressed at the State Library almost every day for 12 to 18 months, a library guard told the Supreme Court.

He wore suits and worked on his laptop computer, logging into the library system.

At one stage he reported his mobile phone and palm computer missing.

Stephen Hugh James said he identified Mr Christie from a photo police showed him.

Mr Christie continued attending the library for about six months after Mr James became aware police were interested in him.

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