

Hound's race of his life

DONIE the greyhound is on a winner – in a competition to find the RSPCA's Rescue Dog of the Year.

He is through to the final stage of the contest and there will be a further chance for people to vote for their favourite in the *Sunday Express*.

Donie is the pet of the Ciddelapaz family of Wyton on the Hill, near St Ives, who adopted him from a rescue centre for greyhounds.

He won just six of his 61 races in his former career, but got off to a flying start by winning a preliminary heat of the contest and now getting through the next stage.

Kirsten Ciddelapaz said Donie was now going to meet the other five finalists at the Millbrook RSPCA where they were having their pictures taken for the contest which will run in the paper from the end of the month to the middle of November.

Donie now lives with Kirsten, her husband Craig and their two young sons Cameron and Dillon, as well as an assortment of other pets.

Kirsten said: "I really hope that by telling Donie's story people are more aware of retired greyhounds and will hopefully consider giving one or more the home forever that they deserve."

She thanked people who had voted for Donie so far.

Council planners bunker golf centre hit by ram-raid

By Julian Makey

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■ TIME FLIES... happy couple David and Christiane McCandless now, right, and on their wedding day, inset.

Honeymoon's over – after 42 years

A COUPLE have completed their honeymoon in Madagascar – 42 years after it was interrupted by the RAF.

But David and Christiane McCandless's plans to renew their vows at the cathedral in Majunga came close to another hitch after fog caused them to miss a flight from Paris. But the duo, from St Ives, got to the cathedral on time with the help of Air France and celebrated their 42nd anniversary in style before completing their much delayed honeymoon.

They met in Madagascar when David, 63, an RAF engine fitter,

was sent to the island to enforce UN sanctions against Ian Smith's Rhodesia.

In those days young service personnel – David was 21 and Christiane 19 – had to apply for permission to marry and their case it was denied.

David and Christiane, whose family was French, went ahead with the wedding, defying the authorities. But her first honeymoon ended after just two days when disapproving RAF found out and sent David to the trouble-spot of Aden.

Christian, now 61, was left behind for a year and was forced to find

her own way to England after being dumped from an official flight in Cyprus. The renewed honeymoon was her first visit to her home town since she left.

David, who retired from RAF Brampton as a Flight Lieutenant after almost 40 years service, said: "We were treated as royalty."

"Christiane had mixed emotions on day one but was more positive on day two as we revisited her old homes and the cathedral. She came away glad she had returned and is now happy with the experience, though sad at the poverty we both witnessed."

COUNCIL chiefs have been forced to scrap a host of conference bookings at a local golf centre after discovering the authority's own planners had accused it of breaching rules by holding such events.

Now Cambridge Golf and Conference Centre's managing director, Peter Durham, says the booming business will face bankruptcy if he can no longer hold non-golf related conferences.

He is also facing the ignominy of having to go to another venue for an awards ceremony his centre should have hosted after his restaurant won a top rating in a council food hygiene scheme.

The problem emerged just days after thieves ram-raided a store on the site and stole expensive golf equipment.

The £1.7m facility at Hemingford Abbots only opened this spring and Mr Durham was convinced it could be used for general conferences – but planners insist that it can only be used for golf-related events.

He has now had to apply for permission to change the use to general conferencing and private functions. Permission is also needed to allow the use of the café-bar by patrons and non-patrons of the golf centre and golf academy at the site.

The problem came to light after an eagle-eyed planner spotted the centre's advertisements for conference facilities – as had other council staff – who had booked the

venue for events.

The red-faced council has now decided to change venues for a conference on digital services as well as the forthcoming launch of its Scores on the Doors food hygiene scheme for food outlets, in which the golf centre's restaurant achieved top marks.

Mr Durham hoped the issue could be resolved with the new planning applications. He said the new facilities would not have been built if they could not be used for general conferencing – they were not financially viable based on golf events alone.

He warned that without the new consent the venue – which employs 40 people and has won top plaudits – faced a bleak future.

"I will go bankrupt," he said. "Conferencing has gone through the roof and is a crucial part of the business. There's a shortage of conference facilities in the area."

Events which have already been booked can be held.

A council spokesman said it had cancelled two events after the conflict came to light.

Police are appealing for witnesses after the Direct Golf pro-shop was damaged in the ram-raid at 4.45am on Friday.

Raiders reversed a stolen car up steps leading to the store, and then drove the vehicle, a brand new silver Honda Civic into shutters.

Call police on 0845 4564564 or Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555111.

Ward plan backed by mental health group

A WARD for older people with mental health issues may be built at Hinchbrook Hospital.

Work to replace Hawthorn Ward is expected to start by the end of the financial year and will shift the unit to the front of the hospital, closer to Acer Ward which also treats mental health patients.

The move has been welcomed by campaign group HuntsMind.

Sarah Hughes, chief executive of

the charity, said: "I think we are very happy this ward is coming, especially as we have an increasing number of over 65s."

She said HuntsMind was particularly keen to see single sex areas.

Cash-strapped Hinchbrook is £38 million in debt and the building of the new ward is part of its plan to consolidate services on a smaller part of the site.

A hospital spokesman said: "We have submitted a

planning application to Huntingdonshire District Council.

"We cannot yet give an indication of the cost of this work as this is still at an early stage."

A spokesman for the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation NHS Trust said: "This is fantastic news for patients."

She said the new ward would provide day and inpatient care in 10 single bed rooms.

Family count cost of rampage

A FAMILY are still counting the cost of a drunken car smash which left their home "looking like Beirut".

As reported in last week's *Weekly News*, unlicensed and uninsured Felician Piatek, 24, was spared prison despite being twice the drink-drive limit, when he smashed into the property in High Street, Warboys at 60mph – writing off two cars and wrecking two boats.

Homeowner Brad Lewis, 45, said that although the case was now resolved he was still trying to find out how much of the damage was covered by insurance, but feared he would be at least £1,000 out of pocket.

He said Piatek, who narrowly missed a taxi, was lucky to have hit the vehicles on the drive, otherwise he would almost certainly have killed himself hitting the house.

Seven members of Mr Lewis's family were in the house when Piatek crashed into it early on Saturday,



■ SCENE OF DESTRUCTION... clearing up just after the crash.

September 13, having jumped a junction opposite.

The *Weekly News* told how Piatek, of Lysander Close, St Ives, admitted drink driving, aggravated vehicle taking, having no insurance and no driving licence when he appeared before magistrates.

He told police he had downed a litre of vodka in an hour. Magistrates gave him 200 hours of unpaid community work and banned him from driving for 20 months.

Mr Lewis, a loans manager, said he and his wife Sharon, 36, had just fallen asleep

when they were woken by a noise outside.

"There was this horrendous noise and I thought a jet had fallen out of the sky and was flying along the High Street," he said.

"I helped him out of the car and he tried to run off. He fell over and I said: 'You aren't going anywhere mate,'" Mr Lewis said.

Piatek, who had taken his girlfriend's sister's car, demolished a streetlight and a wall before hitting the cars, boats, wheelie bins, a motorcycle and a washing machine.

"If there hadn't been all the stuff on the drive he would have gone halfway through the house and that would have killed him," Mr Lewis said.

"When we went to bed on the Friday we had two cars and two boats.

"When we got up on Saturday the whole lot had gone. It looked like Beirut when we got up in the morning."

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