

# Vanished in two minutes

Reports by BRET CHRISTIAN and HUGO TIMMS

**"I looked back," said the last person who may have seen Sarah Spiers alive as she waited for a taxi opposite Christ Church in Stirling Highway, Claremont.**

Mark Laidman's split-second decision may mean he also saw the car in which Ms Spiers was abducted after an Australia Day night out in 1996. Mr Laidman, 58, who then lived in Floreat, had seen a young woman fitting the description of 18-year-old Ms Spiers half sitting on a bollard outside BC The Body Club at the Stirling Highway intersection. She appeared to be waiting

for someone, across the road from the phone box where she had called a taxi.

As the car in which he was a front seat passenger passed the teenager in the right-turn lane and waited for the lights to change before turning right heading for Cottesloe, he became aware of another car in the left-hand lane, next to the bollard. The light changed and his car moved off.

"For some reason I just looked back again," he told the Supreme Court on Thursday.

He saw the headlight of the car and had an impression of the shape of its front, but not much else.

He wanted to see if that car followed his through the lights, but he did not see it enter the intersection.

Like Sarah, Mr Laidman had just left Club Bay View in central Claremont.

Sarah's friend Emma Waites, who had known her since they were both boarders in Year 8 at Iona, tearfully told the court of their last conversation.

She said she tried to persuade Sarah to stay on with her and her friends, but Sarah, who was in a happy mood, said she was going to get a taxi.

She never saw Sarah again. Only her killer knows where she is.

A taxi driver took just two minutes to drive along Stirling Highway to the Christ Church corner after Ms Spiers called for a taxi from that corner's phone box.

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Sarah Spiers was waiting for the cab she called when she disappeared from Claremont. LEFT: Bradley Robert Edwards, the man facing court charged with her murder and the murders of Jane Rimmer (23) and Ciara Glennon (27).

# Desperate blood curdling screams

**"They were desperate, blood curdling, something that you could never forget."**

Judith Borrett, 80, told the Supreme Court on Thursday that at around 3am on the morning after Australia Day 1996, the morning Sarah Spiers disappeared, she heard three high-pitched screams from her home in Fairlight Street, Mosman Park.

Ms Borrett said she heard the screams from her bedroom. "Desperate, blood-curdling, terrible, terrible screams, something you would never

forget, one after the other," she said.

She said she heard three screams close together - very high pitched female screams.

"After the scream ... absolute silence," Ms Borrett said.

Another Mosman Park resident Wayne Stewart also heard the screams followed by the sound of two doors slamming.

Mr Stewart, who was living in St Leonard's Street in the 1990s, told the court his fiancée woke him up at some time between 1am and 4am.

"She just woke me up ... she

was quite concerned that there was something going on outside - she had heard a woman screaming - a loud scream, a woman screaming," he said.

"I went out of the bedroom down the small hallway to the living area and unlocked the sliding door.

"On the way to the door I heard a woman screaming very loudly.

"It was not very long but it was very loud and very distressing.

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From the POST February 13, 1996. The POST photographed a friend of Sarah's who was dressed in identical clothes Sarah was wearing for a re-enactment at the same phone box in Stirling Road, Claremont.



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# Vanished in two minutes

• From page 1

A recording of Sarah's last phone call was played to the court again on Thursday, in which she could be heard saying her name, Spiers, and her destination, Mosman Park.

Jaroslav Krupnik (70), a Swan Taxi driver at the time, told the Supreme Court this week he had received a message about 2am on January 27, 1996, telling him to take a passenger from the intersection to Mosman Park.

He arrived at the intersection two minutes later and saw no one there.

Alec Pannall, now 47, told the court he and two friends in a car saw a young woman lean-

ing against a bollard outside BC The Body Club at the same intersection after they left Club Bay View also about 2am.

Mr Krupnik said: "I was coming from Cottesloe to Stirling Highway. I was driving down Stirling Highway ... look at the corner and see nobody there."

He then drove to Club Bay View and picked up two women and a man, who asked to be taken to Monument Street in Mosman Park.

As he turned left at the intersection of St Quentin Avenue and Stirling Road with his new passengers, he looked again at the phone box next to the Stirling Highway intersection and still saw nobody, he said.

The phone box, no longer there, was metres from the intersection and was where Ms Spiers made the call to be picked up.

Alec Pannall, who appeared by videolink from London, said he was living in Cottesloe in the mid-1990s.

On Australia Day 1996, he and two friends went partying in Claremont at the old Continental Hotel, now the Claremont, and Club Bay View.

"We left at around 2am," Mr Pannall said.

He said the three of them walked to his friend's car parked in St Quentin Avenue, where he got in the back seat, to drive to Cottesloe.

They had stopped at traffic lights at the Stirling Road/Stirling Highway intersection.

He had seen a young woman, who appeared to be aged about 20, leaning against a bollard on the left-hand side of Stirling Road, her arms crossed, as he and his friends waited at the lights before turning right into Stirling Highway.

"My friend said something like, 'Look at her'," he said. "From our vehicle she was 3m away maximum.

"I recall that she was standing outside the Body Club.

"We then turned right on to Stirling Highway and headed back to where I lived, which was in Stirling Highway in Cottesloe."



Jasmine Glatz playing her friend Sarah Spiers' in a re-enactment.

# Driver looking for 'damsels in distress'

• From page 3

The driver ended up agreeing to take her to Innaloo, where her car was parked at her boyfriend's parents' house, she said.

Ms Jones said she "picked up vibes", and so asked the driver to drop her five houses down from where her car was parked.

"Next minute he's behind me ... I got out of the van and he's right there," she said.

"He grabbed my arm and tried to kiss me.

"I told him I'm a blue belt in taekwondo - he backed off.

"I said no ... 'because I will drop you'."

Ms Jones said the man had dark brown hair, and wasn't fat or skinny.

But her testimony on Thursday was challenged by Mr Yovich.

Mr Yovich said Ms Jones made her first statement to police in June 1997, 18 months after the incident she had described.

"You gave a description ... that did not say anything about Telecom or Telstra," Mr Yovich said, referring to her original witness statement.

"Memories don't tend to get better."

Mr Yovich told her that in a statement she had made in 2018, she admitted that an earlier statement, one in which she told police Edwards was a Telstra or Telecom worker, may have been influenced by a newspaper article.

He also questioned Ms Jones about the age and appearance

of the man she described.

Mr Yovich said that in July of 1996 she was asked by police, over the phone, to describe the man who drove her to Innaloo.

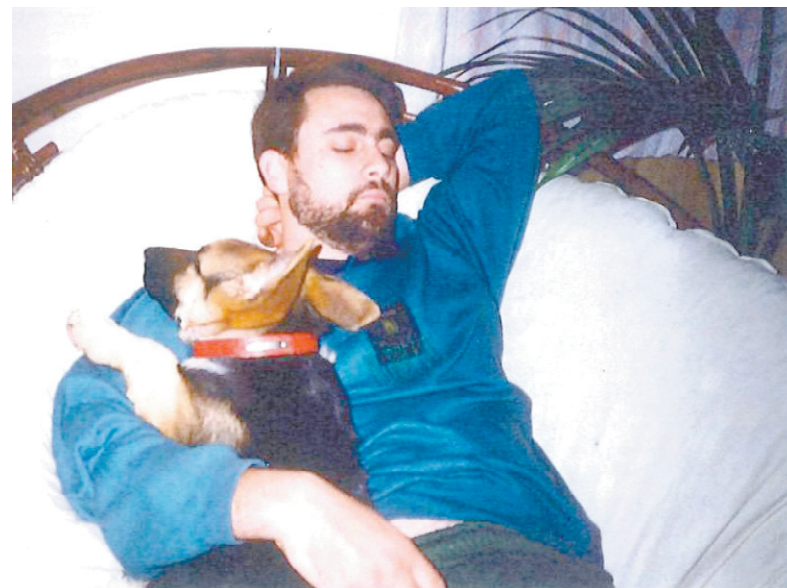
"Your evidence today is a man of 25-27," Mr Yovich said.

"In your telephone call (from 1996) you did not describe him in that way."

Mr Yovich said she described a man with fair hair who was aged between 20 and 22.

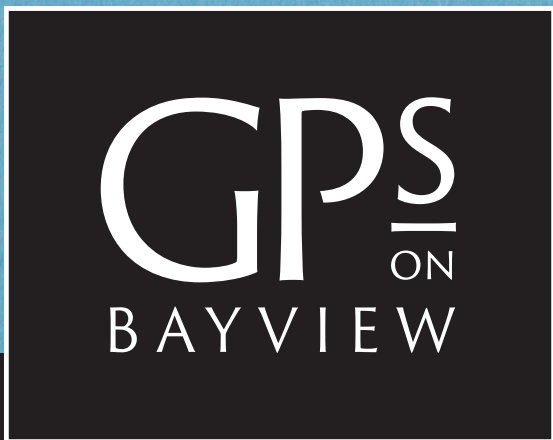
"In July 1996 your memory of the man would have been better," Mr Yovich said.

Ms Jones left the court room in tears.



RIGHT: Bradley Edwards snoozes with Shelby, one of the family dogs.

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Edwards connection missed
From page 39

car nine months later when Ciara Glennon vanished.
In late 1998 or early 1999 the WA police wrote again to Telstra asking for a list of its active vehicles between January 25 and 28, 1996.
Ms Spiers vanished on January 27.
The court was told last week that a witness who investigated screams that night in Monument Street, Mosman Park, saw a white station wagon with wraparound tail lights, consistent with a Camry.
Ms Eldridge told the court the Camry allocated to Mr Edwards would not appear on the list because it was not registered to Telstra by 1998.
The old Camry he had been driving since June 1994 had been sent to auction by Telstra in May 1996, and he soon had a new car, the Holden.
Ms Eldridge said an infringement notice pinged to the Holden allocated to Mr Edwards would have nominated the driver to police.

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specialises in teaching English to international students and migrants.
His registered address is a riverside mansion in Adelma Place.
Plans filed with Nedlands council on November 13 by consultants Rowe Group show a five-storey complex of 14 apartments with a cafe and two offices.
Each apartment would come with two basement car bays, but no off-street visitor parking would be provided for them or any of the three businesses, according to the plans.
In its submission, Rowe Group argued the development should not have to incorporate visitor parking because the existing church did not have any.
"There is ample street parking along Waratah Avenue and Genesta Crescent within short walking distance from the site," the consultants wrote.
They also wrote that the developer had twice asked the council for permission for workers and machinery to use the Dalkeith Hall car park to access the site, but had not received "a favourable response".
At a committee meeting on Tuesday night, Nedlands councillors voted to advertise a policy that would require Mr Larsen's company to cede land at the back of the church site to create a public lane.

The policy existed in the council's old planning scheme, LPS2, but was left out of LPS3 when it was gazetted in April.
The council hopes to create a lane extending from Adelma Road to Dalkeith Hall once all the blocks in between are redeveloped.
One section of the proposed lane, behind the Dalkeith on Waratah building, has already been built.
The plans filed by Rowe Group show a garden courtyard at the rear of the block where the council wants to build the lane, with balconies above.
Councillor Andrew Mangano told Tuesday's meeting that the lane was needed to take traffic pressure off Waratah Avenue.
"It's been a long-term objective to have rear access to all those properties," he said.
Mr Hultgren said he had no complaints about his church being forced to leave the cinema building, and was looking all over the western suburbs for a new home.
"We've been here 10 years so we've had a pretty good run," he said.
"Both the owners have been men of their word.
"The whole building is really only suitable for a cinema or a church."
Nedlands council is accepting public submissions until December 13.

Desperate blood curdling screams

believed it to be a wagon, he said.
The car was on the northern side of the phone box, and facing against the traffic, Mr Stewart said.
He said that he was familiar with Toyota Coronas and Camrys.
The court was told earlier this week that Edwards was allocated a white Toyota Camry station wagon by Telstra at the time Ms Spiers disappeared on the morning after Australia Day 1996.
Mr Stewart said he could not remember if he saw the car drive off.
His former wife Jesse-Maree Munro, 53, said she was woken by a scream.
"It was around 3am in the morning, I sat bolt upright in the bed. I heard a really, really blood-curdling scream," she said.
"My heart was pounding, and then there was another one.
"[Wayne] said, 'Stay there', and he ran out on to the balcony.
"I heard car doors and I saw what I think was red tail lights, you know when someone's got their foot on the brakes, the glow, I saw that.
"When I saw the glow of light the car was taking off."

Back pay for golf course workers

Wembley Golf Course will repay its pro shop workers about \$56,000 after an employee discovered they had been underpaid for years.
Nineteen current and 27 former employees were underpaid after Cambridge council's old collective agreement expired in June 2017, according to council CEO John Giorgi.

City of Nedlands nedlands.wa.gov.au

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Mr Giorgi said the council had believed, incorrectly, that staff were not entitled to CPI increases while a new agreement was being negotiated.
He said the affected employees all worked in retail operations at the council-owned golf course.
"Upon further investigation it was found that staff were eligible for CPI increases on their current salaries while the negotiations for the agreement were taking place," he said.
A replacement agreement was not signed until almost a year later, in June last year.
"The back payment will be funded from the current Wembley Golf Course operational budget," Mr Giorgi said.
"To ensure that all entitlements have been correctly addressed, a final assessment is currently taking place."