



CLAIM: BURNS TO DEFENDANT'S FACE CAUSED BY COOKER, COURT TOLD 'I had no murder motive'

A man accused of stabbing to death his estranged wife and her new lover before burning down her home said he singed his hair and eyebrows on a gas cooker hours before the fire.

by TOM BENNETT

in the early hours of April 2 last year.

He also denies covering his tracks by dousing the property – part of a large estate owned by Mr Ross – with petrol and setting it ablaze.

When questioned in court yesterday, Marshall from Irchester Road, in Rushden, Northamptonshire, said he burned himself while cooking boiled eggs for his breakfast.

He said he had bent down to see if the gas had ignited when it blew up in his face.

Prosecutor David Fisher, QC, said during his police interviews, Marshall could not recall why the hair on his arms and his eyebrows had been damaged.

Marshall told the jury his



SCENE: The burnt bungalow



VICTIM: Fiona Marshall

mind was “going around” too much during the interview, for the cooker incident to register.

He said: “I had just been accused of murdering somebody and it just didn’t stand out at the time.”

When asked how DNA from Mr Flippance had ended up in

the footwell of his car, he said it must have been transferred there by the family dogs or by his seven-year-old son.

He also told jurors he had no motive to kill his wife because he believed her death would leave him with massive debts.

The court heard the couple

owed tens of thousands of pounds and he and his estranged wife had agreed to split their debts and each pay half.

He said the arrangement had been in place for more than a year.

Marshall told the court he assumed that her death would mean that he would have to pay all of it.

The defendant was asked if he or his wife had life insurance.

He said: “I did not and, as far as I know, neither did Fiona.”

“If Fiona had died, I was under the impression I would get her half of the debt as I was still married to her.”

The court heard how Marshall believed his wife would have been in Birmingham on the weekend of her death, along with Mr Flippance.

The case continues.

Man rode his moped illegally

A MAN who was riding a moped to visit his disabled mother was found to be over the drink-drive limit.

Adrian Giles (32), of Highfield Street, Earl Shilton, was given a one-year road ban when he pleaded guilty to driving with excess alcohol, driving while disqualified and driving without insurance.

Prosecutor Sally Laundon told Hinckley magistrates that a policeman pulled him over near The Common, in Barwell, on March 19 for having faulty indicators.

After smelling alcohol, the officer breath-tested him. He was found to have 41 microgrammes of alcohol in 100 millilitres of breath, when the legal limit is 35.

Chris Black, defending, said Giles had only ever held a provisional driving licence.

He had been disqualified from driving in 1997 and he was ordered to be re-tested before getting the licence back.

The court heard that although he had completed the term of disqualification, he had forgotten the retest.

Giles was also fined £50 with £30 costs, and told that, as before, he must be re-tested before he can legally hold a driving licence.

Regeneration project gets a lift from rickshaw plan

A FLEET of eco-friendly rickshaws is being launched on the streets of Leicester this spring.

The vehicles, supplied by company E-Go, will offer free transport to shoppers and visitors around the city centre.

The futuristic pods are to be sponsored by companies who will advertise their business on the side.

The vehicles are powered by a cyclist and an electric back-up motor.

Two will trundle around the city from April 2 and it is hoped there will be 10 by the time the High Street is pedestrianised.

Sonny Banwait, director of E-Go, said: “It is a new way of travel for a city which is regenerating at a rapid pace.”

The vehicles will be demonstrated to city councillors before they meet at the Town Hall tomorrow.

Last year, environmental organisation Groundwork Leicester bid for £76,000 from the European Regional Development Fund to set up a similar scheme, but was unsuccessful.

Groundwork is still trying to get companies to sponsor its rickshaws and could run a service in the evening in the future.



HOP IN: Rickshaws from E-Go are set to offer free transport to people in the city centre

Car donated to Rainbows

A GARAGE has given a car to a children's hospice.

Sandcliffe Garage, which has nine car dealerships across the Midlands, donated a new Ford Fiesta to Rainbows children's hospice, in Loughborough.

Tom Barton, director of Sandcliffe, said: “This is one way in which we can help the community.”

The car will be used by hospice staff to visit and support children and their families, who are terminally and seriously ill.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What do you think of the idea of rickshaws on the streets of Leicester? Will you be using one? Text MM, followed by your message, name and home area, to 82189 and look out for your comments in the Mercury Mailbox in the next few days.

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