



Case against Edwards



Bradley Edwards



Justice Stephen Hall

By BRET CHRISTIAN

With two days of unrelenting horror ahead, Bradley Robert Edwards looked wobbly and uncertain as he climbed from the holding cells into the dock at the Supreme Court on Tuesday.

Had the accused man been warned by his lawyer, Paul Yovich, of the mind-numbing torrent of murderous accusations that were to pour from state prosecutor Carmel Barbagallo on Tuesday and Wednesday?

As Mr Edwards ascended the narrow wooden stairs, gone were the tie and the purposeful stride of last week.

For the first time, he looked hesitant and unconfident, his fixed blank expression broken by rare grimaces.

A small wad of cotton wool in his right ear may have been another clue to his changed demeanour.

It was the leftover sign of an injury he'd had the day before in the showers at Hakea Prison, caused by a pencil, either self-inflicted or in an attack.

Mr Edwards wasn't saying. Once seated in the dock he displayed no emotion as the packed courtroom heard, for the first time, what police had discovered in their top-secret investigations into rapes and murders in the western suburbs, plus evidence they say connects Mr Edwards to the crimes.

For the tall, chunky, black-haired 50-year-old, things were about to get very, very personal.

He'd been staring continuously at the judge until the court began discussing "depraved" stories he had allegedly written, containing details said to match with the abduction and rape.

Then he became very inter-



Jane Rimmer Sarah Spiers Ciara Glennon

SERIAL KILLER CASE

ested in looking at his black shoes.

Apart from the litany of ugly facts alleged about his life, his freedom was going to depend on whether or not the state's lawyers could prove the police were right.

For those of us watching - most of whom had lived through the traumatic days of the mid-1990s - what was revealed in the two days in court was almost too much to digest.

For the families and friends involved, the pain must have been indescribable.

Ms Barbagallo, representing the people of WA, was emphatic that all those horrible things, things beyond shocking, had been done by the man in the jarrah cage-like dock.



A police poster issued in Claremont after Jane Rimmer's body was found. Ciara Glennon vanished the next year.

People had turned up in droves to observe proceedings, lining up outside the 115-year-old Supreme Court for seats in the public gallery. Dozens were turned away on the first day.

The gallery heard Mr Yovich and Justice Stephen Hall warn that there was no proof Mr Edwards was the Claremont serial killer.

"These are all allegations," Justice Hall emphasised.

Mr Yovich said the question central to Mr Edwards' defence was: "Is the person who did the things described the accused [Mr Edwards] or not?"

Whoever it was, the lone man driving Telstra vehicles and prowling Claremont late at night during the 1990s wrought a terrible toll as he targeted single young women walking alone within 1km of the Continental Hotel, the old balconied pub on the corner of Bay View Terrace and Gugerri Street.

This week's hearing was about whether a series of crimes and actions - if proved to be Mr Edwards' work - could be legally linked to show a pattern of behaviour indicating a "significant tendency" that would lead eventually to the Claremont murders.

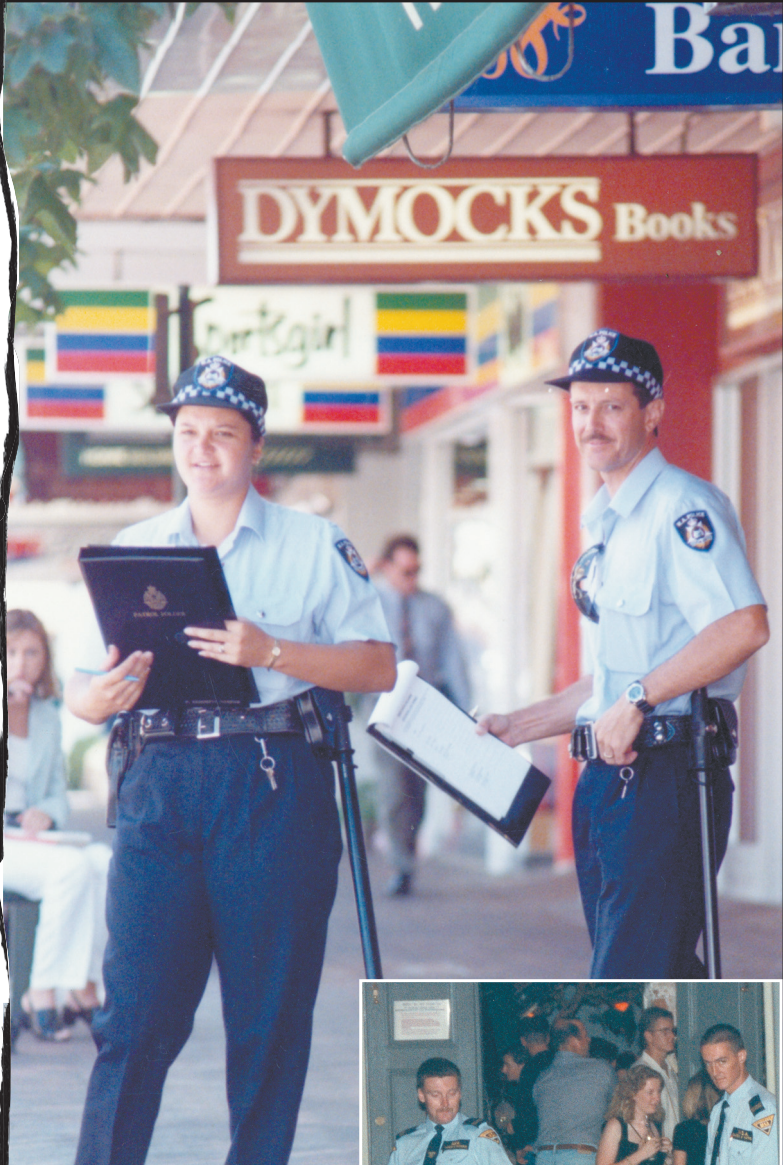
Mr Yovich opposed the inclusion of pornographic material and other evidence at Mr Edwards' main trial, which will be held later this year, saying it was not relevant and was prejudicial.

Ms Barbagallo got straight down to business, first outlining the story of the "Huntingdale prowler", in 1988.

She said the prowler, a teenager, was Mr Edwards, who was then 19.

The prowler took women's clothing and underwear from clotheslines of houses near Gosnells, all within 1km of Mr Edwards' childhood home.

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ABOVE: Police walking the streets of Claremont in 1996 and 1997 taking a register of young people.



RIGHT: Security guards were hired to patrol the streets and escort young women from Claremont's nightspots.

Shock and awe as Bishop quits



By DAVID COHEN

"It's certainly disappointing," Cottesloe MP David Honey said on Thursday when he heard of Curtin MP Julie Bishop's retirement.

"Like many, I hold her in high regard, and it's disappointing to see her leaving Parliament."

Dr Honey said Ms Bishop's successor could be quickly named, given the federal election was due in May.

He said delegates from the Liberal Party's branches in Curtin, and additional delegates chosen by the party's state council, would recommend a candidate.

"I suspect the party would be looking at a truncated selection process," Dr Honey said.

"It could be done within a week, so there's an outstanding candidate in the field."

State party director Sam Calabrese said the state council would have to meet quickly to reopen nominations for Curtin, because Ms Bishop had been endorsed as the candidate.

Party insiders said Thursday's announcement was not a complete surprise.

"It had been swirling around for a while," one said.

"Everyone would have preferred Julie to stay in the seat."

One said academic Erin Watson-Lynn, a supporter of Ms

Bishop, was a likely candidate. "The branches won't be pushed around," they said.

"There is no appetite for unknown people, and people resent politicians trying to engineer their replacement."

Another insider said Ms Bishop's fellow female MPs had been caught on the hop by the news.

"I spoke to one and she had no idea," they said.

One said state council would meet on Sunday to discuss the pre-selection process - but not candidates.

They said all eyes would turn to Sunday night's Newpoll to see what effect Ms Bishop's resignation had.



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SERIAL KILLER CASE



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Gosnells, all within 1km of Mr Edwards' childhood home.

Mr Yovich asked the judge to separate and exclude this evidence from Mr Edwards' main trial.

He said similarities in alleged offending in these and other assertions were countered by significant differences.

Whoever the Huntingdale Prowler was, he was a fetishist who loved wearing women's underwear and silky, flowing nightwear, including when he invaded homes.

Sometimes he would break into homes and rifle through the owners' bedroom drawers.

Sometimes a householder would chase him out, but he visited one house four times, and once fingerprints were left on a sliding door.

Police say the prowler's prints matched Mr Edwards', and it could not be eliminated that bare footprints found at some scenes matched the shape of his feet.

Ms Barbagallo said that at 19, Mr Edwards had been "an introverted, socially awkward man, not involved in any meaningful relationships".

"He had a longstanding tendency to collect and wear women's underwear," she told the court.

The prowling visits culminated on February 15, 1988, when a man wearing a silk kimono he had stolen from a washing line opened the unlocked back door of a house in Huntingdale while the family was sleeping, including an 18-year-old girl asleep on her stomach.

The intruder pulled out the phone lines then climbed



Front page of the POST the weekend after Ciara Glennon disappeared. It was the first indication that she had made it to Stirling Highway from the Continental Hotel at the top of Bay View Terrace.



The Continental Hotel, in Guger Street opposite Claremont station, was at the centre of four abductions, the Supreme Court was told this week. The Stirling Road/Stirling Highway building outside which Sarah Spiers was last seen has since been replaced.

astride the sleeping girl and tried to force fabric into or over her mouth.

She awoke and struggled, and the man fled, dropping the kimono.

Now a 48-year-old, the woman will give evidence at Mr Edwards' trial proper this year.

At the time of the attack, she said the intruder had been as tall as the door frame.

Ms Barbagallo said Mr Edwards was six foot one (185cm).

When scientists tested the kimono in 2016, they found semen stains on it that they said connected it to Mr Edwards' DNA.

The prowling stopped while Mr Edwards family of five holidayed in Bali.

But on October 8 that year, there was another home invasion, involving evidently the same man with underpants over his head.

Ms Barbagallo said that when Mr Edwards had been arrested and questioned in 2016, he could not explain how his DNA had got on the kimono or how his fingerprints had been left on the door.

She then skipped to the western suburbs in 1990, to an attack at Hollywood Hospital on May 7.

On the night of May 6, Bradley

Edwards, then 21, was a Telecom technician and was living with a woman in Noranda.

The couple had argued.

Mr Edwards' partner confessed to him that she had been unfaithful early in their relationship, and was pressuring him to get married.

Ms Barbagallo told the court that this incident was part of a pattern.

She said Mr Edwards would commit crimes against women - including rape and murder - soon after facing stress in his intimate life.

He was still stressed on May 7 when he had been assigned

a phone line job at Hollywood Hospital, where he arrived at 2.30 in the afternoon, a magistrate had later been told.

There he saw a woman, a senior social worker, alone at her desk not far from the toilets.

Mr Edwards asked her for directions to the toilets, went inside then came out holding a piece of cloth and with cable-ties in his pocket.

He jumped the sitting woman from behind, jammed the cloth over her mouth with one hand, and dragged her backwards out of her chair.

He had been trying to drag her to the toilets, he later told

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