

Police chief 'set fire to own car before framing husband of mistress'

Chief superintendent accused lawyer of sending threatening emails

By Richard Savill

A SENIOR policeman set fire to his car during a visit to his mistress before framing her husband for the crime, a court heard yesterday.

Chief Supt James Trotman, 45, had been using the Citroen to visit Karin Gray, whose husband, Ian, was a partner in the City law firm Eversheds.

Mr Trotman allegedly told police that Mr Gray may have been the sender of threatening emails, including one that told him to stay away from the house.

Mr Trotman, who was separated from his wife, Charlotte, had been having an affair with Mrs Gray for 10 months, Swindon Crown Court heard.

He claimed £14,820 from Elephant insurance company and £4,880 from The Warranty Company to cover the cost of his car being destroyed in the fire.

The jury was told that Mr Trotman had used his computer on the day before the fire to carry out research into Audi cars. Insurance companies paid out nearly £20,000 after the fire and Mr Trotman bought an Audi A4 convertible, it was alleged.

He denied one count of arson, two counts of fraud and one count of perverting the course of justice.

The court heard that on Oct 20, the night of the fire, the father of two drove to Mr and Mrs Gray's house in Oxford after watching his daughter perform in a play

in Wallingford. He told officers he arrived at 9.45pm and did not return to his car until about 11.30pm, when he saw fire crews and police officers around it.

Neighbours reported the car fire in a 999 call at 22.31 after hearing sounds of "fireworks" and "popping sounds".

"They told the operator that there was a vehicle on fire and they requested the fire brigade," said Fiona Elder, prosecuting. "The car was a Citroen Xsara Picasso



James Trotman told a colleague on the day of the fire that he had been having an affair

C4 and was a car that was registered to James Trotman and he accepted on the night that it was the car that he had driven to the area."

She said Mr Trotman arrived at the scene of the fire and exclaimed: "That's my bloody car", before admitting to officers that he had been seeing someone he should not have.

Mr Trotman, who was living at a marina in Abingdon, Oxon, at the time, said he locked the car before walking to Mrs Gray's house at 9.45pm.

Fire investigators discovered that a

large quantity of petrol had been poured into the passenger footwell of the car and it was thought that the fire had been started from the inside.

The day before the fire, Mr Trotman had told Det Supt Ashley Smith, a colleague at Thames Valley Police, that he had been conducting an affair with Mrs Gray, the jury was told.

He claimed that her husband had interfered in a previous affair in which his wife had been involved and said he had been receiving threatening emails warning him against visiting her home address.

Mr Trotman was told by Mr Smith that Thames Valley Police would be arresting Mr Gray on Oct 21 but did not make any effort to prevent it from happening, the court heard.

However, the investigation soon began to centre on Mr Trotman after officers discovered that a new camera had not been taken from the car, but a green petrol can had and was found in woods near where the car was parked, Ms Elder said.

Phone records also disputed timings that Mr Trotman gave to officers and showed that he sent a "large number" of text messages to Mrs Gray between 10pm and 10.25pm.

Mr Gray is the head of the litigation and dispute management department at Eversheds.

The trial continues.



Miss Husain-Naviatti worked as the charity's deputy director and is now a model

Wife of snorer dies in search of a peaceful night

By Daily Telegraph Reporter

A WIFE was killed when she fell downstairs after leaving her bed to escape her husband's snoring, an inquest heard yesterday.

Brenda Davies, 59, had told her husband, Philip, that she was going to sleep in the spare room because of the noise he was making.

Moments later, he heard screams and got up to find his wife lying at the bottom of the flight of stairs at their home in Brecon, Wales.

"I was woken by Brenda getting out of bed," Mr Davies told the Powys coroner. "She told me she was going to sleep in the spare room because I was snoring."

"I heard her shout out and I heard her fall. I ran after her and saw her at the bottom of the stairs."

Mr Davies and the couple's two children decided to switch off her life-support machine the next day.

A post mortem examination showed that she died from multiple injuries, including a fractured skull.

Verdict: accidental death.

Boy, 12, tracks thief who took mother's phone

By Daily Telegraph Reporter

A SCHOOLBOY used GPS technology to track down his mother's mobile phone after it was stolen in a nightclub, leading police straight to the thief's house.

Gemma Richardson, 32, lost her £230 smartphone after she placed it on a bar.

She returned home without the HTC Wildfire phone and nobody handed it in at the nightclub in Felixstowe, Suffolk.

Mrs Richardson, a mother-of-three from Felixstowe, told her son Kristen, 12, what had happened the morning after.

She did not realise that he had previously downloaded a Lookout mobile security application on her phone.

On a computer, Kristen was able to display a map showing the location of the phone, a house in a village 10 miles away near Woodbridge, Suffolk. Mrs Richardson said: "I called the police and an officer came."

"He was just amazed when Kristen told him how he had tracked down the phone and he even had its latitude and longitude position."

Police visited the house and found a 21-year-old man who admitted having taken the phone. He handed the phone over and it was returned.

No charges were brought after the man agreed to write a letter of apology.

Vices attract but virtue can repel us

By Richard Alleyne
Science Correspondent

PEOPLE are drawn together by their vices but driven apart by their virtues, say scientists investigating the role genes play in who we choose as friends.

Researchers believe that our genetic make-up plays a big role in our friendship groups.

Scientists, led by Dr James Fowler from the University of California at San Diego, used data from two large health studies to search for genetic links to friendship.

The researchers identified genetic markers, or genotypes, in six specific genes and looked at how often they occurred among friends.

They found two clear examples where

"birds of a feather flock together" and "opposites attract".

The first involved a variant of the gene DRD2 which has been associated with alcoholism. People who had this genotype tended to befriend others with the same marker.

Those who lacked the marker were also more likely to be friends with one another.

"It is not hard to imagine that non-drinkers may actively avoid alcoholics, or that alcoholics may be drawn to environments that non-drinkers avoid," said the researchers writing in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

A less obvious opposite association was seen between people with a version

of the gene CYP2A6 linked to having an "open" personality.

In this case, people with the genetic marker gravitated towards individuals who did not have it.

The findings were significant after taking account of people's tendency to form "local" friendships within the same geographical area.

"An important implication of these results is that genetic structure in human populations may result not only from the formation of reproductive unions, but also from the formation of friendship unions within a population," said the scientists.

They claimed that evolution might have been shaped by interactions between genes and friendship choices.

Whistle-blower Charity worker's tribunal win

AN Oxford-educated charity worker and model has been awarded nearly £50,000 after being wrongly sacked for reporting the alleged theft of more than £300,000 of public funds.

Robina Husain-Naviatti, 38, was awarded £47,580 in compensation by an employment tribunal in Watford and the Charity Commission is to investigate

her claims. Miss Husain-Naviatti, a law graduate of Jesus College, was deputy director of London-based Forensic Therapies, which provided counselling in jails, and now works as a photographic artist and model.

In 2008, the tribunal heard, she alerted trustees that a £535,000 Cabinet Office grant had been

recorded as £240,000. She also claimed staff salaries were unwittingly funded by several different bodies.

She was dismissed in 2009. The charity is now in liquidation.

Forensic Therapies denied funds had been embezzled. In legal papers submitted to the tribunal, it also said Miss Husain-Naviatti's was a genuine redundancy.

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