

Self-Defense News, 2001-2004

From: www.your-martial-arts-resources.com

Simpsonville woman thwarts attack:

From: <http://www.tribunetimes.com/stories/2001/09/11/200109111115.htm>
(September 11, 2001):

Florence Brister thought it odd when she noticed a young man in his early teens trying to jimmy open a car door a Simpsonville store's parking lot. Then she realized it was her car.

What happened next convinced her she was on the right track when she began self-defense classes in January at Upstate Karate.

"I saw this kid near my car, but I didn't think it was my car until I walked past it and saw the tag. So, I asked him what the heck he was doing," she said.

Brister said the young assailant demanded her keys, but she sternly told him she was in no mood to be bothered.

"He just turned around and told me to give him my keys, or something like that," Brister said. "He started coming toward me and I just knocked him down. He got up and took off running."

Brister said she thinks she kicked the young man in the jaw.

"If I had to do it again, I would do it again and again and again," Brister said.

Rebecca Preacher, a third-degree black belt and self-defense instructor at Upstate Karate in Simpsonville, said she was proud of Brister's reaction.

"In my class, I try to teach how to kick and punch properly," Preacher said. "I always tell them the way they practice is how they will do it in real life. Florence does it as if her life depended on it."

Preacher teaches pe-geri, a Japanese form of defense that means hand-foot when translated.

Brister's husband, Terence, owner of Brister Investigative Agency & Associates, said he was worried at first about his wife's safety, but was proud she was able to defend herself.

Florence Brister said her husband has urged her to park close to store entrances as a safety precaution.

"I never park close because I love to walk," Brister said.

She said she did not report the incident to Simpsonville police although a friend urged her to do so.

John Davidson, Mauldin's police chief, said Brister was in the best position to assess what to do in that particular situation.

But as a general rule, any time a person is confronted by assailants, the best course of action is to give them what they want.

"When you are being robbed, it is best not to resist because you are about four or five times more likely to get killed if you do," Davidson said.

Vicars offered self defence classes:

From: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/1715111.stm>
(December 17, 2001):

Clergy working in inner city communities are being offered martial arts classes to help defend themselves from attack.

A survey for the Manufacturing Science and Finance union (MSF), which represents 1,500 clergy, showed that they were more vulnerable to assault than doctors or probation officers.

The increasing level of attacks has prompted the union to offer London clergy Tae kwon do self defence classes - as used by the Korean Army.

MSF General Secretary Roger Lyons said the lessons were an offer of assistance.

"We feel many clergy are left completely open to violent people," he told BBC Radio 4.

"They want to make themselves completely open, with full access to the public, but at the same time that can leave them exposed.

"With Tae kwon do they can turn the aggression of the attacker on the attacker without being too violent themselves.

The report from the Royal Holloway College of London University showed that seven out of 10 members of the clergy had experienced some form of violence.

A similar number had been verbally abused by people ranging from beggars to members of their own congregations who had been denied a preferred wedding date.

Every year at least one member of the clergy is killed at work.

The Church of England has a responsibility to keep their employees safe at work.

But the unique role of the post can pose difficulties, said Mr Lyons.

The offer of voluntary Tae kwon do lessons was agreed by the MSF union's clergy national committee.

The section's head, the Reverend Bill Ward said: "Most clergy receive no training at all in dealing with violent people so we are making a start with our own self-defence classes.

"It is a sad fact of modern life that members of the clergy will come into contact with individuals who are likely to resort to violence."

A union survey of 25 members of the clergy in South East England showed that one in five had been threatened with harm in the previous two years, often when they were in their own home.

Almost half the threats were made by callers to the door seeking pastoral care or money, while some incidents took place in church grounds.

The MSF is sponsoring a Dignity At Work Bill which aims to give workers greater protection from bullying and harassment.

Self-defence classes for GPs:

From: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/2263879.stm>
(September 17, 2002):

GP Dr Ian Brooman was in his surgery one afternoon when a paranoid schizophrenic walked in and stabbed him between the shoulder blades.

This sort of life-threatening incident is rare, but it is estimated that one in four GPs has been abused, threatened or injured at work.

Now doctors are being offered self-defence tuition to help them deal with difficult patients.

Dr Brooman, a GP in Swanley, Kent, was stabbed in February 2000 by patient Matthew Richards.

He lost eight pints of blood, and spent five days in hospital. Mr Richards has been detained indefinitely in Broadmoor.

Dr Brooman, who returned to work as soon as he recovered, welcomed self-defence help for GPs.

"Anything which helps anger management is of use for family doctors who sometimes find themselves vulnerable," he said.

Dr Fred MacSorley, a GP in Lurgan, Northern Ireland, devised the self-defence tuition.

He told BBC News Online it was important for doctors to be able to defuse a potentially violent situation and arrange the layout of their surgery to reduce the risk of attack.

Dr MacSorley, who will present his work to the Royal Society of Medicine's Annual GP Forum in London on Thursday, told BBC News Online: "Northern Ireland statistics show it's the safest place for GPs to work.

"But we do find that there's a lot more verbal abuse from patients."

Dr MacSorley said he devised the self-defence classes because there seemed to be nothing available to advise doctors on how to protect themselves and their staff.

"The message is avoidance, to recognise the signs of impending violence in people, recognise their verbal cues, body language."

He said GPs also had to ensure there was nothing in the consulting room that could be used as a weapon.

In the self-defence class, doctors are also taught how to extricate themselves if patients do physically attack them.

Dr MacSorley has also been subjected to violence. He was hit on the head while in his car on a visit to a patient and by intruders to his surgery.

"That was a very unpleasant incident because I had two people attacking me," he said, "I was OK, but what if I was a 65-year-old GP?"

He added: "Unfortunately, society is not as tolerant of delays and difficulties in the NHS as it once was."

Dr Laurence Buckman, a negotiator for the British Medical Association's GPs committee, said: "I think self-defence classes are essential.

"Violence is an ever-present problem. Every year, some GPs are injured or killed by people who are violent."

Only two weeks ago, Dr Buckman was threatened by a patient who said he would kill the GP's wife and children.

He said: "Most violent patients are people with a mental illness, or they misuse alcohol or drugs.

"But sometimes, as with this guy two weeks ago, violence doesn't come from an expected source."

In March this year, the BMA warned family doctors were not being adequately protected.

It said only a quarter of health authorities had implemented a policy of zero tolerance against violent patients, where the most violent could be seen at a police station.

Church staff learn self-defence:

From: news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/england/south_yorkshire/3261259.stm
(November 11, 2003):

Vergers at Sheffield Cathedral are being sent on a self-defence course amid a rising tide of violence against church workers.

It is believed to be the first time that an English cathedral has sent any of its staff on such a course.

Two of the cathedral's four vergers, Bill Ross and David Maw, are to be taught how to deal with threatening people who come into the building.

Mr Maw, 38, said: "As vergers we always aim to treat everyone with the same fairness and respect.

"But that can be difficult when you are faced with an angry man demanding money with menaces, or someone you know is wanted by the police for violent behaviour."

And Mr Ross added: "Jujitsu isn't on the cards, but we need to know how to deal with potentially violent situations and come out unscathed."

The decision to opt for personal safety training follows a recent assault on a Baptist minister in Sheffield.

And figures published in March this year showed that since 1999 there had been a 33% surge in the number of violent crimes against vicars and other ministers.

During that period, 561 attacks were recorded, including two murders in 2002.

The figures prompted Archbishop of York David Hope to say: "It is extraordinarily difficult to find clergy willing to move to inner city areas.

"There is a distinct lack of applications, particularly in the north and some of the more difficult areas."

Some crime victims fight back, but experts are wary:

From: <http://home.hamptonroads.com/stories/story.cfm?story=63220&ran=14153>
(December 8, 2003):

The man with the gun was backing out of the sports store.

The moment of crisis had passed, and shopkeeper Ziad Ismail was left with his battered dignity and his anger.

He could not contain his feelings that November day.

Without thinking about his five daughters and pregnant wife at home, the 42-year-old man followed the gunman and two others outside his Portsmouth store. He

fought them, wrestled the gun away and smashed the windows of the getaway car as the robbers drove off.

People on the street tracked the suspects, and police caught them minutes later.

“I wanted him to feel what I felt,” Ismail said. “I wanted him to fight for his life. I felt so good.”

Like Ismail, a number of people in South Hampton Roads have fought back against their attackers in the past year.

A 71-year-old man threw a would-be robber off of a bus in Chesapeake and continued to fight with him. A Portsmouth woman shot a man who approached her with a gun in her driveway. A Portsmouth man dodged gunfire and sped through city streets in his sport utility vehicle to chase down the people who mugged him.

U.S. Justice Department studies estimate that victims try to protect themselves or fight back in more than two-thirds of violent crimes.

And in a world where airplane hijackers don't always free their hostages, where some people believe police are too busy to solve every robbery and where being disrespected calls for vengeance, self-defense can take aggressive — even violent — forms.

Although crime-prevention experts say victims should worry first about their safety, they don't condemn people who strike back.

“What we tell victims is, ‘If you survived, you did the right thing,’” said Dean Kilpatrick, director of the National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center in South Carolina. “If the first victim who had encountered Ted Bundy had put a bullet between his eyes when he was trying to run away, that would have been a public service.”

One day in September, George Etheridge was in the driver's seat of a bus that serves as a mobile grocery store, when a teenager jumped on board and pushed a semi-automatic pistol in his face.

The teen demanded money and threatened to kill Etheridge and two others.

But Etheridge wrestled with the attacker, threw him off the bus and continued the scuffle.

After the gun went off, the teenager ran away. Police later arrested a 15-year-old suspect.

At the time, Etheridge said he was angry and unafraid to die.

Victims took protective or defensive measures in 70 percent of about 5.7 million violent crimes in 2001, according to estimates by the U.S. Justice Department.

The department's Bureau of Justice Statistics compiles a yearly study of victimization using information from a representative sample of about 76,000 people.

Victims most often resisted or captured the suspect, ran away, hid, got help or tried to alert others, according to the 2001 study. They attacked the suspect about 10 percent of the time.

Several factors may influence a victim's decision on how to act, Kilpatrick said. A past experience with crime and whether an arrest was made might be considered.

Victims might evaluate the size of the suspect, whether he or she is armed and their own belief about the ability of police to catch the attacker.

"The police officers have their hands full," Kilpatrick said. "People know there are robberies that are personal attacks, where they don't get around to someone being apprehended."

Victims reported that self-defense measures helped the situation 67.8 percent of the time, according to the 2001 survey. They said those measures hurt in 6.8 percent of the cases. In other instances, victims reported that their behavior both hurt and helped.

Despite the numbers, crime prevention experts say victims should be aware of the dangers. They point out that it is hard to know when a person's resistance resulted in death.

"When people fight back, they tend to get more hurt than they would have," said Jeff Eaton, an officer with the Virginia Beach Police Department's Crime Prevention Unit. "We would not recommend chasing after them, fighting them or disarming them."

Property is not worth endangering a life, he said. People should be aware of their surroundings and mentally practice what they would do in an attack.

"It comes back to an instinct: fight or flight," Eaton said. "It really comes back to your individual decision."

Temesha Greene, her boyfriend and two sons were returning from errands that included a trip to a firing range when an armed man approached them in their driveway in August.

Greene testified in court that she pulled out her own gun and started firing. The suspect was shot but survived. She and her family were unharmed.

Although there now is some question about whether Greene or her boyfriend pulled the trigger, prosecutors are not charging either person because the action was taken in self-defense.

Virginia law defines two types of self-defense, said Roger D. Groot, a professor at Washington and Lee University School of Law.

An action is “justifiable” self-defense if a victim being attacked with deadly force in no way provoked the attack. An action is “excusable” self-defense if the victim has some culpability, as in a fight, but he or she retreats as much as possible before battling for life.

“In a trial of self-defense, the whole key is who wears the aggressor tag around his neck,” Groot said. “That tag can switch back and forth.”

That happened in a Virginia Beach case in 1997 that stemmed from an incident the year before.

Three teenagers chased Gregory M. Larmour by car, yelled obscenities at him and punched him in the face when he stopped for a red light. Larmour grabbed a knife, got out of the car and fought with the three teens. He stabbed two of them, and one died from the injury.

Larmour said he was defending himself.

Prosecutors said he became the aggressor when he got out of the car with a weapon.

He pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter and unlawful wounding and was sentenced to serve six years in prison.

The Virginia Court of Appeals addressed a similar case in 1998.

In Rockbridge County in the western part of the state, Robert S. Lynn disarmed and shot to death another man who Lynn said had threatened him and his wife with the gun.

Lynn was convicted on charges of second-degree murder and weapons violations and was sentenced to serve eight years in prison, according to the state Department of Corrections.

The Court of Appeals held that a jury could find that the killing was not self-defense or defense of others if they believed that Lynn had started the fight or that he and his wife were no longer in danger after the attacker was disarmed.

“To disarm an assailant during an attack and to use the weapon against the attacker does not constitute exercising the right to arm oneself in order to avert or resist an anticipated deadly attack,” according to the court’s ruling.

The Virginia Supreme Court affirmed the lower court’s decision in 1999.

Larry Gump Jr. and his fiancée had already been robbed in their driveway and were face-down in their Portsmouth yard one night last December as the suspects began to leave.

Gump’s fear was subsiding, and he thought about other instances when he and his fiancée had been mugged. The police had never arrested anyone. He didn’t want these men to get away.

He left his fiancée, jumped into his Ford Explorer and chased after the robbers, narrating the pursuit to Portsmouth police dispatchers on his cell phone.

During the 15-minute chase, the suspects fired at his vehicle. Dispatchers encouraged him to keep following, and he did.

Eventually, officers caught up and captured the suspects. Gump's feelings about his actions were similar to Ismail's after the athletics store was robbed.

"It's human nature," Gump said. "You want to get even."

He said he has no regret, though he also said he would have second thoughts about doing it again.

He's married now, with a son on the way. He thinks about how he could have plowed into others when he was driving faster than 100 mph after the robbers.

Since then, he has made peace with one of the robbers, John W. Jones, who was sentenced in July to serve 18 years in prison. The other defendant, Sylvester Arrington Jr., has yet to stand trial.

When the time came to testify about the experience for Jones' sentencing, Gump surprised himself by breaking down. It was the memory of being powerless while men pointed guns at him and the woman he loves.

"That's probably the closest I've ever come to the end of my life," he said. Gump, 24, still has nightmares. He moved away from that house, and he now has a concealed weapons permit.

He has applied to become a police officer and got a copy of the 911 tape to play for friends.

But if others say they want to be like him, he discourages them.

"I don't think I'm a role model for anybody," Gump said. "When you get robbed, you kind of burst that bubble where you feel safe in the world. I felt like I got me some control back. It helped a little bit."

Martial Artist Foils Robbery Attempt:

From: Unknown source
(2004):

ARLINGTON, TX — Steve Swyhart, chayon-ryu green belt student at the Arlington Dojang, foiled a robbery at a local Stop-N-Go convenience store here using a gun-defense technique.

Swyhart had stopped at the convenience store after class and was still wearing his uniform (minus the belt). He entered the store and noticed that several people had gathered in the back. A large man stood near a magazine rack at the front of the establishment. Swyhart walked past the man, who then spun around with a pistol in

his right hand. "I didn't think," Swyhart said. "It just happened like we train in class." He avoided the muzzle and pushed the weapon aside, then grabbed the barrel and twisted the pistol and locked the gunman's finger in the trigger guard. The criminal immediately dropped to his knees and screamed in pain.

Swyhart said he heard some "cracking and popping" before he ripped the weapon out of the gunman's grasp. The martial artist then held the moaning robber at bay with the weapon. The clerk grabbed a roll of tape and used it to bind the gunman's hands until the police arrived.

The entire incident was caught on the store's video surveillance system. The police reviewed the tape and were reportedly amazed at what Swyhart had done. The gunman is being held for attempted manslaughter, for having pistol-whipped the clerk and for stealing \$75 from the store.

Martial arts star attacked in pub:

From: <http://www.peterborough.co.uk>
(February 1, 2004):

World karate star Clifton Findley had part of his ear bitten off when a brawl broke out in a Peterborough pub.

The 6ft 3ins tall former world champion said today that he did not throw punches back when he found himself out-numbered by a gang of eight men.

Mr Findley (37) was kicked, punched and knocked to the floor during the melee in the Solstice pub in New Road.

One of the men then sat on him, and someone else bit a chunk out of his left ear.

Mr Findley, who still competes in kick-boxing bouts and holds martial arts classes in Peterborough, said trouble broke out in the early hours of Saturday after he had been talking to city boxing promoter Kevin Sanders, who had earlier hosted a sportsman's dinner in the Tara Suite, above the pub.

Mr Findley, a father-of-five, said it was after he finished his conversation with Mr Sanders, and turned away, that the group of men started punching and kicking him.

He said: "These people obviously thought I was about to have a fight, and they jumped on me.

"There were kicks and punches from all directions and they got me on the floor. I didn't throw any punches myself because I would have got 10 in return, so I curled up in a ball to protect myself – I know how to do that because of my training.

"My ear bled quite a lot, and I had to go to hospital. I've been told that it will never be the same.

"I've lost about 10 per cent off the side of the ear. It's horrible for my kids – they are really upset it happened."

Mr Sanders said he did not see the fight start.

Mr Findley won the World Union of Martial Arts (WUMA) title in 1998 and the World Karate Association (WKA) title in the same year at a tournament in Canada.

He was voted the Evening Telegraph's Sports Personality of the Year in 2001 and has coached the British kickboxing team.

Teen Suspended for Fighting in Self-Defense:

From: <http://www.wtoctv.com/Global/story.asp?S=1772941&nav=Oqq6M9yy>
(April 8, 2004):

Parents expect their kids to be safe when they're in school. But one mother says that wasn't the case at Savannah High School. A few weeks ago, her son was in the cafeteria when kids came onto school grounds and attacked him. And her son was suspended for defending himself.

We spoke with Brenda Johnson, the teen's mother, as well as people at the Board of Education. School officials say it's all part of the zero tolerance policy which means no weapons, drugs or any kind of violence on campus. But Johnson says school policy not only violates her son's civil liberties, but he is an innocent victim.

Her son, senior Alejandro Johnson, says he is a victim of the zero tolerance policy. "I was attacked," he said. "I was in the right, 100 percent. I was where I was supposed to be doing what I was supposed to be doing."

Alejandro says he was eating lunch inside the school cafeteria when kids came off the street and into the cafeteria and started beating him up. He says he had no choice but to stand up for himself. "I was defending myself and I feel like I was backed into a corner," he said.

That day, everyone involved was arrested, and on top of that Alejandro was suspended for ten days.

His mother says two years ago it, wouldn't have surprised her if her son got into trouble, but he has turned his life around. He is now a B student, and because of his new criminal record all that hard work has been tarnished. "Al can't get a job as long as this is on his record," she said. "He won't be able to get to certain colleges."

But the Savannah-Chatham Board of Education says it stands behind the decision of the suspension. "It takes two to fight and the first thing we tell all students, repeatedly, is back away and wait until there is an adult there," board president Hugh Golson said.

But Brenda says, when it comes to her son, the zero tolerance policy has been taken too far. "For someone to come to school and violate his safety, I'm hurt," she said.

"No fighting under any circumstances, I understand that, but I was defending myself," said Alejandro.

We did speak to the principal of Savannah High School and she agrees that it takes two to fight, and again the zero tolerance policy includes no violence on school grounds whatsoever.

(Read comments here: <http://www.zerointelligence.net/archives/000333.php>)

GPs enrol for self-defence:

From: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/northern_ireland/3693049.stm
(May 7, 2004):

GPs in Northern Ireland are signing up for martial arts lessons to protect themselves from assaults at work.

The British Medical Association is so concerned about the rising number of attacks that it has said house calls could be a thing of the past.

County Armagh GP Sandra Elliot took up self-defence classes after being assaulted while leaving a doctors' out-of-hours centre in Craigavon.

She was attacked by two masked men, one with a baseball bat and one with a brick as she left the centre last October. She luckily managed to escape.

Ms Elliot does not know why she was targeted, but is now attending self-defence sessions in an attempt to protect herself in the future.

"The level of depravity of our society has forced me to take action. You have to do something yourself. It seems nobody else will do it," she said.

"It's highlighted in the press about our casualty department, and anyone really at the forefront of the medical side of the care is really quite vulnerable.

"GPs in surgeries, as well as out of surgeries, and even reception staff in some of our surgeries are also faced on a daily basis with violent patients."

Ms Elliot said the sessions had been great for her and she hoped to turn what was the "worst night of her life" into a positive experience for herself and many other GPs.

"I have been quite fortunate to be trained up in self-defence. It's been very beneficial," she said.

"If every cloud has a silver lining, I think this has to be the silver lining out of the Moylinn incident.

"It increases your confidence and helps you to deal with each and every situation. It makes you more situationally aware."

She said there was great support from GPs in the west of the province with regard to the self-defence classes.

It is understood the Western Health and Social Services Board has arranged for other doctors and healthcare staff at her practice to attend the course as a pilot project for the area.

Following the attack, BMA Northern Ireland council chairman Brian Patterson warned that GPs would not go into so-called "trouble hot-spots".

He also said courts must take the appropriate action to tackle violence against doctors.

"There has to be a deterrent. Judges must pass the appropriate sentences," he said.

"We are soft targets and we rely on society's protection."

Last month, an out-of-hours doctor was robbed at knifepoint when responding to a bogus house call in Belfast.

The Department of Health said verbal and physical assaults on health care workers in Northern Ireland had soared to 5,065 in 2002/03.

That marked an increase of about 3,000 on the previous year.

Shopkeeper cleared in death:

From: <http://www.thestar.com>
(July 30, 2004):

Robbery suspect, 24, fatally beaten by owner

No charges will be laid, Toronto police say

A Scarborough clothing store owner is in the clear for beating a robbery suspect to death last spring.

Three men walked in to Manhattan's Fine Clothing Store at 3601 Lawrence Ave. E. on March 24, shortly before noon, planning to rob the hip-hop fashion store.

But the plan went awry when the 28-year-old owner fought back with a pipe, fatally wounding one of the men while the others fled. Kayan Kayson Smith, 24, died of "blunt force head injuries" an autopsy found.

Members of the Toronto Police Service, coroner's office and Centre of Forensic Sciences conducted an extensive investigation.

"Upon review of said investigations by the crown attorney's office, it has been determined that in the specific circumstances of this case there would be no reasonable prospect of a conviction should charges be laid against the store owner. Therefore, no charges will be laid," Toronto police said in a written statement.

Homicide Detective Sergeant Frank Skubic has said that the issue was whether the shop owner was justified in using the force that he did under the circumstances.

Lawyer Marshall Sack, who was retained by the unidentified store owner in the event charges were laid, said yesterday his "faith in the Toronto Police Service and the crown's office in doing the right thing is justified.

"I told my client from the beginning not to worry, they will do the right thing and I was right," Sack said, adding his client was hit three or four times in the head during the clash.

Sack said he is still trying to reach his client, who is out of the country on business.

Police officers have arrested and charged two of Smith's alleged accomplices with robbery while armed with a firearm.

Father invents seal for bottles to foil drug-rape attacks:

From: <http://www.thestar.com>
(November 12, 2004):

An inventor whose daughter's drink was spiked on her 21st birthday has developed a tamper-proof bottle stopper designed to prevent 'drug rapes'.

Ray Lockett hopes the plastic device, called a spikey, will protect women at risk from GHB and Rohypnol or from having vodka poured into soft drinks.

Earlier this year his daughter, Marilyn Henshaw, a model, was targeted while out celebrating with friends. She had not been drinking alcohol but found herself feeling woozy and unable to stand.

She said: "I thought I was coming down with something, but it was only the next day that I realised what must have happened."

"That night changed her life forever," Mr Lockett of Henfield, West Sussex, said.

"Her friends took her home and put her to bed. Marilyn had been spiked and we are so lucky that she was with good friends and wasn't raped."

The spikey is designed to be inserted into the neck of a beer or alcopop bottle. Once in place, it cannot be removed. A straw can be pushed through the stopper, creating a seal that makes it impossible to add anything to the drink.

Research by Mr Lockett's company, R&G Products, found that most teenagers and women in their early 20s are drinking out of bottles with straws in bars and clubs.

<http://www.randgproducts.com/index.htm> (more info)

One in three women who regularly went to bars knew of someone whose drink had been spiked, or had their own drinks tampered with, he said. Home testing kits were available, but are expensive and can only analyse one substance at a time, he said.

Mr Lockett said: "It is a real problem.

"It's a much bigger problem than you realise. Most of it is sticking another shot in. Most drinks will take another shot without noticing.

"What's different about this device is that it cannot be removed. If it's reusable, then anyone can remove it, spike the drink, and put it back."

Gill Henshaw, his business partner, said the stoppers were designed to be added by women or placed in bottles by bar staff.

"The feedback we are getting from bars and clubs is tremendous," she said. "With all the best intentions in the world, we have become less concerned about safety and more concerned about socialising.

"It is impossible to constantly watch your drink and people don't want the hassle of checking for individual drugs in their drinks."