

Fire-raiser jailed over house blaze

By Court Reporter
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A PENSIONER who set fire to her own home endangering the lives of herself, her husband and the neighbours who rescued her has been jailed.

Christina Dewar (62) was sentenced to eight months when she appeared at Inverness Sheriff Court on Tuesday, having previously been found guilty of setting the fire at her home in Mackay Road, Inverness on April 8 last year.

Sheriff Gordon Fleetwood had heard how she used lighter fuel to ignite incontinence pants and other material at the back door of the house and refused to leave the property despite the attempts of others to rescue her and her husband, Charles, who the trial also heard she had wanted to die.

Sentence had been deferred

for reports and the case had to be continued twice because Dewar was attending hospital.

She was finally sentenced this week, having come straight from hospital for the hearing.

Solicitor Duncan Henderson said she had been drinking on the day of the offence.

"She was in very low spirits, having been diagnosed with breast cancer," he said.

He asked the sheriff to consider a community-based sentence that would enable her to address her alcohol problems as well as take account of her previously unblemished record.

Sheriff Fleetwood, however, ruled that custody was the only appropriate disposal.

He told Dewar: "I have to accept, and do accept, your spirits were low. But I must set against that that you endangered you and your husband and two other innocent

persons who, had it not been for the bravery of others, in particular a young boy, you could have ended your life and the lives of others."

The trial had heard how a 15-year-old was among those who rescued the couple.

He had told Dewar's trial how he and neighbours saw smoke coming from the property.

He said he told Dewar and her husband to get out, but they weren't moving and he thought they were both drunk.

"We tried to stand Christina up but she was resisting the attempts," he said.

The couple were eventually carried out and at Raigmore Hospital Dewar told a nurse she had poured lighter fuel onto incontinence pants and set them alight.

PC Michael Heath also told the trial that Dewar informed him she hated her husband and wanted them both to die.



Christina Dewar travelled straight from hospital to be sentenced.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Man fined for 'ginger' insult

A LABOURER who shouted "ginger" at a man in Nairn has been fined £225.

David Debruin was in Bridge Street and saw someone he knew walking a dog and shouted at him.

Debruin, of Dooct Road, Auldearn admitted behaving in an abusive and threatening manner and making an offensive remark on May 14 last year.

Depute fiscal Fiona Murray said the man was with a group and there were further remarks made but were not in the charge. Debruin, she said, was only reported because there was a historical incident between him and the person he made the remark too.

A new head

LYNDA Banks has been appointed as Hilton Primary's new head teacher.

On the market

BARRATT Homes has put a new batch of homes at Ness Castle on the market, with a starting price of £189,995.

Independent review of proposed RBS branch closure in Beauly

Johnston Carmichael has been appointed to independently review the proposed closure of the Royal Bank of Scotland branch in Beauly. If you are likely to be affected by the closure we would like to hear your views by 5pm on 14 August 2018.

Johnston Carmichael, the largest independent firm of Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers in Scotland, has been appointed by the Royal Bank of Scotland plc ("RBS") to independently review the proposed closure of ten branches in Beauly, Biggar, Castlebay, Comrie, Douglas in Lanarkshire, Gretna, Inveraray, Kyle, Melrose and Tongue.

We will be reviewing the usage of each branch on its own merits and then providing RBS with a recommendation on whether we consider each branch should remain open or be closed.

As part of our independent review, we would welcome the views of anyone who uses the RBS branch in Beauly and who would be directly affected by its closure. Specifically, we would like to hear how often you currently use the branch and what you use it for. We would also like to hear if you are aware of alternative ways to bank if the branch was to close and whether those alternatives would reasonably fulfil your everyday banking needs.

**JOHNSTON
CARMICHAEL**

You can share your views with us at any time by:

- Writing to us at The RBS Review Team, Johnston Carmichael LLP, 29 Albyn Place, Aberdeen, AB10 1YL; or
- Completing a short online questionnaire available at www.jcca.co.uk/rbsbranchreview

You can also talk to us in person at the branch on Friday 10 August 2018:

- Members of our review team will be visiting the Beauly RBS branch on Friday 10 August and would welcome the opportunity to meet customers and users of the branch to discuss their banking needs on a one to one basis. Our team members will be at the branch during normal branch opening times and will be looking to meet with as many people as possible. Appointments of 20 minutes will be made available.
- We strongly advise you to book an appointment to avoid extended waiting times. **To book an appointment, please telephone 01224 259353** between the hours of 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Please note that the deadline for the submission of your views is 5pm on Tuesday 14 August 2018 and all comments that you share about how you use the branch will be kept confidential. We look forward to hearing from you.

The Johnston Carmichael RBS Review Team