

# 3am terror raid on Subi family

By LOUISA HARDING

**A young Subiaco family woke at 3am last Saturday to find their two-storey home was being broken into by a gang who threatened to kill them if they came downstairs.**

The family – Gary, Melissa and their two-year-old son Alex – barricaded themselves in the upstairs en suite as the men roamed around the downstairs area of their Heytsbury Road house.

“We definitely had moments of panic when we felt they were going to come upstairs to get us,” said Gary, who doesn’t want his surname published.

Gary and his heavily pregnant fiancée Melissa were woken by a loud banging noise, as the intruders forced the deadlocked back door open with big screwdrivers.

The couple’s bedroom is immediately above the door the men were breaking into, and a balcony from the bedroom overhangs the spot where the group was standing.

“I went out on the balcony and saw three Aboriginal men by the door, and I called out to them: ‘What the hell are you doing?’,” Gary said.

“They shouted back at me: ‘Come down here and we’ll kill you’.

“I replied ‘I’ve got a two-year-old son up here and a pregnant woman – get the hell out of here!’”

At that point, Gary said one of the men picked up a brick from the back yard and challenged him to come down there and fight them.

“I told them again: ‘I’ve got a family up here’.”

Ignoring his pleas, the three entered the house.

Melissa went to Alex’s bedroom and cradled him, terrified.

“I grabbed them both and we locked ourselves into the upstairs bathroom and called the police,” Gary said.

“I felt we were pretty safe there because the door is hung in reverse, so it opens outwards – which means it would’ve been a lot harder to force open.”

Gary called the police from inside the bathroom – and was astounded that the patrol car arrived while he was still on the phone.

But by then the gang had fled in a getaway car waiting outside the back fence of the house.

“The response from the police was amazing,” he said.

“Within 15 minutes, there were three detectives here, and within an hour there were two forensics taking fingerprints.”

Gary said he was alarmed at how undeterred the men were by his attempts to defend his family from the home invasion.

“I’m not a small man, I work as a builder,” he said.

“But it was a bit like the dog chasing a cat, then getting a shock when the cat turns around and chases the dog – these guys were just not intimidated by anything.”

Gary said he was dismayed that the men entered the house after he had confronted them, demonstrating how little impact his shouting at them had.

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Gary and his son Alex in the bathroom, where they hid from a gang that broke into their house.

# Car clue to Claremont killer

EXCLUSIVE:

BY BRET CHRISTIAN

**The description of a car feasibly used by the abductor of Claremont murder victim Ciara Glennon in 1997 is about to be released to the public for the first time.**

Ms Glennon (27) was seen interacting with an occupant of the car shortly before she disappeared from Stirling Highway around midnight on St Patrick’s Day.

Reliable witnesses saw this incident, but looked away before they saw what happened next.

When they turned back, Ms Glennon and the car were gone.

She had been drinking with work colleagues at the Continental Hotel, now the Claremont, in Bay View Terrace, and was seen walking along the Stirling Highway footpath towards her home in Mosman Park.

Police did not release the description of the car at the time because although significant, it was not the only car in the vicinity.

Had the public known of it, police feared it would become the only focus of public information.



Ciara Glennon

They learned their lesson from the disappearance of teenager Lisa Mott in Collie in 1980.

After a yellow panel van featured in that release of witness information, all subsequent calls were narrowed only to yellow panel van sightings. The public disregarded anything else.

But as with the release of controversial video footage, the police squad now working on the case believe the end of the road has been reached on this aspect

of evidence, and that no such harm can now result from releasing a description of the car.

Whoever was in the car has not come forward or been interviewed. The information the police have does not include the car’s

registration number.

The car described by the witnesses stopped next to Ms Glennon as she approached Christ Church on the corner of the highway and Queenslea Drive.

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## Has police secrecy wrecked chance of a solution?

**Obsessive secrecy about the Claremont serial killings preceded the media controversy this week about 12-year-old video footage of a man talking to one of the victims, Jane Rimmer.**

But don’t look to the police squad now in charge of the case for a reason.

Back in 1996, when horror mounted at the likelihood that a serial killer was moving in the western suburbs, police then working on the case made a series of extraordinary decisions.

They decided not to be completely open with their best allies and most effective weapons

### POST comment

– the law-abiding public.

All detectives working on the killings were made to sign confidentiality agreements.

This meant that the Macro squad could operate in complete secrecy and keep any details they wanted from the public.

Normally, surveillance footage, descriptions of vehicles, movement of victims prior to the crime and other information are made public early while memories are fresh.

The Claremont crimes caused a tidal wave of revulsion, as well

as sympathy for the friends and relatives left behind.

The suburb name became synonymous throughout Australia as the site of abduction and death of young women at an unknown hand.

The best hope police had of a breakthrough was to harness the public desire to stop the killings.

Sure, there are good reasons for keeping some facts secret.

“There will always be some nutters who falsely confess to high profile crimes,” says Robin Napper, a former British police detective-superintendent and forensic expert who has worked

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