



WED 4 JAN

**Quote of the day**

'Nothing is more conducive to peace of mind than not having any opinions at all.'

GEORG CHRISTOPH LICHTENBERG

**Birthdays**

Margaret Marshall, soprano, 63; Rick Stein, chef and broadcaster, 65; Michael Stipe, singer and songwriter, 52; Bernard Sumner, guitarist, singer and songwriter, 56

**Anniversaries**

**Saturday 4 January 1958**  
Sir Edmund Hillary and his team arrived at the South Pole, the first overland party to reach the pole since Scott's 1912 expedition

**Television**



PAGES 28-29

**Weather**



PAGE 44

**Games**



PAGE 55

**The News Matrix**

The day at a glance



**Which music king wants to be the voice for his people?**

And what position is he standing for?

SEE PAGE 22

**UNITED STATES**

**Republicans kick off presidential contest**

Iowa Republicans were last night preparing to cast the first votes of the 2012 presidential contest tonight marking their choice for a candidate to challenge President Barack Obama in November. The last polls show the race in the state had become a three-man contest among the front-runner Mitt Romney, Ron Paul and Rick Santorum. **PAGE 26**

**HOMES**

**One million turn to loan sharks for help**

Almost one million Britons have taken out unsuitable payday loans with legal loan sharks to cover rent or mortgage payments in the past year. Around seven million people overall have turned to high-interest credit to keep a roof over their heads, research published today reveals. **PAGE 19**

**GERMANY**

**Second paper claims Wulff issued threat**

A second German newspaper yesterday alleged that the country's president, Christian Wulff, complained to its editor about plans to report on a private loan he received and threatened legal action, raising further questions over his judgment. *Die Welt* ran the report anyway.

**SYRIA**

**Arab League may pull out monitors**

The Arab League called an emergency meeting to discuss whether to withdraw its monitors from Syria, after opposition groups criticised comments by observers saying that the situation in the country was reasonable. The meeting will take place in Cairo on Saturday. **PAGE 25**

**COURTS**

**Woman jailed for killing fiancé in fire**

A woman who murdered her fiancé by locking him in a storeroom and setting it alight has been jailed a minimum of 23 years. Julie Dixon, 43, had claimed she and David Twigg were attacked by intruders, but changed her story at Lincoln Crown Court to claim it was an assisted suicide. **PAGE 23**

**ITALY**

**MPs face austerity battle to keep pay**

Italian MPs are among the best paid in Europe with a basic salary of €11,283 (£9,411) a month, according to a report published yesterday. The report was released as Italy faces austerity measures including tax hikes and pension cuts to try to rein in its bloated public debt. **PAGE 18**



**CO DURHAM SHOOTING**

**Police took guns - then gave them back**

The man who shot dead three women on New Year's Day had his guns confiscated by police in 2008 when he threatened to shoot himself, but they were handed back after he was assessed fit to possess them. **PAGE 10**

**LAW**

**Experts look in to drug-drive offence**

Ministers are to be advised on introducing a new offence of drug-driving by an expert panel. The team will consider whether it is scientifically possible to introduce maximum permitted levels for different drugs, or whether any detectable drug should constitute an offence.

**MAGAZINES**

**Hold the front page**

Louise Mensch has decried the fact female politicians are judged by their appearance, while posing for a shoot in GQ. She isn't the first high-profile figure to cause a stir by posing in a magazine.



**Sally Bercow**

The shy and retiring wife of the Speaker of the Commons posed in last February's ES Magazine with just a bedsheet to protect her modesty. A Big Brother appearance - and a red face for the Speaker - followed.



**Muhammad Ali**

A 1968 Esquire cover showed a rendering of Muhammad Ali as Saint Sebastian, with arrows piercing his body. It symbolised how the boxer was pilloried for his conscientious objection to the Vietnam War.



**Demi Moore**

The August 1991 issue of Vanity Fair showed a naked Demi Moore cradling her baby bump on the cover. The Annie Leibovitz shot has become a template for nude photography but raised eyebrows when it was published.



**Princess Diana**

One of Newsweek's less inspired editorial decisions last year saw the magazine imagine "Diana at 50", if she hadn't died in 1997. Remarkably, it seems she'd look well dressed and a little older.



**OJ Simpson**

When the former football player was accused of murdering his wife in 1994, Time Magazine used his mugshot on the cover, but darkened the image for a more sinister look.



**Kate Winslet**

Famously curvaceous Kate Winslet was given a heavy handed airbrush by GQ in 2003, making her legs appear thinner. "I have no intention of looking like that," she said on seeing the pictures.

**CRIME**

**Owner of killer dog avoids jail**

A former British paratrooper whose "lovable" dog mauled a woman to death has been spared a jail sentence. Alex Blackburn-Smith, from south London, confined the Neapolitan mastiff - the same breed as Fang in the *Harry Potter* film series - to a cage 6in shorter than the dog itself.

**YOUTUBE**

**'Tram rant' woman is sent for trial**

The woman filmed shouting alleged racist abuse at passengers on a tram will face trial at Crown Court next month. Emma West appeared before magistrates in Croydon yesterday charged with two racially aggravated public order offences. **PAGE 20**

**AFGHANISTAN**

**Two Britons held for possessing AK47s**

Two UK nationals were arrested in Afghanistan yesterday for the possession of 30 AK47 rifles, the Foreign Office has said. The pair, held in Kabul, are believed to be private security contractors who did not have the necessary paperwork.

