



Cash windfall for East Quay

Landmark project's £389k grant – page 3

Zookeeper's TV challenge

Tropiquaria staffer cooks for Mary Berry – page 5

Woman walks free after 'despicable offence' against 97-year-old dementia sufferer

Carer stole £47,000 from elderly victim

A WEST Somerset woman who stole nearly £50,000 from the bank account of a 97-year-old Dunster dementia sufferer while being paid to care for her, walked free from court after being given a suspended prison sentence.

Found guilty of what was described as 'a truly despicable offence,' 47-year-old Linda Truman of Minehead admitted splashing the stolen money on a holiday to Center Parcs, McDonald's takeaways and keeping her family in the lifestyle to which they had become accustomed after they fell on hard times.

Taunton Crown Court heard that Truman, who previously lived at Blue Anchor, used her victim's bank card to withdraw cash from her account, and over the course of several years managed to acquire about £47,000 from the lady who later died unaware she had been the victim of fraud.

The court was told that Truman's 'despicable' crimes came to light when the victim's daughter was

granted power of attorney over her mother's financial affairs.

She discovered that her mother's 'frugal lifestyle' could not explain the disappearance of such a large sum of money from her account, and investigations by care provider Somerset Care eventually led to Truman.

In court, the judge, Recorder Philip Mott, was told Truman had a previous conviction for similar offences committed against another care patient.

She had been sentenced previously to a community order by the courts and was working with the probation service while she was continuing to steal from her new victim.

Yet despite all these aggravating features the judge said he could 'just about find evidence' to suspend the two-year custodial sentence he imposed, due to overriding mitigating personal circumstances.

Truman initially pleaded not guilty to allegations of fraud stretching over several years when she was caring for the elderly victim who lived in Dunster.

Prosecutor Ian Fenny said

Continued on page 7



SPLASHING THE CASH

Linda Truman, 47, spent money on a holiday to Center Parcs, McDonald's takeaways and keeping her family in the lifestyle to which they had become accustomed.

Spitfire pilot's mementoes sold at auction

MEMENTOES of a female Spitfire pilot who starred in some of Britain's best loved war films have gone under the hammer for a sky high £5,800.

Joan Hughes, who retired to Brushford on Exmoor, was a Flight Captain in the Women's RAF and delivered replacement Spitfires to air bases around the country during the Battle of Britain in 1940.

She went on to become a film stunt woman after the war and played Douglas Bader in some of the action sequences in Reach for the Sky. Audiences had no idea his Spitfire was being flown by a woman.

She also filmed all the dogfights in the First World War movie The Blue Max and flew in Those Magnificent Men In Their Flying Machines. She even stood in for Lady Penelope as a pilot in the

Continued on page 4

FREE PARKING IN MINEHEAD Somerset West and Taunton mineheadbid

All day in SWT Car Parks on the Saturdays leading up to Christmas and from Monday 21st to Thursday 24th December!

FOR DETAILS OF SHOPS & CAR PARK LOCATIONS VISIT... shopinminehead.co.uk

maitlandwalker Solicitors

LEGAL SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS & BUSINESSES

Lexcel

- Divorce and family law • Residential property
- Commercial property • Litigation and dispute resolution
- Wills, probate and estate planning • Employment
- Corporate & commercial • EU and competition law

17 The Crescent, Taunton, Somerset TA1 4EB • 01823 745 777
22 The Parks, Minehead, Somerset TA24 8BT • 01643 707 777
www.maitlandwalker.com