

BRITAIN TODAY

Two arrested after schoolgirl murder

DETECTIVES investigating the murder of sixth-former Victoria Hall arrested two people today.

Victoria, 17, vanished while walking from a nightclub in Felixstowe, Suffolk, to her home in the early hours of September 19 last year. Her naked body was found in a water-filled ditch 25 miles away at Creeping St Peter, Suffolk, five days later.

Police are not certain how Victoria died but believe she may have been asphyxiated.

A police spokesman said a 22-year-old man was arrested at his home on the outskirts of Felixstowe on suspicion of murder and a 21-year-old woman from nearby Trimley St Mary was arrested in Ipswich on suspicion of conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.

The two suspects, who were being questioned at separate police stations, have not been named.

Residents on the estate where Victoria lived reported hearing a woman scream around the time she disappeared, and one man said he heard a car accelerating away.



NIGHTCLUB: Victoria Hall

The youngster's home was a minute away from the main A14 road between Felixstowe and the east Midlands.

Detectives are certain Victoria was forced or persuaded into a car as she approached her home.

Police are still looking for the clothes Victoria was wearing when she vanished. Searches of verges along the A14 and widespread public appeals have failed to find any trace of her dress, jacket and shoes.

Holocaust libel case

CONTRVERSIAL historian David Irving today launched a High Court libel action over references to him in a US writer's book on the Holocaust.

Mr Irving, 62, author of Goebbels: Mastermind of the Third Reich, claims Professor Deborah Lipstadt's book, Denying the Holocaust, alleges he has denied the Holocaust, distorted statistics and documents to serve his ideological purposes and consorted with extremists.

Publishers Penguin are citing justification in their defence.

Reprisals fear after shooting

FEARS were growing today that the murder of a paramilitary leader could escalate a Loyalist feud.

Richard Jameson, 46, who security sources say was the Portadown Ulster Volunteer Force commander, was shot dead in his car outside his home on the isolated Derrytiff Road, five miles from the Co Armagh town.

The rival Loyalist Volunteer Force, which has been involved in a bitter dispute with the UVF, is suspected of carrying out the killing.

Madonna to sell UK home



FEARS: Madonna

POP queen Madonna is putting her London home on the market because of security fears, just weeks after buying it.

The star, who was flying into England today to resume househunting, will stay in rented accommodation rather than her £3.7 million Chelsea house.

She put the four-storey mansion back on the market for £4m two days before Christmas after security advisers said it was totally unsuitable for a celebrity.

Mystery of the woman in well

AN inquest was being held in Portsmouth today into the death of a woman whose remains were found in a well, 57 years after she disappeared.

Jessie McMahon, a mother-of-two, vanished in April 1942 after going to collect wood at Liss, Hampshire.

Ian Brady in hospital tests

MOORS murderer Ian Brady returned to hospital for tests today, two weeks after collapsing in his room at Ashworth high-security hospital.

The 61-year-old, who has been on hunger strike for more than three months, was transferred to Fazakerley Hospital.

Edinburgh Zoo makes its mark

Under-fire Edinburgh attraction gets thumbs-up

By CATHERINE LYST

EDINBURGH Zoo today got a mixed report in a major survey of the way Britain's zoos display their animals. The Which? report criticised some of the Corstorphine zoo's enclosures - but it praised the penguin pool and a new primate house.

The zoo is also criticised for lagging behind in the way some of the animals are displayed - but detailed information boards were praised.

Overall Edinburgh got a three out of five star rating in the Holiday Which? magazine report on 20 zoos and animal parks around Britain.

The zoo has come under fire from animal welfare groups and zoo keepers since Dr David Waugh took over as director in 1998.

The report said: "At the top of the hill are the larger paddocks holding zebra and deer. From there, visitors descend along twisting garden paths, past a wide selection of animals, including penguins in a large pool and monkeys in a new primate house."

Welfare

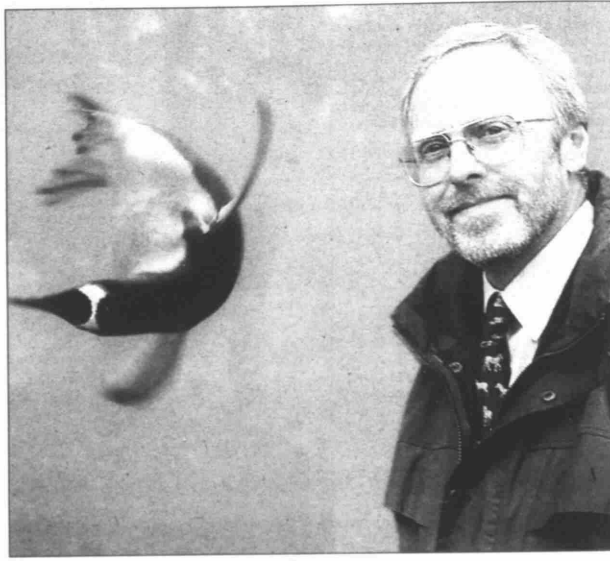
"Compared with the top-rated zoos, Edinburgh lagged behind in presentation - even seeing the animals in some enclosures was difficult - but the detail of information given on boards was good. Outside peak season the schedule of talks is greatly reduced."

But a zoo spokesman today defended the zoo's position in the survey. He said: "We are pleased that we got three stars but we are aware that there is always room for improvement."

"One of the things the report has picked up on is that our presentation is lagging behind but we have plans this year to completely upgrade our presentation of information about the animals."

She said that although the report criticised some of the enclosures as the public could not see the animals all the time, she felt this was because Edinburgh Zoo likes to give the animals an opportunity to "hide away" during the day.

"We try to make the enclosures as natural as possible," she said. "We welcome this kind of survey. It is very good people take the trouble to



RATED: But zoo director Dr David Waugh has been criticised for his methods

Picture: PAUL RAEBURN

- High marks for primate house
- Welfare bodies unconvinced by report
- Zoo welcomes news after recent attacks

come and look at zoos and realise we are striving to improve."

Les Ward, of Advocates for Animals, said he was not surprised at the relatively high rating as the Which? report was only interested in tourists, not the animals.

"They have been looking at the zoo purely as an attraction to tourists," he said. "But they are supposedly there to conserve and educate not just for tourists to look at animals which are clearly not

living in the conditions which match their behavioural patterns."

Which? magazine admitted the question of whether or not modern society should have zoos was a matter for serious debate.

Meanwhile Blair Drummond Safari Park in Stirlingshire was named as one of the worst attractions.

It was criticised by the undercover inspectors for poor signs with sparse information, its food, high prices, and a tiger enclosure where a roar came from a nearby video arcade rather than the cats.

Edinburgh Zoo has been criticised for a number of factors over the past year, the most recent being its proposed move to a new site.

It has already had interest from a developer keen to buy the present site for housing and has advertised for land around the Edinburgh area where it could build the new zoo. A

committee has been set up to look into the feasibility of such a move.

Director David Waugh came under fire from animal welfare groups after a decision was made to put lady the lioness to sleep after it was feared she may have contracted the feline form of BSE from her partner Lumpy. Her life was spared following the intervention of hundreds of News readers, animal welfare groups and celebrities.

Zoo keepers are furious at the introduction of Dr Waugh's new working practices, which mean they are moved around animal sections every few weeks.

They believe the new practices could have contributed to an incident where a keeper received serious head injuries after being bitten by a camel.

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Toilet attendant 'found bags of opium in cubicle'

A TOILET attendant found six kilos of opium in an Edinburgh ladies' loo, a jury heard today.

And a city pharmaceutical company - the only firm in Britain licensed to deal with raw opium - was thought to be the source.

There had already been a security scare at Macfarlan Smith of Wheatfield Road, Gorgie, the High Court in Edinburgh was told. Police called in production manager, Alistair Robertson, 59, after their lab had identified the drug.

Mr Robertson told the court today: "There was no doubt in my mind that it was samples of opium, raw opium. I couldn't think of any other explanation than that it had come from Macfarlan Smith."

Mr Robertson agreed that shortly before the find there had been newspaper inquiries about

security at his firm and a suggestion that opium had gone missing. "The company carried out an investigation to assure ourselves that the story, as put to us, was unfounded," he added.

Another employee, process worker James McKee, 34, told the court security checks, such as personal searches, at the factory in Wheatfield Road were "very few and far between."

Leslie Young, 52, of Longstone Road, Edinburgh, who has worked for the company for 17 years, denies possessing opium and morphine, with intent to supply the drugs to others, between January 1982 and January last year.

Toilet attendant Robert Green, 40, told the court he was suspicious on finding two polythene shopping bags - obviously not containing shopping - in a cubicle while cleaning the ladies'

loos at West Princes Street Gardens on January 9 last year.

Pc Jennifer Whight, 28, who was called to the scene, said the contents looked like cannabis - but didn't smell like the drug. The bags were sent to the police lab. Also found were pieces of label which matched samples from Macfarlan Smith.

The lab identified six kilos of opium worth about £500 to the firm.

The trial has heard that the Gorgie factory buys opium from the Indian Government and processes it to produce such controlled drugs as morphine and codeine.

At least two people are involved in all stages of the process, but it is possible one person might, briefly, be a short distance away.

The trial continues.

Commute



JUST THE TICKET: Cherie Blair

Cherie Blair on ticket

By DIANE KING

CHERIE BLAIR'S day as a crown recorder started right track today arrived at Luton station ticket in hand.

Mrs Blair, who was flying yesterday after she bought a ticket for the from Blackfriars in London, displayed her proudly as she was through the station by.

Asked by reporters if she had a ticket, she replied defiantly: "I have."

There was a brief panic as Prime Minister's wife and the delayed 9.18 train at no sign of her escort in the

Criminal

But within minutes the area business manager McEvoy arrived on the to accompany her on the walk to Luton Crown Court.

Commuters at Blackfriars today sympathised with Blair.

Barbara Fagan, 45, a consultant from the United said: "Half the time you can't get a ticket, the machines don't