



How could thugs attack a 99-year-old woman?

THE ARCHER often carries warnings against doorstep con artists and robbers. Here, Lynda Turner, angered by an attack on an elderly friend in her own home, describes the effect of such crimes.

One recent afternoon at 4.30pm in broad daylight a gang of heartless thugs conned their way into the East Finchley home of a 99-year-old woman. They shouted through the front door that there had been an explosion at a nearby house and that the occupant had to leave her home.

Understandably, she opened her door. The gang of three men and a boy knocked her walking frame away from her and searched the house. There was nothing to steal, so they left empty handed.

The victim telephoned a neighbour who called the police; they arrived on the scene very quickly. An ambulance was also called but the victim, although shaken, thankfully did not need medical attention.

Repeat crime

The same victim was robbed almost exactly a year ago, possibly by the same gang. In

order to gain entry that time, they pretended that a lad had kicked his football into her garden and asked if they could retrieve it. The victim, being a kind and caring person, let them into the garden. A few moments later she realised this was a ruse, and the lad and his cohorts had inveigled their way into her home in order to rob her, which they did.

Heartlessness

Those who know this lady are saddened and angry that a gang of men should pick on a defenceless victim. The robbers must have, or have had mothers, grandmothers, sisters, wives or female friends. How can they find it in themselves to con their way into the home of somebody clearly unable to protect herself against four people?

The victim is tiny, how could they even consider knocking away her walking frame with the intention of robbing her?

One wonders what they can possibly say to each other after the attack: are they proud, do they laugh?

The police were appalled by this crime. As a result of it they now patrol her road and the surrounding streets many times throughout the day and night. The council's housing team was also horrified and has agreed to increase the street lighting. CCTV is also being considered as the police want to catch these nasty, heartless burglars. Neighbourhood Watch has been stepped up and the men and women of the community are now much more vigilant.

If you have any information about this crime please call the police on 020 8721 2506 or e-mail Fortisgreen.snt@met.police.uk. A local person would like to offer a reward for information leading to the arrest of the gang. This will be arranged via Crimestoppers.



Lieutenant Colonel Andy Westcott inspecting the Army section of the Combined Cadet Force at Christ's College

Cadets, atten-shun!

Cadets at Christ's College Finchley paraded for their biennial review by the Ministry of Defence and put on a display of their skills for some military top brass.

The Combined Cadet Force at the school in East End Road was inspected by Lieutenant Colonel Andy Westcott of the Army Air Corp before putting on a field gun display, a musi-

cal display and drill and signals displays.

Christ's College Finchley's CCF is the oldest combined cadet corp in the country after the one at Eton school.

Positive images of ageing

Age Concern Barnet has launched the Active Ageing photography competition and is calling on anyone over the age of 55 to get clicking. Prizes include a £100 gift card to spend on photographic equipment, and tickets to the Phoenix Cinema.

The competition aims to promote the value of older people by depicting them as fit, healthy and active members of society. Entrants may interpret this brief widely but all photographs must have been taken after 1 August 2008.

All entries must reach Age Concern Barnet by 31 July 2009. Winners' photos and runner up entries will feature in Age Concern Barnet's 2010 calendar, going on sale 1 November.

Age Concern Barnet works throughout the borough to

promote fitness, health and wellbeing for the whole of the over-55 age group. As well as two day centres providing respite for carers and a place for older people to socialise and access services, projects include fitness programmes, a befriending service and TransAge Action, which aims to bridge the generation gap by providing opportunities for older people to work with children in schools.

To enter the competition, contact Age Concern Barnet for an entry form and

a copy of competition rules, which are available on the Age Concern Barnet website - www.ageconcernbarnet.org/calendar/. They can also be requested by calling Age Concern Barnet on 020 8346 3511, by emailing lisa-finchely.acb@btconnect.com, or by post, at: Active Ageing photography competition, Age Concern Barnet, The Ann Owens Centre, Oak Lane, London, N2 8LT.

Stay secure in your own home

Doorstep crime can happen to anyone, not just the elderly. Police give the following crime prevention tips:

- 1. When you hear someone at the door shout through the door to find out who is there. If you do not recognise who it is apply the chain or door bar.
- 2. Check all your doors are locked, burglars often come in pairs, so one may come in the back while you are being distracted at the front door.
- 3. Always ask for identification, but remember that identity cards are easy to copy. If in doubt ask the caller to wait and call their company to verify and check. A genuine caller will not mind.
- 4. Use your phone book or utility bill to find the number of the company they claim to be from. Do not accept a mobile phone number offered by the caller.
- 5. Utility companies don't usually call without a prior appointment. If they say it is an emergency ask them to get a police officer to attend.
- 6. You do not have to let people in and if you are uncertain then don't, however persuasive or plausible the caller is. It is better

that a genuine caller is turned away than a burglar is let in.

Vouchers for schools

If you shop at Tesco and are offered Vouchers for Schools when you pay at the check-out, please accept them even if you have no connection with a school.

Holy Trinity has told *THE ARCHER* that they would be grateful for any addition to their collection, as would other local schools.



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