

# FARM PROTECTION

The following article is an extract from Neighbourhood Watch Member's Guide.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH – THE HISTORY

In 1990, Guardian National sponsored a newspaper, member's guide and periodical for the Neighbourhood Watch in South Africa. The Member's Guide was compiled by Guardian, Neighbourhood Watches, the police and municipalities in South Africa.

In March 1991, a symposium was held in Natal where the Watch leaders, police, government, ANC and municipal delegates discussed the security position in South Africa, organised by national convener, Marius Wessels.

Mr John Wright, assistant General Manager of Guardian National in Natal, delivered a paper and was complimented and thanked for the contribution by Mr Justice W.H. Booysen, the conference president of the symposium.

The papers so presented by the different entities were chronicled and distributed throughout South Africa and beyond.

Dr Lorraine Glanz, Group Social Dynamics of the Human Sciences Research Council, called for the symposium records to be presented and included at a large conference by the Council in Pretoria on 4-6 August 1992. These were duly presented as "Managing Crime in the New South Africa. A Practical and Affordable Approach". A comprehensive bundle, including the Neighbourhood Watch Symposium records, was compiled for national and overseas distribution.

**After nearly 25 years, the Member's Guide instructions for Neighbourhood Watch seems to be as, or even more, applicable to conditions in South Africa today.**

Here are extracts from the guide:

The definition of good neighbourliness and the single greatest aim of every member of Neighbourhood Watch is –

**TO ACT AS THE GUARDIAN OF THE LIVES OF OUR PEOPLES, THE  
PROTECTOR OF ITS PROPERTY AND THE CUSTODIAN OF OUR NATURAL  
HERITAGE AND ALL THINGS LIVING.**

To qualify for this a member needs to be aware of his surroundings, conscious of its dangers and sympathetic to its needs.

## WHERE DO I START?

We start with Education. If we had been taught the basic principles of road safety, courtesy and good driving behaviour at school, the carnage on our roads would have been less severe.

Good neighbourliness should become a way of life. It is not a short-term solution. We have a long grind ahead to teach our children these basics; we have made ourselves their Guardians, Protectors and Custodians and we owe it to them. They are tomorrow's Guardians, tomorrow's Protectors and tomorrow's Custodians; and tomorrow is only a few years away.

The safety of the group means the continued existence of the individual. If the group is maintained the individual shall survive.

### **OUR IMMEDIATE SURROUNDINGS**

Most of us reside in a city, town or village where we have a house or apartment, which is like a cell in a honeycomb. If we make things readily accessible to thieves they will take them from us, now or later.

But a stout fence, gate, locks, lights, dog, alarm and burglar guard system make it more difficult.

### **THIEVES BEWARE**

#### **THE GOODS IN THESE HOUSES ARE MARKED**

Notices in your area like the above are marvellous deterrents. Have your ID marked on all movables, such as cameras, TVs, radio and music equipment, car, furniture, et cetera.

Police recover millions of rands of good yearly. It is sold by public auction because the owners cannot be traced. Fences are reluctant to buy marked articles from thieves. Your area leader will put up boards in your neighbourhood like the one above.

When you go on holiday, tell your area leader well in advance, he will take the particulars of your destination, advise on precautions and ask the police or police reservists to patrol. Take your membership card with you. If you have problems away from home, there is bound to be a Neighbourhood Watch which could assist.

### **PRECAUTIONS**

Comprehensive tests were recently done on aircraft fire disasters, smoke inhalation and emergency escape. The chances of survival by people who have practised the emergency drill beforehand were from 38% to 80% better than the new recruits without experience.

Some of the following calamities, disasters or mishaps will befall each and every one of us in our lifetime. How we survive is up to us. The following emergency drills are vital. Your life will depend on them; practise them over and over. Once you have acquainted yourself with these you will instinctively know what to do and how to react when the real thing comes along. There will be less panic or hysteria, more time to follow an orderly routine – and so the chance to survive.

### **THE TELEPHONE TREE**

Your Watch leader will supply you with a drawing of the telephone tree. Each member is assigned telephone numbers of two other members. In case of a major disaster or in the discretion of the area leader it might be necessary to alert the whole Neighbourhood Watch. As soon as such an event is reported to the Watch leader he will telephone the proper authorities and then also ring two pre-arranged numbers of members. They in turn will ring their two allotted numbers and so on until the last numbers in the chain have been telephoned.

This procedure should be practised regularly and the time recorded to complete the cycle.

### **THE FIRE DRILL**

This is best done over a weekend. Set the alarm clock at random without looking at the setting. Get the whole family together and work out a plan of action. One person must be nominated to handle the telephone. The duty of this member is to telephone the fire brigade and your area leader (these numbers are on your tear-out sheet).

Ascertain the problem areas in your dwelling and choose the safest place to gather.

Nominate the person in charge of the first aid kit. Work out the procedure with your animals and who would be responsible. Remember animals will panic and must be brought under control as soon as possible.

By allocating the duties to different people in the household you eliminate panic and create an orderly procedure. When the alarm goes off go into full swing as if this is the real thing. Do not get complacent; practise the drill at regular intervals.

### **THE SAFE HOUSE**

Do you know the route taken by your children going to school, the bus stop, sports or town? The young are not always aware of the dangers lurking in deserted environments. They will usually take any route as long as it is the shortest or easiest. Make some time available to accompany your children on this route to ascertain that it is safe.

Introduce them to the safe house keeper on the route. This may be the most important time ever spent with your children.

### **THE AGED, THE SICK AND FRAIL**

Why don't you "adopt" two old, sick or frail people in your block? Visit them and make a note of their doctor's telephone number, next of kin and their needs. They must draw money, buy food, pay accounts or get medicine. Their next of kin might not be close by. It is dangerous for them to walk around or go to an Auto-bank. Sometimes these people cannot afford to buy security systems. Go through the following drill with them.

Insert your telephone number on their tear-out sheet. Show them to dial your telephone number, wait until it rings and then replace the handset. In case of an emergency they need only to remove the handset and press the redial button on the telephone (●●). They can then talk to you or in case of danger leave the handset off the hook.

You will immediately know if there is any danger because it would be possible to hear background noises. Telephone the numbers of the two aged people on your emergency telephone sheet. The engaged number will be that of the person in trouble. Telephone your area leader, who will set the emergency drill into action.

If this facility is not available on your telephone, take it to your local Post office, together with your ID book and it will be exchanged for a suitable telephone at a small cost.

### **IDENTIKIT**

To enable the Police to arrest a criminal, or for the courts to find him guilty it is necessary that he be identified as the culprit. Many people are just not attentive enough. This could actually be overcome by concentrated observation and practice. Make a habit of noticing the shape of face of a person, colour of eyes, hair, mannerisms and so on.

Arrange with the Watch leader to send somebody of your Watch, unknown to you, to your house when every member of the family is at home. He will stay for a few minutes on some pretence. Now ask your family for each to draw an Identikit of the person. At your next Watch meeting take your drawings and compare the likeness to the stranger. It can be hilarious, but also disconcerting.

After some practice you will find a lot of improvement. Try it on visitors at random. It can be a lot of fun for the family and might come in handy at a later stage.

## **EMPLOYEES**

When your Watch was established your Watch leader made it clear to you that casual workers should *never* be employed without a traceable reference.

Most of the arguments encountered in the employer/employee relationship stem from a misunderstanding of terms of employment.

Your Watch leader will supply you with a *pro forma* agreement which you could adapt to your particular needs. Complete this and insert as much information as possible. Make a photocopy together with that of the employee's identity document and hand a copy to the employee.

Go through the above procedure with your existing workers and also supply them with copies. It eliminates misunderstandings and instils a sense of security.

Get your workers involved in all the emergency drills. You might not be at home when some of the mishaps could occur.

## **THINK LIKE A BURGLAR**

Have you ever been locked out of your own house and tried to break in? It really is quite easy.

The burglar is usually a professional with all the tools of the trade.

Look at your property again and see how many ways there are to get inside, if you really wanted to, and you had the necessary tools. You may even have a left a ladder outside to be of help. Get individual members of the family to do a meticulous survey of the house and garden and make a list of problem areas. Compare notes afterwards and draw up a plan of action to rectify the matter.

## **HOUSEBREAKING**

Discuss with the family various points of escape – only escape if it is safe to do so.

What are the individual capabilities of members of the family? If members of the family are armed or have a good knowledge of self-defence, then these tactics must be practised often. Practise often with firearms. What about members of the family (e.g. children) who are totally defenceless – where will they hide? Can they be used to operate the telephone without being seen or heard? If they should lock themselves in a room, will it be safer for them, or does it place them in greater danger? Where is the telephone situated? Let the “defenceless” person (woman or child or frail citizen) operate the telephone. Who will they tell? Is it best in your situation to call a neighbour, who is physically fit and who is armed and prepared to assist – or is it better to call the Police? Remember: You only use the telephone PROVIDED the housebreaker will not be aware that the call is being made – or else he will try to prevent you from making the call and might even hurt you. Discuss with neighbours the fact that you will punch in their telephone number last thing at night and should someone intrude, you will press the repeat button.

Never turn the lights on inside once you hear something outside. You should remain in the dark. That is why it is important...to leave the outside lights at your home on every night. Housebreakers are more likely to enter premises where it is dark around the outside of the house.

By remaining in the dark, you are more likely to see the intruder first, and remember, you know the layout of your house and you can easily move around even though it is dark. Consider leaving an inside light on at night – thus showing that the house is occupied. Alternate these lights.

Have you discussed how you will alert the rest of the family once someone has ascertained that an intruder is inside the house? Have you thought up a code word? Does the family know how to react once the code word has been uttered?

If the family should already be in bed when somebody gains access, and if nobody in the house is armed – it is suggested you feign sleep. Hopefully he'll take what he wants and leave the premises without hurting anyone. If he notices that you are awake, he knows that his chances of being identified are good – and he does *not* want to be identified. Call the Police only once you are quite sure he has left the premises. If possible, try and get hold of a stick or bat or any other article close-by. Don't overestimate your own capabilities. Does he appear to be armed? Act accordingly – e.g. don't try to draw a knife in a gunfight!

One can, however, argue that if you work very swiftly and surprise your attacker, you may get the better of him – that is if he is alone.

If you should have a firearm, and the only way to save or defend your life is to use it, then use it. Only use your firearm when your life is in danger, and not before you have identified your target – it is expected that you use sound judgement. Once you've decided to shoot, make sure that your first shot incapacitates the person!

It is imperative that in your planning you discuss escaping from the house. The nearest and safest place to go is to your neighbours PROVIDED you've already met them and discussed your plan of action with them so that they know how to react.

If you don't know them, then:

- a) They will not let you into their house as you are a stranger to them.
- b) How will you get past their dogs?
- c) How will you get your message across quickly to these strangers (your neighbours) without delaying reaction time and possibly leading to fatal results?
- d) If you don't know your neighbours you won't know if they have a telephone. Do they know the emergency numbers? Do *you* know the emergency numbers?

## **RAPE**

Remember that rape is normally an act of total and utter violence.

- 1) Keep calm – you will remain in better control this way – and you'll at least be able to think of possible ways of getting out of the situation
- 2) Women have been known to play along with the would-be rapist. He may in fact relax and unwind a little more if he sees that you are not going to fight him. Agree with what he says to you – let him believe that you "are on his side". Remember, he needs an ego boost rather than having his ego deflated. Make eye contact with him, but don't stare at him. The moment you sense a weakness in him, work on it – let him talk and keep him talking – until you get his mind off you for a fleeting moment. Don't give up.  
By now you must have realized that you're taking control of the situation. Remember, your aim is to escape unhurt at the least. Keep in control. As soon as you feel confident enough and he appears to be relaxing sufficiently and provided you really believe you can cope, you can either:
  - a) Escape or
  - b) stick 2 or 3 fingers from each hand into the eye sockets, lunge deep and rip the eyeballs out or
  - c) hit him with a heavy object or any vulnerable spot e.g. under the nose, gullet area or
  - d) grab the testicles and twist.

Note that this is always preferable to escape; b), c) or d) above should only be carried out by a person who is in control; who has the confidence to carry out what she's doing and who will cope should the rapist attack her further.

Should a woman have lost all her confidence through being panic stricken, or ceases to cope through fear, sadly this is where rape normally takes place. If the victim has a firearm close at hand, she may reach for it only when:

- a) She has made the decision to kill her assailant,
- b) She is certain that this is the only means to save her life.

Remember that rape is an act of violence; females must start preparing themselves mentally and physically for attack and rape.

Self defence instils confidence – if you're confident you'll cope better. Think clearly and if possible take charge of the situation.

### **EVERYDAY CONFRONTATIONS**

Drawing money from an Autobank, going to the cinema or doing the shopping; all have some elements of danger. You will listen to many lectures on the dos and don'ts in future.

We are, however, interested to find out how we will react in these situations. Each one of us knows our own abilities and our own shortfalls. It is impossible for anyone else to know how you will react.

Therefore it is important to visualise and imagine an attack, robbery, mugging or bag snatching.

Discuss with the family, other members and knowledgeable people such as the police how you as a person would most probably react. Weigh up the advice in the light of your personality and ability and decide on the plan of action you will take in these different situations. If any of these should occur your sub-conscious mind has now been trained, and will activate the reflex actions most suitable for survival. We are living in times where violence has become the norm rather than the exception. An emergency drill is just what it says; it is repetition, repetition and repetition until you feel you have all the possible angles covered; then keep doing it all over again. Make entries in your diary or PC today and set fixed times for the different drills. In the beginning do one at a time so as not to confuse some of the family.

Do not become complacent. These drills will enhance your chances of survival. Without these drills your chances of survival might be virtually non-existent. The last drill is a grim one. If you should be one of those who do not survive your family must go through the agony of continuing without you. Discuss all the implications in case of a fatality. A sensitive informal approach to such a discussion may allay many exaggerated fears in the minds of the young. The agony and hardships of those left behind will be lessened if they are prepared for it. Your preparedness of the family's physical and financial well-being is important. The morale and discipline will be of incalculable worth if the family had been mentally prepared by this last emergency drill.

### **UPLIFTMENT OF THE SOCIETY**

You are aware of the saying "Give a man a fish and he will eat to-day; teach him how to fish and he will eat every day". Most people will steal rather than see their loved ones go hungry.

### **OUR PEOPLE**

#### **Children**

The young are susceptible to the teachers' tutorage. Their minds are uncultured and with them there are no set preconceived formulas, ideas or habits. What we have said about basic training on road safety and driving at school level, also holds good for good neighbourliness.

Neighbourhood Watches are in touch with various institutions to present a training package, on the principle of the movement, to the Education Authorities. Neighbourhood watch training should be included in the curriculum offered at primary schools. Until this is done, parents and teacher members should encourage children to form their own Junior watches within the Boy Scout, Voortrekker and Girl Guides movements.

### **The Unskilled**

It is estimated that more than 90% of the total population of this country will live in or around our cities within the next 9 years. More than 35 million people... These people will probably cause a massive influx of unskilled labour with the resultant slums and ghettos around the cities. These cannot be wished away.

Unemployment and adverse Socio-economic conditions are regarded all over the world as the biggest contributory factors to crime. We can educate, train and encourage these people in such skills that would lift them from these slums; you can give them an income, pride and independence. A recent editorial in *Neighbourhood Watchword* states; "This will open the eyes of many people to opportunities they had never been aware of – in order to reach for the stars, one must first know of their existence".

To start your programme, you should tackle the problem by drawing up a "balance sheet". On the credit side make an inventory of the skills and abilities of the members in your area – woodworking, pottery, sewing and so on.

Now list the tools of trade at hand and the premises available. Time spent on the project is another asset. On the debit side you have the lack of enough tools, not sufficient premises and finance. You have unlimited raw material – the unskilled people. Whether they end up on the credit or debit side is up to you. Start a drive to collect the tools, premises and finance required. Get your local newspaper to join in on the effort, get the local authorities, the church and commerce involved. Once you have started the training programme you will be amazed at the talents and skills available; skills and talents that have been lying dormant for too long.

### **OUR ENVIRONMENT**

Through the efforts of many, many dedicated people and well supported by the media, man has been brought to pause in his headlong rush to self-destruction. We, as the only custodians of our natural heritage and all things living, will shortly hand over the reins to the next generation; hopefully a more acceptable inheritance than the one left to us.

Many city dwellers seldom get the opportunity to do gardening. The sidewalks and verges in most of our cities provide such opportunity. watch members should get their councillors involved in a programme to beautify these unsightly stretches of usable garden space. We suggest that Neighbourhood Watches, in co-operation with their local authorities, work towards attractive, more environmentally friendly streets. A strip of attractive paving could be laid down for pedestrians and the rest of the pavement could be turned into flower beds. Residents could be given the choice of maintaining these themselves or making use of a garden service. Instead of planting rows of similar trees – or worse, no trees at all – residents could be supplied with a list of suitable species they could plant in front of their homes. Neighbourhood Watch organisers might enter into a contract with a local nursery to supply these at a relatively low price.

This project could be launched even in built-up areas. Such a project will not only promote involvement in the community – neighbours working in their "pavement gardens" would inevitably

meet each other – but it will also serve as a deterrent to crime, as many more people will be out on the streets. It might even be possible to find sponsors for “pavement garden” competitions.

Many of the bigger cities have service lanes on the side or behind the houses. Most of these are not in use any more and fallen into a bad state of repair. They become breeding places for flies and mosquitoes. You should follow the same routine with these as with the sidewalks. Imagine the transformation; beautiful green lungs instead of a concrete jungle.

Roofs of blocks of flats could be put to better use. Initial cost must be provided for drainage of water, but the beauty of a roof garden will contribute to the well-being of the inhabitants. A few well-placed pot plants, benches and paving will create a dramatic effect.

Window boxes are a relatively new innovation in this country. They enhance the appearance of older buildings, built close to the road. In one London suburb the local authorities will rent out pre-planted window boxes, and renew it with newly planted ones after the flowering season of the initial ones are past. Watch leaders could follow this example and generate some income for pensioners. Uniform brackets for particular buildings could be mass produced.

Even an old building with all the window boxes in full bloom will stand out in all its floral splendour.

### **CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this Guide is to prepare you against those actions and eventualities not acceptable and not foreseen by our society. With a much larger concentration of people in our towns and cities we will find an increase in the crime rate. This will stretch the resources of the police to breaking point if we as citizens do not get involved. By actively pursuing the principles of the Neighbourhood Watch movement we can play a large role in protecting the group, which in turn will secure the continued existence of the individual.

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### **ATTACHMENTS.**

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- CONCERNED WATCH LEADERS MEET
  - COVER OF BOOK SUBMITTED TO HSRC.
  - MEMBERS GUIDE
-