

Family dog 'helped solve murder'

A dog which helped detectives crack a major murder inquiry has been reunited with her family.

Sasha was a key weapon in the case against four men jailed for the brutal murder of former boxer Brian Keating.

Scientists were able to link dog hairs found on Mr Keating's body to others found in the van of one of the key suspects, Daniel McGowan.

Police tracked down McGowan's dog but found she actually belonged to a family from Leeds who lost her in July 2002.

Alan Paterson, 24, and his three young children Benjamin, seven, Jordan, four, and two-year-old Kelsie, were reunited with Sasha on Tuesday.

His eldest, Benjamin Hepworth, said: "I really want to play with her again."

He said the family had just bought the three-and-half year old bull mastiff a new dog bed and a big bone to welcome her home.

Sasha was known as Duchess until a trip to the vet uncovered an ID chip that revealed her true identity.

Detective Superintendent Chris Gregg, who led the inquiry, said: "These dog hairs were a vital piece of evidence.

"This case was mainly built on circumstantial evidence, but this gave us a key piece of forensic evidence.

"The Patterson family were amazed when their dog Sasha turned up in this way."

Mr Gregg said he did not know how McGowan came by the dog, which had escaped from the Patterson family's garden.

Mr Keating was beaten to death with a sledgehammer and a baseball bat by a gang which burst into his home in Pontefract, West Yorkshire, in October 2002.

On Monday, McGowan, 33, was jailed for life at Leeds Crown Court after he was found guilty of kidnap and murder.

Jetinder Singh Khosa, 29, Jaspal Singh Khosa, 26, and Rudolph Berkeley, 31, all from Leeds, were also jailed for life after being found guilty of the same offence.

A fifth man, Baldev Singh Khosa, 30, was jailed for eight years after admitting kidnap and assisting offenders.

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