States Of Jersey Police

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday, 28 May 2008

Key personnel:

Senior Investigating Officer:	**Deputy Chief Officer Lenny Harper**
Deputy Senior Investigating Officer:	**Detective Inspector Alison Fossey**
Forensic Services Manager:	**Mrs Vicky Coupland**
PolSA Inspector:	**Insp Alan Guy**
LGC Forensics Team Manager:	**Miss Julie Roberts**
Forensic Canine Search Consultant:	**Mr Martin Grime**

HISTORIC ABUSE ENQUIRY - HAUT DE LA GARENNE PHASE

PRESS SUMMARY

S.I.O. INTRODUCTION

In April 2006 States of Jersey Police became concerned at the number of carers who were being accused of involvement in offences concerning the abuse of children. This was particularly highlighted when the commanding officer of the Jersey Sea Cadets was arrested for downloading pornographic images including some involving sea cadets.

The attitude of the Sea Cadet authorities of that time caused great concern. Accordingly, police began to examine a number of previous cases and during this review were continually referred to abuse which had allegedly taken place at Haut de La Garenne.

This covert phase of the enquiry went on until November 2007 when the investigation was made public. Because of the concerns of victims about any involvement of the Jersey caring agencies it was decided to seek the assistance of the NSPCC in London.

Within a week seventy victims had come forward, most detailing abuse at Haut De La Garenne.

Among the victims were a few who said that children had been dragged from their beds at night screaming and had then disappeared. Two others said they had knowledge of human remains at the location but were not specific. A local advocate also came to police and said he had a client who knew there were human remains buried at the home.

The collation of numerous complaints of both sexual and violent abuse of children led to the decision being made to enter the home to carry out a screening search for human remains and evidence in support of the allegations of abuse. The advice and assistance of the NPIA in the deployment of UK specialists was secured.

The abuse enquiry parameters are presently set at events that took place from the mid 1940's to 1990.

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HAUT DE LA GARENNE

Haut De La Garenne was built in 1866 as a privately run home and industrial school for destitute and orphaned children of the Jersey population.

In 1900 the name of the property was changed to the Jersey Home for Boys.

In 1953 the Education Committee took responsibility for the home renaming it Haut De La Garenne when it became a mixed home in 1960.

With the appointment of a Children's Officer in 1970, the number of children in care gradually dropped in numbers and by 1983 HDLG ceased to be used for the purpose it was built.

The building and grounds were then administered by the Public Services Committee during which time it was used as the set for a BBC television series ' Bergerac'.

In 1970, Aviemore, a new two storey wing was built to the western part of the site which was used principally for staff accommodation. In recent times this building has been adapted to provide respite care for children.

In 1992 the Department of Property Services took over administration of the site from public services. Until 1999 the building was used to accommodate visiting groups requiring low cost accommodation.

In 2003 an extensive refurbishment of the building was completed and since that time has been administered by the Youth Hostel association as an accommodation and activity centre.
The building is of granite stone construction with four main wings, north, south, east and west which form a central courtyard. The grounds and building occupy an area of approximately 220 m X 130 m. Hedgerows bound the perimeter fields, playing fields and open areas.

The building was originally built on several levels. The north wing being two storeys, the south wing as two storeys with the west and east as two storeys except for the southernmost ends which were only one storey.

Several major renovations throughout its history included the addition of two further floor levels to the southern ends of the west and east wings.

In 1925 the east wing was converted to two main floors leaving the ground floor enclosed as 'cellars'. Archaeological excavation has revealed five stages of historical groundwork:

1. Victorian
2. Early 1900's
3. 1940-1950 (Including German wartime occupation)
4. 1960-1980
5. 2003

These staged renovations have been identified from archive planning so as to prioritise areas of search and identify precise locations of relevant to this enquiry.

TASKING, STRATEGY AND DEPLOYMENT

On 5/2/08 a briefing was held at LGC Forensics Oxford Chaired by the SIO Deputy Chief Officer Lenny Harper, States of Jersey Police. Mrs Vicky Coupland the SOJP Forensic Services Manager was also present.

In addition to the briefing a document was distributed which had been prepared by Karl Harrison, lead scientist LGC Forensics. This document was a desk based study of the "Haut de la Garenne grounds, and identified potential areas of interest to the investigation.

Martin Grime of The Forensic Canine Search Consultancy produced a canine deployment brief encompassing the entire site to maximise assurity. The canine assets would be deployed both in a wide area screening and detailed search capacity.

On 19 February 2008 the "Haut de la Garenne" site was visited by a reconnaissance party including States of Jersey Police SIO and Forensic Services Manager, NPIA homicide search advisors, FCSC canine search advisor and LGC Forensics staff representing forensic archaeology and anthropology.

SEARCH

- The search of Haut De La Garenne employed numerous complementary assets that were deployed as required. The systematic approach was adapted to produce high assurity in any possible scenario including sub-surface deposition, dismemberment and destruction by fire. It must be stressed, however, that there was no direct evidence of homicide at that time and the search was to include the collation of evidence of both sexual and violent abuse.

- The assets were deployed in a logical and systematic manner applying best value and best practice guidelines.

- The canine assets were deployed in the first instance in a wide area screening search to contact role prior to detail targeting.

- Geophysical and Ground Penetrating Radar assets were deployed to identify anomalous areas for further investigation by other assets.

- Gridded probing techniques of identified anomalies allowed the canine assets easier access to sub surface scent.

- Forensic and archaeological assets were deployed upon the reaction of the canine assets, GPR anomaly and/or when anecdotal witness evidence applied.

- Forensic assets were deployed to secure evidence of sexual and violent abuse within crime scenes declared upon canine reaction and anecdotal witness testimony.

- The human blood search dog was deployed in a detailed close supervision search role within declared crime scenes to locate human blood deposits that may be explained at a later date as being accidental or suspicious.

The system of deployment was recorded in the Standard Operating Procedures and policy documents. The policies and procedures were applied consistently throughout the search to conclusion.

CANINE SEARCH

The Enhanced Victim Recovery Dog (EVRD) 'Eddie' was deployed in a wide area screening capacity within the outer boundaries of the HDLG with no alert indications or behaviour changes evident. The search was recorded via GPS data logging equipment attached to the dog's collar to ensure complete area coverage.

Geophysical anomalies identified by other assets, were probed and subjected to EVRD screening. No alert indications were forthcoming.

A large amount of animal bone historically deposited in the grounds of Haut De La Garenne as refuse was ignored.

The EVRD was deployed tactically within the ground floor of the premises where a continuing alert indication of varying strength was given in the western aspect. The weakest being in the south-western corridor, the strongest and most significant being in the north-western stairwell.

The reactions of the dog are explained as scent travelling through 'chimneys' such as conduit, electric cable ducting, which transects from the north west stairwell along the western corridor in a southerly direction.

Anecdotal witness evidence was suggestive of juvenile human bones being recovered from the area of the north-western stairwell during recent building renovations in 2003.

Human remains deposited within the ground in that area would contaminate the ground, and any porous material within it. The dog's reactions were therefore consistent with this scenario. The area was therefore subjected to intrusive archaeological excavation.

A fragment of what the forensic anthropologist describes as being possibly human juvenile skull was recovered from within a Victorian context of the excavation. The fragment was shipped to the U.K. for confirmation of substance, species, carbon dating and DNA testing. The laboratory conducting the analysis reported confused and conflicting findings therefore no conclusion is available at this time. Other burnt bone fragments were also recovered from the context within this area. The dating of the context is Victorian, outside the time spectrum of a homicide enquiry at this time.

The EVRD gave a number of alert indications in the eastern wing of the building. Holes were drilled through the 3 inch thick wooden / insulated clad flooring to allow the dog scent access to the voids below. He identified areas of interest which supported anecdotal witness evidence. This prompted the complete removal of the flooring in 2/3 of the east wing.

Removal of the flooring revealed the original ground floor of the building including a large brick and rendered bath, original sinks and toilet area. Renovations had enclosed the areas below the modern flooring which resembled 'cellars'.

The EVRD was again deployed in a detailed search of these areas. Alert indications were forthcoming which, where appropriate, were confirmed using 'Keela', the human blood search dog.

The EVRD alert indications were confirmed by intrusive archaeological excavation and sieving. A significant number of bone fragments and teeth have been recovered which have been corroborated as human both macroscopically and microscopically. The remains are at the present time undergoing forensic testing including carbon dating procedures. We have received various dating indicators which require clarification.

Three indications by the human blood search dog were given in cellar one which, when subjected to presumptive testing, proved positive.

Two indications by the human blood search dog were given in the cellar entrance hall which when subjected to presumptive testing proved positive.

The EVRD provided alert indications in support of the human blood search dog.

Forensic samples were recovered and conveyed to the UK for further testing.

Other deployments of the EVRD were based upon the blind screening of soil samples and other areas from which suggestive intelligence is supported:

The EVRD was deployed to screen soil samples from certain contexts of archaeological excavation. A positive reaction was forthcoming from a context where it is reported possible human remains were uncovered and removed by builders in the area of the main electric feed in the north-western wing.

There is some witness evidence to suggest that these remains were also human juvenile. Although the remains were examined by a pathologist they were not positively species identified. In fact the pathologists report lists at least one bone that was 'UNIDENTIFIED'. Measurements of the bones would tend to suggest that they would have been consistent with being juvenile human.

It is important to note that a substantial amount of animal bone has been recovered from the site as a whole. The EVRD has ignored all such material whilst alerting to confirmed human remains. This tends to support the scenario above.

Both the EVRD and Human blood search dog are presumptive screening assets. Any alert indications must be forensically corroborated to be conclusive.

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FORENSIC ARCHAELOGICAL SCIENTIST DEPLOYMENT

A team of archaeologists and anthropologists from LGC Forensics under the supervision of Miss Julie Roberts were deployed to excavate areas of interest identified by search assets, geophysical survey or anecdotal witness evidence.

All anomalies and areas of interest were intrusively investigated to conclusion.

The spoil from contextual hand trowel excavation, cellar floors and other anomalies was sieved by hand or with the use of mechanical device. (100 tons plus).

Comprehensive records of excavation were completed including the approximate date of context and exhibits recovered. Items of interest include;

- Fragment of possibly human juvenile skull recovered from within a Victorian context of the excavation of north-western stairwell.
- Burnt bone (pending species identification) from the context at the north-western stairwell
- Burnt fabric and toys from anomalies within the grounds.
- Lime at the base of a large hole that had been dug previously and reinstated for no apparent reason.
- Human deciduous teeth from cellars three and four (sieving)
- Human burnt bone from cellar 4.
- Human bone from cellar 3
- Human deciduous tooth from water cistern (sieving)

In addition, numerous bones were discovered within the search area both through excavation of anomalies and when investigating anecdotal accounts of previous finds by witnesses. These were identified by the resident anthropologist as being of animal origin.

Detailed archaeological analysis of the building and its structure, in conjunction with archive plans, has provided time lines for historical renovations within the building.

POLICE SEARCH TEAM

Police search teams under the direct supervision of a PolSA Inspector Alan Guy were tasked to search the north and east banking of the southernmost field to Haut De La Garenne (boundary to search areas 4,5&7).

The search was conducted with the aid of mechanical earth moving equipment.

The banking had been identified by witness testimony concerning the deposition of bones the origin of which was not known whether to be animal or human.

A large amount of bone was recovered and examined by the on site forensic anthropologist. The bone was identified as animal.
Clothing was recovered and has been retained whilst the investigation continues.
The team was also deployed to conduct a search of the attic within the confines of the building.

FORENSIC EXAMINATION

The States of Jersey Police forensic examiners with the aid of UK based personnel provided the following services:

- Mrs Coupland, the States of Jersey Forensic Services Manager provided day to day management of the search venue and supervision of forensic scene examination.
- Provision of multiple scene management.
- Provision of multiple scene examination.
- Provision of photographic support.
- Provision of exhibit management at HDLG.

Six crime scenes were declared in relation to the abuse enquiry and identified as cellars 1-5 and the cellar entrance hall.

All scenes were subjected to meticulous examination.

- Floor joists taped to recover hair, fibre and skin cells.
- Floor joists and floor boards subjected to chemical treatment to identify and recover fingerprints.
- Walls taped to recover hair, fibre and skin cells.
- Light source search including quasar.
- Ultra violet light search.
- Floor swept using gridding system.
- Items of interest recovered and exhibited.
- Sweepings sieved.
- Human blood search dog screening.
- Chemically treated (Luminol) to highlight areas of interest for further testing.

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GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY

Gradiometer and Resistivity techniques were carried out at 7 different locations within the grounds of Haut de La Garenne in order to detect likely remains indicating clandestine burials. Two areas were chosen for control purposes (Test Pits 3 and 7) to determine the underlying responses from the soils and geology of the area. These were located in the north east corner and southernmost point on the promontory respectively of the site.

The results indicated some significant anomalies possibly representing pit-like features (F1, F2, F3, and F6-8). The majority proved to be of recent origin and associated with rose bed planting immediately to the south of the house. Other anomalies indicated modern services or features of geological/natural origin.

Ground Penetrating radar was deployed on two separate occasions within the grounds and the interior of Haut De La Garenne. Detachments from HOSDB and 58 Squadron Royal Engineers identified a number of anomalies both within the grounds and the interior of the building.

The anomalies were numbered and their locations plotted on building plans and site maps. Although some could be explained as pipe trenches and known features identified by witness testimony, unexplained anomalies were subjected to screening with the EVRD and intrusive investigation by forensic archaeologists.

Finds of interest from identified anomalies are:

- Burnt bone (awaiting further examination)
- Burnt clothing
- Burnt toys
- Burnt bed sheets
- Coins (provided indication of dating of anomaly)

Of particular interest were anomalies that were identified by GPR, Geophysical survey and by witness account.

Approximately 20 years ago two large holes had been dug with the use of a mechanical digger at the request of staff at HDLG. The following day the staff caused the reinstatement of the ground without any explanation or obvious reason for the ground intrusion. These holes have since been excavated by the resident forensic archaeologists who discovered at the base of the hole hardcore and lime. Lime is a well known addition to deposition to aid the reduction of decomposition scent. Its inclusion in this scenario may be suggestive of suspicious activity although no human remains were found.

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FORENSIC ANALYSIS

Remains identified by the resident forensic anthropologist Miss Julie Roberts as human, and items of interest to the enquiry, have been submitted for forensic analysis.

Laboratory confirmation of origin of teeth and bone as human has prompted further testing. We are presently awaiting various test results from carbon dating and DNA analysis etc to try and confirm identity, age of victim and date of demise.

The number of victims and cause of death are not currently known but the prevailing information would suggest that the circumstances are suspicious at this time.

SUMMARY

To date, the meticulous search of Haut De La Garenne has produced supportive evidence to the abuse enquiry and suggestive evidence that the remains of at least one child are present within the structure of the building.

In the past few days there has been some controversy over the origin of one of the exhibits recovered from the north western stairwell. Despite the media suggestion to the contrary, the identity of this item has not been confirmed. The item has been excluded from the enquiry as it was recovered from a Victorian context within the ground.

Several fragments of bone recovered from cellars 3 and 4 have been confirmed as being of human origin.

Other bone fragments suspected as being of human origin are yet to be examined.

Several teeth recovered from cellars 3 & 4have been confirmed as being of human origin and are in the process of forensic examination.

The SIO has stated that the results of all forensic testing will be completed prior to any release of information with regard to a homicide enquiry at this time.

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