

DETECTIVES AT WORK SHOWCASING THE ROLE OF DETECTIVES WITHIN POLICING



Karen Stephens,
**Interim National Board Member
and Deputy Secretary for PFNDF**

“Detectives play a vital role within policing of England and Wales, and often work alone, so their files are usually completely of their own doing and without any team assistance.

There is some excellent work being undertaken every day by officers across the country.

Here we showcase some of the inspirational stories of force and personal achievements.”

Impressive court results thanks to expertise

DC Nicole Russell from Doncaster PPU (Child Abuse Unit) has been in the department for more than five years. In this time not only has she undertaken the role of A/DS duties and being a tutor/assessor for a civilian investigator, but in 2015 achieved some excellent court results.

Thanks to DC Russell, have resulted in some significant jail terms for the offenders:

- Rape of a female child, wounding and conspiracy – offender was jailed for 15 years plus another six years concurrent sentence.
- Rape of a six year old boy – offender sentenced to 9 years plus a total of 18 years concurrent sentence.
- Rape, sexual assault of 3 girls aged 4-14 years – offender was jailed to 21 years plus a total of 33 year concurrent sentence.

Rape and sexual assault of three daughters – offender was sentenced to 15 years plus a total of 113 years concurrent sentence. DC Russell also has a number of other trials pending in 2016.

Monster brought to justice thanks to DNA advances

New advances in DNA technology allowed the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Major Crime Unit to solve a 25-year-old cold case.

In 1984, Paul Drinkwater raped a 15 year old girl at knifepoint, and stole her property. Three weeks later, he raped and assaulted an 18-year-old and sexually assaulted her companion. While extensive investigations were carried out at the time, and Drinkwater himself was interviewed, Police were unable to charge anyone for the horrendous crimes.

Fast-forward to 2012, and the Major Crime Unit Cold Case Review Team believed that new advances in DNA may be able to bring a monster to justice. Comparing a DNA sample from the original crimes to DNA existing within the National DNA Database (NDNAD) from subsequent arrests, the investigation team was able to link the offences to Drinkwater.

“Forensic evidence is forensic evidence, it doesn’t lie. It could only have been him,” said Det Insp Pushpa Guild, who led the investigation. “There

was a sense of elation about being able to identify someone so long after the event.”

Det Insp Guild said it was a tough case, as they weren’t just investigating Drinkwater, but having to go back over the original investigation to check witnesses, victims and statements given at the time. There was a sense of nervousness about taking the case to trial, as they knew the new technology would be questioned. But, the risk paid off, which Det Insp. Guild said was something that meant a lot to the victims.

“They would tell you, that a crime like the one he committed, it never really leaves you. It always haunts you. So this was closure for them.

“It’s not exactly ‘job satisfaction’ but there is an immense sense of pride to get a conviction against someone who thought he got away with it.”

Paul Drinkwater, by then 52, was charged, convicted and sentenced to more than 30 years for his crimes.

More than a 125 years imprisonment for crime gang

In April 2015, a major criminal operation was shut-down following a 12-month intensive investigation. It culminated with 26 defendants being convicted, who were sentenced to a total of 127 years in prison.

Operation Yonside was a covert Level II criminal investigation which involved the large scale supply of Class A and Class B controlled drugs, including heroin, cocaine and cannabis, in and around North Wales.

Det Insp Arwyn Jones, who led the investigation, said it was a big undertaking. It began following

the seizure of £70,000 of cocaine, when Gavin Thorman was identified by police as a head of an organised crime ring.

Det Insp Jones said the hardest part was dealing with the copious volume of information that was being gathered each day. By the end of the investigation, there were more than 2700 exhibits, 192 phones and devices physically recovered, examined and reviewed, and 180 witnesses involved.

Thorman, he said, was completely unaware of the operation, so much so that while in prison serving

time for another offence, he continued business through phone calls. Despite knowing calls could be monitored, he told a colleague that it was OK, because he was talking Welsh, and was only in for assault so the police weren't interested in his chats.

How wrong he was, the multiple phone calls provided invaluable evidence for the Yonside team. "Taking someone like Thorman off the street, to dismantle his network, yes, there's satisfaction in seeing that – and in seeing my community feel

safer," said Det Insp Jones.

"At the end of the day, these are the criminals you want to target. These are the criminals you want to see behind bars, that cause the greatest harm to the community.

"The drugs are one thing, but it was the reduction in violence and intimidation within the community that has made a huge difference – and that's why I joined the police."

Historic abuse case sees three men jailed

Op Latin saw three men sentenced to a total of 35 years in prison for sexual abuse crimes committed between the late 1960s and 1993.

It focused on three men who were responsible for looking after vulnerable boys at a school near Tonbridge, and who were charged with a string of offences, dating back to the 1960s.

Swaylands School was run by the London Borough of Barnet between 1968 up until its closure in 1994. It was initially for boys who had moderate learning difficulties, then from 1987 was re-designed to accommodate boys with emotional behavioural difficulties. Pupils from across London and the south east of England were placed there.

Detective Superintendent Paul Fotheringham, from the Kent and Essex Serious Crime Directorate, said: "This sentencing brings to a close a comprehensive investigation that has lasted a number of years. It shows that no matter how long the passage of time, if you are convicted of carrying out sexual offences you will feel the full weight of the law.

"As residential child care officers Baker, Hennessy and

Putman were supposed to look after the boys out of class. Instead they exploited the pupils in their care and committed horrible acts over a long period of time.

"The first victims in this case came forward in 2011. It soon became apparent there had been others affected and officers went to great lengths to ensure no stone was left unturned.

Despite the weight of this evidence, the three men refused to admit to their crimes. Instead they forced their victims to appear in court and re-count the abuse they had suffered all those years ago. There were a total of 65 ex-pupils who had made allegations, and together with the victims and the CPS put forward the strongest case to the court. All the victims were involved in the process, and were kept fully up to-date. This is justice for all of them and I'd personally like to thank all those who have helped to bring this case to a conclusion."

There was some truly outstanding detective work by staff, dogged, determined with a real focus on the victims in this harrowing case that finally saw the offenders brought to justice in March 2015.

Multi-million pound drugs find smashes criminal drugs ring

In June 2015, following a trial at Maidstone Crown Court, nine defendants were found guilty and sentenced to a total of 154 years and four months. The nine men were sentenced to a total of over 154 years in prison following an investigation by Kent Police and the National Crime Agency (NCA), which saw millions of pounds of drugs taken off the streets.

The investigation began in September 2013 after customs officials in Germany contacted the NCA in respect of a number of packages destined for Swanley, Kent which were found to contain over 100kgs of Class A and B drugs. Investigators from the NCA worked with Kent Police detectives to follow the boxes to Swanley in Kent.

Detectives saw the boxes being delivered to an industrial unit where one member of the gang – 35 year old Stevie Joyce - took possession of the boxes and was arrested.

Following this arrest a complex investigation took place, which led to the identification of the rest of an organised crime group who were continuing to arrange the importation of millions of pounds-worth of drugs in to the country on a weekly basis. By April 2014 the gang had rented a new industrial unit in Eton in Berkshire, and NCA officers observed the delivery of another set of packages, this time containing 55 kilos of heroin, that was purported to be car parts being delivered from Belgium.

Mobile phone data was used throughout the case to identify key members of the group and officers struck as the gang attempted to distribute the drugs to other crime groups who had travelled from as far afield as Liverpool, Manchester and Blackburn to collect their share of the drugs, showing the enormous scale of the operation. Forensic tests on the heroin packages seized showed they would have had a likely potential street value of in excess of £6.5 million.

Detective Superintendent Mark Hall from the Kent and Essex Serious Crime Directorate said: 'This investigation started in September 2013, when a consignment of drugs was detected by customs officials en route to Kent in Germany.

'As a result of our investigations we were able to intercept a further large consignment of drugs and to gain crucial evidence of the involvement of not only the foot soldiers collecting the drugs but more importantly of the top tier of the smuggling ring as well.'

Investigating officer DC Mark Froome added: 'This gang was a highly-organised criminal outfit that saw over 100kgs of drugs being brought into England; a haul that would have made the gang a significant amount of money. I'm glad that we have been able to convict the offenders and stop the drugs entering circulation and causing misery to the lives of drug users, their families and communities across Kent and beyond.'

***Have you been involved or know of any great work that you would like to feature in the newsletter?
If so, then please let us know via email: Karen.stephens@polfed.org***