

In Brief

'Fearful' star selling home

POP queen Madonna is putting her London home on the market just weeks after buying it because of security fears. The star, who was flying into the capital yesterday, will stay in rented accommodation rather than the house that cost her £3.7million in Tregent Road, Chelsea. She put the property on the market for £4million after advisers said it was not safe to live there.

Gun charges

A WOMAN walked free from court yesterday after charges against her connected with a plot to smuggle guns into Ireland from the US were dropped. Jacqueline McIntyre, 33, from Spidai, was charged with possession of three Ruger .357 Magnum revolvers, three Glock semi-automatic pistols and 120 rounds of ammunition on July 27 last year. The Director of Public Prosecutions decided the charges should be withdrawn.

School shake-up

SWITCHING to a five-term school year could provide the opportunity to put some fun back into education, an expert said yesterday. Former Labour MP and university principal Chris Price said a new summer term could be devoted to the "art, culture and creativity" which had been squeezed out of the curriculum. He is heading a commission examining a shake-up of the three-term year in English schools.

Cocaine charge

THE case against a detective charged with the possession of cocaine at a nightclub was adjourned yesterday. Detective Constable Mark Parfitt, 31, is also accused of stealing 13 kg of the drug from the Metropolitan Police. He was arrested last December in Kingston upon Thames, London, and charged with possession of the class A drug. The offence is on bail and is now due before the court on February 8.

Names wanted

CHILDREN have been asked to name three police dog cades - which were specially bred for their role. The trio, two bitches and a dog, were born as a result of the Northumbria Police dog breeding and development programme. Police dog handlers have appealed to local schoolchildren to help them name the pups.

Radio relaunch

COMMERCIAL radio station Talk Radio is to be relaunched as the UK's first dedicated sports channel, talkSPORT, will go on air next Monday, with four shows hosted by England football coach Kevin Keegan. Talk Radio chief executive Kelvin MacKenzie said it would capitalise on the "uplifting" feeling sport gave people.

Church schools

THE Church of England is aiming to expand the number of church schools. It aims to double the number of church secondary schools - there are under 200. The aim was set out by the Church Schools Review Group.

Factory jobs go

MORE than 470 jobs are to be lost at a Michelin Tyre factory. The workforce of 2,700 at the Stoke site were told that 473 jobs would be lost by the end of the year. At the same time, the company announced an £11million investment to update buildings and equipment.

Scotland to get new 60-mile walking trail

THE winding trail straddling the borders between Perthshire and Angus through which bands of cataners or Highland brigands raided those counties is to be resurrected as the latest long-distance Highland walk.

The Cateran Trail, which is to be opened later this year, is a 60-mile circular route centred on Blairgowrie, using ex-

isting paths, minor roads and time-honoured walks which will take five days to complete.

For 400 years, the cataners brought fear, fire and sword and introduced the euphemism blackmail to the lexicon of the Southern Highlands.

They were answerable only to their own chieftains north

of Bremaer and raided deep into the glens and rich pastures of Perthshire and Angus, pillaging rival clan settlements and carrying off whatever they could steal.

They made an art form of medieval extortion - offering written protection against raids on the herds of black cattle raised on southern meadows - which passed into

everyday language as blackmail. The trail will be provided by Perth and Kinross Councils Trust and Angus Council have invested more than £10,000 to establish and develop the trail which it is hoped will attract thousands of walkers and a cash boost to the local economy.

An independent company has been created to market

and promote the trail around the world and to provide a central booking service. Walking is the main growth market in Scottish tourism in recent years. Almost half of all tourists coming to Scotland on activity holidays participate in walking. The West Highland Way attracts 35,000 hikers each year, who spend £240 during their trek.

The Scottish Landowners' Federation, criticised for what has been labelled as a less than welcoming stance towards ramblers, has been involved in the Cateran Trail from an early stage. Spokesman Ian Crombie said well-planned, responsible public access could be integrated with farm and estate activities.

Violent 'leather' attacker alert

A VIOLENT intruder with a leather fixation has struck for an eighth time during a terrifying campaign against professional women alone at home, police said yesterday.

The man is thought to stalk his victims before launching increasingly violent attacks as he tries to exert his control over the women, officers believe.

The attacker specialises in selecting his well-dressed victims, who include secretaries and members of the legal profession, and keeps them under surveillance before striking. All of the attacks have been carried out in south-east London since last September and the man has demanded "trophies" of leather trousers, purses and gloves from the terrified women.

One of his victims told how she had become too scared to use a vacuum cleaner in case it drowned out the sound of an intruder breaking into her home. The 42-year-old woman had just got in through her front door when the man ordered her to hand over a glove and her purse.

He was fairly calm but insistent upon what he wanted. At one point he hit me a couple of times because I couldn't give him what he was asking for - I didn't have my purse on me."

Neighbours

She managed to escape to neighbours to raise the alarm but said she had completely changed since the attacks.

Some of the victims, aged from their 20s to their 50s, are thought to have been followed as they walked home alone from railway stations after work.

In the latest attack last night, a 50-year-old woman was confronted on the stairs of her home in Catford by a man dressed in black with a stocking mask over his face. He broke in via a downstairs flat, then grabbed the woman, demanding her leather gloves and shoulder bag.

Detective Chief Inspector Phil Fitzgerald, who is heading the inquiry, said: "It's about power, control and violence which suggests there might be a more sinister motive as to why he's terrorising these women."

"He has made no sexual advances at the moment and has made no threats to cause someone serious injury. But his actions are clearly violent, the violence has increased."

Victims described the attacker as about 5ft 10in tall, with dark hair and a soft London accent. Anyone with information should call the incident room on 0181 284 7643 or Metropolitan on 0800 555 111.

Firms in talks over unused oil blocks

GOVERNMENT plans to press ahead with a £1.5bn programme of oil blocks could boost prospective work for Barmac, an MP claimed last night.

Inverness East, Nairn and Lochaber Labour MP, David Stewart welcomed a review of the oil blocks and discoveries announced by Energy Minister Helen Liddell.

An MP claimed that he is meeting BP Scotland president Alan Jones to press the company to advance its development plans during a continuing round of talks with oil firms designed to drum up business for the offshore construction yard.

Mr Stewart has so far seen senior executives of Shell, Tiscano and Conoco and will be holding discussions with Talisman and British Gas.

The review was disclosed in reply to a question put down in the Commons by Mr Stewart on Government policy towards oil and gas companies which hold fallow fields in the UK continental shelf.

Mr Liddell said it is to encourage exploration and development of the UKCS while allowing licence holders the option of what discoveries are brought to development.

"They are encouraged to relinquish any acreage considered unprospective or non-commercial."

"A review of fallow blocks and discoveries is under way. Companies are being urged to use a computerised marketing information service for trading in unwanted blocks with roll-over tax relief available to postpone any tax liabilities."

Mr Stewart said he will be asking what developments BP have that could be brought forward and what issues there are which would encourage them to be brought forward.

Job losses of around 3,300 were announced in November for the yards at Nigg and Ardeer unless Barmac win more work by April.

Drink-driver gets five years after fatal crash

A RUGBY player was jailed for five years yesterday after his drink-driving following a traditional Boxing Day fixture ended in the death of a teenager.

Ruan Matheson drank beer, port and white rum during an eight-hour binge at a social function in a Highland hotel following an Old versus Young match staged by the Skye and Lochalsh club.

But although he was drunk four times the drink-drive limit Matheson, 31, decided to get in his Peugeot car and drive causing a horrific head-on crash that killed 19-year-old Kevin Stoddart.

The Lord Justice Clerk, Lord Cullen, told him at the High Court in Edinburgh: "Parliament has made it quite clear that to cause the death of a person by driving carelessly while the driver is unfit through drink is an extremely serious matter."

The judge pointed out that Matheson had continued drinking until 11.20pm following the rugby game before setting out to drive.

Lord Cullen said: "It is plain that at the time of the accident you were grossly intoxicated and you should have plainly realised you were in no fit state to drive long before you left the hotel."

He said that although it was likely Mr Stoddart was not wearing a seatbelt, the force of impact meant he would not have survived the crash in any case. The judge said he was satisfied he had imposed a "substantial" period of imprisonment and also banned Matheson from driving for 10 years.

The self-employed builder of the Old School House, Killin, near Dornie, in Ross-shire, earlier admitted causing the death of Mr Stoddart on December 26 in 1998 through careless driving while unfit to drive through drink. He drove at excessive speed and failed to keep the vehicle under proper control leading to a crossing into the opposite carriageway on the Invergarry to Skye road.

Mr Stoddart, of Quoynoy, Inverinate, in Ross-shire, was a front-seat passenger in a car which Matheson's Peugeot collided with. The youth never regained consciousness after the crash and died shortly afterwards from extensive chest injuries. Two of his friends in the backseat suffered multiple injuries and one developed

the court heard that Matheson had completed an 18-month driving ban in August 1998 which was imposed after he failed to provide a specimen to police. On the day of the fatal crash he had travelled to Kyle to take part in the rugby match which was followed by a night of drinking.

Advocate Depute Calum MacNeill said he was seen consuming beer, Baccardi and port and others at the function assumed he would be going home by taxi or getting a lift.

Mr Stoddart, of Quoynoy, Inverinate, in Ross-shire, was a front-seat passenger in a car which Matheson's Peugeot collided with. The youth never regained consciousness after the crash and died shortly afterwards from extensive chest injuries. Two of his friends in the backseat suffered multiple injuries and one developed

the court heard that Matheson had completed an 18-month driving ban in August 1998 which was imposed after he failed to provide a specimen to police. On the day of the fatal crash he had travelled to Kyle to take part in the rugby match which was followed by a night of drinking.

Advocate Depute Calum MacNeill said he was seen consuming beer, Baccardi and port and others at the function assumed he would be going home by taxi or getting a lift.

Mr Stoddart, of Quoynoy, Inverinate, in Ross-shire, was a front-seat passenger in a car which Matheson's Peugeot collided with. The youth never regained consciousness after the crash and died shortly afterwards from extensive chest injuries. Two of his friends in the backseat suffered multiple injuries and one developed

the court heard that Matheson had completed an 18-month driving ban in August 1998 which was imposed after he failed to provide a specimen to police. On the day of the fatal crash he had travelled to Kyle to take part in the rugby match which was followed by a night of drinking.

Advocate Depute Calum MacNeill said he was seen consuming beer, Baccardi and port and others at the function assumed he would be going home by taxi or getting a lift.

Mr Stoddart, of Quoynoy, Inverinate, in Ross-shire, was a front-seat passenger in a car which Matheson's Peugeot collided with. The youth never regained consciousness after the crash and died shortly afterwards from extensive chest injuries. Two of his friends in the backseat suffered multiple injuries and one developed

the court heard that Matheson had completed an 18-month driving ban in August 1998 which was imposed after he failed to provide a specimen to police. On the day of the fatal crash he had travelled to Kyle to take part in the rugby match which was followed by a night of drinking.

Advocate Depute Calum MacNeill said he was seen consuming beer, Baccardi and port and others at the function assumed he would be going home by taxi or getting a lift.

■ Ruan Matheson... "grossly intoxicated"

School sex scandal sparks review call

A CALL was made yesterday for a review of the way a scandal-hit military school is run amid fears unruly pupils are wasting taxpayers' money.

Prestigious Queen Victoria School at Dunblane, which caters for children of servicemen and women, costs the Ministry of Defence more than £1million a year to run.

But in the past few years the 92-year-old establishment's proud reputation has been tarnished by a series of incidents including under-age drinking, shoplifting, bullying and sexual assaults.

In the latest incident, five pupils, three boys and two girls aged 16 and 17, were expelled after being found having sex in a dormitory. Another girl was suspended. It is the first case of its kind since girls were accepted in 1996.

Concerned politicians and Government officials are now keen to find alternative ways of funding the school, which has 270 pupils.

The MoD is looking for "radical and imaginative ideas" to fund the school after undertaking a review last year.

An Army spokeswoman yesterday confirmed the expulsions had taken place.

"This resulted from the discovery of inappropriate behaviour on school premises. In the interests of the pupils and their families, the school is not prepared to go into any further personal details."

MSP Lindsay McIntosh, Conservative deputy home affairs spokeswoman, was shocked by the state of incidents.

She said: "They should be doing things like this, heaven forbid. These children are supposed to be among the cream of the country."

Queen Victoria School was founded in 1908 to commemorate victims of war in South Africa and is for children of servicemen who are serving or have served in the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force or Army.

It was built through public subscription and caters for 270 pupils, including 57 girls, between the ages of 10 and 18.

Pupils of the school include Prince Philip and the Earl of Airlie.

But incidents involving unruly senior pupils in the last nine years have tarnished the school's name.

In August last year, five senior pupils were suspended for a week after a drinks session soon after the start of term.

Two 17-year-old boys were also escorted back from a trip to Brisbane, Australia, with the pipe band and rugby team after they broke a strict curfew and stayed out all night.

And two girls were sent home from a Duke of Edinburgh Award trip to Fort William after disrupting fellow campers and stealing condoms.

In March last year, a 14-year-old pupil was caught selling cut-price alcohol to teachers after smuggling spirits into the school.

Four years ago another 14-year-old was expelled after he stabbed a fellow pupil in the leg, and in 1994 a 15-year-old was expelled after a girl had been sexually assaulted by one of the pupils.

In 1991, letters were sent to parents of 57 pupils informing them of incidents of alleged bullying in the school.

Headmaster Brian Raine said the school had taken a strong line after pupils broke their code of conduct.

He said: "The school's Guide to Life in the Community is very specific on personal relationships within the school and the vast majority of pupils abide by the criteria."

"Because we take such a pride in the school we felt we had to take it seriously in this instance. This type of behaviour has not been repeated since."

Dunblane East councillor Ann Dickson said the pupils were normally an example to the school.

She added: "The pupils pass my window all the time and I always make sure I compliment them on the way they are turned out. I am sure it is a temporary blip."

A BUSINESSMAN was murdered yesterday during a bungled burglary at his holiday home on a golf course in southern Spain.

Eric Robinson, 65, from Williston, Leighton Buzzard, was hit over the head in a struggle with an intruder after his wife raised the alarm at their villa near Marbella in the early hours of the morning.

Mr Robinson, who ran the precision engineering firm E.R. Robinson on Merseyside, had suffered another burglary recently when his wife, Doreen, who was known as Sammy, had her bag stolen.

In yesterday's incident the thief broke in through a kitchen window, the only window without bars on it at the bungalow the couple bought last September on the Los Naranjos Golf course. Mr Robinson's mother, Sarah, was also staying with the couple at the bungalow.

Unconfirmed reports said the burglar demanded money in English, calling into question the intruder's nationality.

Mr Robinson had been visiting Spain more frequently recently after a heart bypass operation 2½ years ago. His family, including daughter Yvonne and friends, were said to be devastated yesterday.

He was killed in a struggle with an intruder after his wife raised the alarm at their villa near Marbella in the early hours of the morning.

Mr Robinson, who ran the precision engineering firm E.R. Robinson on Merseyside, had suffered another burglary recently when his wife, Doreen, who was known as Sammy, had her bag stolen.

In yesterday's incident the thief broke in through a kitchen window, the only window without bars on it at the bungalow the couple bought last September on the Los Naranjos Golf course. Mr Robinson's mother, Sarah, was also staying with the couple at the bungalow.

Unconfirmed reports said the burglar demanded money in English, calling into question the intruder's nationality.

Mr Robinson had been visiting Spain more frequently recently after a heart bypass operation 2½ years ago. His family, including daughter Yvonne and friends, were said to be devastated yesterday.

He was killed in a struggle with an intruder after his wife raised the alarm at their villa near Marbella in the early hours of the morning.

Mr Robinson, who ran the precision engineering firm E.R. Robinson on Merseyside, had suffered another burglary recently when his wife, Doreen, who was known as Sammy, had her bag stolen.

In yesterday's incident the thief broke in through a kitchen window, the only window without bars on it at the bungalow the couple bought last September on the Los Naranjos Golf course. Mr Robinson's mother, Sarah, was also staying with the couple at the bungalow.

Unconfirmed reports said the burglar demanded money in English, calling into question the intruder's nationality.

Mr Robinson had been visiting Spain more frequently recently after a heart bypass operation 2½ years ago. His family, including daughter Yvonne and friends, were said to be devastated yesterday.

He was killed in a struggle with an intruder after his wife raised the alarm at their villa near Marbella in the early hours of the morning.

Mr Robinson, who ran the precision engineering firm E.R. Robinson on Merseyside, had suffered another burglary recently when his wife, Doreen, who was known as Sammy, had her bag stolen.

In yesterday's incident the thief broke in through a kitchen window, the only window without bars on it at the bungalow the couple bought last September on the Los Naranjos Golf course. Mr Robinson's mother, Sarah, was also staying with the couple at the bungalow.

Unconfirmed reports said the burglar demanded money in English, calling into question the intruder's nationality.

Mr Robinson had been visiting Spain more frequently recently after a heart bypass operation 2½ years ago. His family, including daughter Yvonne and friends, were said to be devastated yesterday.

He was killed in a struggle with an intruder after his wife raised the alarm at their villa near Marbella in the early hours of the morning.

Mr Robinson, who ran the precision engineering firm E.R. Robinson on Merseyside, had suffered another burglary recently when his wife, Doreen, who was known as Sammy, had her bag stolen.

In yesterday's incident the thief broke in through a kitchen window, the only window without bars on it at the bungalow the couple bought last September on the Los Naranjos Golf course. Mr Robinson's mother, Sarah, was also staying with the couple at the bungalow.

Unconfirmed reports said the burglar demanded money in English, calling into question the intruder's nationality.

Mr Robinson had been visiting Spain more frequently recently after a heart bypass operation 2½ years ago. His family, including daughter Yvonne and friends, were said to be devastated yesterday.

He was killed in a struggle with an intruder after his wife raised the alarm at their villa near Marbella in the early hours of the morning.

Mr Robinson, who ran the precision engineering firm E.R. Robinson on Merseyside, had suffered another burglary recently when his wife, Doreen, who was known as Sammy, had her bag stolen.

In yesterday's incident the thief broke in through a kitchen window, the only window without bars on it at the bungalow the couple bought last September on the Los Naranjos Golf course. Mr Robinson's mother, Sarah, was also staying with the couple at the bungalow.

Unconfirmed reports said the burglar demanded money in English, calling into question the intruder's nationality.

Mr Robinson had been visiting Spain more frequently recently after a heart bypass operation 2½ years ago. His family, including daughter Yvonne and friends, were said to be devastated yesterday.

He was killed in a struggle with an intruder after his wife raised the alarm at their villa near Marbella in the early hours of the morning.

Mr Robinson, who ran the precision engineering firm E.R. Robinson on Merseyside, had suffered another burglary recently when his wife, Doreen, who was known as Sammy, had her bag stolen.

In yesterday's incident the thief broke in through a kitchen window, the only window without bars on it at the bungalow the couple bought last September on the Los Naranjos Golf course. Mr Robinson's mother, Sarah, was also staying with the couple at the bungalow.

Unconfirmed reports said the burglar demanded money in English, calling into question the intruder's nationality.

Mr Robinson had been visiting Spain more frequently recently after a heart bypass operation 2½ years ago. His family, including daughter Yvonne and friends, were said to be devastated yesterday.

Music to your ears
with Classified £5 from only...

Advertise musical instruments you no longer need in The Press and Journal Classified Section. Your ad will only cost you £5 for two consecutive days in The Press and Journal and Evening Express.

Items valued at under £50 are FREE under £150 only £5 over £150 only £10. Special offer for private advertisers only.

Tel: 01224 691212 Fax: 01224 694613 e-mail: ad@p.co.uk

Man questioned over schoolgirl's murder Businessman killed during burglary

A 22-YEAR-OLD man was being questioned last night by detectives on suspicion of the murder of 13-year-old Victoria Hall.

Police investigating Miss Hall's death were also questioning a man and woman in their 20s on suspicion of conspiracy to prevent the course of justice.

Miss Hall, 17, vanished while walking from a nightclub in Felixstowe, Suffolk, to her home in nearby Trimley St Mary, in the early hours of Sunday, September 19. Her naked body was found in a ditch 25 miles away, at Cretting St Peter, Suffolk, five days later.

Police are not certain how she died, but believe she may have been as-

phyxiated. A police spokesman said a 22-year-old man was arrested at his home on the outskirts of Felixstowe on suspicion of murder early yesterday.

At around the same time, a 21-year-old man from Trimley St Mary was arrested in Ipswich on suspicion of conspiracy to prevent the course of justice.

Later, a 23-year-old man from Trimley St Mary was also arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to prevent the course of justice. The three suspects have not been named.

A 21-year-old Ipswich man was released without charge shortly before Christmas after twice being questioned about Miss Hall's murder.

A BUSINESSMAN was murdered yesterday during a bungled burglary at his holiday home on a golf course in southern Spain.

Eric Robinson, 65, from Williston, Leighton Buzzard, was hit over the head in a struggle with an intruder after his wife raised the alarm at their villa near Marbella in the early hours of the morning.

Mr Robinson, who ran the precision engineering firm E.R. Robinson on Merseyside, had suffered another burglary recently when his wife, Doreen, who was known as Sammy, had her bag stolen.

In yesterday's incident the thief

broke in through a kitchen window, the only window without bars on it at the bungalow the couple bought last September on the Los Naranjos Golf course. Mr Robinson's mother, Sarah, was also staying with the couple at the bungalow.

Unconfirmed reports said the burglar demanded money in English, calling into question the intruder's nationality.

Mr Robinson had been visiting Spain more frequently recently after a heart bypass operation 2½ years ago. His family, including daughter Yvonne and friends, were said to be devastated yesterday.

He was killed in a struggle with an intruder after his wife raised the alarm at their villa near Marbella in the early hours of the morning.

Mr Robinson, who ran the precision engineering firm E.R. Robinson on Merseyside, had suffered another burglary recently when his wife, Doreen, who was known as Sammy, had her bag stolen.

In yesterday's incident the thief broke in through a kitchen window, the only window without bars on it at the bungalow the couple bought last September on the Los Naranjos Golf course. Mr Robinson's mother, Sarah, was also staying with the couple at the bungalow.

Unconfirmed reports said the burglar demanded money in English, calling into question the intruder's nationality.

Mr Robinson had been visiting Spain more frequently recently after a heart bypass operation 2½ years ago. His family, including daughter Yvonne and friends, were said to be devastated yesterday.

He was killed in a struggle with an intruder after his wife raised the alarm at their villa near Marbella in the early hours of the morning.

Mr Robinson, who ran the precision engineering firm E.R. Robinson on Merseyside, had suffered another burglary recently when his wife, Doreen, who was known as Sammy, had her bag stolen.

In yesterday's incident the thief broke in through a kitchen window, the only window without bars on it at the bungalow the couple bought last September on the Los Naranjos Golf course. Mr Robinson's mother, Sarah, was also staying with the couple at the bungalow.

Holocaust books branded lies as libel denied

CONTROVERSIAL historian David Irving was branded a liar yesterday as he started his High Court libel action over a claim that he was a Holocaust denier.

The 62-year-old was author of Hitler's War and Goebbels: Mastermind of the Third Reich. He claims that Penguin Books and academic Deborah Lipstadt were part of an organised international endeavour to destroy his career.

He says that the waves of hatred generated by their book, Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory, had robbed him of

financial security for the future. Penguin and Professor Lipstadt, holder of the Dorot Chair in Modern Jewish History and Holocaust Studies at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, deny libel and plead justification.

Their counsel, Richard Rampton, QC, told Mr Irving that he is a hearing of the case without a jury. "Mr Irving calls himself a historian. The truth is, however, that he is not a historian at all, but a falsifier of history. To put it bluntly, he is a liar... in the end, all forms of lying converge into a single definition: wilful,

deliberate mis-statement of the facts."

Counsel continued: "Mr Irving