

# Axe attack



Barefoot and handcuffed in Cottesloe ... The axe lies on the footpath as police hustle two boys to a paddy wagon. Photo: Amanda Battley

## World expert seals Edwards car link

By HUGO TIMMS

The odds of Jane Rimmer's hair picking up a combination of fibres by random chance are so unlikely, it is "a bit like the winning numbers of the lottery," a world expert told the Supreme Court this week.

Dr Ray Palmer told the court that unless Ms Rimmer and Ms Glennon had been inside the car that Bradley Robert Edwards, their accused murderer, once drove, he would not expect to see the results that have been produced by WA forensic scientists.

Dr Palmer, appearing from his study in the United Kingdom via video link on Wednesday night, is an international authority on forensic fibre evidence and the state's expert witness in the Claremont serial killings trial.

Jane Rimmer and Ciara

### SERIAL KILLING CASE

Glennon were murdered in 1996 and 1997 after nights out in Claremont, where each of them was last seen.

Blue and grey fibres in their hair and on Ms Glennon's shirt have assumed vital significance in the search for their murderer.

The body of the third victim Sarah Spiers, who had also been out partying in Claremont, has never been discovered.

Fibres from the seat and carpet area of a 1996 Holden Commodore stationwagon, and fibres from navy Telstra work pants from the same period, directly match those found on the victims, the prosecution alleges.

Dr Palmer agreed with the WA scientists' conclusions that the fibres found on the victims



The Holden stationwagon driven by Bradley Edwards being forensically examined.

were indistinguishable from those found in the car.

"What we have here is a combination of fibres that relate to a random source," Dr Palmer said.

"What we have to ask ourselves is what are the chances of finding these specific combination of fibres ... it's a bit like the winning numbers of the lottery.

"The more combination of fibres you have the less likely you are going to have that combination by chance."

Prosecutor Carmel Barbagallo put it to Dr Palmer in simple terms: Unless Ms Rimmer and Ms Glennon had been in contact with Edwards' car, would he expect forensic scientists to have made the findings that they did?

Dr Palmer's response was that if the young women had not been inside the Holden stationwagon, he would not expect to see the observations he had been shown.

As the State's expert on fibre evidence, Dr Palmer is allowed to give his opinion to the court.

and shows clear prejudice," Ms Shannon told the meeting.

"Many people are suffering at the moment and their local government has to be scrupulous with ratepayers' funds.

"We have closed the pool, the golf course, the library, the community facilities and Boulevard function centre.

"We cannot afford to pay full salaries."

Last week, Mr Templeman called Cambridge's decision to stand down staff "a serious

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By DAVID COHEN

A young boy allegedly swung an axe at a police officer in Cottesloe on Thursday morning before he was handcuffed and bundled into the back of a paddy wagon.

Coffee drinkers at Il Lido, on the corner of the coastal strip and Forrest Street, watched the aftermath of police chasing four barefoot boys down the lane behind the restaurant and the Seapines unit block.

"I was shocked by the size of the axe and the littleness of the kids," Marine Parade resident Fulvio Prainito said. "The axe was as long as the boy's arm. It was a wood-chopping axe.

"It's not what you normally

see on a bright Cottesloe morning."

Mr Prainito was alerted to the drama when he heard a cry of "Drop the axe!" from the lane.

He went out to see two officers wrestle one boy to the ground.

Overton Gardens resident Amanda Battley was across the road from Il Lido when she saw the police and boys.

She said: "One officer told me, 'he (one of the boys) tried to attack my partner with the axe.'

"They searched the boys for other weapons.

"I'm just glad the officer wasn't hurt."

Ms Battley said the axe lay on the footpath near Il Lido as police picked up a blanket and

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## WE SHINE THE LIGHT ON TENANCY ADVICE



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### ADDITIONAL ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS

At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 21 April 2020, the Council resolved to hold additional Ordinary Council Meetings on the following dates:

- Tuesday 5 May 2020 at 5:30pm
- Tuesday 9 June 2020 at 5:30pm
- Tuesday 7 July 2020 at 5:30pm

These meetings are to be held electronically during the COVID-19 public health emergency, and then in the City of Subiaco Council Chambers at 241 Rokeby Road Subiaco should the public health emergency declaration be revoked prior to any meeting.

**ROCHELLE LAVERY**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

[www.subiaco.wa.gov.au](http://www.subiaco.wa.gov.au)

# Defence bid to shred fibres

By HUGO TIMMS

**Bradley Robert Edwards stopped taking notes and stared intently at his lawyer, Paul Yovich, SC, when for four hours on Tuesday Mr Yovich sought to cast reasonable doubt on the source of "critical fibres" found on Edwards' alleged murder victims.**

Mr Yovich was cross-examining state scientist Rees Powell, who spent his last day giving evidence in the Claremont serial killings trial defending the conclusions he had made over the course of nine years working on the case.

Mr Yovich's cross examination zeroed in on Jane Rimmer and Ciara Glennon's final hours in Claremont.

His questions sought to raise doubt as to whether the fibres discovered on their bodies could be said, with certainty, to have come from Edwards' workwear.

The state alleges that fibres belonging to the car Edwards formerly drove, a 1996 Holden VS Commodore stationwagon, and the blue Telstra workwear he wore, directly link him to the murders of Ms Rimmer and Ms Glennon.

The body of Sarah Spiers, the first of the three victims to have disappeared, also from Claremont, has never been found.

It was Mr Powell's third week in the witness stand, and he has spent much of this time explaining why the 98 fibres relevant to the trial "correspond in properties" to Edwards' car and workwear.

Mr Yovich wanted to explore the possibility that the fibres could have originated from the Continental Hotel, now the Claremont Hotel, on the packed nights the women spent there before their disappearance.

"So if in the few hours before we start to collect fibres from a person they went to a nightclub full of people, then that is likely to be the - the dominant environment ... from which fibres that have got on to them have come?" Mr Yovich asked.

"The Conti was very crowded," he said.

Mr Powell agreed with Mr Yovich that if people were shouldering past one another it could be a good opportunity for the transference of fibres.

In particular Mr Yovich asked him about Ciara Glennon's jacket, of which evidence has been given that it was tossed on the ground for "a few seconds" before a friend of hers wore it around his waist. Mr Powell agreed



Jane Rimmer Sarah Spiers Ciara Glennon  
**SERIAL KILLING CASE**

that this would be a good opportunity for the transference of fibres.

The background to this line of questioning was a "population study" that collected more than 17,000

fibres for the ChemCentre database.

Mr Powell has given evidence that fibres from the Telstra pants don't have a match anywhere on this database.

But Mr Yovich put it to Mr Powell that the range of fibres to have existed at the Continental Hotel, on busy nights in 1996 and 1997, was not likely to have been reflected in the population study, which was done in 2017 and 2018.

"So the absence of critical fibres (in the population study) is of less relevance?" Mr Yovich asked Mr Powell as his last question.

Mr Yovich also asked why, when a "shedding test" was performed on the Telstra pants, 81% of the fibres that fell from the pants were of a variety not found on "any Macro exhibits".

Macro Task Force was a name given to the team set up to investigate the Claremont serial killings.

## World expert seals car link

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He was first contacted by WA Police in 2015, 10 years after his testimony on fibres played a leading role in the conviction of the Suffolk Strangler, who had murdered five sex workers in the English town of Ipswich.

Dr Palmer has said that, from his research and personal experience, 80% of fibres passed on to an individual would disappear in the first two hours.

But hair could retain fibres for a surprisingly long time.

"Significant amounts of fibres have been retrieved from the head hair of people deposited outdoors," Dr Palmer said.

He said two of the Suffolk Strangler's victims were found in a river, two and four weeks respectively after they went missing, and critical fibres were still able to be retrieved from their hair.



Dr Ray Palmer

The bodies of Ms Rimmer and Ms Glennon were undiscovered for 55 and 19 days respectively.

Ms Rimmer's body was discovered by chance in a wet roadside ditch in the rural suburb of Wellard, and had faced significant exposure to the elements.

But at the start of his testimony, Dr Palmer was

highly critical of WA detectives and people present at the autopsies.

"Very little regard had been taken to preserve trace evidence from the crime scene," he said.

"From what I have seen it is likely that there has been a lot of material on the women lost because of the practices employed at the time."

He was particularly scathing about what he saw in mortuary videos.

In "shaking the drapes of Jane's hair ... all this debris has literally just been thrown on the floor," he said.

"It's just pulling at the hair with no real consideration." But Dr Palmer qualified his remarks by saying that such ignorance was certainly not confined to WA in the mid-1990s.

His testimony is expected to run late into Friday evening.

## Swan song for virus singalong

**I Still Call Australia Home and Advance Australia Fair rounded off a marathon repertoire of 33 stiff-upper-lip and heart-warming songs at St Ives Centro retirement village in Jolimont on Monday evening.**

Dozens of residents populated their balconies and village public areas for the gathering of the "Elderly Vienna Boys and Girls Choir".

For several weeks residents who have had to keep their distance from friends and neighbours came together over a good old-fashioned singalong.

Bob and Marjorie Semple said it began a few weeks ago when they heard neighbour Judy Newton singing on her balcony, with some others joining in for songs such as Ten Green Bottles.

"It was very ad hoc at the start but it took on a life of its own," said Marjorie, who



High note ... Robin and Doug Patterson on their balcony at St. Ives.

became one of the main organisers.

A dapper and well-tuned Vin Warrenner belted out a few classics such as Danny Boy for his fellow residents last week.

Vin - who has an OAM for services to opera, including 20 years as general manager of Opera WA - gently joked he had been bulldozed into singing for his neighbours.

But the nonagenarian

also used the power of song down the phone to connect with his wife, Jane, who is in care at another facility and who he couldn't visit because of restrictions.

"She's no longer able to talk, but I could hear her breathing," he said.

Monday night's session was the final one planned by the residents but there is already talk of reforming the choir for carols at Christmas.

### Cambridge Notice

### INVITATION TO COMMENT - LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN - LOT 7 (NO.344), LOT 8 (NO.350) AND LOT 78 (NO.352) CAMBRIDGE STREET, WEMBLEY

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Cambridge has received an application for a Local Development Plan at Lot 7 (No.344), Lot 8 (No.350) And Lot 78 (No.352) Cambridge Street, Wembley.

Submissions on the Local Development Plan should include the title of the proposal, the property affected and details of the submission. Submissions may be lodged online via the Town's website, by email to [mail@cambridge.wa.gov.au](mailto:mail@cambridge.wa.gov.au) or to 1 Bold Park Drive, Floreat WA 6014 and are to reach the Town by **5:00 pm Monday, 25 May 2020.**

The Local Development Plan and supporting information can be viewed at [www.cambridge.wa.gov.au/public-notice](http://www.cambridge.wa.gov.au/public-notice).

**JOHN GIORGI, JP**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



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### Cambridge Notice

### WEED CONTROL WORKS

1. Beginning on the 25 May 2020, kerbs and footpaths in the Town will be sprayed to control weeds. The herbicide in use Glyphosate is low toxic, with no soil residual activity. Only visible weeds will be sprayed.

**If you don't want the kerb and footpath outside your property sprayed and have not already sent in an exemption form, call the Town on 9347 6000. Your name and address will be recorded and a form sent to you to fill in that will ensure your exemption.**

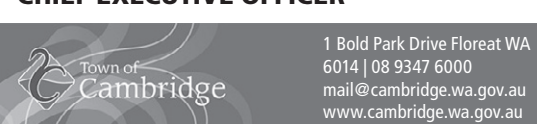
All property owners/occupiers who sign the form will need to keep the kerb and footpath adjacent to their property weed free to the same standard that will be achieved by chemical control.

2. The Town's lanes and drainage sumps will also be sprayed for weed control, using the above same chemical.

3. During August/September various sportsgrounds, parks and road reserves will be sprayed with a Selective Herbicide to control Bindii, Clover and other weeds in turf, to ensure the safe use of these parks by the public.

All works are in accordance with Health Department regulations.

**JOHN GIORGI, JP**  
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### METRONET Claremont Station Project

### HAVE YOUR SAY CLAREMONT STATION PUBLIC ART

The Claremont Station Project presents an opportunity to create public art in or around the station that incorporates themes inspired by the Claremont community.

METRONET is now seeking Claremont community input to help shape the Artist Brief for the project.

Claremont residents are invited to complete our online survey at: [www.mysaytransport.wa.gov.au](http://www.mysaytransport.wa.gov.au)

Or call **9326 3666** so we can help you complete it online, or post you a hard copy.

We would like to hear your thoughts.

#### MORE INFORMATION

9326 3666  
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### City of Nedlands

[nedlands.wa.gov.au](http://nedlands.wa.gov.au)

### Local Planning Policy: Parking Adopted March Council Meeting

The Council at its March 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting adopted the Parking Local Planning Policy in accordance with the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 Schedule 2, Part 2, Clause 4. Please note that the residential parking ratios require approval from the Western Australian Planning Commission in accordance with Clause 7.3.2 of the Residential Design Codes Volume 1. This Policy is available as part of the City's Local Planning Policies accessed via the City's website.

[Read the POST online at postnewspapers.com.au](http://Read the POST online at postnewspapers.com.au)