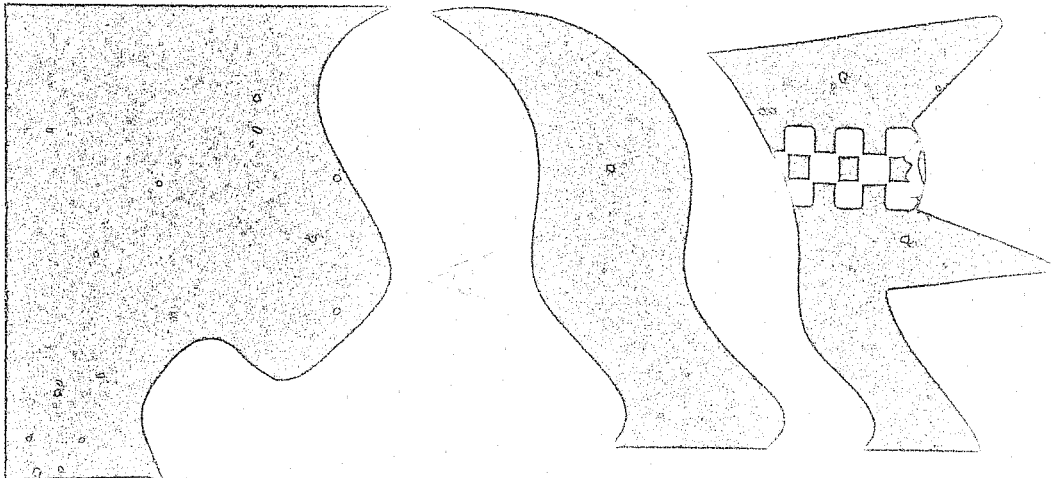


Vol. 40, No. 2, 1986

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Neighbourhood Itch

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Our Cover: COMMUNITY CARING



Neighbourhood
watch.

The 'Neighbourhood Watch' logo which was
designed by a community group in Victoria and
which has been adopted throughout Australia.
The theme being 'Community Caring' working
together to prevent crime.

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community relations



Some Recent Developments in Community Policing — Part I

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Introduction

There have been several important developments in community policing programs and activities in New South Wales and Queensland, as well as in other Australian States and Territories, in recent years. This has involved a larger allocation of resources than formerly by Police Departments for such programs and activities, with a view to involving members of the general community in assisting the police in the prevention and detection of crime.

New initiatives in the community policing field include the establishment of the Police Community Relations Branch and its activities in Queensland. The restructuring of the police public relations and community relations area in Western Australia through the recently designated Community Affairs Branch, following upon the earlier Public Relations Branch, in the Western Australia Police Department, should also be noted.

The above Branches in turn have promoted significant new pro-active policing programs and activities, including the introduction of Neighborhood Watch schemes, Safety House programs for children, Blue Light Discos and many other activities, some of which are mentioned herein. These programs and activities are being promoted and developed with the active participation and assistance of Police Community Liaison Officers in Districts, through New South Wales and Queensland. The last-mentioned scheme, whose members in New South Wales are called District Community Relations Officers, constitutes a very significant step in police involvement with local communities in Australia.

This article has been written so as to deal with certain developments in the community policing field, in particular in New South Wales and Queensland. However, it also

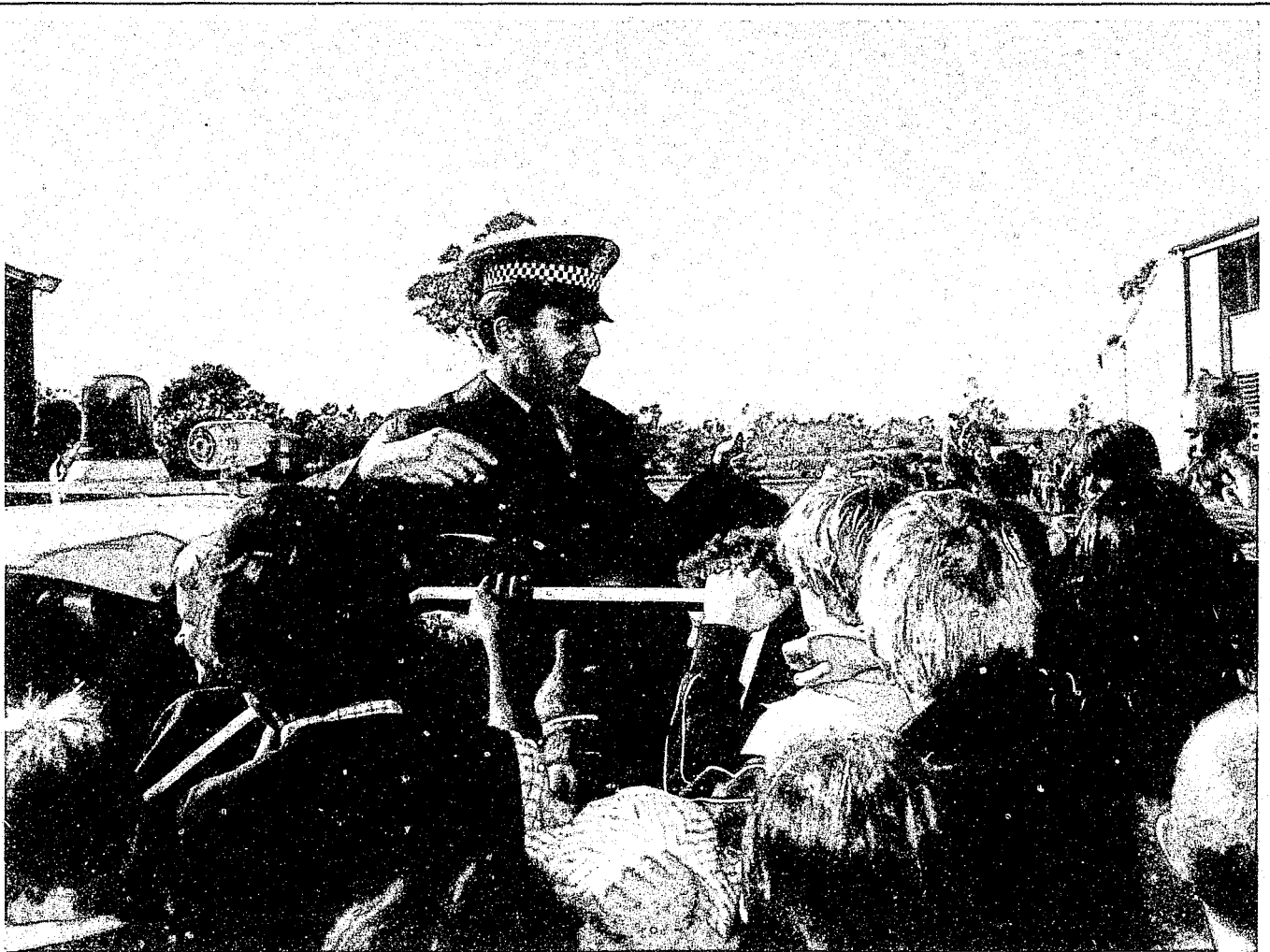
contains some references to developments in Victoria, Western Australia and the Australian Capital Territory, with respect to Neighborhood Watch. Mention is also made of some similar programs and activities introduced and developed even earlier in some other countries. Thus many of the pro-active policing measures and programs recently introduced in Australia have been inspired by similar activities, which have been in operation for several years overseas, as in the United States, the United Kingdom and in New Zealand.

Police Community Liaison Officers

A network of District Community Relations Officers has been developed in both New South Wales and Queensland within the last two years. These officers, called District Community Liaison Officers in Queensland and District Community



The writer, Andrew Hiller, addressing the Queensland Police District Community Liaison Officer's Course — Oxley, 1985.



Constable Mike Volk of Fortitude Valley Police Station has been officially adopted by the children of the Northgate State Primary School.

forthcoming events

D.A.L. Open Day

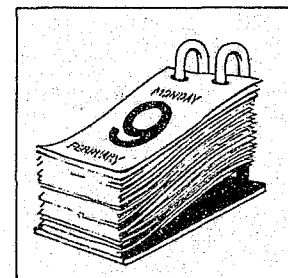
Thursday, 25 September, 1986

The New South Wales Division of Analytical Laboratories (DAL) provides essential scientific services to the State's police, coronial, consumer-protection and public health systems. These services include chemical, microbiological and physical tests on food, water, drugs, scene-of-crime exhibits, blood and other body fluids and organs.

The Open Day aims to provide our peers and client groups with an insight into the workings of the Division. This Open Day is by invitation only; interested persons should contact one of the following officers:

Ms. K. Meleady (02) 646 0293
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Department of Health
Division of Analytical Laboratories
Joseph Street, Lidcombe
Telegrams: "Govanalyst", Sydney
Postal Address:
P.O. Box 162
LIDCOMBE, N.S.W. 2141
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Extension: 410



Relations Officers in New South Wales, now serve in all Police Districts in those States. They range in rank from Constable to Sergeant. They are responsible to their District Superintendents for implementing and developing community relations programmes appropriate to the needs of their particular District.

Community Liaison Officers and Community Relations Officers in Districts are tasked to establish, develop and maintain contacts with local communities through service clubs and organisations, ethnic or minority groups, schools, colleges and youth clubs, parents' and citizens' associations, sporting, social and other recreational bodies, senior citizens' associations and other community groups and services.

Thus they help to set up and publicise Safety Houses for children, in the vicinity of schools, to protect children against molestation, encourage schools in their District to 'adopt a cop' and promote Blue Light Discos where young people can enjoy themselves in supervised surroundings free of drugs and other like undesirable influences. They promote crime prevention and road safety campaigns and address schools, service clubs, nurses' groups, scouts, guides and other youth groups and citizens' associations on topics ranging from home security to 'bike safety'. They arrange or help to co-ordinate police displays and publicity for same on major public occasions. District Community Relations Officers in New South Wales have also become involved with setting up Neighborhood Watch programs and acting as District Co-ordinators for these programs. This may also become one of their roles in Queensland in the not too distant future, following the announcement of a pilot Neighborhood Watch Scheme to commence on the Gold Coast in 1986.

Community Liaison Officers and Community Relations Officers also liaise with local police, including operational units and station personnel and foster and promote an interest on the part of local police in the value of links with community groups and organisations, with educational institutions, youth clubs

and other community associations and services. They assist senior officers in their District and provide them with information as to community groups and services, crime prevention and other police-community related projects, on community problems which could be relevant to the incidence of crime and with other information which could be useful to their senior officers. They also promote good relations with the media and use the media, such as local newspapers and radio stations, to publicise their activities.

Though the District Community Relations Officers are responsible to their District Superintendent, they also report to their central office at State Police Headquarters, being the Police Community Relations Bureau in New South Wales and the Police Public Relations Branch in Queensland. In New South Wales, a Sergeant I/C at the Community Relations Bureau acts as State Co-ordinator for the various District Community Relations Officers.

It has to be noted that District Community Liaison Officers in Queensland, unlike their counterparts in New South Wales, are appointed as such in a part-time capacity. It is up to their respective District Superintendents to determine how much of their shift times they may spend on community liaison tasks, as distinct from other tasks which may be assigned to them. I understand that in some Districts already, the duties assigned to Community Liaison Officers are wholly or in large part related to their Community Relations functions. It is hoped that they will all soon be able to demonstrate the importance and operational relevance of their community liaison duties to their senior officers to such an extent as will cause their appointments to become full-time in their community policing roles.

The new schemes for District Community Relations Officers in New South Wales and for District Community Liaison Officers in Queensland have already been officially acknowledged as successful. The 1985 Queensland Police Department Annual Report states that the scheme has led to improved police-community relationships in most areas of

Queensland.¹ Likewise, the 1984-85 Annual Report of the New South Wales Police Department declares that there is already clear evidence that the service provided by these officers is what is wanted by the community.² In fact, early in 1986 it was announced that additional District Community Relations Officers would be appointed in the metropolitan police districts of New South Wales and these officers would have particular responsibility for assisting victims of crime.³

A significant set of activities organised by the Queensland Police Public Relations Branch for the various District Community Liaison Officers in 1985 were special Liaison Officers' Courses held for them, in two groups, at the Queensland Police Academy.⁴ These courses provided further expertise by way of instruction and dissemination of information and materials to the various Community Liaison Officers. They also enabled the Community Liaison Officers, including those from Country Districts, to meet and exchange their experiences and ideas with each other and with the senior members of the Public Relations Branch.

In New Zealand, Community Liaison Officers, subsequently called Community Constables, have operated at a local level since 1973. By 1985, there were over forty Community Constables, liaising with their respective communities and with community leaders, schools, clergy, local authorities, youth and sporting clubs and other appropriate bodies and persons, throughout New Zealand. Their activities come within the umbrella of the Public Affairs Directorate, headed by a Superintendent at Police National Headquarters in Wellington. The Directorate controls and co-ordinates Community Liaison, Crime Prevention and Youth Aid, as well as

REFERENCES

1. P.56.
2. P.33.
3. See "The Sydney Morning Herald", 22 January 1986, p. 3.
4. See Queensland Police Department Annual Report 1985, P. 56.
5. See Report of the New Zealand Police for the year ended 31 March 1985, pp. 15-16 and New Zealand Police Public Affairs Directorate Papers. See also Superintendent J. Morgan, Paper presented to Seminar on Community Policing, Australian Institute of Criminology, 1984, n. 12 infra, at p. 38.



Queensland Police Department Community Liaison Officer's Course 1985.

the Law Related Education Program⁶.

A Chief Inspector in the Public Affairs Directorate at Police National Headquarters acts as national Community Relations Co-ordinator. There are also full-time Community Relations Co-ordinators, including Inspectors and Sergeants, in five Police Districts, while other Police Districts are served by part-time Community Relations Co-ordinators. The functions of Community Relations Co-ordinators include obtaining support for police from all sectors of society. This involves advising the public of problems facing the police, countering anti-police propaganda, helping to eradicate prejudices and reminding the public of the joint, police-public, nature of responsibility for law enforcement. The functions of the Co-ordinators also include encouraging the acceptance of external aims by members of the police force.

Thus the Community Relations Co-ordinators give addresses on suitable subjects and promote open

days and displays in order to widen public understanding of the police and public acceptance of police aims. Their duties also include stressing the need for humane and impartial policing within the police service and the necessity to avoid unnecessary alarm or inconvenience to citizens. Their duties further include stimulating recruiting within ethnic groups, ensuring that crime prevention is built into community planning, assisting the Media Liaison Officer in countering ill founded criticism and co-operating with specialist police sections in order to co-ordinate their efforts.

It may be noted that Police Community Liaison Officers have operated in United Kingdom Police Forces for many years. Thus the London Metropolitan Police, in particular, have posted Community Liaison Officers at Divisions, at the senior levels of Chief Inspector and Superintendent for over thirteen years⁶. Many other Police Forces in the United Kingdom, smaller in numbers than the Metropolitan

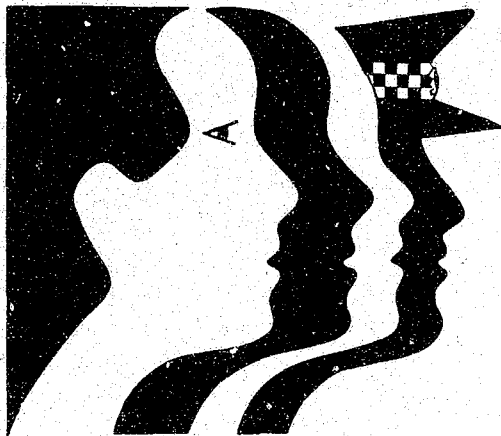
Force, also use community Liaison Officers at Divisional level, often at the rank of Inspector, or Chief Inspector, and sometimes at the rank of Sergeant or Constable⁷.

In addition to the system of Community Liaison Officers at Divisions as abovementioned, Home Beat Officers have operated at grass roots level, meeting and getting to know local people and local feelings. The important role of Home Beat Officers was emphasised by Lord Scarman in his Report on the Brixton Disorders of April, 1981⁸.

Neighborhood Watch

Neighborhood Watch has been described as a prime example of police-community involvement in action.⁹ The concept is that of a

6. See Reports of the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis 1973-1984.
7. See S.V. Phillips and R. Cochrane, *The Role, Functions and Training of Police Community Liaison Officers*, Final Report (University of Birmingham) 1985.
8. See Lord Scarman, *Report Of An Inquiry, The Brixton Disorders 10-12 April 1981*, pp. 69-90 (Cmd. 8427) 1981.
9. Inspector D. Smith, Paper presented to Seminar on Community Policing, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, 1984, A.I.C. Seminar Proceedings No. 4, p. 53, at p. 71.



Neighbourhood watch



COMMUNITY CARING



CRIME PREVENTION

HOME SECURITY

Carelessness accounts for nearly 20 per cent of all house robberies in New South Wales.

In some cases thieves had only to turn a key left in the lock. Others had only to look under the doormat or another of those favourite "hiding places" to find the key.

REMEMBER, A LOCK IS NOT A LOCK UNLESS YOU USE IT.

The object of securing your home properly is to deter thieves. A determined thief may still get in, but by taking a few relatively simple precautions you can greatly slow the thief down and thus increase his chances of being caught.

Household burglaries involve three factors: The Victim, The (Criminal) Desire, and The Opportunity. The first two are constant. Neighbourhood Watch seeks to reduce the opportunity.

Being insured is not enough!

No insurance policy can replace personal items such as family photographs.

If you take the precautions outlined in this brochure, a would-be thief will quickly see what he is up against and probably look for an easier target. Be aware of the need to protect your home and yourself at all times.

- Break-ins do occur when people are at home — asleep, watching television, etc.
- Assaults do occur in the home.

MAKING YOUR HOME SECURE — Have You considered these areas?

- Good quality deadlocks on all perimeter doors and key-operated locks on sliding doors.
- Key-operated locks on all windows — more vulnerable windows can be fitted with steel security grilles.
- Good quality interior security grilles on skylights.
- Garage and other exterior buildings (workshops, garden shed, etc.) secured with padlocks.

- Exterior lighting — an effective deterrent.
- An intruder alarm system.
- A torch and drill-resistant floor safe (set in concrete).
- Time switches to turn on/off lights, radio, etc. while you are absent from the home.

SOME SIMPLE PRECAUTIONS

1. Display your house number clearly to enable emergency vehicles to find your house easily.
2. Lock away tools, ladders and other implements which a thief could use to break into your home.
3. Never leave notes which a thief could read (to the milkman, family, friends, etc.)
4. Don't leave keys in "hiding places" around the house for a thief to find.
5. Keep valuable documents in a bank, with a solicitor, etc.
6. Don't leave your house keys with your car keys when having your vehicle serviced or when using a parking station.

WHEN GOING AWAY

1. Don't close blinds, curtains, etc., that are normally left open; make the house look "lived in".
2. Arrange for a neighbour to change the curtains around and generally give the house a "lived in" appearance.
3. Cancel milk, bread and newspaper deliveries.
4. Stop your mail at the local Post Office and arrange for a neighbour to clear your letterbox of any other material daily.
5. Turn the telephone down so it can't be heard from the street.
6. Arrange for a neighbour to park their car in your driveway occasionally.
7. Arrange for a neighbour to mow your lawn if you are going to be absent for any length of time.
8. Let your local police know you will be absent, and who has the key.
9. Let a responsible person know where you are going and how to contact you in case of an emergency.

MOTOR VEHICLES

1. Never leave your keys in the vehicle, motor cycle, etc., even in your own garage.
2. Never leave your registration papers or driver's licence in the vehicle.
3. Never leave valuables in view.
4. Avoid parking in quiet or secluded areas.
5. Install a good quality alarm system.

REMEMBER, HE WHO DOES NOTHING TO PREVENT CRIME ENCOURAGES IT!

PERSONAL SAFETY

Neighbourhood Watch is not only about protecting our homes and belongings. It involves personal safety and the safety of our loved ones. A large percentage of sexual assaults and personal assaults occur within the victim's home or very close to it.

There are some very important DO's and DON'Ts which, together with the community spirit which comes from Neighbourhood Watch, can help you:

- Never admit you are alone in the house — either to a caller at the door or to someone on the telephone.
- Never allow a stranger to enter your home — check their identification or telephone the organisation they claim to represent. If they are who they say they are, they won't mind.
- Never wait at bus stops or on railway stations at night any longer than you have to — know the timetables.
- Never take short-cuts at night through parks or vacant lots.
- Never place an advertisement in the newspaper which requires people to call at your home, unless you have someone with you.

- Never walk close to doorways if you are forced to use a poorly lit street.
- If you are forced to wait for public transport at night, stay as close as possible to a well lit area (shop front, etc.), or where there are other people (railway staff office).
- Fit good quality locks to your house (front and back) and have either a security door or peep hole fitted — USE THEM.
- Have perimeter lighting installed so the whole area outside your house can be illuminated if you think there is a prowler about.
- Always carry your handbag clutched in front of you — don't let it dangle from your shoulder or hand.
- If you are walking and a car is following you, go to the nearest place where people are likely to be (a neighbour's house, a shop, etc.), taking care to get a description of the vehicle — notify police immediately.
- If you are driving and a vehicle is following you or acting strangely, go straight to the nearest Police Station, taking care to get the registration number and a description of the vehicle.

KNOW THE ADDRESS OF YOUR LOCAL POLICE STATION AND BE FAMILIAR AS TO HOW TO GET THERE.

SELF PROTECTION

First and foremost — Don't panic.
Your best protection is noise.
If you can't escape, scream as loudly as you can.
Yell "FIRE", rather than "HELP", as people seem to react more readily.
Avoid violence if possible — most women escape by talking their way out of trouble.
Think about carrying personal security devices, such as a shrill alarm.
Remember, there are always items in a women's handbag which can be used as weapons to defend yourself, such as a nail file, bunch of keys, etc.

OPERATION IDENTIFICATION

Break and enter offences account for one third of all major crime in New South Wales, yet only a small percentage of stolen valuables are returned to their rightful owners.

The problem is that few people can supply Police with positive identification of the stolen items.

It is important that you make a record of all your property and keep the list in a safe place.

Write down the make, model number and serial number if it has one, and engrave the model and serial number in a visible position on that property.

As a further precaution, and a more secure one, engrave your driver's licence number, prefaced by "NSW", on the property (preferably in a visible position).

Photograph small valuables, such as jewellery, stamps, coins, paintings, etc., and write details on the back of the photographs. Keep these photographs in a safe place.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN OPERATION IDENTIFICATION

Contact your Neighbourhood Watch Group or Area Co-ordinator as most areas have their own etching pens.

If your Area does not have a suitable electric etching pen available, or you are not in a Neighbourhood Watch Area you can purchase one, alone or together with your neighbours, from any reputable hardware store.

OPERATION IDENTIFICATION STICKER

When you have marked your property obtain Operation Identification Sticker. This should be displayed prominently in a front window or door, to serve as a warning to would-be thieves that all valuables in your home are permanently marked for ready identification by Police. Stickers are available from Neighbourhood Watch groups or by phoning 332-4333.

CRIME REPORTING

CRIME: WHAT TO LOOK FOR AND HOW TO REPORT IT

What to do . . .

- If you see someone breaking into a neighbour's home, or an unauthorised person in your neighbour's home, call the Police Emergency number 000 immediately. Do not hesitate to call 000 if you see any serious crime being committed.
- If you see a suspicious vehicle in your neighbour's driveway, or parked outside their house, telephone to see if they are home and check if they are just having visitors or something delivered.
Make a note of the registration number and description of the vehicle if unsure of its bona fides and, if necessary, telephone your local police.
Remember, criminals often use commercial vehicles to cloak their real activities.
- If you have reason to believe that your home has been entered illegally during your absence, **DON'T ENTER — THE THIEF MIGHT STILL BE THERE.**
Use a neighbour's telephone to call police immediately. Keep watch on the house until police arrive.
- If you hear a neighbour's burglar alarm sounding, telephone them to see if it is a false alarm.
If no-one is at home, the chances are someone has attempted to break in, so call police immediately. Similarly, if your neighbour's house is open and you know they are absent, call your local police.
- If a stranger comes to your door, check their credentials, even if it means telephoning the organisation they claim to be representing. If they are genuine, they won't mind waiting.

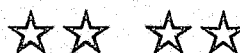
NEVER LET A STRANGER INTO YOUR HOME unless you are certain of who they are. If you are suspicious, call your local police.

Be on the alert for any suspicious happenings — a barking dog could mean that a prowler is about.

WRITE IT DOWN

Suspicious Vehicles	Suspicious Persons
Registration number	Sex
Make and model	Age
Colour	Hair colour/style
Peculiarities (e.g., dents, rust, accessories such as roof racks, etc.)	Height
	Build
	Peculiarities (e.g., beard, moustache, tattoos, etc.)

Remember, a patrolling police officer may not recognise a stranger in your neighbourhood, or a vehicle that shouldn't be there, but you and your neighbours will. Become the eyes and ears of the police, join the Neighbourhood Watch Program.



JOIN AN ESTABLISHED NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH GROUP NOW, OR FORM YOUR OWN GROUP.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT THE POLICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS BUREAU.

community based crime prevention program, through neighbors acting together in an endeavour to protect property and themselves from criminal activity. It involves an awareness on the part of local communities that crime is not just a matter to be left to the police. It is up to everyone to aid the police in their task.

The New South Wales Police Neighborhood Watch Manual states that Neighborhood Watch is aimed at minimising the incidence of preventable crime in a defined area, by people observing and reporting crime. It points out that traditional methods of policing to date have proved inadequate in halting the spiralling crime rate.¹⁰

Neighborhood Watch schemes have been established for over twelve years in the United States, where substantial reductions in residential burglary were reported in several cities, including Detroit, Seattle and St. Louis, where such community involvement programs have operated.¹¹ Subsequently, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and, in more recent years, the United Kingdom have also established Neighborhood Watch schemes.¹² Now, within the last few years, Neighborhood Watch has also been introduced by various Australian State and Territory Police Departments and it appears to be spreading rapidly, following public demand for the scheme.

In 1983, the Victorian Police Department introduced a pilot Neighborhood Watch scheme in the Kananook area of the Westernport Police District. This scheme was developed in a manner which involved substantial contributions by a committee of local residents formed following a public meeting in the area. The committee assisted with logo design, funding and the dissemination of information. The following year, Neighborhood Watch was introduced on a selective basis throughout metropolitan Police Districts. Operational police, up to some two thousand in numbers, were briefed about the Neighborhood Watch program before it was officially introduced. The public launching took place in March, 1984. By June, 1985, one hundred and twenty Neighborhood Watch

programs had been established in Victoria, including some in country areas.¹³

A central project team based at Victoria Police Headquarters has co-ordinated the program throughout the State. The team is commanded by an Inspector, who, together with a Sergeant and a Senior Constable, have a part-time commitment to the program. However, two other team members, a Sergeant and a Senior Constable serve the program on a full-time basis.¹⁴

In New South Wales, a pilot Neighborhood Watch program was officially introduced in the Campsie area, in 13 Division, on 5 December 1984. A public meeting held that day at the Orion Centre, Campsie attracted over three hundred people and extensive media coverage, including television, radio and local and metropolitan newspapers. Over twenty people volunteered to act as group co-ordinators for the pilot area. The meeting was chaired by the local District Community Relations Officer.¹⁵ Subsequently, in March, 1985, Neighborhood Watch was introduced in New South Wales on a general basis, in both metropolitan and country Districts.¹⁶ New Neighborhood Watch areas are being continually established, following increasing demands from residents. A Sergeant and a civilian member of the Police Community Relations Bureau act as State Co-ordinators of Neighborhood Watch.

The 1984-85 Annual Report of the New South Wales Police Department states that seventy nine Neighborhood Watch areas covering over sixty three thousand homes were within the scheme, with plans for one hundred areas to come within the scheme before the end of July.¹⁷ The overwhelming public response to the introduction of Neighborhood Watch is mentioned in the Report.¹⁸

The Commercial Union Insurance Limited, as well as the N.R.M.A. Insurance Limited, have given aid as sponsors of Neighborhood Watch programs in New South Wales. In Victoria, sponsorship support to Neighborhood Watch has been provided by the Commercial Union Insurance Limited.

Neighborhood Watch was also introduced by the Australian Federal

Police in Canberra, in 1984. Financial support was provided by the National Roads and Motorists Association (N.R.M.A.). By 30th June, 1985, it was reported that the scheme was operating in sixteen suburbs, with plans for more suburbs to join in the near future.¹⁹ It was also reported that early statistics indicated an outstanding success in reducing household breakings and theft, since the introduction of Neighborhood Watch in the Australian Capital Territory Region.²⁰

In Western Australia, Neighborhood Watch has also been operating for some years, as at Geraldton by 1984, in the Kalgoorlie-Boulder areas by 1985 and elsewhere in the State. New Neighborhood Watch schemes have been introduced with the assistance of the Crime Prevention Bureau in the Community Affairs Branch of the Western Australia Police Department. The Royal Automobile Club Insurance Pty. Ltd. has assisted with sponsorship, in conjunction with other organisations.²¹ The Commissioner of Police (Mr Bull) has pointed out that both Neighborhood Watch and Safety House programs, which operate in Western Australia, rely heavily on community involvement.²²

In New Zealand, Neighborhood Watch programs have been in operation since 1980, with substantial support from police, co-ordinated by the Public Affairs

10. 1985, p. 3.

11. E.g. see Washington D.C. Metropolitan Police Department PACT Program; D. Smith, *supra* at p. 75; I. Waller, Paper presented at National Conference on Burglary, Australian Institute of Criminology, Brisbane, 1985, pp. 5-7; D.H. Bayley, Paper presented to Seminar on Community Policing, n. 9, *supra* at pp. 20-28.

12. E.g. see Superintendent J. Morgan, Paper presented to Seminar on Community Policing, n. 10 *supra*, at pp. 40-44; D.H. Bayley, n. 10 *supra*; London Metropolitan Police, Review of Neighborhood Watch, n. 25 *infra*; D. Smith, n. 10 *supra*; Sergeant C.K. Coster, Paper presented at National Conference on Burglary, n. 10 *supra*; I. Waller, n. 10 *supra*; L. J. F. Smith, Home Office Crime Prevention Unit, Neighborhood Watch, a note on implementation (1984).

13. See C.K. Coster, n. 12 *supra*, at pp. 3-6; D. Smith, n. 9, *supra*, at pp. 68, 71, 72.

14. See C. K. Coster, *supra*, at p. 4.

15. See "Nemesis", Jan. 1985, p. 1.

16. See Report of the N.S.W. Police Department, 1984-85, pp. 36-37.

17. *Supra*.

18. *Supra*.

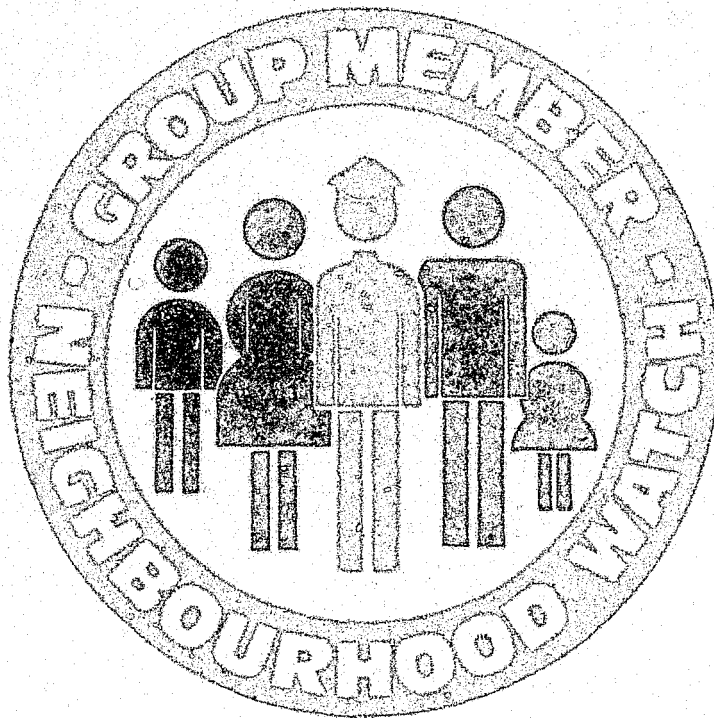
19. See Australian Federal Police Annual Report 1984-85, pp. 55-57.

20. *Supra*.

21. See Annual Report of the Commissioner of Police Western Australia for the year ended June 30, 1984 pp. 16-17 and see "Newsbeat" (Western Australia Police Official Newsletter), 2/85, p. 13.

22. See "Newsbeat" 2/85, *supra*.

23. See J. Morgan, n. 12, *supra*, and New Zealand Police Department, Community Initiated Crime Prevention Programme Seminar Report, (1984).



The New Zealand Police Neighbourhood Watch logo.

Directorate of the New Zealand Police Department.²³ Assistance has also been provided by private sponsors, ranging from the State Insurance Office to locksmiths and other suppliers of home security devices. Further, within the last few years, Neighborhood Support Groups have been formed by residents in parts of Auckland and in various other areas in New Zealand, with police assistance. These Neighborhood Support Groups appear to have been designed to protect residents against personal violence in particular, as well as against property related offences.²⁴

Neighborhood Watch comprises four principal elements. They include Operation Identification, Crime Reporting, Home Security and Personal Safety.

Operation Identification involves encouraging all residents in a Neighborhood Watch Area to mark valuable items of household property, such as television sets or stereo equipment, preferably in a visible position, with an engraving instrument. Smaller valuables such as jewellery, stamps, coins or paintings can be photographed and the particulars recorded on the back of the photographs. The objects are to deter thieves, whilst making the articles more easily traceable. Engraving instruments are available

from Neighborhood Watch Areas or Groups, or from 24 hour Police Stations.

Operation Identification stickers are issued to householders participating in the scheme. When the items of household property have been marked, the householder prominently displays his stickers on the front gate, door or window, as a warning to potential thieves. Operation Identification stickers are made available to the householders by the Neighborhood Watch Area, or from the local 24 hour Police Station. The display of these stickers throughout Neighborhood Watch Areas constitutes an important element of Neighborhood Watch programs.

Crime Reporting means reporting crime in an effective manner. Citizens are informed as to the kind of persons or activities, suspicious vehicles or other suspicious objects, to look out for. They are also advised how to make accurate reports containing an adequate description for identification purposes and what number to call to report a crime they see being committed or about to be committed, or in an emergency. They are further informed how to distinguish between emergencies and non-emergency situations, so they do not tie up police resources.

unnecessarily. Quality reporting, though it is likely to take time to be realised in practice, would seem to have obvious benefits to police and to the public interest generally.

Householders are told that a police officer on patrol may not recognise a stranger as such, or a vehicle that should not be at the premises, whereas this would be known to those living in the neighborhood. Accordingly, residents are urged to become the eyes and ears of the police and to report suspicious activities by strangers to the police. Emphasis is laid on the fact that this is a mutual assistance program, which enables neighbors to help themselves and to help each other, with the aid of the police.

It is also stressed that Neighborhood Watch is not a vigilante activity and any physical action is to be left to the police. Suspicious activity should be reported to the police immediately, as when a person appears to be entering a neighbor's house while the neighbor is known to be away. Meanwhile, a watch should be kept on the house until the police arrive. If a suspicious vehicle is seen outside, the registration number and description of the vehicle should be noted and reported to the police.

The above information, when promptly and efficiently provided should assist police to locate and apprehend offenders and thus reduce the crime rate, particularly in relation to residential burglaries, to a substantial extent.

Residents who join a Neighborhood Watch Scheme are also advised on making their home secure, protecting their valuables and other possessions and generally the ways in which to deter thieves and reduce the opportunities for burglaries and like offences. They are issued with literature containing information on Home Security, including advice on precautions to take, both generally and when going away for some time. The program also includes an address or addresses on crime prevention, by a qualified police officer.

Likewise, information is also provided to participants in

24. See J. Morgan, *supra* and Seminar Report *supra*.

Neighborhood Watch on Personal Safety, through suitable literature and through the crime prevention lecture. They are advised as to precautions to take against potential intruders when at home and against likely assailants when outside, as at a bus-stop, or railway station at night. Information and advice on self protection, when faced with the prospect or threats of immediate violence, is also provided.

The description of the principal elements of Neighborhood Watch herein is based on the New South Wales scheme. It is similar to schemes which operate elsewhere in Australia, particularly in Victoria and in Western Australia, as well as in the Australian Capital Territory. Particulars of Neighborhood Watch may vary amongst different countries or States, or, as in the United States, amongst different cities, or generally from place to place.

A detailed Review of Neighborhood Watch by the London Metropolitan Police in England in 1984 stated that the importance of the initial contact between the police and residents cannot be over-emphasised. It stressed that police have to demonstrate clearly from the outset that they have a genuine interest and a continuing commitment which will distinguish Neighborhood Watch from other campaigns of a commercial nature. The success of any future scheme will be directly related to the nature of the initial contact and the way in which it is conducted.²⁵

It is essential to obtain support for community policing and community involvement schemes, such as Neighborhood Watch and the other schemes mentioned herein, from police generally, including station personnel and police in patrol cars. It is not sufficient simply to enlist the interest of those police who are designated as District Community Relations Officers, or as Neighborhood Watch liaison officers, or in other like appointments specifically related to such schemes.

Thus, the importance of prior briefings to operational police in new Neighborhood Watch areas cannot be over-emphasised. An initial example in Australia is to be found in the briefing sessions as to Neighborhood Watch, given to

operational police in Victoria, mentioned above.²⁶

As Chief Superintendent L. Poulton of the New South Wales Police Community Relations Bureau has stated, all police have to be convinced that the program will work.²⁷ This is reinforced in the Neighborhood Watch Manual of the New South Wales Police Community Relations Bureau, which affirms that all police must be encouraged to support the scheme.²⁸ They should all be conversant with the concept of Neighborhood Watch and respond to reports from the public in a friendly and interested manner. Though a large number of trivial reports are to be expected at the beginning of new Neighborhood Watch groups, a polite and patient response is important, to give the right impression to the public.²⁹

It is clearly important to ensure that all necessary preparations for introducing Neighborhood Watch in a new area are made well in advance. Thus, Members of the local Council, other local community leaders and organisations, service clubs and local residents generally must be given ample notice of the date, time and venue of the inaugural meeting. The importance of prior briefings to police in the area has been mentioned herein. Good liaison with the media can provide favourable publicity for the scheme, both before and after its commencement.

The local Council and service clubs in the area, such as Rotary and Lions, sporting and ethnic clubs, other community organisations and residents' associations in the area should also be invited to participate in the introduction of the scheme and initially help to publicise the inaugural meeting, in conjunction with the police. Letterbox drops should be arranged with police participation, to inform local residents of the meeting. This is in addition to media publicity and publicity through community organisations, as mentioned above. It is important that all residents be advised in advance, so that no one feels left out.

The importance of avoiding misunderstandings between the police and members of the public, due to

lack of communication, was emphasised in a recent Home Office study.³⁰ It also stressed the need to obtain adequate publicity for a scheme and using it to the best advantage.³¹

A good venue for the inaugural meeting, known to or easily identifiable by residents in the area, with adequate parking facilities at or near the venue is important. A School hall or Council hall are often available and appropriate. The venue should be reasonably centrally situated in the area, so residents do not have to travel too far. This would be particularly appreciated by elderly citizens, as would be the availability of public transport. A recent Review of Neighborhood Watch by the London Metropolitan Police found that the location of a suitable meeting place was of considerable importance.³²

Care must be taken in selecting a new area or areas for the introduction of Neighborhood Watch. Clearly, a substantial degree of community support in the target area is essential. An area which has a high level of concern amongst residents about criminal activity and a reasonably high incidence of crime in the area, such as burglary, theft and vandalism, would meet significant criteria for a potentially successful Neighborhood Watch program. A target area should be clearly defined, having regard to the nature and boundaries of an identifiable community. Use should be made of natural boundaries, such as rivers, where appropriate. It is important that the area selected should not have a largely transient population. The majority of victims of crime in the area should be local residents and not people who simply park their cars there, or do their shopping in the area.³³ apj

Due to insufficient space in this particular issue it was impossible to publish the complete article. Part II will appear in the next issue. — To be continued

25. Metropolitan Police, Review of Neighborhood Watch On No. 1 Area, May, 1984, p. 14.

26. See D. Smith, n. 9. supra, at p. 72 and C. K. Coster, n. 12 supra, at p. 3.

27. Chief Superintendent L. Poulton, Community Policing In New South Wales, June 1985, Community Relations Bureau.

28. p. 7.

29. Supra.

30. L. J. F. Smith, Home Office Crime Prevention Unit, Neighborhood Watch, A note on implementation, 1984, p. 12.

31. Supra.

32. See n. 25 supra, at p. 16.

33. E.g. see Metropolitan Police Review of Neighborhood Watch n. 25 supra; L. J. F. Smith, Home Office Crime Prevention Unit, n. 30 supra; New South Wales Police Neighborhood Watch Manual, n. 10 supra.