



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF PARKS AND RECREATION
W.A. DIVISION

Heath Banksia (*Banksia ericifolia*) one of the species collected by Sir Joseph Banks in the Botany Bay area of New South Wales in 1770.

WORKSHOP ON VANDALISM 1st July 1978

Can we manage our public facilities more effectively in such a way as to minimise the cost of vandalism?

PROGRAMME

Welcome: President W.A. Division R.A.I.P.R. Gordon Shearwood

Introduction of speakers by John Fox, Convenor of Workshop.

Mr. David Merrywether, Psychologist, Community Welfare Department
Motivation of vandals

Dr. Harry Pearson, Assistant Director of Schools, Education Department
Scale of vandalism and precautionary measures

Const. Norman Adams, Police: Public Relations and Crime Prevention Branch
Consequences following the apprehension of offenders

Mr. Peter Hunt, Architect
Design alternatives to avoid vandalism

Mr. Gordon Shearwood, Superintendent, Parks and Gardens, City of Stirling
Planning strategies for park management

After the last speaker has finished, participants should locate other members of their discussion group. Morning tea will be served at 10.00 am. Discussion groups have until 11.00 am to deliberate on the questions put to them. Each group has one area of the room in which to gather.

Participants re-assemble to hear one representative from each group present (in five minutes) the views of the groups on the questions put to them.

Closing Remarks

***** LUNCHEON *****

OPENING OF WORKSHOP ON VANDALISM

Good Morning, Ladies & Gentlemen,

One of the many aspects that this Institute of Parks & Recreation endeavours to provide is a stimulus - a platform - which enables its members and others to participate in, to share a common problem - wrestle with that problem and whilst, not necessarily providing a direct solution, gives to all that participate, a clearer and better understanding of the problem, and sometimes provides a common front to all concerned in containing or controlling it.

The question of Vandalism has been a frequent topic of discussion amongst many groups of people. A greater understanding of this particular subject can be achieved by a discussion with people from various fields of interest focused on this shared concern.

It is for these reasons that this Institute decided to promote this 'Workshop' and the response in your attendance already justifies my colleagues' efforts in preparing the programme.

A wide variety of representation interests are present, both from the Perth inner and outer Metropolitan area and some Country Districts.

May I extend a warm welcome to you all - I expect that we will all learn from this shared experience this morning.

I now have pleasure in introducing to you the Convener of the Institute Education Sub-Committee and Chairman for this workshop Dr. John Fox.

Mr. David Merrywether, Community Welfare Department

The majority of people tend to see vandalism as "mindless, random action". In fact, on closer analysis vandalism can be seen as a complex cluster of meanings and motives which could hardly be termed mindless or random. I will be talking from a socio-psychological point of view, and I want to discuss the motives behind vandalism rather than solutions to the problem.

A stereotype of vandalism which should be dispelled from the start is that it is homogeneous. In fact vandalism is carried out by a variety of different individuals and groups of varying ages and in a diversity of situations. For instance, most research has indicated that two-thirds of telephone vandals are adults, who are more interested in the money contained in the phone box than in the destructive act itself. On the other hand, most railway vandalism is perpetrated by 10-12 year olds.

If we examine the common definition of vandalism, we can see also that few people have not committed acts of vandalism at some stage in their lives. Vandalism is generally defined as "the illegal destruction or defacement of property belonging to someone else." Whether vandalism is attended to by the legal authorities is largely dependent upon the situation in which it occurs. There are certain "socially approved" types of vandalism, such as occurs during festivals and sporting fixtures, when the usual comment is that "you must expect some destruction and damage when large groups of people are having fun."

Sometimes the act of vandalism is, in a sense protected, as when students "let off steam" - take, for example, the instance of a student driving a steamroller into the University of W.A. pond some years ago - this was dismissed by many as a silly prank, and it caused much public amusement at the time. The defacing of school desks and equipment by pupils is often given a measure of social approval, and is dismissed as something that "kids always do at school."

There are other forms of "approved" vandalism, such as graffiti, which is usually seen as a form of ideological or political expression, rather than outright vandalism, or the behaviour of sporting teams, who

systematically wreck their hotel room and then attempt to justify their behaviour by saying they were just letting off steam after a series of hard matches.

Thus we are able to rationalize certain types of vandalism. It is significant that much of this rationalized vandalism is carried out by middle-class groups or by groups who are behaving within the protection of an institution. The vandalism which causes us most concern is that committed by socially disapproved groups, usually representing the disadvantaged sections of our population who do not have socially approved outlets for their destructive urges.

"What destructive urges?!" You may ask. Are we a destructive race? It is not my intention to argue the point as to whether destructiveness is a primary or secondary type of motivation, although I tend towards the view that it is a learned behaviour, derived from feelings of frustration and boredom with the existing environment. Certainly destructiveness, whether directly or vicariously experienced, is an accepted part of our way of life. It is no coincidence that there was, a few years ago, a wave of "destruction" films, such as "Towering Inferno" and "Earthquake", which have given way to the more recent car chase films, which involve mass destruction on a huge scale. An advertisement for one film in the press stated the following, "See the greatest cars in the world destroyed!" This film is sure to attract a large audience.

The point I am making is this. We are, most of us, capable of destructive acts of vandalism, but some of us are able to find acceptable outlets for this behaviour, some of us are not. This is not meant as an excuse for unacceptable acts of vandalism, such as breaking windows in a classroom or ripping up all the shrubs in a park. But it at least puts vandalism in perspective as a less deviant type of behaviour than is commonly assumed.

I would like to look, now, at the forms of vandalism which cause us most concern, in terms of the motives behind them. The first of these is Aquisitive vandalism, which refers to removing valuable materials, such as copper and brass, from buildings, collecting street

signs (a common student activity which has gained remarkable acceptance) and looting from parking metres, telephone boxes, etc. A second form of vandalism is Tactical vandalism, usually committed to advance some non-acquisitive end. This sometimes occurs in industry, where employees may jam a machine so that they may take a rest. Sometimes this kind of vandalism may be directed towards attracting attention because of personal troubles. Psychiatric committals are sometimes precipitated by an incident of property destruction - that is, the person involved is probably consciously drawing attention to himself.

A third type is Vindictive vandalism, which accounts for many more cases than appears on the surface. Sometimes the target may be symbolic, such as a statue representing the "establishment." The grievance the person has may be imaginary, but the target is just as real. Vindictive vandalism is not only emotionally satisfying, but also a very safe outlet: detection is unlikely, and one is far less likely to be hurt than if personal violence was resorted to. Personal violence is, in any event often an impossible alternative because the object of one's grievance is inaccessible. School vandalism is often motivated by a sense of revenge, and most often the vandals are pupils of the school, who perhaps feel their low achievement is caused by a particular teacher and therefore decide to break the windows of his classroom. In cases such as these vandalism is often preceded by punishments, deprivation of privileges, expulsions or other potential sources of grievance.

A fourth type of vandalism, most relevant to the public sphere is Play vandalism where there is little of a malicious content. Motivations such as curiosity, and the spirit of competition and skill are more important. Quantity (how many windows can you break?) and Quality (how accurately can you throw the stone?) are paramount. The fact that property is destroyed might be a minor or even incidental part of the game, although it may add to the excitement. Often the participants are surprised at the disapproval they incur, and at the amount of damage they have done. How often do we see children playing on a pile of sand at a building site oblivious of the fact that the

sand is gradually spreading and being rendered practically useless, causing extra work and cost for the builders.

A fifth type of vandalism is Malicious vandalism. Here there is a combination of hostility and fun. The action is often enjoyed for its own sake. Extreme examples of this would be pouring acid on a car's paintwork or strangling swans on an ornamental lake. The kinds of subjective feelings experienced prior to this type of vandalism are usually boredom, despair, exasperation, resentment, failure or frustration. It is significant that in everyday language we talk about escaping from these kinds of feelings by "breaking out" or "breaking free" - again it is easier for some to find appropriate ways of doing this than it is for others. - For example, the person who says "I was so fed up and bored I just decided to lash out and buy some clothes." For a person living in deprived circumstances, malicious vandalism may be the only viable alternative.

These, then are the types of vandalism so often seen. Having examined some of the motivational factors, can we isolate one personality type for vandals? Can we predict, via psychological interviews, tests or observation, whether or not a child be a vandal? Generally, I am afraid, not so. Whilst psychologists can to some extent identify those who are prone to delinquency, they cannot identify a personality type for vandals. From my own experience, children that I have assessed who have been charged with wilful damage are often relatively normal in their personality functioning but have drifted into vandalism through peer pressure or boredom arising out of specific situations.

Juvenile vandalism has one of the lowest reconviction rates of all offences and (in one study) was the only "symptom" in child guidance clinic referrals not predictive of later personality disturbances or related to any psychiatric diagnosis. Thus vandalism is a behaviour which may be one of several "delinquent" behaviours but of itself does not provide much information about the personality of an individual child.

Probably the most difficult type of vandalism to understand is the apparently senseless vandalism occurring in late adolescence, in large

groups, often in public settings and by almost exclusively working class offenders.

Andrew Wade, a prominent writer in this field, emphasizes vandalism as a spontaneous social act. Most importantly he sees vandalism as often occurring within the context of a group situation, where there is opportunity for it to occur, such as in an abandoned building in an isolated area, where there is exchange of information about destructive acts such as "Did you see what Billy did last night?" and where there is internal competition for status in the group. Wade identifies five stages in the act of vandalism, which, I think, add substantially to an understanding of their behaviour.

Stage 1 is "Waiting for something to turn up". Here the local deli or pool hall serves a vital function as the group's meeting place, where talk about delinquent behaviour is initiated and where the group first "hangs around." Generally the situation appears unstructured and unsupervised, but in terms of group dynamics, a subtle pattern emerges.

Stage 2 is the "Exploratory Gesture", where one member of the group makes a suggestion about vandalistic behaviour - "I feel like breaking a window."

Stage 3 is called "Mutual Conversion" because here the traditional "dare" is brought into play and reluctant members of the group are called "chicken", - a highly provocative label for the insecure adolescent out to prove himself.

Stage 4 is the "Elaboration of the Act" where the spirit of the activity takes hold of the individual and we see what is termed "manufactured excitement" or "group psychological intoxication." There is also a "circular reaction" - the behaviour is usually generated by the most impulsive member of the group but as more members of the group participate, so the originator of the act gains confidence and goes onto more destructive behaviour, and so on.

In the process of this mutual excitation, the individual loses his feeling of self-identity and this in turn makes the act of vandalism easier to carry out. The vandal feels less sense of guilt

or responsibility - "They made me do it" is a common response.

Stage 5 is "Aftermath and Retrospect". This can be important because often the vandal, directly following the act views himself as simply a prankster and non-delinquent. Early apprehension is of considerable value in helping the individual to recognize the consequences of the vandalism and to re-evaluate the seriousness of the offence.

In conclusion, Vandalism of the type we are discussing here today, can be seen primarily as a spontaneous behaviour and the outgrowth of social situations in which group interaction takes place. In some instances it can be motivated by revenge, a simple desire to play, a need for excitement, a desire for attention, malice or an acquisitive need.

In the case of the older juvenile, it remains a very complex area of study. Stanley Cohen, a criminologist who has written extensively in this area, feels that vandalism is tied up with a feeling of powerlessness, particularly in the adolescent from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. This person tolerates the school system while he is there but once he leaves he becomes acutely aware of his deficiencies in terms of being unable to find satisfaction or rewards either in his work situation or at home. Vandalism becomes one of the only viable solutions. It provides excitement, a directed group activity and a brief, if futile means of achieving power and control. It also seems to represent the us - them dichotomy, a hitting out by the have-not against the haves, by the powerless individual against the establishment. Hence the tendency for vandalism to be aimed so often at public, rather than private property.

I have tried to present a brief outline of the motives underlying vandalism. I hope this will stimulate your thinking to some extent, particularly with regard to finding realistic solutions to the problem.

Dr. Harry Pearson, Education Department

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to speak for a few moments on the problem of vandalism and of precautionary measures as seen in the school system. I think, first of all, I should stress that my degree of expertise is from the administration point of view. I should also point out that it is with some slight degree of relief that I looked around the exhibition this morning and couldn't identify one school scene on the billboards. That very mild degree of relief was shattered when I spoke with one of my fellow workers in the education department. His comment was that he was delighted to see that vandalism occurred in other fields than the school.

Vandalism is not new. The term crept into the literature in about the 17th century, so we have had it for a long time. Much of the vandalism in school is of the 'soft' type referred to by David Merrewether. That is grafitti and similar defacement. I would suspect that everyone in this room has at some stage been guilty of carving his or her name on a school desk. Now I think probably we live with this, I don't believe there is an absolute cure. I'm not sure that we could have an absolute cure. It may be heresy to say that but I think probably it is one of the prices of having children locked into a confined situation for a fair period of their day. The price that we pay for that is very difficult to measure. Schools do have some preventive measures or ameliorative controls which come into effect at the end of each term. For example at the end of the year cleaning staff go round and scrub off the tops of the desks and so on. The furniture in the schools is replaced from time to time and we spend something in excess of \$50,000 a year on the replacement of furniture; but not all of that is a result of vandalism. We are talking about furniture in schools that has been there in some cases, in excess of 20 years. There is no single measure of the effect of the grafitti type

vandalism in schools. What can we do about it? I have indicated that I believe that we are stuck with it but we can reduce it. An important element in the school is class supervision, it doesn't always work terribly well but the alert staff in the class room can prevent a fair degree of the desk type vandalism. One gentleman working in Head Office recalls the time when he was teaching in the class room and he saw Johnny up the back slowly carving his name in the desk, so he moved up the back to tap Johnny on the shoulder and say don't and Johnny sort of slowly drew his book aside and there was the teacher's name carved from the day when the teacher was a student in the same school. You know, I think we have all been in it. The seal of acceptance on grafitti type vandalism, I think, is moving in. We have one school that has in fact set up a board and it is acceptable to put your name on it. We have another school that has reserved part of a wall specially for the students leaving to decorate. In actual fact it lasts about four years because then it is painted out. But this gives the children the sense of recognition that perhaps is the cause of some of this vandalism - a carving in a desk.

Moving onto the hard vandalism, and this is the destructive, wilful-damage type of vandalism, most of this being connected with breaking and entering. The most serious fire in the last decade that I know of was at Albany Senior High School about 1973, where supposedly a student or two got into the office downstairs, a fire ensued and the whole of the new two storey building was burnt out. This fire cost the Department in the order of \$4 million to replace. The costs in any one year of this sort of thing are usually hidden. They are hidden because the Department does not in general carry insurance like household insurance. It carries its own cover, it carries its own insurance. Therefore action that is taken to correct acts of vandalism are, up to the present, buried in a variety of items, either within the Department itself or through the PWD who maintain our buildings (in fact they own our buildings) and so I cannot give you a figure for the effect of vandalism in

any one year. I have some figures which may well be the tip of the iceberg and I can give you those. We do carry a small component of insurance with property that is not ours, not the Department's. In one year it is estimated that in terms of goods destroyed, stolen or damaged in break-ins and so on, it is \$18,000 worth. Cash taken \$2,000 worth. Others about \$1,000. So we are talking about \$21,000 worth of insurable materials. A tip of the iceberg. Coupled with those we have some figures that have come through from the PWD. These include expenditure of \$15,000 on school lockers; \$5,000 of carpet damaged. These are where students had purposely broken things, spilt things or painted over the carpets just as acts of pure vandalism. Filing cabinet damaged - where people broke in to see if there was money in them: about \$1,000. We are up for another \$21,000 in debt for a year. However, much of the damage is uninsured, breaking of windows, forcing of doors and so on and I would suspect that the true figures are probably four or five times those I have given.

Alright, who does this sort of thing? As David suggested it seems to be a student in some cases, often I think an ex-student and perhaps more often the ex-student. Also the local residents may be a problem. We have trouble at present with trail bikes tearing around school grounds, digging up turf, and damaging posts and things on the way past. On the whole the culprits are not professional thieves. Schools are pretty measly pickings for a thief. If the thief wants a television set he would do better to break into a commercial storeroom or something of that sort. What is the cure for this hard vandalism? There is probably only one cure and that's probably unacceptable to everyone. That is to turn schools into prisons with high walls, glass on the top, locked gates and so on. That would presumably reduce, cut down or help to eliminate hard vandalism. School design using plastics instead of wood may reduce vandalism of the grafitti type. The use of bricks instead of plaster, while reducing one sort of vandalism can increase others. We must take into account the difficulty of cleaning different sorts of materials.

What precautionary measures are available? Surveillance is often considered a useful measure. The P & C tend to be actively involved in many primary schools. That seems to have a deterrent effect because they are around all the time. On the question of caretakers, people living on the premises. We have tried this method in high schools. Their effect is symbolic and is very difficult to measure. On the whole if their effect is there it is very slight and we are no longer putting them in. They have their days off, they are also inevitably on one side of a 25 acre plot and anything can happen on the other side of it. We have watching services in some high schools at a cost of about \$100.00 a month per school. The company will visit three times a night and they have their effect. We have electronic gadgets in some of the worst areas. These cost about \$4,000 per school to install and something like \$700 per annum for maintenance fees. We have something like 16 schools protected for us in that sort of way. The departmental reaction to "bad areas" is variable. In some cases where there is a collection of equipment which might be attractive to a vandal we take special precautions. We have fire detectors only in two schools.

In conclusion the department has found that it is cheaper to carry its own insurance. I don't believe there is a complete cure, I'm not convinced in my own mind that we would need a complete cure if you considered grafitti in that overall frame of mind. The school efforts have a marked effect on soft and hard vandalism. The school morale is significant. Another factor that is very important I think is the degree with which the school has been a part of the community because in general vandalism occurs from the people that live in that community. If the school is seen to contribute to the community and be part of the community, a facility to be used by the community, it is less likely that vandalism will occur.

Constable Norman Adams, Police Department

People are likely to say when they see us, "look out what have I done wrong" or something like that and you often get this reaction when we first appear on the scene. But let me assure you that this is wrong, I am in Public Relations, in the lecturing branch. In other words you could say that we are the good guys of the Police Dept. Now vandalism is an alarming thing when you start looking at figures and the amount of damage that some people do with regard to our facilities and things of that nature. We have brought some charts along which resulted from some research we conducted last year prior to the Royal Show. I am going to show you these with the aid of my colleague here. Just look at some of the figures. Quite alarming figures in some areas for fires caused by vandalism throughout our state and within the metropolitan area. The incidence is increasing with some showing a severe rate of damage, increasing in recent years.

We had a display at the Royal Show last year outlining these costs and illustrating the types of vandalism caused. Many people who saw these were quite appalled and had no idea that this sort of thing was going on.

What is the police involvement when a person has been apprehended? In the case of persons under 18 years of age the child's parents are contacted. After enquiries have taken place and the report has been completed, then the child is treated as a first offender. He is brought before a juvenile welfare panel. This includes a member of the community welfare department and a retired police officer. The facts are related to the panel and in their wisdom if they feel that the child shows contrition and some restitution has been made towards the damage that has been caused, etc. then that child could be placed under the supervision of a child welfare officer for something up to six months. Now if the panel feels that the damage, or the offence, committed by a person is so great that they cannot adequately deal with the matter, then the child is brought up before the Children's Court and

there dealt with.

We have a staff of eight in the lecturing branch representing increased involvement by the Police Department in regard to the education of juveniles. We visit all schools and talk to the boys and girls, and show them films about vandalism. We try to visit about 80% of the metropolitan area each year. Last year we exceeded that, the figure being of the order of 95%. I will now attempt to give you an idea of the people who are coming before the panel in regards to acts of vandalism. Vandalism can be difficult to define. As an example consider two children walking down the road; one of them upsets the other and decides to run away. As he does so the other child picks stones up and starts throwing them at him. We have all seen examples of this. By throwing the stone he accidentally (in his opinion) breaks a window. Compare that with another instance where two boys are walking down the street and, for no apparent reason, nothing better to do perhaps, they pick up stones and decide to smash the windows out in a factory. Now here are two different types. So when we are examining figures as to how many people are coming up before the panel in regards to acts of vandalism perhaps we should distinguish the types involved. Vandalism, according to the Police Act, is wilful damage, it is a category that comes under the head of wilful damage or wanton damage. So when you start there are kids who break into a school to get in there to pinch pencils; others who go in there because they have a grudge against the Headmaster, or one of the teachers, or something similar. These may go and literally wreck the school. To get into the school itself they must damage part of the building, so that in itself is wilful damage. As from January 1st this year, when it first became mandatory that all juveniles on a first offence must appear before the panel 64 males and 2 females under 18 have appeared before the panel on charges of wilful damage. According to our figures for breaking and entering, which is really in itself wilful damage, we had something like 272 males and 40 females so far this year. These figures are quite alarming, in terms of

numbers coming before the panel.

Penalties

Under the Police Act Section 80, "every person who wilfully or maliciously destroys or damages any real or personal property of any kind owned by Her Majesty or any Public or local authority or by any other person is guilty of an offence". The penalty can be quite high: a fine of not exceeding \$500 or imprisonment, not exceeding six months. That's for wilful damage generally, but of course, we have another section in the Police Act which covers the cases of fires and such like. Under Section 58A, "whoever wilfully or wantonly does or attempts to do any act which may directly or indirectly damage, injure or destroy (a) any beef, bird, reptile, fish or other living creatures or any egg or spawn thereof; or (b) any garden, flower bed, tree, shrub, plant or flower; or (c) any building, structure or other property in any place maintained or used as a garden etc". This applies to a Zoo or any of our public gardens or recreation areas. The penalty under this section is not exceeding \$500.00 or imprisonment, not exceeding six months or both.

So the penalties are there, there is no question about it. What can we do as far as we are members of the public or of a community? What could you do as a citizen? You have probably had people say to you that you can arrest somebody. This is correct you can in fact. For those that are interested you can make a citizens arrest. I will read out to you that particular section. It comes under the Criminal Code under Section 564 - "It is lawful for any person who finds another committing an offence to arrest him without warrant", so there it is.

Mr Peter Hunt, Architect

Fellow speakers and ladies and gentlemen I am pleased to have this opportunity of discussing vandalism with you. I apologise for my late arrival as I only returned from Melbourne at midnight.

I don't know whether David mentioned where the word vandalism came from he may have done in the beginning of his speech. My research suggests it is derived from the East German tribe who invaded Europe in the 5th Century and went on to sack Rome in 455. I thought that was very typical, of the word vandalism in fact I was amazed, I had to read it twice I couldn't believe it.

I am an architect and I am here to talk about design. It has been said by a number of well learned architects that architectural social theory concedes that the social behaviour of building users is influenced and even determined by the physical environment in which the behaviour occurs. In this context, therefore, the belief includes the concept that architects direct social behaviour patterns through their work. I am sure we all sort of believe that and we all tend to hold with that philosophy. I think architects generally do take account of vandalism in their design. It is most important that security measures should be established in new buildings both to control the cost of destruction and defacement of the building on its site and the loss of valuable equipment. We all accept that and we all appreciate it. The measures should be effective but as unobtrusive as possible and only as extensive as necessary. If the building is too security conscious it runs the risk of incurring the depersonalized atmosphere which can encourage rather than deter abuse, and it does too, there is no question of this. Walk into a building that looks like a jolly prison and you end up damaging it and getting put in one. I strongly believe people respond to a cheerful and attractive environment in positive ways. They protect what's

beautiful, just as they deface what isn't. That's not a completely idealistic statement, but I wouldn't discount it and I have been around long enough in my trade to know that its a fact. A clean appearance, a well maintained building will increase people's pride in their environment. I believe a particular attention should be given to the following design criteria. I am going to give you a list of them to assist the discussion groups of this seminar. I am going to put them under seven headings.

The seven headings are:

- * Roadwork planning
- * Detailed planning
- * Internal Circulation
- * Landscaping
- * Applied chemicals
- * Materials
- * Components

Roadwork planning - external circulation, that includes pedestrian circulation. In the field of vehicles, there are community vehicles, people with wheelchairs, with crutches and other means. We must allow pedestrians as much freedom of movement as possible to provide the privacy expected and for the property to be respected. In other words, you have to give free movement and it comes back to the defensive, I don't agree that we should fence off buildings. We should allow free movement but where there are areas that have to be secure they should be fenced and fenced properly. Fences are the biggest joke in my opinion because really and truly a fence only encourages people to climb over it or cut the jolly thing. Most fences are just 4ft to 6ft high and you see a sports ground surrounded by fences which are almost a temptation to climb over. The number of vehicles should be reduced to a minimum avoiding long straight roads that become lane traps; that will allow pedestrians greater freedom and obviously more safety. More importantly, of course, one should not encourage vehicles into particular localities such as school grounds.

In other words keep the roads out of the design and out of the design complexes. I support the concept that the closer the building can get to the community and the community can get to the building the better. The two divisions are, of course, the criteria and the materials. Building complexes should be planned so that renovations are minimal and should be constructed from non-susceptible materials in a spaced high rise area. It has been proved, particularly in Europe and to a lesser extent in the Eastern States and to a much lesser extent here, that buildings that are obtrusively placed in high rise areas or high density living spaces are generally vandalised much more heavily. This particularly applies to the faces of the buildings that face those high density areas.

A local government officer supported this from the floor.

Detailed planning - in regard to lighting, internal lighting. Vandals prefer to work in areas that are not overlooked or are too dark in which to be observed, that's obvious. It is desirable to provide as much natural daylighting as possible because it provides for more varying and interesting surfaces and it is less costly to provide. Also it allows for better illumination; it eliminates dark nooks and crannies through the building. Artificial lighting should be made as varied and as interesting as possible and any high lighting should be provided from accessible sources. External lighting, obviously half illuminated areas should be avoided as much as totally dark areas should be avoided, particularly if it is in a high risk areas. I refer to a previous speaker who talked about high risk areas: that's why certain schools have alarm systems. A high level of illumination should be provided with these high risk buildings but generally speaking high level illumination external to a building is undesirable. One it is a jolly expensive element and second I have heard police officers say it even shows the vandals where to go. The internal circulation should be reduced to a minimum, particularly the internal corridors of buildings and

of course the use of vertical circulation. The theme to avoid in planning a building is to have a lot of corridors. You end up with a series of passage ways almost invariably. These spaces are where the vandal could gain external entry to the various elements. So, use for example internal sliding doors. The other side of the ledger on that point of course is that all external doorways could be entered. The answer to that is that we don't have locks on these doors which you can lock from the outside. One has one lock for the building and that's a dead lock; all other door locks are only locks on the inside with fasteners, bolts and so on. So there is only one door which you can lock in the building even though there are dozens of other doors which are external.

We talked about vehicular circulation. It is also important to examine circulation within the building in terms of particularly attractive areas to vandals. Last Sunday I was in Karratha where a part of one of my newest schools was burnt down. Vandals got into the canteen. The new building had been open for four days, vandals got in, into the canteen, forced the window and burnt part of the building down. They knew a function was coming up at the weekend and there were a lot of lollies there. Its just a rather disastrous example of current vandalism. It demonstrates how one should try and reduce the blazing to a minimum by considering the possibility of planning the building so that elements of accommodation have very little or no common front onto any foreseeable high risk areas. Again where a high risk area in a building is that which is hidden away from the passing parade (such as the car park) we should try and avoid windows which can be easily vandalised. Cheap fibreglass should not be provided because of course it can easily be broken and damaged to gain access to the building. Small hidden recesses could be avoided, service gates should be provided. Strong rooms should always be internal, where you must have security, you have a need for security stores, and lightweight construction is a waste of time. Most important of course, security rooms should be located internally.

Landscaping - with hard surfacing and top dressing. Obviously for circulation reasons we need hard surfacing. You can see around this room of course, hard surfacing it looks enjoyable but one can't afford to do that everywhere as it destroys the environment so much. Soft surfacing on the other hand is very susceptible to vandalism. I have an office in West Perth and all my hanging baskets are gone in two months, but they haven't stolen the native which has actually been planted. I was in Melbourne yesterday and we were discussing landscaping for some shopping centres. Vandals are so bad in Sydney that the councils literally insist on using mature plants. They dig holes and they really rip the concrete to put plants into position because the people tend to get at them. Generally speaking any loose items, hanging baskets are a waste of time. But why do people damage them? This must be one of the most interesting things for you to discuss today.

We can now move on to applied chemicals, materials and components. Paints and varnishes can be damaged by writing, slashing and gouging. Many substances are not weather proof and though maintenance may be easy it is frequently necessary. We have to be careful where we apply them and try and choose good colour, good base finishes as these are often more acceptable. We may apply finishes to asbestos, metal and aluminium and so on. They all tend to dent, break-down, crack. Some materials like asbestos get brittle with age and tend to deteriorate rapidly. People are tending to use plastics more now where it can take a bit of treatment and generally retain its shape, but even that is not fairly good really. Applied materials such as ceramic wall tiles or mosaics are very easily damaged and of course should never be used in high risk buildings like public toilets. Individual tiles can be gouged off. Many colours and patterns are available and of course that doesn't help the fact that they can gouge it off. The plain tile is often the worst tile from a maintenance point of view compared with a coloured or a patterned tile if you have got a vandalism problem. You will never get a plain tile around the edge of a pool, you always get a patterned tile and these are less

susceptible there. Applied coatings such as plasters and plasterboards are easily damaged by gouging and banging. Colours available are few. They may suffer badly from movement: maintenance again relatively easy but quite frequently necessary. These materials should be used in small areas where vandalism is unlikely.

Glass of course is thoroughly unsuitable. Bricks and blocks are probably the two best materials to counteract vandalism and I was distressed to hear Dr. Jean Battersby, then Chairman of the Australian Council of Arts, advocating grafitti on walls at a National Seminar in Canberra in 1974. She thought that that would help to change the pattern of damage. It is still hard to remove grafitti off bricks and blocks even with all sorts of acids. Lettering has to be designed and manufactured specially. Light fittings should be flex mounted in cages or certainly best concealed. I have designed a few jails and it is incredible the effort one puts into designing a light fitting in a cell because people do things to them. The con does seem to hop into the light fitting and I have never seen a light fitting so extensively located, its hidden away with bars.

Rainwater pipes - design for these to stay in the building because thats the best spot for them. All pipe work in other words should be concealed. Where you put the system behind the wall you have a button but even then the vandal may get into the button but that is the best you can possibly do.

Mr. Gordon Shearwood, City of Stirling

Workshop Theme "Can we manage our public facilities more effectively in such a way as to minimise the cost of vandalism?"

An act of vandalism is wilful destruction or defacement of property. It is a deliberate act and, therefore, it could be said that no matter how well you plan or build, the vandal will destroy or deface anyway - so why worry - on the other hand, it might become a challenge to defeat the vandal - become an obsession and we could shut everything away, restrict movement and use 24 hour patrols - in fact, completely frighten the vandal away from public facilities - 'in fact' probably frighten 'everybody' away.

Is there a compromise - should there be a compromise? A compromise is often interpreted as a weakening - a weakness. Is it?

It could well be the common sense - most practical thing to do. Remember we are talking about public facilities, therefore, it is to be, and must be available for the public. The vandal is obviously a small minority of the people.

If a public facilities is not being used - it can fall into disrepair and be subject to vandalism and one could question its need. On the other hand - a useful public facility considered essential - but infrequently used can, and usually is, the subject for attack.

It is considered that serious thought - planning - must be given to public facilities and I make specific reference to Park Management.

The Neighbourhood Park, the local Sports Ground or Garden, the Regional and National Parks from .5 ha to 10,000 ha - we must not be restrictive in our thinking regarding size, type or purpose of a Park. They cater for the whole age population and from the 'Park around the corner' to the Park 'a day's drive away'.

The location of a Park cannot always be planned, although in more recent years Town Planning Schemes have achieved planned locations. Significant natural features requiring preservation are not planned locations in one sense, but are acquired and their location is not of the prime importance, it being the feature that is.

Parks should be planned to achieve their function - standards of development demanded - and the development maintained. Irrespective of vandals - through just good wear and tear - a park or sports ground will deteriorate is over used - so we must plan for utilisation and develop facilities to what the park is capable of performing - over development is a worse

feature than under development - if it deteriorates - its an attraction to wilfully destroy or deface. Facilities must be planned - if you want people in the park - provide for the car - otherwise the car (and driver) is accused as the vandal. If you don't want cars in the park or parts of it - you have to plan to keep them out.

Landscaping, with plants, rocks, contours, other physical barriers, fences, unmountable kerbs. Signs warn but do not prevent. No use having a path wide enough for pedestrians and cars too without a barrier to prevent the car - one post perhaps. Remember the wide age range - parks are not restricted to the 'old uns' or Mum and the pre-school child.

Why can't the playground equipment cater for the wide age group - if not planned and designed properly the old ones 'teenagers' will use it - break it and be accused as vandals!

Should we have the sign 'Keep of the grass'?

Why can't the kids play ball games in the local neighbourhood park.

Perhaps we don't provide the right kind of facility within the park.

Seats, lights, rubbish bins, siting of buildings, placement of trees, shrubberies must be considered to make the park functional but to be so placed to minimise the temptation of the vandal.

Standards of Development. Park work must be robust - yet pleasant and useful - be prepared to meet a capital cost to ensure to maintain a standard. 'The lowest tender is not always the right tender'

Be prepared to stage works programmes to achieve a better standard, rather than finish the job 'to get it out of the way'.

Don't be pressurised by demand groups to produce - just because - its O.K. for the kids at home, why shouldn't it be O.K. for the kids in the park - good example is playground equipment standards.

The equipment, if poor, can fall to pieces, but the vandals are blamed again. Windows should be protected but they don't need forbidding iron bars - these could lead to a challenge - selection of materials used must be considered.

'Maintenance' of developed areas - natural areas - preserves areas - must be introduced - no area maintains itself which people use. The area must be serviced. Standards of maintenance reflect on people's respect for areas.

Without question, some parks/reserves are 'frail areas' and everyone must be kept out - including vandals. Unfortunately, many are tempted and some form of 'policing' must be available for prevention and apprehension. The public generally respect public facilities - law and order - but are frightened of the vandal - are reluctant to contact authorities - or have the attitude 'She's right Jack - someone else would have rung'. We must respond and respect public interest.

Whilst we mightn't want to advertise the crime - perhaps some blunt facts about the guilty one and penalty might be a deterrent and encouragement to the public to accept more responsibility. No matter how well you plan, develop and maintain Park Managers cannot do it alone - the public, the courts, the parents, the children, authorities, schools must all maintain a relationship and a responsible attitude towards 'wilful' destruction.

Yes, planning involves not just an academic design but a practicable understanding to include Management Techniques or Strategies within the planned development.

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN TUESDAY NOVEMBER 7 1978

MRD AFTER A TOUGHER LINE

The Main Roads Department is looking for vandal-resistant telephones to replace the destroyed network which once enabled motorists to summon help on Kwinana Freeway.

The last of a dozen phones along the freeway went out of action and was removed in August. When the new pattern telephone is found it will also be installed on Mitchell Freeway.

An MRD officer said yesterday that contracts for the replacement and the new installation along the Mitchell Freeway would not be written till next year.

Several patterns, including the United Kingdom type where the instrument is set behind a stainless steel plate, were being studied in an effort to find a telephone to beat the vandals.

"There is no such thing as a vandal-proof anything," he said.

The former telephones on the Kwinana Freeway were used to call fire and ambulance services as well as the emergency breakdown service of the Royal Automobile Club.

They suffered over the years not only from malicious damage, but from cable damage caused by subsidence.

When the new network is installed all calls will go to the RAC headquarters. Calls for fire and ambulance will be sent on from there.

Formerly the calls were routed by a security firm.

GROUP 1DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is there a relationship between the affluence of society and an increasing level of vandalism ?
2. Does advertising encourage vandalism ?
3. Community service orders involve supervisory problems. How can these problems best be met ?
4. Is lighting a deterrent to vandalism ?
5. Should Rangers have trained patrol dogs ?

DISCUSSION GROUP MEMBERS

Discussion Leader : Mr. A. WOODCOCK
Scribe : Mr. Richard MAY
Speaker : Mr. J. DAVENPORT

Mr. Robert COOKE
 Mr. D. HUGHES
 Mr. I. JELINER
 Mr. Peter SHARP
 Mr. T.N. TREWIN
 Mr. Steven WOOD

Mobility was seen by the group to be the key between affluence and vandalism. Mobility gives anonymity to vandals and makes detection of vandalism harder. There is an obvious connection between age groups and trail bikes : the group of teenagers and sub-teenagers in the trail bike cult seem to be obviously associated with a great deal of unnecessary environmental damage. Parents who can 'afford' these machines encourage (in their ignorance) much environmental damage. There is an identification problem involved, accentuated by mobility, in that environmental vandals are unable to relate themselves to their environment, or the environment (in the case of trail bikes) where they are active.

Mobility reflects a change in attitudes through much of the community. While vandalism is a perennial problem, increasing costs may be at

least partially attributed to mobility. The effect of mobility on peer group adulation is also difficult to quantify but the discussion group felt there was a probable correlation of increased affluence with vandalism largely through enhanced mobility.

The group took this question in terms of the media. Two forms of advertising were noted. Firstly the straight reporting of incidents of vandalism often has a promotional effect because a cost is not associated with the message. Often it seems as though the media pretend that costs don't exist in relation to the incidents reported. The second type involves the forms of media presentation. Some types of films and of books reflect negative attitudes towards property. Playing down vandalism does not stop it. It may be that a direct form of advertising which relates the cost of vandalism may provide a means of cutting it down by inducing a new form of challenge.

In this connection advertising of the enforcement of penalties is important as is the means whereby offences may be notified. For example for local government a specific person in the office should be available to take the report and 'after hours' phone numbers should also be published. Correlated with changes in the forms of vandalism are the types of changes in design the meeting has heard about. It may be that society requires a more liberal set of reward schemes to help combat vandalism.

The group noted an inevitable reluctance of parents and of the wider community to be involved in this area. Parents need to be involved and to relate to children's offences and subsequent penalties. Supervision of the execution of the penalty is required at two levels, both at the council level and by way of parental involvement. Community service orders are praiseworthy in aim but suffer from supervisory problems in enforcing penalties. Perhaps active involvement of community service groups e.g. Apex, Lions etc., could be seen as part of community participation in supervisory tasks.

Vandalproof lighting is a deterrent otherwise lighting may be an aid to vandals. Lighting can act as an attractant : groups may congregate and congregation may induce other problems. Secondary effects of lighting (e.g. whether locations are lit or unlit) are part of the overall social problems of young people who are unable to identify themselves with established outlets (sports etc.)

On the question of trained dogs it was considered that rangers do not have the time to undertake training. There seems to be no real need for a dog in most circumstances and there are problems associated with how far is dog aggression to be taken. The whole area depends largely on particular circumstances in a given location. Where there are particular problems that only a trained patrol dog can help out in then they have a role.

GROUP 2DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Should we always design for the average ?
2. Should Rangers be preventative officers or should they have an educational role ?
3. What are the implications of community service orders for workers compensation payments ?
4. Should minors be named in reporting of court proceedings related to vandalism ?
5. How can the suppression of vandalism be rewarded ?

DISCUSSION GROUP MEMBERS

Discussion Leader : Mr. L.A. VICARY
Scribe : Mr. Sri RAMANATHAN
Speaker : Mr. A. WEBSTER

Mr. G. BONAKEY

Mr. J. EVANS

Mr. C. KINCH

Mr. Murray ROGERS

Mr. E. ELLIOT

Mr. C. MEYLE

Design should fit the circumstances - that is the features of the locality should be considered, with perhaps the main emphasis on preservation of public open space. The group felt that undoubtedly Rangers should have an educational role and that this aspect of their work would generally be of the first priority. However this, second, question suggested to group members that more publicity should be given to offenders. Convictions and public knowledge of convictions are likely to be more of a deterrent than simply smacking the hand of a small boy.

Injury incurred during community work should be covered by the Government. The analogy was drawn with imprisonment where an offender

would be covered. The consensus was then that offenders should be covered by workers compensation. The matter of funding was not considered.

The group felt that first offenders should not be named in proceedings, but that for subsequent offences the persons involved should be named. Other modes of dealing with offenders may have some merit also.

The suppression of vandalism may best be rewarded by public participation in public services. The group noted that the more the public is involved then the less the chances are that acts of vandalism occur.

GROUP 3DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How should hours of community work be valued in relation to damage caused ?
2. What is the responsibility of the citizen who observes an act of vandalism ?
3. Should teachers be informed of the names of vandals ?
4. Is it possible to construct a vandal-proof building ?
5. Would more frequent patrolling combat the rate of vandalism ?

DISCUSSION GROUP MEMBERS

Discussion Leader : Mr. J. DAVIES

Scribe : Mr. C. HAWKINS

Speaker : Mr. Stan SAXON

Mr. B. BEECH

Mr. R. DAWBARN

Mr. Alan DOLPHIN

Mr. Ken HUNTER

Mr. G. GOBA

Mr. T. KEATING

The group considered that community work would be of little value in the case of a chronic offender : imprisonment has no substitute for the hardened individual who repeatedly offends. The type of punishment given under community work was likely to be very valuable for younger people and for first offenders in particular for whom the act of vandalism may have been an isolated aberration.

The question of whether the magistrate or the supervisory officer should set the length of time was discussed. In some cases clearly a task ought to be finished for the principle to have been established, rather than that a fixed time duration merely elapsed. There was

felt to be considerable difficulty in the way of L.G.A. people being able to effectively administer community ordered work. In some countries the system has failed because the people who administer the scheme do not ensure that offenders complete the task.

In N.Z. the system apparently works well : considerable thought is given to appropriate work e.g. a person making malicious hoaxing fire calls put to work in the fire station. Inconvenience to the offender is an important point in rehabilitating him.

All agreed that it is the citizens' responsibility to report acts of vandalism. However people are not prepared to be involved or to speak out. Peer group pressure is seen as important in the problem of responsibility - groups motivated by fear of derision or physical harm may not respond well. Society must motivate people to take more responsibility : one way being by making it easy to report offences. We all know the incredible delays that may occur while an official seeks to note down a few facts.

Teachers should be informed of the names of vandals. When they are aware of such things teachers can then supervise and assist the child accordingly.

No, it is not possible to create a vandal - proof building.

It was felt that more frequent patrolling could reduce the amount of vandalism. It would not completely solve the problem. The cost would be prohibitive and the rate of vandalism could be more simply reduced if citizens were more highly motivated to take action.

GROUP 4DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Should authorities take out vandalism insurance ? Can we reasonably budget for a vandalism cost as a proportion of public budgets ?
2. Can high maintenance overcome the effects of vandalism ?
3. Should vandals be banned from driving ?
4. How can vandalism be affected by advertising ?
5. Should parents be permitted to pay fines for their children ?

DISCUSSION GROUP MEMBERS

Discussion Leader : Mrs. KETTLE

Speaker : Mr. Alf COOMBS

Mr. R.H. POUND

Mr. Peter KEOGH

Miss Katie PEARCE

Mr. Steven PRICE

Mr. K.W. SMITH

Mr. E. TIPPING

Mr. V. FONTANA

The group supported the motion of insurance against vandalism. Where public facilities are funded from ratepayer levies then protection should be mandatory.

Dealing with the second question the group noted that high maintenance depends on the facility concerned. The public could be made aware of the beauty of trees and surroundings. Under many circumstances maintenance should be effected as soon as possible even if this involves some higher costs. Leaving vandalised facilities unrepaired may well be counter - productive : emphasis should therefore be placed on speedy restitution.

Driving incidents related to vandalism include, as an example, driving on public parks and causing damage to turf. There is a certain amount of existing deterrence under regulations of the Traffic Act. The group felt that persons causing damage by taking motor vehicles (etc.) onto public space should be banned from driving. The length of time involved would need to be related to the severity of the offence.

Regarding advertising of vandalism the group considered that the media generally needed to take a more responsible, community orientated approach. There are a number of ways in which commercial advertisements may seem to condone vandalism by depicting a slap-dash approach to public facilities.

The fifth question 'should parents be permitted to pay fines for their children' was found to be a difficult topic for consensus to be reached. In general the group felt that as a principle parents should not be allowed to pay fines but that the children should pay their own way by being obliged to make up for the damage caused. That is by undertaking a work programme related to the damage. This would involve supervision which could cost the community money. However the deterrent effect of compulsory restorative work was considered to be of high value. The system would need to be correlated with an educational programme.

GROUP 5DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is it desirable to give immediate media coverage to acts of vandalism ?
2. What is required of a vandal-proof light ?
3. How can fines and penalties affect vandalism ?
4. Should the vandal be given work directly related to what he has damaged ?
5. What is the responsibility of the parent in training his children ?

DISCUSSION GROUP MEMBERS

Discussion Leader : Mr. J. O'BRIEN
Scribe : Prof. HUGO-BRUNT
Speaker : Mr. Trevor WADDINGTON

Mr. L. DUNGATE
 Mr. J. EGGLISTON
 Mr. I.T. McCAUGHAN
 Mr. David SEARS
 Mr. Peter WANKEY
 Mr. DRAYSON

The group felt that media coverage in general was not to be recommended. The reasons being that it too often tends to encourage further similar actions and also gives the culprit publicity. In some cases this may well be why the vandalism occurred that is someone seeking notoriety or to draw attention to their existence. Under some circumstances media coverage may be useful in leading to apprehension of an offender. It is also necessary to promote public awareness of the magnitude of acts of vandalism. The

style of media coverage was also felt to be important and sensationalism was denigrated. The authority concerned by an act of vandalism must carefully consider how best to use the media in particular instances.

The most useful approach to vandal-proofing of lights was considered to be the use of plastic sheeting. This could be useful in resisting instantaneous acts of vandalism. Different locations require different treatments but as far as possible lights should be concealed, inaccessible, completely safe and effective.

The group felt that our court systems seem to be overloaded and that we probably have little alternative to the letting loose of first offenders. It was far better to attempt some form of productive community work.

Vandals should be given work directly related to the damage perpetrated. This is a better alternative to the use of fines and penalties. Used wisely we stand a chance of producing a useful member of society. If the vandal were asked to help with maintenance of the unit he would become aware of its value.

Parents provide tender love and care, their responsibility is obvious. Must we teach parents that they have a responsibility to their children? An example of responsibility was given by the presence at the meeting of a school Principal, a member of the school P and C and a son of that member. Where responsibility is lacking then perhaps incentives can be devised. In general many parents do not assume sufficient responsibility and all of us, in our own communities, need to encourage responsibility in others.

GROUP 6DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is there an association between unemployment and vandalism ?
2. Should P and C groups take a more active role in seeking to minimise vandalism ?
3. In community service ordered work should the tasks be given individually or may they be shared with other culprits or paid employees ?
4. What features of public signs tend to inhibit vandalism ?
5. How can people be educated to take a pride in or to value public facilities ?

DISCUSSION GROUP MEMBERS

Discussion Leader : Mr. SCOTT
Scribe : Mr. Francis LOBO
Speaker : Mr. Nick BELL

Mr. A. AUSTIN

Mr. G. DONOVAN

Mr. Brian GROUT

Mr. John HARRIS

Mr. P. SURR

Mrs. Laura TOLLIDAY

The group discussed the question of age groups involved and found that unemployment may lead to crime generally. Vandalism was perhaps more likely with younger age groups through unemployment causing frustration : boredom and idleness often being pre-requisites for wanton damage to occur. However the lines are blurred and we can't assume all the young are vandals, that the adults are in the pubs : vandalism often takes place after closing time and drinking is a group activity. Vandalism is not homogeneous in nature but

there is general association between unemployment and vandalism.

P&C groups can take a more active role in seeking to minimise vandalism. Suburbia may tend to be impersonal and by encouraging participation the P&C can lead to more people identifying themselves with the community. Perhaps the P&C could go out and positively identify problems and then seek to involve people in positive programmes. There is a great need to cater for individuals who, for whatever reason, feel themselves to be on the periphery. The P&C can to some extent assist with surveillance but the vigilante approach should be avoided and the problem of creating castouts borne in mind

This question brought a divided response. The majority felt that culprits should be integrated into the work force while the task was being undertaken. Minority views were that tasks should be undertaken individually and that some choice should be available to the offender. The main points noted were that it was undoubtedly counterproductive to put the offenders together and highly desirable to avoid a supervisor/culprit relationship. The task is surely one of seeking to change attitudes while doing the job and bringing shame into the work could reflect badly on this and on the culprits' appreciation of the value of the work. On the other hand when offenders can see that society puts a value on the work caused by vandalism (or related maintenance) inevitably they become aware of the costs involved. Cash should be returned to society to re-inforce this.

In general most signs that are erected are inhibitory to actions we might take (no parking etc.). They tend to warn us, to guide us off, and hence play little role as a deterrent to a potential or committed vandal.

Welcoming signs with less arrogance can be considered an improvement and may be less likely to be vandalised.

People will appreciate public facilities if they can participate. This can be done in planning and programming activities as well as by bringing people to established events or locales. The aim should be to involve everyone according to their requirements e.g. if a need exists for a drag race track then provide one. There is a much better response to public issues today than in earlier periods. However councils need to ensure that people understand and appreciate how local government works.

GROUP 7DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Does good design inhibit vandalism ?
2. How should vehicles be controlled in public places ?
3. Should schools be involved in punishment under the community service order ?
4. When vandalism occurs in association with a civic event should it be reported along with the coverage of the event ?
5. What features do vandal-free societies have that we could emulate ?

DISCUSSION GROUP MEMBERS

Scribe : Mr. F. WARREN
Speaker : Mr. K. BROWN

Mr. Ross BOWMAN
 Mr. Arthur BRAY
 Mr. C. HORROCKS
 Mr. M.O'CONNOR
 Mr. G. PRESS
 Mr. R. HARRISON
 Mr. J. DAWSON

On the question of design the group objected to the word 'good' as being open to too much variation in interpretation. A more appropriate question would have been "does practical design inhibit vandalism?" Very often we tend to put up a facility to some pre-conceived design and then introduce the users to it. Many reports coming back to local authorities suggest that often the users (children particularly) don't necessarily require very elaborately designed facilities. They frequently tend to require more simple or basic structures. Secondly the practice of providing social amenity rooms/meeting rooms in conjunction with changing rooms is

often not very practical. People come off the field or court in a boisterous mood and the noise and jostling associated with change rooms tends to spill over into the more formal rooms. This may cause nuisance to other groups or lead to unnecessary damage. These two kinds of facilities should be separated even though additional capital expenditure may be involved. Change rooms should be of a very basic design, omitting all glass.

Conventional methods of controlling vehicles in public places seemed to be reasonably adequate. The major problem was seen to be the control of off-road vehicles. Even with licensing the problem of control was considered to be very difficult e.g. how can an R.T.A. patrol-man get onto a sandhill? Clearly the authorities would need to equip their staff with similar vehicles that could also use the terrain being exploited by O.R.V's.

The operation of community service orders was felt to be extremely difficult. Group members with local government experience felt that involvement in punishment should not be the responsibility of the authority and rather than schools being involved it was suggested that service clubs may be the best way of obtaining responsible community based supervision. While everyone individually agrees that the system is a good idea no groups so far have embraced the methods wholeheartedly and the problems generated have incurred much dissatisfaction amongst those who have been involved in supervision.

On the question of reporting vandalism in association with a civic event the group considered that generally media treatment tended to give greater coverage to the disruption than to the event disrupted. This is not the way it should be. Not enough emphasis is placed on the event and attention drawn to vandalism tends to promote, amongst the larrikin or disruptive elements, a feeling that this is the way to gain publicity or draw attention to themselves. Clearly the civic event should attract the most coverage and disruption should be placed in context.

Dealing with the last question the group could come forward with no suggestions at all.

GROUP 8DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Should authorities publicise the cost of vandalism ? For example should authorities distinguish between the costs of maintenance and vandalism in budgets ?
2. What design principles can be adopted to minimise the cost of removing paint sprayed by vandals ?
3. Should there be parental involvement in ordered community work by young offenders ?
4. What is the role of the media in spreading vandalism ?
5. Should the culprit be responsible for the total cost of damage ?

DISCUSSION GROUP MEMBERS

Discussion Leader : Mr. Dick LEGGO
Scribe : Mrs. Val BRAY
Speaker : Mr. Alf ALLISON

Mr. J. MUNN

Mr. Gary BROWN

Mr. Peter LUFF

Mr. Shaw

Mr. Rob WALSTER

Mr. Jeff SMITH

Mr. D. MCKAY

How should authorities publicise vandalism ? To define the cost of vandalism may be a difficult exercise because there are many hidden costs involved. There should be a difference between the presentation of routine maintenance costs and costs directly attributable to vandalism. For example following up complaints can be a straightforward method. A pool could be allocated for a given area and then the extent of drawing from this fund could be made known to the local ratepayer. A distinction has to be made between items broken or damaged following use by children

of the wrong age group. Here the authorities need to be concerned with design - stronger materials in the structure may mean little damage from misuse. Keeping an account of vandalism costs should be a useful exercise for the public official. He can then show the public the costs involved for example in a recreation programme when funding is scarce and priorities allocated, clearly areas of public misuse should be wound back.

Design principles should be critically examined at the construction stage. In particular the type of surfaces to be applied to areas open to the public and obviously vulnerable to vandalism should be given careful consideration. The problem is often a technical one and warrants technical solutions. For example a rough concrete surface may be a deterrent to ball pen or sharp pointed instrument damage but would be difficult to clean of aerosol spray paint. Silicon surfaces applied to brickwork may be easier to clean off.

The group considered that if parents offered to support the child under the community work it would give a much more positive result. The choice of a fine is not wholly appropriate even though problems of supervision will arise if fines are no longer levied.

The media was considered under two heads with most emphasis on television. Firstly what might be referred to as the border-entertainment type. This does have a behavioural impression on people and considerable responsibility needs to be exercised by the media.

Secondly much coverage focusses on particular acts of vandalism in a sensationalist manner. For example close-up shots of broken glass at the bottom of slides. Bringing this into the home generates discussion amongst the family and alerts mothers of young children to possible hazards. However it may also generate duplication by some of the young people watching the programme. The media need to pay particular attention to their ability in stimulating social behaviour.

The culprit may not be able to meet the cost of vandalism caused. However there needs to be some indication from the court of methods by which restitution may be attempted, by the child directly concerned.

Perhaps the culprit himself could be invited to indicate how he would propose to make amendment and then this undertaking could be considered prior to delivery of sentence.

GROUP 9DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Under community service orders can a distinction be made between working hours and weekend tasks ?
2. What are the ideal guidelines for public toilets ?
3. 1979 is a special year. What can the government of W.A. do in the way of planning to minimise vandalism which may give a poor impression to visitors ?
4. What role can parents play in preventing vandalism ?
5. Are publicly sponsored campaigns likely to be satisfactory or self-defeating ?

DISCUSSION GROUP MEMBERS

Discussion Leader : Dr. Paul WYCHERLEY

Speaker : Mr. Rod BAYLISS

Mr. M. HARDING

Mr. D. GOOD

Mr. John HANN

Mr. Greg MILLER

Mr. J. PRIES

Mr. K.K. TAYLOR-THORPE

Mr. Brett KETTLE

Mr. Peter KITCHEN

Delinquents have to do work under community service orders after hours, in the main. Various organisations have offered their assistance in supervising tasks. There may be a case for young people to be given tasks in working hours during school holidays.

Work under community service orders should involve reconstruction of damaged property when possible. The creative tasks of making

or repairing items may lead to more chance of rehabilitation. Cleaning up tasks need more careful supervision and planning in relation to the damage caused. Wherever possible the offender should personally confront the damage perpetrated, and his family should be brought in if possible.

Some concern was expressed that a special effort should be made to get offenders involved in such things as organised games.

One of the main problems with public toilets is the universal desire to put them out of the way and to suggest that we don't use them. They should be out in the open where people can see them : exposed and visible (cf Clochmerle). The basic design should be aesthetically appealing : it should be designed to fit into the area. All plumbing should be concealed and the favoured basic construction would be of solid material e.g. pre-cast concrete. Stainless steel bowls; good (concealed) lighting; avoid tiling; ceiling and roof in one part.

For the special year, 1979, the group felt that the State Government should allow no erection of advertising hoardings or signs, which are aesthetically unattractive and not strictly necessary. Every effort should be made to achieve personal involvement so that people do not feel left out and hence likely to resort to vandalism.

Parents can encourage their children by their own example to indulge in more creative activities and to participate in functions and other community affairs.

The group felt that there was a good case for more communal use of school facilities. For example the school library could be open to the public, the sporting facilities more available, and some creative uses arranged for utilising the buildings otherwise unused for 11 weeks each year.

Campaigns need to be promoted via the media in a confident and

professional manner. They can be satisfactory and successful if well organised in such a way that young people (particularly) can identify themselves imaginatively with, for example, community organisations. The motivation of the campaign should emphasise that vandalism costs everyone money for repair, in diversion of resources and loss of enjoyment.

GROUP 10DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What publicity is most appropriate in relation to vandalism ?
2. Can fittings (e.g. phone boxes, fountains), be satisfactorily situated in isolated or remote places ?
3. Should we provide facilities for 'soft' vandalism, e.g. graffitti ?
4. Is group work under community service orders likely to be satisfactory ?
5. Who are the vandals ? What are the implications ?

DISCUSSION GROUP MEMBERS

Discussion Leader : Mr. I. COX
Scribe : Mr. G.J. COX
Speaker : Mr. Kevin JENNINGS

Mr. P. DEAGUE
 Mrs. GRIBBLE
 Mr. Jeff KELLY
 Mr. E. WITWER
 Mr. I. OSBORNE
 Mr. Laurie MURNANE
 Mr. Keith KENDRICK

The media provides the most appropriate publicity arm in relation to vandalism. The emphasis should be on the costs of vandalism so that the public realise what the personal costs amount to. Such an approach could encourage people to be more forthcoming about reporting acts of vandalism. The group suggested that a similar campaign to 'Life Be In It' may be warranted, and felt that sensationalism was not the way to inform the public of vandalism.

The group agreed that fittings (e.g. phone boxes) could not be

satisfactorily located in isolated or remote places. However such facilities have to be provided to the public and must be placed in such areas. Large organisations (e.g. Telecom) undertake surveys to determine the most appropriate locations.

Adequate lighting and closeness to main roads are two factors of importance in choosing location.

The group felt that things like grafitti boards were useless and not worthwhile. The average vandal would go and vandalise something else. In the U.S.A. some enormous grafitti boards have been erected but there is more grafitti on toilet walls in the vicinity.

Groupwork under community service orders was felt to be likely to be satisfactory. To be effective they should be seen as both a penalty and as a process of re-education. Provided the work is correctly supervised it is likely to benefit the majority. The spin off effect was considered to be most valuable. An offender's mates would see that he went off to undertake the work, and next time an adventure involving vandalism was suggested, hopefully they would say no, I don't want to have to do such and such afterwards.

Who are the vandals ? While recognising that persons of all ages could undertake malicious damage the group placed most emphasis on the age group 10-18 years. In present society people in this age group

- a) steal motor cars
- or b) have the facility to travel from place to place.

Closing Remarks -

Gordon Shearwood thanked all the participants for having given up their Saturday morning to attend the Workshop.

CLOSING OF WORKSHOP

Thanks to members of the Institute's Education Sub-Committee for its efforts in preparing and presenting this Workshop.

To all of you for participating and assisting others through your discussion.

Thanks to the Group Discussion Leaders, the Scribes and the Group Reporters.

Special thanks to the speakers who commenced our Workshop David Merryweather, Harry Pearson, Norman Adams and Peter Hunt.

Last, but no means least, to John Fox for his excellent Chairmanship this morning and for the personal effort involved in the preparation.

The Institute has been pleased to promote this Workshop and I trust you have considered it worthwhile.

This burns us up!

A historic railway carriage has been destroyed by fire at the Castledare Boys Home. The carriage was of immense historical importance and valued at \$10,000.

The secretary of the miniature railway voluntary workers, Mr Reg Barthrop, said: "We are all very upset by the amount of vandalism done to the railway during the last 18 months."

However, the co-ordinator of Castledare Boys Home, Mr Macnamara, said that he did not believe that vandals had burned the carriage.

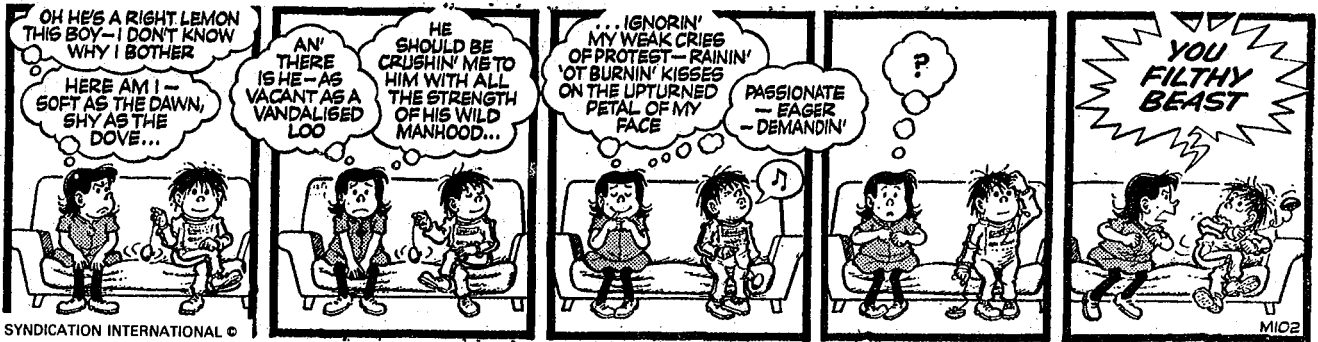
One railway car and two trams have also been destroyed by fire, and last year the train shed was broken into and the track damaged.



Picture by Paul Costello

MISS K. PEARCE
STUDENT
W. A. I. T.

THE PERISHERS



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MOVE ON PARK VANDALISM

RAC worry on car-use penalties

The Royal Automobile Club is worried about the charges laid against unauthorised users of motor vehicles and the penalties offenders receive.

The general manager of the RAC, Mr W. J. Solloway, said yesterday that legally a person was not considered to be stealing a car unless it could be proved that the person intended to retain the vehicle taken.

In most cases offenders were charged with unauthorised use of a vehicle. Usually the offenders were fined.

Mr Solloway said that many of the offenders were juveniles. They were usually fined and their parents or guardians paid the fine.

The RAC believed that a more appropriate penalty would be weekend work on community projects.

The loss of weekend liberty would be considered more serious by young offenders than a fine that they did not have to pay.

In many cases, the offenders should be charged with stealing.

[On Thursday, an 18-year-old youth was fined more than \$1200 on charges arising from the unauthorised use of three motor vehicles. Other charges included four counts of driving without a driver's licence and giving a false name. He was placed on probation for three years on forging and stealing charges.]

The Kings Park Board appears likely to be given power to curb vandalism and other offences in the park.

The power will be provided in amendments to the Parks and Reserves Act. The Minister for Lands, Mrs Craig, plans to introduce the changes in the current session of the State Parliament.

Mrs Craig said she knew of the incidence of vandalism in the park. The results reduced the public's enjoyment of the park.

Mrs Craig said: "Some members of the public may think they are menaced by larrikins, though actual abuse and threats of violence seem to have

been limited in general to those against the staff who have to enforce the by-laws.

"The situation is kept under regular review but any appraisal must be realistic in the light of available finance."

She was replying to Mr T. H. Bateman (Lab., Canning) who asked if extra rangers would be provided in the park during weekends and holidays to reduce vandalism and protect the public's right to enjoyment of the park.

THE WEST AUSTRALIAN MONDAY SEPTEMBER 25 1978

New schools to have strongrooms

By ALLAN HALE

Future State schools will have windowless strongrooms with mesh-reinforced ceilings.

This is an Education Department acknowledgement that schools now contain valuable electronic equipment which is a prime target for thieves.

The State's deputy director-general of education, Mr S. W. Woods, says nobody knows how much electronic equipment is stolen from schools.

Provision of electronic aids, ranging from tape cassettes to video players, was a \$98,000 item last year and is allotted \$179,000 in this year's Budget.

Such equipment, particularly for libraries, is also bought by school parent and citizen associations.

This means that claims against insurance which are made by the department for lost equipment do not represent a picture of the losses, Mr Woods says.

BREAK-INS

There were 420 break-ins at State schools last year.

That figure does not include intrusions on

sports fields and lavatories.

Mr Peter Barrett, the department superintendent of buildings, says that adults are thought to be responsible for only a small proportion of the offences reported.

Principals reporting on 400 incidents judged that adults were involved in only 22 cases.

In 25 of the 680 schools administered by the department, sensory alarm systems have been installed. These react to body temperature and movement.

In one case they proved sensitive enough to detect a mouse, Mr Barrett said.

Caretakers still live on the premises at some schools.

Mr Barrett said that one of the best safeguards was community use of a school outside school hours.

Country schools, where the buildings might be expected to form a focus of community activity, had a much better record of freedom from break-in and vandalism than city schools.

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