

SCOTLAND TODAY

5 years for driver with 'hitman kit'

A TAXI driver who had a "hitman's kit" in his car has been jailed for five years.

When police stopped James McKay, 52, they thought at first he was carrying drugs, the High Court in Glasgow heard.

But they then found a Russian-made pistol, silencer and bullets wrapped in a black bag inside his Ford Focus.

Alastair Carmichael, prosecuting, said: "The

pistol, ammunition and silencer suggests it may be a hitman's kit."

McKay, of 26 Glenhove Road, Cumbernauld, admitted three contraventions of the Firearms Act on the M74 motorway, Hamilton, on October 12, last year.

McKay told police he knew he was picking up something that wasn't right but thought it might be drugs not a gun.

Firm faces copyright claim

A JUDGE has refused to throw out a claim against a tyre and exhaust firm over allegations it infringes musical copyright because employees tune into radios at work.

At the Court of Session in Edinburgh, Lord Emslie ruled the action brought by the Performing Right Society against the Kwik-Fit group can go ahead. The organisation raised a claim against the firm seeking £200,000 damages for what it says is "playing" or "performance" of music in public.

Stephen in election call



SCOTTISH LibDem leader Nicola Sturgeon has challenged Prime Minister Gordon Brown to set a date for a General Election.

Speaking at their annual conference at the Royal Concert Hall in Glasgow, Mr Sturgeon said the LibDems were in a strong position to make gains if the PM next week announces a date for an election.

Bid to up broadband links

A NEW scheme that aims to boost broadband internet access has been launched by the Scottish Government.

Ministers are urging those who want the high speed internet connection, but cannot yet receive it, to come forward.

An open procurement process, worth up to £3.5million, has now begun to find providers to deliver the service.

Those with access problems are urged to contact the government by the end of this year, to enable connectivity work to begin early.

Arts centre's birthday bash

A GLASGOW arts charity has thrown open its doors to the public to mark its 30th birthday.

The Open Studios event at Wasps Artists Studios in Hanson Street today and tomorrow is showcasing the work of hundreds of visual artists, including Glasgow's Frank To.

The Dennistoun studios will be open from 10am to 5pm on both days.

Peace demo man for court

A PEACE activist faces prosecution after he was rescued from freezing waters near a submarine base.

Police plan to charge Andres Hedfors, from Gothenburg, Sweden. RAF rescuers pulled

Mr Hedfors, 29, from the water near the Trident nuclear naval base at Coulport on the Clyde after he got into difficulties.

He was one of four protesters who tried to swim into the facility.

WE'LL NEVER

How Malawi touched city men

A TEAM of Glasgow workers has returned from a mercy mission to Malawi.

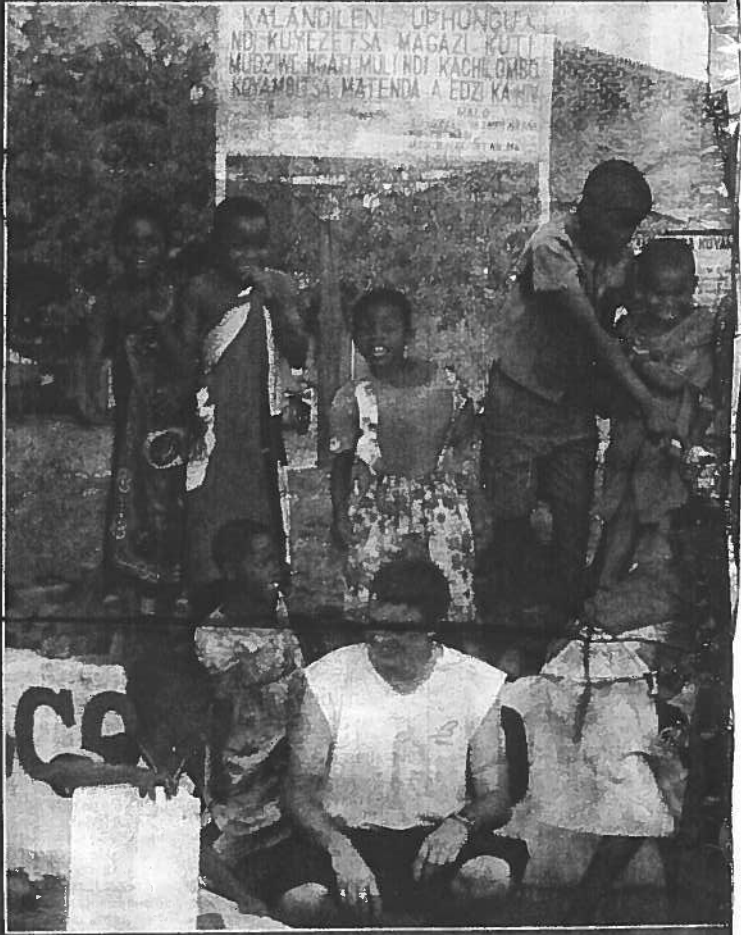
The nine joiners, electricians, plumbers and decorators from City Building put up an Aids testing clinic and helped build an extension at a hospital in Chikwawa, where patients face appalling conditions. Early detection of Aids

can save lives and is crucial in the poverty-stricken African country where 1.5million people have the disease.

There are only two doctors for every 100,000 residents and they battle for even basic drugs.

ALAN BURNS, 30, was the Chikwawa District Hospital project leader.

The metal worker, from Woodside, kept a diary during his trip which we publish today.



Despite the intense heat the group from City Building celebrated a construction job well

THE one business thriving in Malawi is the coffin-making business. There were at least four coffin makers on every street.

Our first impressions were those of abject poverty.

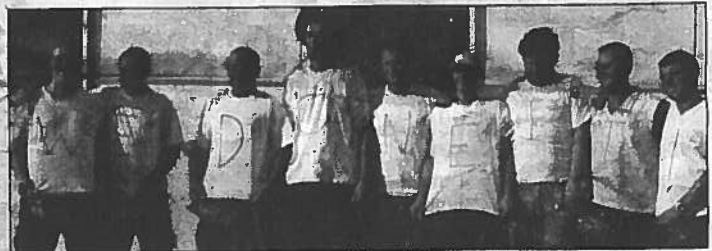
In the hospitals, people dying of Aids were lying everywhere, including the corridors.

They would be lying there for days, but the saddest thing was many had their kids beside them.

We felt as though we had arrived on another planet. We are all hard-working Glasgow guys but found it tough to take when we looked at the poverty these people lived in.

We attracted a lot of attention from the locals and every day we were surrounded by hordes of kids.

They were lovely people, well-mannered, polite and had a great use of the English language. There was a little girl who



The team celebrates completing their work on the clinic after 12 days in soaring temperatures

arrived with a baby strapped to her back. We later found out she was six, her father died a couple of months ago and her mother was lying just across the road from us also dying of Aids.

This beautiful little girl was responsible for her six-month-old sister. It was stories like this that we found upsetting.

We worked in unbelievable heat, 42C (108F) on several days.

We were running through gallons of water each day. We had a one-hour journey by coach to get to the site and it was a long day - we were on site for 8am and finished around five.

Everyone lost weight. After work we would go for a quick beer, then meet up for dinner. Then most of us just headed for bed because we were exhausted.

We were all struck down by

some kind of bug but only 12 days to complete the project, so it was just a case of head down and get on with it. Not one of us missed a day's work. We all pulled for each other.

Most of us had large blisters strips out with it. After a couple of days you would see the Rangers tops and the

You would think

FORGET THIS

Charity gig for suicidal counselling

BOY Kill Boy singer Peck is to play a special acoustic show in support of the Wasted Youth campaign next week.

He will play at Glasgow's T'Chal-O' Otago Lane on Friday.

Wasted Youth campaigns for awareness of suicide among young men in Britain, and donations will go towards a helpline for young people to discuss their problems.

The gig will be organised by organisers who will donate money.

Chris will perform ahead of the new single, No Cation, on October 2nd album, Stars Sea, in the new band play Glasgow Mor on November



DENIS BACK MEET WATER

Web juk gives ml lovers cl

MUSIC giant launch the online juk month, as sale the internet s

A subscri service wtl month, givln; access to ove songs in its ai

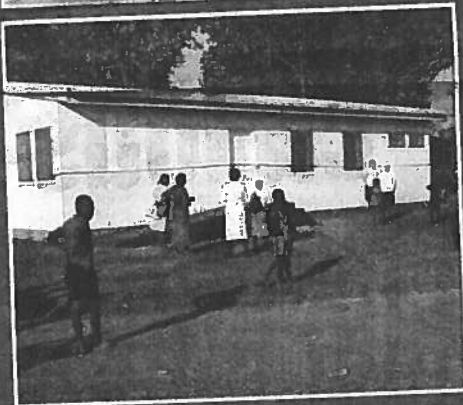
Customer the firm's w choose a sel songs to be their home c

Music bo: service will parties and gatherings.

The track downloaded puter or iPod

Gideon L merce direc said: "For 8 has operat spaces such the custom interact in o

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
CHIKWAWA DISTRICT HOSPITAL
P.O. BOX 32,
CHIKWAWA
TEL 01420266/289.



done during their time in Malawi and were amazed at how the awful poverty didn't affect the spirit of the locals for whom they built a life-saving HIV clinic

handed them a lottery win when you gave them a top.
Local trademen worked with us and on our last night we invited them to our hotel for a meal.
When they looked at the menu, they couldn't believe the prices. The starters were more than a day's pay to most of them.
The whole trip was a humbling experience for us all.
We'd taken cases of Tennent's

66 Most live in little more than mud houses but they gave us all a farewell gift pack

lager, Coca-Cola and Irn Bru. The kids loved the soft drinks - especially Irn Bru and the lads we worked with were quite partial to Tennent's.

When we asked them to come in earlier one morning, they said they would be happy to do it for four cans of lager. They got their lager, plus the overtime payment.

On Sundays the locals put on their best clothes and entire families would go to church. Oddly, the main churches were Church of Scotland and Catholic.

In the village, the court was just beside us and each morning we'd see the chain gang walking past us, all chained together at the ankles.

Many of the locals had trouble getting their heads round the fact we worked as hard as they did. Their perception was that white men did not work like this.

Our farewell was emotional. Hundreds of people turned out to wave us goodbye.

They don't have much. Most live in little more than mud houses yet they gave us all a farewell gift pack which included wooden carvings.

It was an experience none of us will forget. There is talk of building a youth centre next year and I think we'd all be interested in helping.

I feel we left a bit of Glasgow and Scotland behind us.



The team were moved by this girl who had been left looking after her baby sister