

Raptor Persecution UK

‘Should I Marry a Murderer?’ New Netflix documentary provides sobering insight into brutal killing & burial of charity cyclist Tony Parsons by McKellar twins at Auch Estate, Glen Orchy

RaptorPersecutionUK
May 6, 2026
2009 persecution incidents, News
carbofuran, gamekeeper, golden eagle, poisoning

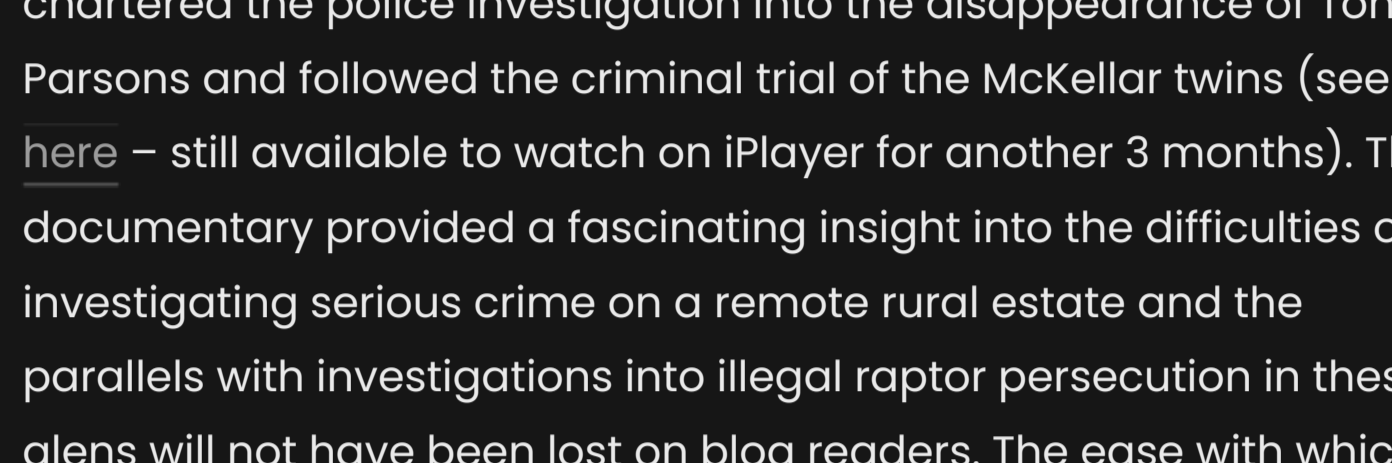
A new three-part documentary was released on Netflix last week as part of a new series called, ‘Should I Marry a Murderer?’

At first sight, this is perhaps not what you’d expect to read about on a blog about the illegal killing of birds of prey in the UK, but this programme was brought to my attention by a high number of visits, especially from the United States, over the last few days, and my blog stats were showing that visitors were looking at specific pages relating to the Auch Estate in Argyll.

Long-term blog readers will be familiar with the Auch Estate. It first featured here in relation to the illegal poisoning of a Golden Eagle, found by walkers on the estate in 2009. Auch Estate farm manager Tom McKellar was later convicted in 2012 for possession of the banned poison Carbofuran that had been found in three separate containers and in a syringe at his house (here). He also managed to swerve a mandatory five-year custodial sentence for illegal possession of two hand guns that were found in his loft during the police search for poisons; for unexplained reasons, he was instead given a 300 hour community service order (here).

Golden eagle found by walkers in Scottish Highlands was poisoned

Bird of prey had eaten insecticide, say police



© RSPB Scotland Head of Investigations Bob Elliot holding a dead golden eagle found in Glen Orchy, Argyll, northern Scotland. Photograph: RSPB/PA/PA

Police confirmed today that a golden eagle whose body was found by walkers in the Scottish Highlands had been poisoned.

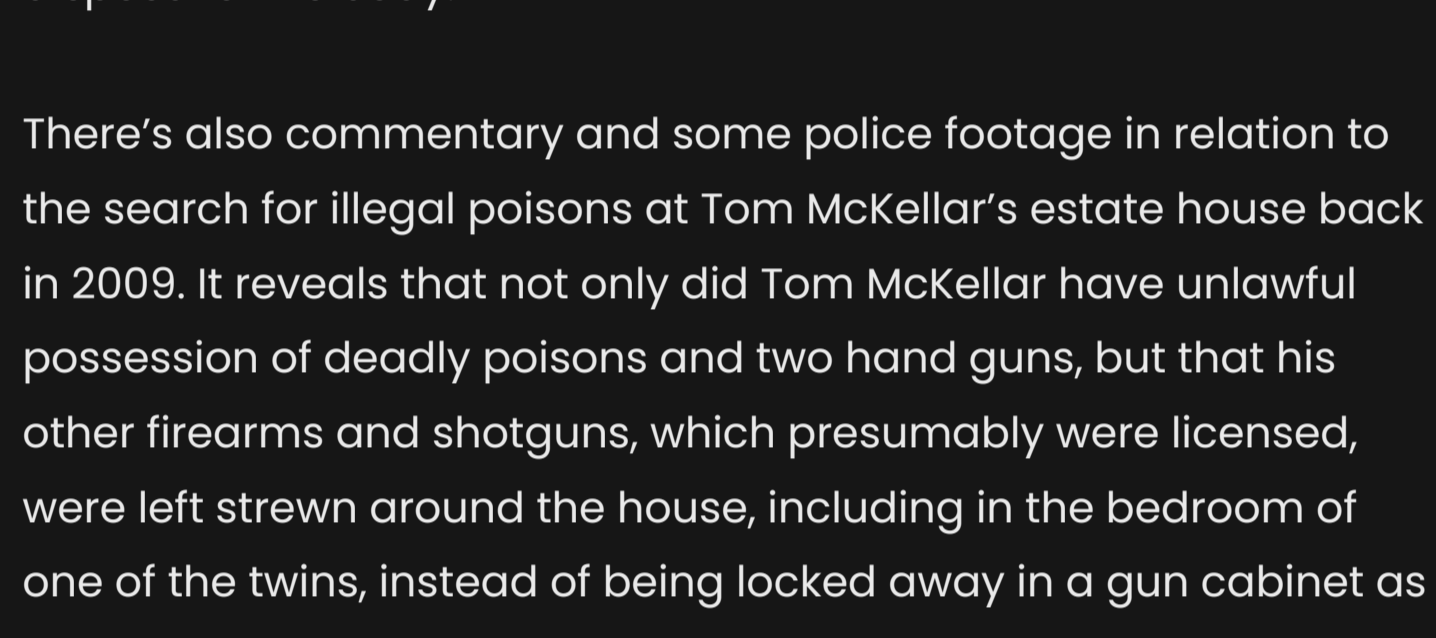
Scottish government scientists said the eagle, which was found in Glen Orchy, Argyll, died after eating insecticide, probably on poisoned bait.

Headline from The Guardian newspaper in 2009

Auch Estate was back in the news in 2023 after Tom McKellar’s twin sons, Alexander (Sandy) and Robert were convicted at the High Court in Glasgow for their roles in knocking down charity cyclist Tony Parsons and burying his body in a stink pit on the estate in 2017 (here).

A BBC documentary, aired two years later in August 2025, chartered the police investigation into the disappearance of Tony Parsons and followed the criminal trial of the McKellar twins (see here – still available to watch on iPlayer for another 3 months). The documentary provided a fascinating insight into the difficulties of investigating serious crime on a remote rural estate and the parallels with investigations into illegal raptor persecution in these glens will not have been lost on blog readers. The ease with which the McKellar twins could hide their appalling crimes for so long was sobering.

The latest documentary, ‘Should I Marry a Murderer’, currently available on Netflix, covers the case from the perspective of Dr Caroline Muirhead, who worked as a forensic pathologist in Glasgow and happened to be in a relationship with Sandy McKellar whom she’d met on a dating app. McKellar confessed his crime to Muirhead and it was her evidence, including surreptitiously leaving a can of Red Bull to mark the spot on the vast estate where Tony Parsons was buried, that secured the twins’ convictions.



Dr Caroline Muirhead with Alexander (Sandy) McKellar. Photo from Netflix

The documentary includes commentary from a former local police officer who knew the McKellar family well, and he speculates about how a life surrounded by guns and animal-killing may have desensitised the twins and influenced their callous attitude towards the death of Tony Parsons and the disposal of his body.

There’s also commentary and some police footage in relation to the search for illegal poisons at Tom McKellar’s estate house back in 2009. It reveals that not only did Tom McKellar have a lawful possession of deadly poisons and two hand guns, but that his other firearms and shotguns, which presumably were licensed, were left strewn around the house, including in the bedroom of one of the twins, instead of being locked away in a gun cabinet as the licence requires.

This Netflix documentary has already reached ten million views only a week after its release. It’s well worth watching.

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