

We're still in dark over Lamara's death in M9 blunder

By Dean Herbert

THE family of M9 crash victim Lamara Bell spoke of their sheer frustration last night as they backed calls for an official inquiry into their daughter's death three years ago.

Miss Bell, 25, lay for three days critically injured after the car she was a passenger in careered down an embankment off the motorway near Stirling, despite a 999 call from another motorist about the incident.

The mother of two died in hospital a week later. Her partner, John Yuill, 28, was also found dead at the scene.

Police were heavily criticised for their response to the tragedy after it emerged they had been alerted to the accident but did not send a patrol to look for the wrecked Renault. The couple were only discovered in the car on July 5, 2015, three days later and only after police received a further phone call.

A probe was launched by the Police Investigations and Review

'We've got a little bit of hope'

Commissioner, but three years on the family are still waiting to hear who was to blame.

The crash was reported to Police Scotland on the day it happened by a member of the public, but by the time assistance finally arrived at the scene, father-of-three Mr Yuill was already dead and Miss Bell was so badly hurt she eventually succumbed to her injuries.

Speaking yesterday, her father Andrew Bell said he knows 'about one per cent' of what happened to his daughter three years on from her death.

He added: 'That's basically all you hear - "it's part of an ongoing

investigation, none of your concern".'

Mr Bell says he has been 'a pain' to the authorities, adding that he has become fixated with the details of the case.

He added: 'You read up on medical histories, you read up on examinations, you read up on crash scenes.'

'You watch crash scenes, you see how they happen, you judge them in your head, you pin stuff to the walls.'

Miss Bell and Mr Yuill's deaths, and the circumstances around how long they were left in the car, have provoked repeated calls for a fatal accident inquiry (FAI).

The latest call for an inquiry came at the weekend from Scottish Liberal Democrat leader Willie Rennie, who wrote to Scotland's top law officer calling for an FAI to be held 'at the earliest opportunity'.

Mr Rennie added that the families of Miss Bell and Mr Yuill have 'waited too long' to find out what happened. In a letter to Lord

Advocate James Wolffe, QC, he insisted an inquiry is needed to prevent a repeat of the 'tragic incident'.

Mr Wolffe has already made it known that he wants the incident to be 'investigated thoroughly'.

Mr Bell said that Mr Rennie is 'the only person that does anything'.

He added: 'I owe that man a huge thank you, because he pokes

'Investigation remains live'

and prods the same as me. They can slam him and shut him down and all the rest of it, but as long as he's asking questions, we've got a little bit of hope.'

A Crown Office spokesman said: 'Progress continues to be made on the investigation into the incident on the M9.'

'The case team and dedicated staff from the specialist victim information and advice service



Picture: STV

Probe: Andrew and Diane Bell, left, want an inquiry into the death of Lamara, above

have met with family members and their legal representatives throughout and will continue to keep them informed of any significant developments in relation to the investigation.

'The investigation remains live and as such, it would not be appropriate to comment further.'

Assistant Chief Constable John Hawkins said: 'Police Scotland has been committed to assisting the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner and Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service throughout the investigation into the circumstances surrounding the deaths of John Yuill and Lamara Bell.'

'Three years on, our sympathies remain with their families and friends.'

'This is an independent process that we, like many others, await the outcome of and so we cannot comment on any details whilst this remains ongoing.'

'The recommendations made by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary concerning our contact, command and control centres have been fully implemented and we remain committed to the ongoing review of our arrangements going forward under the scrutiny of the Scottish Police Authority.'

Zut alors! Fake French rose is just cheap wine from Spain

By Arthur Martin

A GLASS of chilled French rosé is seen by some as a quintessential summer drink.

However, wine enthusiasts have been unwittingly drinking inferior Spanish rosé which was falsely labelled as French.

Fraudsters have sold some ten million bottles of fake French rosé to four of the largest wine distributors in the country.

The inferior Spanish wine was then sold in French restaurants and hotels for three years. Britain is one of the largest export markets for French rosés and investigators believe some may have ended up in the UK.

French officials said criminal proceedings will be launched, but have not named the vineyards or merchants accused.

A wine distributor near the Spanish border is accused of concealing the origin of three million litres of Spanish rosé. The wine was either falsely labelled as French, or given misleading labels.

Alexandre Chevallier, of the French consumer fraud office,

'Warnings about Frenchification'

said: 'We first received warnings about "Frenchification" towards the end of 2015.'

Investigators found evidence of Spanish wine being passed off as French in more than a fifth of establishments they checked. The profits are believed to be enormous.

A litre of Spanish rosé cost about 30p in 2016. Passed off as French, it would fetch up to three times on the wholesale market.

In March, police found 66 million bottles of ordinary wine passed off as Châteauneuf-du-Pape and other prestigious Côte du Rhône appellations.

Weeks later, one of Bordeaux's most highly regarded châteaux was accused of illegally adding sugar to some of its 2016 Margaux vintage.

Château Giscours said the mix-up was accidental.

In 2010, 12 winemakers and merchants in southern France were convicted of selling millions of fake pinot noir to E&J Gallo, a California-based wine producer and distributor.

Calls to ban salmon farms' lice treatment

CAMPAIGNERS are calling for a ban on an electric method of removing lice from salmon after it was revealed it had killed 230,000 fish in only two years.

More than 100,000 salmon died on farms using the Thermolicer and Hydrolicer treatments to get rid of pests in the six months to January this year.

Campaign group Scottish Salmon Watch will file a legal challenge this week against all of Scotland's salmon farms for systematic breaches of the animal welfare laws.

Data released by the Scottish Govern-

By John Dingwall

ment through Freedom of Information (FOI) laws shows the extent of salmon fatalities on farms following the use of 'mechanical treatments' intended to kill sea lice and treat amoebic gill disease.

Scottish Salmon Watch director Don Staniford said: 'The Thermolicer and Hydrolicer are torture chambers for fish. Heating salmon up to 34C - that's over 90F - is a welfare nightmare which must be stopped.'

'These Heath Robinson contraptions act

as monstrous washing machines in a desperate and failed attempt to clean tons and tons of lice-infested and disease-ridden salmon. No wonder fish are dying due to bleeding brains and head damage.'

'The legal challenge will serve notice that Scottish salmon farmers must adhere to animal welfare and they cannot go on killing hundreds of thousands of farmed fish.'

Scotland is the largest producer of farmed Atlantic salmon in the EU and one of the top three producers globally after Norway and Chile.

In May, it emerged that one in three

Scottish salmon farms have 'major problems' with sea lice.

Colin Smyth, Scottish Labour's rural economy spokesman, said: 'The Scottish Government are actively encouraging massive growth in salmon farming. But these growth targets are just not sustainable if we continue to have the highest levels of sea lice and delicing methods that have frankly led to the mass slaughter of salmon in recent years.'

The Scottish Government was approached for comment but had not responded last night.