

Special Inquiry into St Andrew's Hostel

Hearing

Held at: Katanning Magistrates Court
Clive Street
KATANNING WA 6317

Thursday, 12 April 2012 at 12pm
(Day 17)

Before: The Hon Peter Blaxell

1 HIS HONOUR: Yes, Mr Urquhart?
2
3 MR URQUHART: Thank you, sir. The first witness that the
4 Inquiry will be calling here today is Ainslie Veronica
5 Evans.
6
7 HIS HONOUR: Mrs Evans, if you could come forward, please?
8 Thank you.
9
10 <AINSLIE VERONICA EVANS, affirmed:
11
12 THE WITNESS: I don't hear all that well. I don't hear at
13 all well.
14
15 MR URQUHART: Thank you for that, Mrs Evans. I will keep
16 my voice up.
17
18 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
19
20 <EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR URQUHART:
21
22 MR URQUHART: Q. Now, if you don't know, I am counsel
23 assisting the Inquiry and I have some questions to ask you.
24 Then after that, some other lawyers, too, might ask you
25 some questions. Okay?
26 A. Thank you. Yes.
27
28 Q. Have you got some water there?
29 A. Yes. I'll need that.
30
31 Q. Good. Mrs Evans, I don't mean any offence, but can I
32 ask you how old you are?
33 A. Yes, you can ask me how old I am. I'm 70.
34
35 Q. Do you reside in Katanning?
36 A. Yes, I live in Katanning.
37
38 Q. For how long have you lived in Katanning?
39 A. I have been here for my whole life and my family were
40 all here before.
41
42 Q. You are currently a Councillor for the Shire of
43 Katanning?
44 A. Elected member of the Shire of Katanning, yes.
45
46 Q. Were you first elected in 1983? Does that sound about
47 right?

1 A. That sounds about right, yes.
2
3 Q. Did you remain on the council until 1991?
4 A. I was reelected at the end of each term, yes.
5
6 Q. How long were the terms?
7 A. They used to be three years, then they went to four
8 years.
9
10 Q. It is just that I have looked at a photograph of an
11 honour board, which has your name up there and it says you
12 were a Councillor from 1983 to 1991, and then a bit lower
13 down it says that you're a Councillor from 1991 onwards.
14 A. That's exactly right. I did miss one election and
15 then somebody resigned and I went back. I was only out for
16 a few - two or three months, but that's how the board
17 recorded it.
18
19 Q. Oh, I see.
20 A. So you read it right.
21
22 Q. Yes. Therefore, you have been a Councillor - if I
23 have my maths right - for 29 years?
24 A. Yes. (Indistinct)
25
26 Q. Yes. Is it a State record, is it? I was going to ask
27 you --
28 A. (Indistinct) I don't know.
29
30 Q. -- have you been the longest serving Councillor?
31 A. Not for the Shire of Katanning, no, no. They're long
32 stayers there.
33
34 Q. Of course, that is voluntary, isn't it? You don't get
35 paid?
36 A. No.
37
38 Q. Do you do any other voluntary work at the moment? I
39 will also ask you about whether you have done voluntary
40 work in the past?
41 A. Yes. At the moment I am the curator for the local
42 historical society and I do one afternoon or a bit more at
43 the local visitor centre. I am also involved in other
44 groups but I don't have positions, I just go.
45
46 Q. Is it the case that you have been involved in
47 voluntary work here in Katanning for most of your adult

1 life?
2 A. Yes, for all my adult life.
3
4 Q. Do you have a family?
5 A. Yes, I have a family.
6
7 Q. How many children do you have?
8 A. I have four children.
9
10 Q. They are all grown up now, obviously?
11 A. Yes. I am a grandmother to 12.
12
13 Q. Did any of your children attend the Katanning high
14 school?
15 A. Yes, three of my sons - oh, three of my sons attended
16 the Katanning high school at different times.
17
18 Q. Can you recall the time span in which you had sons at
19 the high school?
20 A. No, not quickly. I'd have to get a pen - they went
21 there for their first three years of high school education
22 and then they went to other education - tertiary education
23 in Perth.
24
25 Q. Is your youngest son now 40 years old?
26 A. Yes, he is.
27
28 Q. He was the last of your boys who went to the high
29 school?
30 A. Yes, he was.
31
32 Q. He would have been at the high school for years 8,
33 9 and 10?
34 A. Yes, he was.
35
36 Q. Was he born in --
37 A. He was born in '71. The last one was --
38
39 Q. 1971?
40 A. My last child was born in '71.
41
42 Q. He would have finished school in 1988 when he was 17?
43 A. No, no. He went to (indistinct) --
44
45 Q. Oh, but (indistinct) finished school, yes.
46 A. Sorry.
47

1 Q. Therefore, he would have done his schooling in 1987
2 and 1988 in Perth?
3 A. Yes.
4
5 Q. And then --
6 A. Then tertiary.
7
8 Q. Yes. In 1984, 1985, 1986 he was at Katanning high
9 school?
10 A. Yes.
11
12 Q. Of course, because you lived in Katanning, none of
13 your boys actually stayed at the hostel?
14 A. No, they didn't.
15
16 Q. I will ask you some questions about Dennis McKenna, if
17 I may --
18 A. Yes.
19
20 Q. -- Mrs Evans. I gather you are expecting that?
21 A. Yes.
22
23 Q. Did you meet Dennis McKenna soon after he began
24 working at the St Andrew's hostel?
25 A. I really don't know just when I first met him and when
26 I was aware of the fact he was in town. I don't remember
27 that first meeting in any way at all.
28
29 Q. We do know that he started work at the hostel in 1975.
30 A. I remember the chat about a new warden at the hostel
31 which, yes, of course, was him, but --
32
33 Q. Yes.
34 A. Yes, I remember that.
35
36 Q. Would it be fair to say - and I know it's a long time
37 ago - that you would have met him some time after that?
38 A. Well, I certainly didn't meet him before, no.
39
40 Q. That's right, yes.
41 A. Mmm.
42
43 Q. Did you have a son at the high school then?
44 A. I would have. My eldest son Paul would have been at
45 high school then.
46
47 Q. After he began working at the hostel, you obviously

1 got to know him, I gather?
2 A. Well, he was another person in town. My boys were
3 involved in sport the hostel kids were involved in and we'd
4 come and go. It was (indistinct) getting to know him,
5 like, having another acquaintance in town, it's a bit hard
6 to put that in the right context.
7
8 Q. Okay. It is not a criticism.
9 A. No, I understand that and I appreciate what you are
10 saying, yes.
11
12 Q. But at some stage you not only became aware --
13 A. Of course I did, yes.
14
15 Q. -- of who the warden was, but you also --
16 A. Yes.
17
18 Q. -- would have met him?
19 A. Yes, I did, yes.
20
21 Q. Can you recall previously, when you were interviewed
22 by investigators for this Inquiry, describing your
23 relationship with Mr McKenna as a community friendship and
24 casual friendship?
25 A. Yes, a community acquaintance, a community friendship.
26 If I wanted something in the community that perhaps the
27 students could be involved in, I may at different times
28 contact him. I also was supportive of functions and things
29 that were on at the hostel.
30
31 Q. I think you mentioned a moment ago that - did you see
32 him at sporting events?
33 A. Yes. One of my boys was a talented footballer and we
34 seemed to live a lot of football.
35
36 Q. Yes. Did you sometimes have to go to the hostel for
37 functions or meetings, and things like that?
38 A. Oh yes, yes, and sometimes my husband went too. We
39 had a theory of sharing it between us, then missing one, so
40 we (indistinct).
41
42 Q. Again, I am not saying that on every occasion you went
43 to the hostel you saw him, but were there occasions when
44 you went to the hostel that you saw him?
45 A. Oh yes. He was - it was insignificant. I didn't,
46 kind of - sometimes he was there, sometimes he wasn't. But
47 I don't recall who else was there or what we --

1
2 Q. Am I right in saying that you and he attended the same
3 church?
4 A. Yes, I'm a - yes, we did.
5
6 Q. In that case, you would see him on a weekly basis,
7 would you?
8 A. No, no. He was not a regular church attender. I am
9 but he wasn't, but he did attend on different occasions,
10 yes.
11
12 Q. We have also heard evidence - and I think you can
13 recall - that he was the joint winner of the Katanning
14 citizen of the year award?
15 A. No, I think he was the only - he was a winner but I
16 don't think it was joint winner. I think he was the
17 standalone person in that particular year.
18
19 Q. But you are not certain about that? I think our --
20 A. Well, I think - well --
21
22 Q. -- inquiries revealed there were two.
23 A. No, I will say that he was the standalone winner that
24 year. I believe this year that we have just had is the
25 first time we have appointed joint winners. They have
26 always been standalone winners.
27
28 Q. Are you aware now that there is also an honour board
29 in the Shire's offices of those past winners of the citizen
30 of the year award?
31 A. I am very aware of that. I am at the Shire offices
32 regularly.
33
34 Q. Yes. Indeed, your name is up there?
35 A. Yes, my name is up there. I'm very proud of that.
36
37 Q. I think you were appointed or became citizen of the
38 year in 1986. Does that sound about right?
39 A. I can't remember the year. Round about, yes.
40
41 Q. Is it the case that Mr McKenna's name has actually
42 been removed from that honour board?
43 A. Yes, it has been.
44
45 Q. Are you able to tell us how that came about?
46 A. People from the public wrote to the Shire and asked
47 for it to be removed, and it was the vote at Shire Council

1 that it be removed.
2
3 Q. When was that vote made?
4 A. Oh, earlier this year. Not long ago.
5
6 Q. So it is only just recently?
7 A. Only recently, yes.
8
9 Q. There wasn't a consideration to remove it after he had
10 been convicted in 1991?
11 A. No.
12
13 Q. Can you recall whether there was any submissions --
14 A. No.
15
16 Q. -- by the public that he be removed then?
17 A. No. The honour board with the citizens of the year is
18 in the Shire chambers and so it could be considered,
19 perhaps, not public, albeit people are welcome to the Shire
20 chambers, but there's not a huge population that take
21 advantage of that. There has been suggestions that the
22 honour board should go into the library, where it could be
23 seen by more people, but that hasn't eventuated either. So
24 it could be that a lot of people didn't even see it there
25 or realise that it was on the board.
26
27 Q. Mrs Evans, given your role as a Shire Councillor for
28 many years, can you just give us some sort of understanding
29 as to how someone, firstly, is nominated to be a Katanning
30 citizen of the year?
31 A. It's a Premier's award and it happens annually in
32 local government entities. Somewhere around October,
33 advertisements are put in local papers asking community
34 groups to nominate who they consider would be a suitable
35 participant for the citizen of the year. They then go to
36 the Shire Council, who have a dedicated citizen of the year
37 committee. That committee consider all the nominations
38 that have come in, make a recommendation to full council,
39 who then usually accept the nomination - but there is
40 community participation.
41
42 Q. Certainly. Were you involved in the process of
43 awarding Mr McKenna?
44 A. No, I wasn't involved. I have only joined the citizen
45 of the year committee in the last two years. I haven't
46 been involved with it at any time before then.
47

1 Q. In your role, though, as a Councillor --
2 A. Yes.
3
4 Q. -- at the end --
5 A. Oh yes, yes. As a Councillor, I would have been there
6 when his nomination came forward.
7
8 Q. Again, this is no criticism of you --
9 A. No.
10
11 Q. -- but was it the case that you supported that he
12 be --
13 A. As far as I remember, it was the only nomination but,
14 yes, I did support it - that's not a problem - but as far
15 as I remember, that was the only nomination that came
16 forward. But he was appointed for his community work, not
17 his hostel management.
18
19 Q. So you draw a distinction between the two --
20 A. Yes.
21
22 Q. -- do you?
23 A. Yes. The hostel management was his career and his
24 wage and nobody can nominate for that position if their
25 employment is part of the nomination. It has to be
26 entirely voluntary and community based.
27
28 Q. Can you recall what factors came into play in the
29 assessment of his community work?
30 A. No, no.
31
32 Q. What was his community work?
33 A. No, not quickly. It was pretty general; supporting
34 football, morning teas, different - yes, I can't
35 particularly come - place something in his community work,
36 except the kids were available to help with different
37 things.
38
39 Q. Wasn't that a significant factor, that he got the
40 hostel students to be involved in various community work?
41 A. Yes, that was significant. I agree, yes.
42
43 Q. I don't know if I mentioned it, but this was 1983 --
44 A. Yes.
45
46 Q. -- that he --
47 A. It's a long time ago.

1
2 Q. Yes, it certainly is, yes, and, of course, I am asking
3 you about things that did happen a long time ago, and I
4 appreciate that.
5 A. And they weren't of any importance particularly to me
6 at that time either; it was just another part of life.
7
8 Q. But am I right in saying that by 1983, he had built up
9 a very respectable reputation within the Katanning
10 community?
11 A. Yes, you are right, he had.
12
13 Q. Am I right in saying he had enhanced the reputation of
14 the hostel?
15 A. Yes, he certainly had. He enhanced the reputation and
16 the participation.
17
18 Q. Yes. With respect to the reputation of the hostel,
19 can you recall what the reputation of the hostel - whether
20 rightly or wrongly - was like within the community prior to
21 Mr McKenna becoming warden?
22 A. I can give you comments but a lot of them are,
23 perhaps, hearsay and I don't know how factual. Working on
24 the fact that my elderly retired parents lived in that area
25 and they would comment on hostel kids walking the streets
26 and being around at different times, and then it was --
27
28 Q. Was there some suggestion they might have been
29 responsible for stealing milk money?
30 A. Yes, there was. It was a time when you put out the
31 milk money in the milk bottles, and my elderly parents
32 would comment to that, that that happened, and whether - I
33 believed them, I think they were right, that the kids would
34 go for a walk at night and be a little bit disruptive.
35
36 Q. But certainly it would appear that Dennis McKenna was
37 responsible for the hostel regaining a good reputation?
38 A. He was responsible for that, yes.
39
40 Q. Can you recall that over the years that he was warden,
41 there was an increase in the number of students staying
42 there at the hostel?
43 A. I believe there was but whether I built - I only build
44 that on hearsay. I wasn't particularly involved. I
45 believe there was an increase in participants.
46
47 Q. We have already touched on his involvement of students

1 in community projects?
2 A. Yes.
3
4 Q. Can you recall some of those? If not, I might be able
5 to jog your memory.
6 A. In particular, I can recall that we had a very large
7 all schools reunion here in 1989. I was not on the
8 catering committee but the people who were worked with
9 Dennis and he did an excellent job in catering for quite a
10 few hundred people over the weekend.
11
12 Q. Yes. He got the students involved?
13 A. And the students, yes, were very involved and we had a
14 lot of participation in that, and that's one that I was
15 particularly involved in. As I said, we had different
16 committees. I was the history person, somebody else was
17 the catering person, but it worked extremely well and he
18 got lots of credits for it.
19
20 Q. Was it the case that he also arranged catering for
21 other events, such as weddings?
22 A. Yes, he did. I was never participating in those, but
23 I'm well aware of it happening.
24
25 Q. He got students involved in community work, such as -
26 and if you don't remember, by all means say so - collecting
27 roadside litter and that sort of thing?
28 A. Only by hearsay. I don't know for sure.
29
30 Q. Yes. Assisting the elderly members of the community
31 with gardening and things like that - again, the students
32 being involved?
33 A. Yes, yes.
34
35 Q. Was it also your recollection that he was involved in
36 fundraising for the hostel?
37 A. Well, yes, it was my recollection that he did that,
38 because he would take the students for trips to the
39 football in Perth and they did fundraising for that.
40
41 Q. Did you also notice over the years that he was the
42 warden that the infrastructure on the hostel grounds
43 expanded?
44 A. The swimming pool and things like that, yes, I do.
45
46 Q. When you say "things like that", the rec --
47 A. Oh, the swimming pool is all that comes to mind, but I

1 think the gymnasium probably fitted in. Oh, and perhaps
2 the cinema at different times.
3
4 Q. Yes?
5 A. Yes.
6
7 Q. Also, buildings or further buildings being built in
8 order to accommodate more students; do you recall that?
9 A. No, I can't recall it but I wouldn't refute it either.
10
11 Q. Am I right in saying, Mrs Evans, that the economic
12 benefits of a large and successful hostel were considerable
13 for the town?
14 A. Oh, they certainly were and the town was appreciative
15 of that.
16
17 Q. Was that a view you held of the hostel at a time
18 during the 1980s?
19 A. It's a view I hold about any commercial venture in
20 Katanning. We need them.
21
22 Q. Yes. Is it fair to say that the success of the hostel
23 was largely attributable to its warden, Dennis McKenna?
24 A. Yes, I believe that.
25
26 Q. By the time that he was named citizen of the year in
27 1983, did it appear to you that the general view of the
28 community was that it was blessed to have Dennis McKenna?
29 I don't want to use a religious term but would that be fair
30 to say?
31 A. Yes, I think it was.
32
33 Q. Furthermore - are you okay? Are you all right?
34 A. Yes, I'm fine, thank you.
35
36 Q. Furthermore, that he was a great role model for those
37 students who stayed at the hostel?
38 A. Yes, that's how I believed it to be. I wasn't
39 intimately involved but that's how I saw it as an outsider
40 looking in.
41
42 Q. I know, with hindsight, that that was not the case --
43 A. No, but before.
44
45 Q. -- but back then --
46 A. Yes, that's how I saw it at that time.
47

1 Q. You mentioned that you supported his nomination for
2 citizen of the year. Would I be right in saying that up
3 until he was charged in 1990 for sexual offences against,
4 firstly, one ex-student and then there were a number of
5 others he was further charged with in early 1991, but up
6 until those charges, you, together with the general
7 community, were supportive of him?

8 A. Yes, and shocked and surprised with (inaudible).
9

10 Q. Mrs Evans, we have been able to have some access to
11 Shire minutes.

12 A. Mmm-hmm.
13

14 Q. I just want to maybe show one piece of paper to you as
15 an example of the fact that the community thought that he
16 was a good role model for students. In 1984, the Shire
17 moved that he be approached to assist the Shire during the
18 international youth year, which was going to be the
19 following year. Do you have a recollection of that? If
20 you don't, by all means, I can show you a page from the
21 minutes.

22 A. No. I certainly believe you but I don't have a
23 recollection of it, I'm sorry.
24

25 Q. I might just show you that page.

26 A. Yes.
27

28 Q. (Indistinct).

29 A. I'm not surprised.
30

31 Q. Yes. It is page 7 of the Shire's minutes--

32 A. I don't remember year of the youth, unfortunately.
33

34 Q. -- and it is dated 20 June 1984.

35 A. Councillor Bolto and Councillor McFarland
36 (indistinct).
37

38 Q. Yes, and I think we have highlighted it on the page
39 there.

40 A. Yes.
41

42 Q. For those of us who don't have that copy in front of
43 us, the heading is International Youth Year '85?

44 A. Mmm, and (indistinct) yeah.
45

46 Q. And further advice as to the declaration of 1985 as
47 international youth year with the theme of participation,

1 development and peace. Seeking council's thoughts on how
2 the Shire might wish to use IYY and whether any particular
3 projects are planned. It was moved by - you recognise the
4 names, Councillor Bolto --
5 A. And Councillor McFarland.
6
7 Q. -- and seconded by Councillor McFarland.
8
9 .. that this committee recommend that
10 Mr Dennis McKenna be approached to see
11 whether he may be able to assist the Shire
12 in the participation during international
13 youth year.
14
15 A. Should I comment that the Councillor McFarland who
16 seconded that is not the Councillor McFarland who currently
17 sits on the Shire?
18
19 Q. Okay.
20 A. If it's any distinction - I don't know if it matters,
21 but if --
22
23 Q. Thank you for that, and if you have any other comments
24 to add about that --
25 A. No (indistinct) comment to add, but I just make that
26 clear.
27
28 Q. Mrs Evans, if you feel like you need to add something
29 to clarify something, by all means do so.
30 A. Thank you.
31
32 MR URQUHART: That applies throughout your evidence and
33 any other documents I might show you. I will tender that
34 page.
35
36 HIS HONOUR: That is exhibit 47.
37
38 EXHIBIT #47 ONE PAGE, KATANNING SHIRE COUNCIL MINUTES
39 20/6/1984 RE IYY '85
40
41 MR URQUHART: Q. Mrs Evans, do you recall a group of
42 young people who had come from outside Katanning coming to
43 live in Katanning as part of the Westrek project in 1985?
44 A. Yes, I very strongly recall Westrek and I got involved
45 in looking - in helping with them.
46
47 Q. Was it the case that the Shire - can you recall -

1 actually applied to have the township of Katanning involved
2 in this project?
3 A. I don't know how Katanning was selected in the first
4 place; I have no idea. My first feeling or even knowledge
5 of it was when the then Shire CEO, Trevor (indistinct),
6 invited - asked me to come to his office and alerted me to
7 the fact that this team of young people were coming to town
8 and that we could make good use of them in the community
9 now and make them very welcome.

10
11 Q. Certainly. Can you recall whether a Westrek committee
12 was formed by the Shire, which actually included you and
13 Dennis McKenna?

14 A. No, I don't recall that, I'm sorry, but we had
15 hundreds of committees at different times.

16
17 Q. Yes, I appreciate that. This document might assist
18 you with your recollection. It is titled President's
19 Report, 27 June 1985. Again, this is part of the Shire
20 records that the Inquiry has looked at. Now I know the
21 photocopying is not very good down the left-hand side of
22 that page, Mrs Evans, but if you can just have a look at
23 that?

24 A. Yes. Most of these other people were Shire employees.
25 Robert Turner, Terry Blanchard, the Shire Clerk, they were
26 Shire employees of the (indistinct) they weren't community
27 people.

28
29 Q. Thank you for that. I will just read out those
30 paragraphs in bold type, for the benefit of others here who
31 haven't got copies:

32
33 Most councillors will be aware at this
34 stage that Katanning was successful in
35 attracting a team of Westrek participants
36 and they will be commencing their stay in
37 Katanning on 11 July and will become
38 involved in the projects that have been
39 arranged ie. the old mill and the all-
40 ages playground, etc, as from 22 July.

41
42 The members of the Westrek committee
43 comprise of Mr Chris Overbey, Mr Ron
44 Caudwell, Mr Terry Giles, Mr Dennis
45 McKenna, Mr Doug Dowdell, Councillor
46 Ainslie Evans, Mr Robert Turner,
47 Mr Terry Blanchard and Mr Shire Clerk.

1 in the tree planting or the all-ages playground, I was only
2 involved in the mill one afternoon a week.
3
4 Q. Was that on a Wednesday afternoon?
5 A. Wednesday afternoon, every week for six months. That
6 was my total involvement.
7
8 Q. But does this sound familiar, that someone appointed
9 you as the community liaison officer?
10 A. I probably said that I would do it. I don't know
11 whether I was appointed or dragged into it, or what else it
12 was - whether I was sitting in the wrong seat that day.
13
14 Q. If people who were involved in the Westrek program
15 said that you were the community liaison officer for
16 Katanning, you would not dispute that?
17 A. No, no, no. But then I would have also - Leo Pocaro
18 was pretty involved too, but no, I wouldn't dispute it was
19 - yes.
20
21 Q. You mentioned a name there, Leo --
22 A. Leo Pocaro was the works foreman at that time and he
23 had to actually provide equipment and different things, so
24 he was pretty involved too. Unfortunately he is no longer
25 with us, but he was involved too.
26
27 Q. Mrs Evans, can you recall the spelling of his surname?
28 A. P-o-c-a-r-o, but there may be other local people who
29 can confirm or deny that.
30
31 Q. All right. Mrs Evans, were you aware of where the
32 people involved in the Westrek program, the young people
33 who were involved and their group leaders - which I will
34 talk to you about in a moment - can you recall where they
35 stayed here in Katanning?
36 A. Yes. They stayed at a facility that has had lots of
37 names over the years. It's currently known as Reidy House.
38 It started its life as St Rita's convent. During the time
39 that Westrek were there, it was called Kartanup.
40
41 Q. Can you recall, when Westrek was there, who was
42 overseeing the management or running of that property?
43 A. No. I find it a bit confusing. I believe the
44 property was on lease to the country hostels association.
45
46 Q. Yes?
47 A. But how much of the management they oversaw, or what,

1 I don't know, but I believe they had the property on lease.
2
3 Q. Can you recall from what department?
4 A. No, sorry, no.
5
6 Q. Were you aware of who the group leaders were, the
7 people in charge of these Westrek participants in
8 Katanning?
9 A. The only person I ever had contact with was Maggie
10 Dawkins, who was known to me as Maggie Maruff, and she was
11 the live-in person who controlled the (indistinct). I
12 didn't have any form of management or have any reason to
13 know of any other people or management, or anything.
14
15 Q. We know that Maggie Maruff's married name is Dawkins.
16 A. Yes.
17
18 Q. Throughout this hearing we have been referring to her
19 as Mrs Dawkins or Maggie Dawkins --
20 A. Okay.
21
22 Q. -- so we will do that now but, yes, I do understand
23 that she was Maruff back then. You didn't meet another
24 group leader, a male group leader by the name of
25 "I"?
26 A. I know the name but the person is not familiar and I
27 don't really know that I did meet him, but I think he
28 probably was around. I don't know.
29
30 Q. Can you recall how often you saw Maggie Dawkins?
31 A. Well, once a week. Wednesday afternoon was my
32 afternoon to work with the group and that was when I went.
33 She would take - she had the transport. She would take
34 the young people to the mill, which is in the centre of
35 town, and I worked there with them.
36
37 Q. Okay.
38 A. Oh, I let them - if there was holdups, if it was
39 particularly pouring with rain and they couldn't go to the
40 playground, we'd swap days or have other arrangements. We
41 were pretty flexible with the whole thing.
42
43 Q. We will refer to where they stayed by its current
44 name, Reidy House.
45 A. Right, yes.
46
47 Q. Would you visit Reidy House on occasions?

1 A. Oh yes, I would. If we had to change routines or
2 something like that, I would visit Reidy House, yes. I'm
3 very familiar with the place.
4
5 Q. How would you describe your relationship with Maggie
6 Dawkins, this is back in 1985?
7 A. Casual, I suppose. Yes.
8
9 Q. Did you and her have a lot in common?
10 A. Very little.
11
12 Q. In what way did you both differ?
13 A. I'm a country town person and she's a city town
14 person.
15
16 Q. Would she say anything about living in a country town
17 to you?
18 A. Oh, we had lots of conversations and it's hard to put
19 them in context. I don't think she was entirely
20 comfortable living in a country town. She saw things that
21 I had never noticed as being inconvenient; the lack of
22 supplies in the shops, and different - that had never
23 bothered me. We just chatted about lots of these things.
24
25 Q. Anything else that you can recall that you thought she
26 might be a bit unhappy about, living in a country town?
27 A. She was unhappy about a lot of things. No, nothing
28 particularly. It would depend on the day, what happened on
29 the day.
30
31 Q. The weather, was that another complaint of hers?
32 A. Yes, the weather. She didn't like our cold winters,
33 that's for sure.
34
35 Q. There might be a basis for that argument, but yes.
36 A. She might have, yes.
37
38 Q. Mrs Evans, did you have any concerns about how she ran
39 the Westrek project here in Katanning?
40 A. It wasn't my place. I wasn't management; it wasn't my
41 place. I was only there one afternoon a week.
42
43 Q. Look, I --
44 A. Yes.
45
46 Q. -- appreciate that but --
47 A. So I didn't have any - she was the manager. She was,

1 I presumed, I believed, a trained person; I was an
2 untrained volunteer.
3
4 Q. But from your contact with the group --
5 A. It was working quite well, yes.
6
7 Q. You didn't have any concerns about how she ran the
8 project?
9 A. No. I never would have done that job, that's for
10 sure.
11
12 Q. Yes, I can appreciate that. Did you have any concerns
13 about the behaviour of the young people who were involved
14 in the project?
15 A. I'm sure at times we chatted about that and I think
16 she took me to task for being inconsiderate (indistinct)
17 but I only compared them to my children and things that my
18 youngsters were doing, and I found that these children did
19 not have the same background or the same moral upbringing
20 or the same family life as my children. I accepted what
21 came.
22
23 Q. Did you have any concerns about their behaviour?
24 A. Yes, but (indistinct). Mostly language and - yes, and
25 - yes.
26
27 Q. Look, feel free. I mean, it's okay.
28 A. It's very difficult. It comes up again even now. I
29 have concerns about language and manners and at times, yes,
30 I'd correct them, but I'm saying I was comparing children
31 from totally different backgrounds.
32
33 Q. So you would correct them about their language?
34 A. Yes, I would.
35
36 Q. Which is fair enough, yes. Anything else?
37 A. Nothing that comes to mind. Perhaps eating habits and
38 manners.
39
40 Q. Did you have any concerns - you were talking about,
41 obviously, when you were working with them or when they
42 were working under your supervision.
43 A. Mmm.
44
45 Q. What about outside of their work, did you have any
46 concerns about their behaviour?
47 A. No. That was her problem. No, I didn't have any

1 concerns about - I didn't have any involvement with them
2 outside of their work period.
3
4 Q. Have you heard of anybody else having concerns about
5 their behaviour, either within the work or outside of
6 working hours?
7 A. No, not - there were, perhaps, questions but nothing
8 drastic, nothing that needed to have - beat a drum about.
9
10 Q. Can you recall what those questions were that you
11 didn't have to beat a drum about?
12 A. Only things like I said to you: should they be yelling
13 and screaming like they are, or they - what are their
14 manners, what are their background. Yes.
15
16 Q. Mrs Evans, can you recall whether you ever had cause
17 to complain about the Westrek participants to the Westrek
18 head office people in Perth?
19 A. No, no. That wasn't my business. I wasn't in
20 management.
21
22 Q. No?
23 A. No.
24
25 Q. Were you aware if anybody else here within Katanning
26 had complained --
27 A. No, I wasn't aware.
28
29 Q. -- about the Westrek participants?
30 A. No, I wasn't aware, no.
31
32 Q. So you didn't have any contact yourself with head
33 office; I'm talking in writing or a phone call?
34 A. Certainly not in writing, and I don't believe a phone
35 call, but there could - there would be times - perhaps they
36 came to check on the job or were in town as - might have
37 drifted in and out, but I don't recall any particular
38 meetings with - the only particular special thing we had
39 was when Janet Holmes a Court came once, and we had a lunch
40 with her, but apart from that I don't recall any --
41
42 Q. Okay.
43 A. -- particular meetings or people coming or going.
44
45 Q. And when you say "we", there was a luncheon?
46 A. I mean, we, the - yes, the Westrek people when, yes,
47 involved with that. Well, like Leo or whoever was - was

1 around.
2
3 Q. I just want to run some names by you --
4 A. Yes.
5
6 Q. -- who were involved in Westrek management in Perth,
7 and see whether they ring any bells with you - Elizabeth
8 Stroud?
9 A. I don't remember her. Obviously I read some press
10 reports. I'm aware that she's been, but I don't remember
11 the person from that time.
12
13 Q. Okay. And you don't remember ever discussing anything
14 with her?
15 A. No. I don't even remember her being around at all.
16
17 Q. Okay. Peter Sherlock?
18 A. Peter Sherlock, yes, but I also believe I met Peter
19 Sherlock at different times, and I can't pinpoint in
20 particular whether it was here or - yes. I know the name,
21 I believe he was involved, but --
22
23 Q. Okay. But --
24 A. -- that's it.
25
26 Q. -- apart from that --
27 A. No, nothing.
28
29 Q. -- you don't remember speaking to him about the
30 Westrek program or any concerns you had about it?
31 A. No.
32
33 Q. Ian Carter?
34 A. I believe Ian Carter took over when Maggie went to
35 Bunbury, but that's all I - I know. Apart from that, I
36 don't remember him being around at all.
37
38 Q. And do you remember speaking to him at all?
39 A. Well, I believe I did when I - Maggie wasn't there one
40 day.
41
42 Q. I see. Can you --
43 A. But not apart from that, no, and then he said she'd
44 been relocated to Bunbury, that's all.
45
46 Q. I see. So on that occasion you --
47 A. Well, I did meet him, yes. He was there when the kids

1 came, but apart from that --
2
3 HIS HONOUR: Q. When you say he "took over" from --
4 A. Sorry?
5
6 Q. When you say that Ian Carter took over from Maggie
7 Dawkins, what do you mean? When you say "took over"?
8 A. Well, when Maggie was shifted to Bunbury, just as the
9 project was finishing, I believe Ian was the one that took
10 over the management.
11
12 Q. So he came to Katanning, you say, and took over the
13 management?
14 A. Yes, that's what I can remember.
15
16 HIS HONOUR: I see.
17
18 MR URQUHART: I see. Yes.
19
20 THE WITNESS: Yes, but apart from that I didn't see him or
21 speak to him.
22
23 MR URQUHART: Q. That might be a different Ian
24 (indistinct).
25 A. Sorry.
26
27 Q. That's fine.
28 A. I don't know, sorry.
29
30 Q. It's a long time ago, that's okay. I should have
31 clarified it. I'm talking --
32 A. I'm sorry, no, I didn't know.
33
34 Q. I'm talking about an Ian Carter who was involved in
35 the management of Westrek at the head office in Perth?
36 A. No, I don't - we've got Carter and Carpenter mixed up.
37 I have too.
38
39 Q. I see. Okay.
40 A. Yes, no, sorry, I don't know the other person at all.
41
42 Q. Right. And the other person I was going to ask you
43 involved in Westrek management at head office was a Peter
44 Kenyon, K-E-N-Y-O-N?
45 A. I've had numerous times I've met with Peter Kenyon
46 over Route 120, Katanning Landcare, Bank of Ideas, Heritage
47 Council, and pinpointing which time we spoke about what

1 thing, no. I don't ever remember him as part of Westrek,
2 but I have sat with Peter Kenyon in lots of rooms at lots
3 of times.
4
5 Q. I see. And that's over, sounds like, many --
6 A. Over many - several years, yes.
7
8 Q. Several years, or --
9 A. Lots - yes, lots of years, but I don't remember him as
10 part of Westrek, but then I don't know that he wasn't.
11
12 Q. Okay. So did you ever have cause to complain to
13 anyone at head office - either in writing or by a phone
14 call - regarding the behaviour of Maggie Dawkins?
15 A. No.
16
17 Q. No?
18 A. No.
19
20 Q. Did you have any concerns regarding her behaviour?
21 A. She was alternate. She was different to what I was
22 used to. I had used the phrase before, as a drama queen,
23 and I had not used it in any of these hearings, but now
24 that it is printed in the paper, in public media, I can
25 only confirm that that was probably my impression of her.
26
27 Q. Right. And is that with respect to the examples that
28 you've already given, with her complaining about the lack
29 of --
30 A. Yes.
31
32 Q. -- variety in the stores here, and the weather --
33 A. Yes.
34
35 Q. -- that sort of thing?
36 A. Yes. And she was pretty outspoken about some of those
37 things.
38
39 Q. Is that the impression you got of her - that she was a
40 very outspoken woman?
41 A. Yes.
42
43 Q. That she would - if something was on her mind, she --
44 A. She was the - she was the boss.
45
46 Q. Yes, she'd let people know?
47 A. Yes, she was the boss, yes.

1
2 Q. Yes. Were you aware - and this could be based on
3 hearsay, or it could be based on your own personal
4 knowledge - were you aware of any breakdown in the
5 relationship the community - the Katanning community had
6 with Maggie Dawkins and her Westrek participants?
7 A. None at all. No, I don't think the rest of the
8 community even knew she was around.
9
10 Q. Right. Why do you say that?
11 A. Well, she was - she was only involved with Westrek,
12 she wasn't involved with anything else, and I don't think
13 the community particularly knew about her. I don't think
14 there was a breakdown. I think - I don't think there was
15 anything really.
16
17 Q. Can I ask you this, Mrs Evans - would of you been the
18 person within the community that she had the most contact
19 with?
20 A. Probably, but I - I would have thought she probably
21 had more contact - well, probably yes.
22
23 Q. And can you think of anybody else that she might have
24 had contact with, within the community?
25 A. Well, there was other suppliers. She was involved with
26 other, you know, caterers and buying supplies and fuel and
27 all those things around, but other than Leo Pocaró, no, I
28 don't know that she would have. She went out to Marybank,
29 which is a mission out from here. I don't know who she was
30 involved with there, or what part of the project that took.
31
32 Q. Can you recall whether she had any contact with Dennis
33 McKenna, given where her and the Westrek participants were
34 residing?
35 A. Yes, she would have, and I believe at times there were
36 functions, meetings, when some hostel kids would meet with
37 some Westrek kids for interaction, and they had meals
38 together or something like that, and Maggie would have had
39 dealings with Dennis to organise and set those up, yes.
40
41 Q. Now, I gather, Mrs Evans, you've been following what's
42 been said at the Inquiry by various witnesses?
43 A. Yes, I have.
44
45 Q. You've already mentioned how you've read just
46 recently --
47 A. Yes.

1
2 Q. -- about one witness describing Mrs Dawkins as a drama
3 queen. I gather you've also read the evidence that she
4 gave at the Inquiry a couple of months ago?
5 A. Yes.
6
7 Q. I'm going to ask you some things about that, okay.
8 But, firstly, can I ask you whether any conversations that
9 you had with Maggie Dawkins that stands out - and I know
10 you've mentioned the complaints she had about what you
11 could - couldn't do in a community such as Katanning - but
12 can you recall any conversation she had with you of some
13 note regarding Dennis McKenna?
14 A. That's - you are obviously referring to the
15 conversation that she brought up.
16
17 Q. I'm just asking you what you can recall.
18 A. No, I don't think it would have particularly occurred
19 to me if it hadn't become (indistinct) and she hadn't made
20 evidence of it. And she said that she went to my house. I
21 don't ever remember Maggie being at my house, but we did
22 have a streetside conversation in front of the mill there
23 one day, and I do remember that she said to me she thought
24 he had too much control over the students.
25
26 Q. I see.
27 A. And that's what you're referring to?
28
29 Q. I'm asking you that --
30 A. Yes, she did.
31
32 Q. -- that's one conversation - that's a conversation
33 that you can recall that you had with Maggie?
34 A. Yes, and I believe - yes, she did tell me that she
35 believed he had too much control, and I thought that the
36 control he had was very good because the behaviour levels
37 had improved, but --
38
39 Q. We'll just clarify. We know who you're talking about.
40 We'll just clarify for the transcript. You're talking
41 about Dennis McKenna, are you --
42 A. Yes, I am.
43
44 Q. -- when you say "he"?
45 A. Sorry, I beg your pardon.
46
47 Q. Yes. Good. So you mentioned - yes, so you recall

1 that conversation. And can you remember responding to
2 that?
3 A. Well, I think that that's what I responded to - that
4 it was a good thing.
5
6 Q. Right.
7 A. But if that conversation had not been recorded in the
8 original transcript in the press, I don't know that I would
9 have remembered it particularly, but when she commented,
10 yes, I remember her telling me that she believed he had too
11 much control.
12
13 Q. Too much control, right. And did you actually know of
14 one example where Dennis McKenna's control of the students
15 could arguably be said a little excessive?
16 A. You're commenting to a statement I made about shifting
17 the telephone --
18
19 Q. You're right there, yes.
20 A. -- but that was well after the Maggie Dawkins era --
21
22 Q. Okay.
23 A. -- a long time after. And it was, you know, years
24 after, and that was one comment, yes, and I don't
25 particularly remember how that came up. That was well
26 after her era.
27
28 Q. Could you tell us about that, what you've heard about
29 that --
30 A. My --
31
32 Q. -- (indistinct)?
33 A. -- yes, with - in (indistinct) that Dennis had shifted
34 the telephone from where it was down the passage, as much
35 as I can describe, to outside his office window, so that he
36 could supervise the phone calls that the students were
37 making. This was the time before lots of mobiles and
38 things, please recall. And he wanted to know what students
39 were using the telephone, and he had reason to ask who they
40 were phoning.
41
42 Q. Right.
43 A. And the kids were not happy with that. They believed
44 they should be allowed to phone their parents if and when
45 they wanted to.
46
47 Q. And what position did you take on that? Did you think

1 that Dennis McKenna was entitled to listen in on student's
2 private phone calls?
3 A. No, I don't think he listened in on the phone calls.
4 I think he may have been aware of who they were phoning.
5 It was through a window, yes, and there's another,
6 probably, comment - yes, I did think he had the right to
7 know who they were phoning. It gets very involved, and my
8 kids have been - my kids have moved on a bit by then and
9 when they've been at boarding school I'd had comments about
10 the staff wanting to know who the kids were phoning and
11 what after-hours activities they may have been interested
12 in, and I've thought it was agreeable that management of
13 the hostel knew who the kids were phoning and what they may
14 have been doing.
15
16 Q. So you have no problems with --
17 A. No, I didn't have a problem --
18
19 Q. -- him doing that?
20 A. -- with it.
21
22 Q. But you do know the setup where the phone was in
23 relation to --
24 A. Yes.
25
26 Q. -- his office, didn't you? And as a matter of fact,
27 if that office window was open where the phone was --
28 A. He would --
29
30 Q. -- he could quite easily hear --
31 A. Yes.
32
33 Q. -- what they were being said?
34 A. Yes, he could have, but whether it was, I don't know.
35
36 Q. Now, can you recall any other conversations that you
37 had with Maggie Dawkins in which she complained about
38 Dennis McKenna?
39 A. No, I don't.
40
41 Q. I'm going to ask you some things about what Maggie
42 Dawkins has said, because in fairness you're entitled to
43 answer them. One matter she talks about is she said that
44 Dennis McKenna, and also you, would just walk into Reidy
45 House without knocking and waiting to be invited in. With
46 respect to yourself, what do you say about that?
47 A. I think I probably did, but I don't recall that, but

1 then the reason for it was the front door was a very, very
2 long way from the back door, and you could knock on the
3 front door for 10 minutes before anybody heard you. It was
4 much better to open the door and go in and yell out, than
5 stand and hope somebody heard you. That would be the
6 reason for it.

7
8 Q. Okay. Knowing the man, Dennis McKenna, does that
9 sound like something he would do as well, that he would
10 just walk in?

11 A. Yes, it's a familiarity thing. We felt familiar with
12 the property.

13
14 Q. I see.

15 A. I did. I spent - I felt familiar with the property,
16 because I've been there under lots of different things and
17 lots of different times.

18
19 Q. Mrs Evans, she's also described --

20 A. No, no, sorry.

21
22 Q. Okay. Are you all right?

23 A. Yes, I had other time constraints. It's okay. No,
24 no, it's okay.

25
26 Q. Please tell us. I understand you have to be at an
27 appointment --

28 A. It's okay.

29
30 Q. -- at half past three.

31 A. It's okay.

32
33 Q. Do you have any others?

34 A. No.

35
36 MR URQUHART: -- because we're going to be adjourning
37 shortly, I understand, your Honour, for lunch --

38
39 HIS HONOUR: Yes.

40
41 MR URQUHART: -- at some stage.

42
43 Q. Is that - I don't want to inconvenience you.

44 A. No, thank you.

45
46 Q. Are you right? Would you like to have the break now?

47 A. No, no, let's get it finished.

1
2 Q. Well, I don't think we're going to finish before
3 lunch.
4 A. Oh, dear. Okay.
5
6 Q. Okay. All right. But we'll finish in time for you to
7 make that appointment at half past three.
8 A. Thank you.
9
10 Q. Okay. Now, Mrs Dawkins also described you as being
11 differential towards Dennis McKenna?
12 A. As being what?
13
14 Q. Differential. That means - differential has a number
15 of meanings. It can mean being respectful and also being
16 prepared to accept the opinion of someone else?
17 A. Yes, that would have been right. I would have
18 accepted his opinion on things. I had no reason not to.
19
20 Q. And also you - and we're talking about 1985 - you were
21 respectful of him and towards him?
22 A. Yes. And the position he held, yes.
23
24 Q. And another thing I want to ask you about. Do you
25 remember a Westrek participant, a young man who Dennis
26 McKenna arranged to take up a position as a supervisor at
27 the hostel in Albany?
28 A. No. I've seen it in the transcripts, I have no idea
29 that it happened and I don't recall anything about it.
30
31 Q. Right. So you don't recall then Mrs Dawkins raising
32 with you her concerns that there might have been more to
33 the relationship between this young man - he was in his
34 early 20s - that he had with Dennis McKenna?
35 A. No, nothing like that at all, I don't know.
36
37 Q. Had she raised that concern with you, or her concerns,
38 would have you been concerned as well about that?
39 A. Possibly not, because I had respect for Dennis, but
40 that sounds a bit blase at this stage.
41
42 Q. Yes. No, no, that's understandable.
43 A. But, no, I had --
44
45 Q. You're not alone in that regard, okay.
46 A. Yes. My four hours a week were very minor, really, in
47 the whole project.

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Q. So given the reputation that Mr McKenna had at that time, you would not have been --

A. No, I wouldn't have been perturbed.

Q. -- worried about that?

A. No.

Q. Were you aware that Dennis McKenna was single?

A. Yes, I was.

Q. Were there any rumours that you were aware of circulating around the town about his sexual preferences?

A. None whatsoever.

Q. None whatsoever?

A. But it wasn't a time when we discussed a lot of things like that either.

Q. No?

A. No, none whatsoever.

Q. Now, Mrs Evans, I'd like to take you now to what Mrs Dawkins says about another concern she raised with you, and a far more serious one regarding Dennis McKenna. I think you know what I'm talking about.

A. Yes.

Q. Yes, but in fairness to you and everybody else here, I'm going to set out what it was that - or read out what Mrs Dawkins said about this - and, sir, it's at page 239 of the transcript from 23 February of this year. And this is what Mrs Dawkins' recollection of it is:

I sought Mrs Evans' assistance to have the allegations of sexual abuse by a former resident of St Andrew's investigated. She did not for a moment focus on the allegations, but lost her composure, berating me for daring to besmirch the glowing reputation of Dennis McKenna, who was Citizen of the Year.

I tried in vain to convince Mrs Evans that it wasn't a case of believing me against Dennis McKenna. I appealed to her to have the allegations investigated. I became a

1 yours - sir, again, on the same page, line 39:

2
3 I made it clear to Mrs Evans that it was
4 not up to her to judge whether these
5 allegations had substance or not. It was
6 important that others, such as the Country
7 Hostels Association or the Education
8 Department, investigate, or some other body
9 outside of Katanning.

10
11 Mrs Evans asked me to name the boy who had
12 come to me. When I divulged his name, she
13 dismissed him as nothing but trouble. I
14 volunteered to Mrs Evans it was quite
15 possible that his troublesome behaviour was
16 a direct result of sexual abuse by Dennis
17 McKenna.

18
19 She was not interested in my concerns or in
20 having these concerns investigated.

21
22 And I'll just finish off now:

23
24 She told me that she would contact my
25 superiors and have me removed immediately.
26 During the course of the meeting Mrs Evans
27 turned from a warm, motherly person to an
28 aggressive, vindictive woman out to have me
29 sacked.

30
31 Yes. So, again, does any of that ring a bell or jog your
32 memory?

33 A. No, I'm sorry it doesn't, but I'm very confident that
34 I would not have even suggested I could get her removed.
35 That would be far beyond my powers. I had no management.
36 I was a casual volunteer. I - surely nobody would take any
37 notice. It would be beyond my powers of ability to
38 redirect her employment.

39
40 Q. Would you think at the time that would be beyond the
41 powers of Dennis McKenna to have her removed?

42 A. I don't think I would have even considered it. I
43 don't know.

44
45 Q. But you do --

46 A. Yes, it should be beyond his powers, yes.
47

1 Q. Yes.
2 A. I would not have even thought of that or considered
3 it.
4
5 Q. But you've read the evidence this week, haven't you --
6 A. Yes, I have.
7
8 Q. -- of witnesses --
9 A. Yes.
10
11 Q. -- about exactly that matter?
12 A. Yes, I have read the evidence, yes, but at that time -
13 I'm trying not to be repetitive, but I was a tiny little
14 cog in that wheel, and I didn't assume to have any powers I
15 didn't have.
16
17 Q. Certainly. I just want to ask you now about the name,
18 because according to Mrs Dawkins' account you actually
19 asked her for the boy's name, and when she told you - and
20 incidentally I should add that Mrs Dawkins can't recall the
21 name of the boy now, that's why I can't tell you that - but
22 she told you the name back then because she could remember
23 it, and then you dismissed that boy as being nothing but
24 trouble.
25
26 Now, I just want to put this in context before your
27 comment. Mrs Dawkins estimated that this young man's age
28 was around 18 or 19, and so this was 1985. So assuming he
29 went through the hostel until Year 12, he would have left
30 maybe 1987 or 1988 or thereabouts - sorry, no, I apologise
31 - 19 - sorry, if he was 18 or 19, around 1985, he would
32 have been at the hostel maybe up until 1983/'84, we don't
33 know, but early '80s, yes, okay.
34
35 Now, it would be case though, that you would know a
36 number of high school students at the school at the time
37 because of the fact that, as I understand it, you would
38 have had at least one son there at that time, yes?
39 A. Yes.
40
41 Q. Yes. So would you agree that you would know a number
42 of boys who went not only just to the hostel, but also to
43 the school in these years?
44 A. Yes, I certainly knew boys from town. I didn't very
45 much know the boys at the hostel at all, only other boys in
46 town and boys that were friends with my lads. And with the
47 emphasis again, we lived a lot of football, and if they

1 weren't there, I possibly didn't know much about them.
2
3 Q. But by the same token, you may well have known them?
4 A. Yes. I don't recall her mentioning it, but I would
5 have - I am sure I would have mentioned it to my lad if
6 there'd been a name.
7
8 Q. Well, you mentioned earlier if there was a name you
9 would have asked your son if you knew --
10 A. Yes.
11
12 Q. -- about the boy?
13 A. Yes.
14
15 Q. But in this instance here, according to Mrs Dawkins,
16 you already knew about the boy and said that he was nothing
17 but trouble?
18 A. I don't recall any of that. I don't recall a name or
19 her even saying. I recall the conversation we had before
20 about him saying too much management. I don't recall that
21 conversation at all.
22
23 Q. Now, given Dennis McKenna's standing in the community
24 at that time, which I've already asked you about, had
25 Maggie Dawkins told you this - so this is assuming that she
26 did - I know you can't remember, and I accept that, but
27 assuming that she did - I'm not saying that she did, I'm
28 just saying assuming that she did - would it be the case
29 that you would have found it very difficult to believe that
30 Dennis McKenna, this reputable man from within the
31 community, would be sexually abusing an ex-student?
32 A. Yes, I would have found any indiscretions of Dennis's
33 hard to believe because of the standing that he had in
34 town, and because of the fact that Maggie complained about
35 most things.
36
37 Q. Yes. Okay. And that would be particularly so if -
38 and I'm just saying again, assuming, if you knew the
39 student had a poor reputation himself. Would that be fair
40 to say?
41 A. Yes, that would be fair to say.
42
43 Q. And particularly given the fact that you had never
44 heard so much as a whisper about this sort of behaviour by
45 Dennis McKenna?
46 A. Nothing at all.
47

1 Q. And do you agree that if this allegation was to be
2 aired publicly within the community, it could have impacted
3 on the good standing that the hostel had gained?
4 A. Well, yes, it would have, but it never occurred to me
5 that would - yes, it wasn't a comparison I made.
6
7 Q. No, look, I appreciate that, but if --
8 A. If, what, yes.
9
10 Q. If this allegation was to be --
11 A. Yes, it would have impacted on the hostel, but it
12 wasn't a comparison I made.
13
14 Q. And it would have also impacted on the reputation of a
15 highly respected member of the community?
16 A. Yes.
17
18 Q. And could I suggest to you that if this allegation was
19 to be made public, that it would also be very embarrassing
20 for the Shire if word got out that a member of the
21 community who had just been named two years earlier as
22 Citizen of the year, was accused of sexually abusing a
23 student that he was supposed to be looking after?
24 A. No, it wouldn't have been embarrassing for the shire.
25 They would have taken it on board because, see, the
26 nomination for the Citizen of the Year was the community
27 work he did, not his management of the hostel, and the
28 shire would not have appreciated it, but they wouldn't have
29 liked it, but they didn't give him a Citizen of the Year
30 award for hostel management.
31
32 Q. No, but it still would have been embarrassing for the
33 shire, would it not, if word got out that it was
34 disseminated amongst the community that an ex-Citizen of
35 the Year has been accused of sexual abuse of a boy that he
36 was supposed to be looking after?
37 A. Look --
38
39 Q. Whether it's justified or not, there would be that
40 perception, wouldn't it?
41 A. There would be, but we're using, perhaps, the wrong
42 words. It was not the Shire would, as a council, be
43 embarrassed about giving it. They gave it in good faith at
44 the time.
45
46 Q. Yes, certainly.
47 A. Yes. And then when it came - whether it be - it would

1 disappointing and upsetting to them, yes. "Embarrassed"
2 might be the wrong word.
3
4 Q. You see, you'd only be embarrassing?
5 A. It's not not embarrassing.
6
7 Q. All right. Okay.
8 A. Yes, when you do something in good faith and it comes
9 back to bite you, that's a bit difficult to be embarrassed.
10 You would be distressed and upset by it. It's a matter
11 of definition of words.
12
13 Q. So given all of that - so given that background, I'm
14 going to suggest to you that if you'd been told that -
15 assuming that you'd been told that Dennis McKenna had been
16 sexually abusing an ex-student, and given the fact that
17 you'd been told that by Maggie Dawkins - and I suggest to
18 you that if it happened, you would have dismissed it,
19 dismissed the allegation because it was ludicrous?
20 A. Well, I did - if she told me, I did dismiss it, but if
21 I thought there was any seriousness in this problem, my
22 part of call would have been the then CEO, Trevor Ruland.
23 He was virtually the senior person, and if I had complaints
24 or comments about things, I would have discussed it with
25 him.
26
27 Q. But would have you regarded the allegation as
28 ludicrous?
29 A. I did. Well, I don't think she said it, so you're
30 twisting --
31
32 Q. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. No, if - if you'd been told
33 this?
34 A. Yes, I would have been - unfounded. "Ludicrous" might
35 be too hard a word, "unfounded" would have been my
36 summation.
37
38 Q. So given this unfounded allegation from someone who
39 you thought was - the person that Maggie Dawkins was - I
40 think you described her, but it escapes me for the moment,
41 a description that --
42 A. Drama queen.
43
44 Q. Drama queen - that's it, yes. So given that, given
45 the allegation being made against Dennis McKenna, I'm going
46 to suggest to you that you would have just dismissed it and
47 not done anything about it?

1 A. Yes.
2
3 Q. Would I be right in that?
4 A. Yes, you're right in that.
5
6 HIS HONOUR: Q. Just to clarify there - you say you
7 don't recall this conversation. Does that mean that it
8 could have happened, but you just don't remember it?
9 A. Yes, it could have happened, but perhaps it was taken
10 out of context. It might have been - she might have been
11 complaining about five different things in the same
12 conversation. I don't recall. She complained quite
13 regularly, and I don't recall that conversation. It could
14 have been with something else, I don't know.
15
16 HIS HONOUR: Right.
17
18 MR URQUHART: Q. Mrs Evans, it's not quite the same
19 category as complaining about the fact that you can't get a
20 particular brand of shampoo at the supermarket?
21 A. You're right, I agree there.
22
23 Q. Or that the weather's too cold here.
24 A. No, I agree with you. I hear what you're saying, but
25 I treated them all the same, "Here she goes again." I
26 don't particularly remember her complaining about that, and
27 I have said that. And if I had believed there was some
28 substance, I probably would have gone further, but I don't
29 believe it. I don't remember her complaining.
30
31 Q. So if you believe it had any substance, what would you
32 have done by taking it further?
33 A. I would have spoken to the Shire's CEO.
34
35 Q. What about the police?
36 A. No, no, no, I, at that time I - well, I don't know.
37 No, I would have gone to the Shire CEO. He was managing
38 the Westrek thing as well. He was aware of why they were
39 in town. I would have asked him first. He --
40
41 Q. The allegation was not against a Westrek participant.
42 A. No, it was against Dennis McKenna. Fair enough.
43
44 Q. No, sorry, an ex-student from St Andrew's Hostel.
45 A. No, I don't - coming back to the beginning, I don't
46 recall the conversation. If I had taken it seriously, I
47 don't imagine myself going to the police. I would have -

1 it was - I would have had to have a lot more information.
2
3 Q. What about the Hostel Board?
4 A. No, I - well, I don't - no, I don't know.
5
6 Q. You were aware that --
7 A. Yes, I'm --
8
9 Q. -- there was a Hostel Board?
10 A. I'm aware of the Hostel Board. I'm aware of the
11 people that sat on it. I'm aware of, yes, things like
12 that.
13
14 Q. Were you aware of the hostel Board in 1985?
15 A. Yes, yes, I was aware, yes.
16
17 Q. What about the school principal, speaking to school
18 principal about it?
19 A. Well, we were saying that this lad was past school age
20 then anyway, so I doubt that I would have even considered
21 it being anything to do with the school principal.
22
23 MR URQUHART: So is that a convenient time?
24
25 HIS HONOUR: Yes. We'll adjourn now, I think, until
26 2 o'clock.
27
28 MR URQUHART: Q. Now, Mrs Evans, yes, if we can just get
29 from you what time would you need to leave here?
30 A. I must leave this place by 20 past three.
31
32 MR URQUHART: 20 past three. Thank you for that.
33
34 HIS HONOUR: Very well, is 2 o'clock good enough?
35
36 MR URQUHART: Yes, 2 o'clock will be fine, thank you, sir.
37
38 HIS HONOUR: All right. We'll adjourn until two.
39
40 LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT
41
42 UPON RESUMPTION:
43
44 MR URQUHART: Q. Mrs Evans, before I move on to another
45 area, I just want to ask you about this conversation that
46 Mrs Dawkins says she had with you. Can I ask you this:
47 would you have expected to have recalled that conversation

1 if, in fact, Mrs Dawkins had that conversation with you?
2 Would you have expected to recall it?
3 A. I probably would, but 20 years is an awful long time
4 and we had an awful lot of conversations.
5
6 Q. Certainly.
7 A. I don't - no, I can only say no, I don't recall it
8 (indistinct).
9
10 Q. But I know --
11 A. As I said, one more of her complaints. But no - yes,
12 I would have - I should have recalled it. Is that the word
13 you're looking for?
14
15 Q. Well, no. I am asking you if - I know it is 27 years
16 ago, it's longer than 20 years, but had she had that
17 conversation with you, given the importance of it, would
18 you have expected to recall it?
19 A. Yes, I would have expected to recall it because I had
20 boys around. We didn't discuss things like that. It was
21 alien to the community at that time.
22
23 Q. Mrs Evans, am I right in saying that you try to
24 regularly read the local newspaper down here, the 'Great
25 Southern Herald'?
26 A. I am a great supporter of the local newspaper. It's
27 the oldest business in town, if you're into history.
28
29 Q. Well, thank you for telling me that. So you do try
30 and read it over the years?
31 A. I do read it regularly.
32
33 Q. Can you recall whether you followed the coverage by
34 that newspaper of Dennis McKenna's trial in 1991?
35 A. Yes, I do.
36
37 Q. So you did follow it? Did you follow that newspaper's
38 coverage of his trial?
39 A. Yes, yes.
40
41 Q. I will show you now something that is related to its
42 coverage, I suppose, and it is a letter that Mrs Dawkins
43 wrote to the newspaper after Dennis McKenna was convicted.
44 It is exhibit 4. The letter that she wrote appears in the
45 bottom left-hand corner there, under the titled Hurried
46 Departure Explained. I will just give you a moment to have
47 a look at that.

1 A. It's pretty small print.
2
3 Q. I know. Would you like me to read it out for you?
4 A. Oh, well, for the benefit of the others. That's
5 pretty hard to read.
6
7 Q. Yes, I know. We had to get it onto an A4 sized bit of
8 paper for the full page, that's all. Okay?
9 A. Yes, okay.
10
11 Q. I just want to draw your attention - I will read out
12 now, for the benefit of people here, the passages I would
13 like to ask you something about. It is the third
14 paragraph:
15
16 In 1985 a young man told me of his time at
17 the St Andrew's hostel. I wanted the
18 claims of sexual abuse by Dennis McKenna
19 investigated by the appropriate
20 authorities. I turned to my supervisor in
21 Perth and a Katanning Shire Councillor. I
22 was told by the councillor that the young
23 man was of questionable character and that
24 such claims were 'ludicrous'. The
25 councillor also said - the words still ring
26 in my ears - 'How could a former citizen
27 of the year be accused of such unspeakable
28 things?' For my trouble, I was literally
29 run out of town by McKenna. He telephoned
30 my supervisor in Perth and threatened to
31 withdraw the Westrek accommodation at
32 Kartanup. This would have effectively
33 closed down the project.
34
35 Now, Mrs Evans, I know it's a long time ago but would you
36 happen to recall reading that letter?
37 A. I'm sure I would have read it but, no, I don't
38 particularly recall reading it.
39
40 Q. Certainly.
41 A. But I am an avid reader. I (indistinct) would have.
42
43 Q. It is just that now, obviously, you know that the
44 "Katanning Shire Councillor" that she refers to almost
45 inevitably would have been you?
46 A. Yes, I - yes, I agree with that.
47

1 Q. Do you know if, when you would have read that article,
2 whether you would have connected that reference to a
3 Katanning Shire Councillor to yourself?
4 A. Oh, I know I was the only one there. Yes, I would
5 have connected it, yes. It's no good shelving it.
6
7 Q. No. At that time, 1991, might that have jogged your
8 memory as to whether she did have that conversation with
9 you?
10 A. I'm sorry, it doesn't.
11
12 Q. Maybe back then it might have?
13 A. Well, no, I don't think so. I don't think she had the
14 conversation, so I can't recall it.
15
16 Q. Had you read that article, it might have been
17 something that you would have thought: no, wait on,
18 Mrs Dawkins didn't have this conversation with me?
19 A. No, I just would have thought, "There she goes again".
20
21 Q. Which is?
22 A. Another complaint. Another - something else. But,
23 no, it didn't have any bearing on me.
24
25 Q. You can hand that back now.
26 A. Thank you. Enlarge it for next time.
27
28 Q. I will. I think you already touched on this before we
29 had the break, Mrs Evans, but it is your recollection that
30 Mrs Dawkins suddenly left Katanning?
31 A. Yes.
32
33 Q. Was it the case that you can recall that she suddenly
34 left because she didn't say any formal goodbyes, or
35 informal goodbyes, with you or anything like that?
36 A. The project was nearing its end, it was very close to
37 the last few days of the project, and there was a project
38 in Bunbury that she could take on. That was the way I saw
39 it at that time.
40
41 Q. Do you know why --
42
43 HIS HONOUR: Q. Are you saying that you did not see
44 anything untoward about her departure, you just thought it
45 was the normal thing, did you - or what?
46 A. No, I didn't see anything - it was near - everybody
47 was going. It was near - just about the end and she'd

1 moved on.
2
3 Q. You just thought she was leaving because the job was
4 finished; is that what you are saying?
5 A. Just moving - leaving this job - well, somebody else
6 came, I think, and then - and she was going to take on a
7 new project in Bunbury.
8
9 MR URQUHART: Q. Do you know why she left?
10 A. No, I don't. Since then, I've heard lots of things
11 but when she left, I believed it was because this job was
12 virtually finished and she needed another job. That's
13 (indistinct).
14
15 Q. You said that later you heard lots of things?
16 A. Yes.
17
18 Q. As to why it was that she left. Are you talking about
19 hearing lots of things now, more recently, or more back
20 then?
21 A. No, no. Only recently. Back then, she'd gone, it was
22 the end of Westrek, move on to something else.
23
24 Q. I gather from those answers you have given me,
25 Mrs Evans, that you did not know or hear anything back then
26 - I'm talking about 1985 - that Dennis McKenna may well
27 have played a role in her being moved from Katanning?
28 A. That's hard. At that time I didn't think he played a
29 role but, of course, so much has come forward since. He
30 may well have told her he would withdraw the accommodation
31 facility, but I didn't know at that time.
32
33 Q. Yes, that is what I was going to ask. You didn't hear
34 anything --
35 A. No.
36
37 Q. -- at that time?
38 A. No, not that I recall.
39
40 Q. Correct me if I am wrong but I understand from the
41 evidence you have already given us that, in fact, you were
42 pleased with this Westrek program and what it had achieved?
43 A. Yes, I enjoyed it. It was interesting. It gave these
44 youngsters a real taste of country life, and we did a lot
45 of cleaning and things in the mill.
46
47 Q. Yes?

1 A. Yes, I thought it was excellent for the young people
2 who participated that they had experience in the country.

3

4 Q. I will now show you something we have got from the
5 Shire records. It is the minutes of a Shire meeting from
6 18 December 1985, under the heading General Business.

7 A. Thank you.

8

9 Q. You are being shown a copy of that?

10 A. Yes.

11

12 Q. I will just wait while others here get a copy of that.
13 This is page 6, dated 18 December 1985 and it is under the
14 heading General Business. I will just read it out for
15 those here who haven't got a copy of it. Under the heading
16 Westrek:

17

18 Councillor Evans reported that Westrek
19 had now completed their six months in
20 Katanning. The project has been very
21 successful and Katanning has certainly
22 benefited from the work that was carried
23 out whilst the groups were here. It is
24 estimated that the groups spent
25 approximately \$25,000 during the six
26 months. If the project is to be offered
27 again, perhaps we could apply in
28 conjunction with the surrounding shires.

29

30 A. Yes. It's recorded. I would have said it.

31

32 Q. You would have said it?

33 A. Yes.

34

35 MR URQUHART: I tender that page, sir.

36

37 HIS HONOUR: Exhibit 49.

38

39 EXHIBIT #49 PAGE 6 GENERAL BUSINESS, MINUTES OF SHIRE
40 MEETING 18/12/1985

41

42 THE WITNESS: So what question have you got on that?

43

44 MR URQUHART: Q. Oh, no. I am just stating --

45 A. Okay.

46

47 Q. -- that there is a record --

1 A. Oh, that it completed?
2
3 Q. Yes.
4 A. Yes.
5
6 Q. That it's completed and what you had to say about it.
7 The question, I suppose, I would have asked and I think you
8 have already answered is would that have been, to the best
9 of your recollection, an accurate record of what you
10 actually said?
11 A. Yes, it would have been, yes. Shire minutes are
12 usually pretty particular.
13
14 Q. Indeed, with the passage of time, that would be your
15 recollection of what your views were of the project?
16 A. Yes.
17
18 HIS HONOUR: Q. As far as you were concerned, there were
19 no problems at all with the project?
20 A. No, no. The project was quite good (indistinct), yes.
21 It was --
22
23 Q. It didn't cause any trouble in the town?
24 A. No, no, it didn't cause trouble in town. Whether
25 there was a few disruptions - no, I don't think it caused
26 trouble. There might have been some disruptions or a few
27 (indistinct), but there is with lots of things that happen.
28 Nothing different or extrovert[sic] or more so. It just
29 came and it went.
30
31 MR URQUHART: Q. Thank you. You can hand that back now,
32 Mrs Evans.
33 A. Okay.
34
35 Q. In a similar vein, I will now show you page 4 of the
36 'Great Southern Herald' newspaper, dated Wednesday,
37 11 December 1985, so the week before those minutes of that
38 Shire meeting. We have barcoded this page 0065.
39 A. I'm afraid you will have to read that out.
40
41 Q. Yes, okay.
42 A. That's a bit beyond my powers.
43
44 Q. Fair enough.
45 A. It's too small.
46
47 Q. "Westrek Project Comes to End", and immediately above

1 the article is a photograph of a young man, and it reads:

2
3 Work experience positions were organised
4 for several of Katanning's Westrek group
5 members last week. Steve (indistinct) of
6 Corrigin spent three days at the 'Great
7 Southern Herald'.
8

9 I will read out to you what the article says:

10
11 Westrek Project Comes to End: Katanning's
12 Westrek project ends this week. The six
13 months project has seen several tasks
14 completed around Katanning, including the
15 planting of street trees, the establishment
16 of a park at Clarence Street and the
17 cleaning up of the alleyway at the old mill
18 in Austral Terrace. According to the
19 chairman of the Katanning Westrek
20 committee, Mrs Ainslie Evans, the Westrek
21 group has achieved all it set out to do in
22 Katanning.
23

24 Then you are quoted as saying:

25
26 There were also other jobs completed by the
27 group, such as work inside the mill and at
28 the all-ages playground.
29

30 The article continues quoting you as saying:

31
32 'The committee is happy with the group and
33 what it has achieved. We are also grateful
34 to the Katanning business community, which
35 helped with work positions and other
36 things.' Mrs Evans said the committee
37 intended applying for another Westrek group
38 next year. This year's Westrek project was
39 an initial pilot scheme in six WA towns.
40 The success of the scheme this year
41 determined whether it would be run next
42 year. Westrek is designed to give
43 participants life skills and experience of
44 group living and working, while completing
45 work on community projects.
46

47 Again, that does accord with your recollection of --

1 A. Yes. I think I was very pleased to see it finished,
2 only because it was coming to the end of the year and we
3 (indistinct), but not because I didn't like doing it.
4

5 Q. The quote here is that you said, "The committee is
6 happy with the group and what it has achieved."

7 A. Yes. But I wouldn't have come out - it would have had
8 to be pretty bad before I would have come out derogatory
9 and made bad statements. I like to be positive with
10 everything, and what they did was - what they did in the
11 mill and the brick paving, and things, was good.
12

13 Q. This article says that you were the chairman. I
14 suppose it is politically incorrect now. It should be the
15 chairperson of the Katanning Westrek committee.

16 A. Yes, I have read that. We are very - I don't
17 completely recall being chairman, as I said before, or
18 there being a committee. But we are very generous with
19 each other at the Shire and if one person can't come,
20 another person steps in for them, and it could have easily
21 been that I was the right person there that night, so
22 that's what happened.
23

24 Q. Now that I have read out the very small print there,
25 would you take any issue with --

26 A. No.
27

28 Q. -- what has been said there and what has been
29 attributed to you?

30 A. No. I'm happy with that.
31

32 MR URQUHART: Thank you, Mrs Evans. I tender that.
33

34 HIS HONOUR: That is Exhibit 50.
35

36 EXHIBIT #50 PAGE 4 'GREAT SOUTHERN HERALD' 11/12/1985,
37 BARCODED 0065
38

39 MR URQUHART: Q. Mrs Evans, I haven't got much more to
40 ask you other than this: do you remember a telephone call
41 that you got from Maggie Dawkins after Dennis McKenna was
42 convicted in 1991?

43 A. I had various calls from her. I remember her calling
44 me. We had shifted house and everything by then, and I
45 remember her calling me. She was very pleased with
46 herself.
47

1 Q. Are you able to tell me what you can recall of that
2 conversation?
3 A. Oh golly, no.
4
5 Q. Well, you said that she was --
6 A. In a nutshell, she was trying to tell me that she knew
7 all along, that she was the right person at - no, I --
8
9 Q. Sorry? "That she was the right person"?
10 A. That she knew what was happening and that - that's - I
11 remember the kids all being around. I remember her
12 calling. It was quite a surprise that she had actually
13 found where we were and called me, and that she knew and
14 nobody had - yes. No, I don't remember - I remember her
15 calling and being surprised that it was her on the line,
16 but I don't remember a lot about the conversation or what
17 she said or anything.
18
19 Q. Do you recall that she was saying something along the
20 lines of that she was right --
21 A. Yes.
22
23 Q. -- and you were wrong?
24 A. Yes - or that she was right, yes.
25
26 Q. So you recall that much?
27 A. Yes, I do.
28
29 Q. Would you recall what that was with respect to?
30 A. Oh, Dennis's behaviour and Dennis being up to no good.
31 It was Dennis that she was critical of.
32
33 Q. Do you recall her saying something to you, not only
34 that she was right but that you were wrong?
35 A. No, I - no. They're words I put to it. I don't
36 particularly recall that.
37
38 Q. I'm sorry?
39 A. They're words that I use but I don't particularly
40 recall that that's what she said in the conversation. I
41 remember her calling, but the actual detail of the
42 conversation I find rather difficult. I remember --
43
44 Q. I certainly --
45 A. -- commenting to my husband that she'd been on the
46 phone, but it was pretty insignificant really.
47

1 Q. Why do you say that it was insignificant?
2 A. Well, she'd gone, Westrek had finished, there was no -
3 it was all over. Westrek had finished.
4
5 Q. But, Mrs Evans, it wasn't insignificant --
6 A. No, it wasn't.
7
8 Q. -- the subject matter, about --
9 A. No, no, no. I'm not trying to belittle it and make
10 light in that way, but I had - oh, how is it? If somebody
11 gives you a phone call in the middle of a busy morning, it
12 - to me, it wasn't - look, I'm sorry, I can't find the
13 right words for it. She called, yes, I admit that, but I
14 can't find exactly that - what she said, and that, but she
15 rang to say that she'd heard Dennis had been charged and
16 that she was aware or she knew or she thought it was - yes.
17 No, you've got - I'm sorry, I'm too confused over that one.
18
19 Q. But not only that he had been charged but that he had
20 actually been convicted?
21 A. No, I don't know whether she phoned when he had just
22 been charged or after he'd been convicted. I think she
23 phoned as soon as she thought - heard that he'd been
24 charged.
25
26 Q. Heard that he had been charged?
27 A. Yes, but not after he'd convicted.
28
29 Q. But it might well have been that she was ringing you
30 not only after he had been charged but he had actually been
31 convicted?
32 A. Yes, it could well have been. I've got no recollection
33 of just when it was.
34
35 Q. Mrs Evans, I will just say to you what her evidence
36 was at the Inquiry that she said to you in that
37 conversation. That is at page 244 of the transcript. I
38 will just read it out to you, Mrs Evans, even though I
39 gather you may well have read it at the time, but --
40 A. No, read it, yes.
41
42 Q.
43 After the 1991 court case when Dennis
44 McKenna was first convicted, I phoned
45 Mrs Evans and asked her how she felt about
46 what had transpired between us in 1985.
47 She explained to me that she felt an

1 obligation to the town --

2

3 This is what she is saying that you said to her --

4 A. That's fine. Yes, that's - I probably did.

5

6 Q. -- in 1991. It continues:

7

8 She explained to me that she felt an
9 obligation to the town, as the economic
10 benefits of having the hostel were
11 considerable. Mrs Evans said I threatened
12 the continuation of this economic
13 prosperity and she was not concerned that
14 I had suffered as a result. When I
15 pressed Mrs Evans to express any remorse
16 towards the victims, she refused.

17

18 That is her recollection of the conversation she had
19 with you in 1991.

20 A. Yes. I don't have a problem with that. I was
21 supportive - she was - I was supportive of the fact that
22 any commercial enterprise in Katanning keeps going and I
23 would not be trying to get rid of anything that's
24 commercial, and that was a commercial asset. But, also,
25 condemning somebody that ran it, even though he had been
26 convicted then, we still needed the facility to operate.
27 But I don't know about not showing remorse. I didn't know
28 the victims. I don't - I can't agree with I didn't show
29 remorse. I think it's a tragedy.

30

31 Q. So you don't agree with her recollection, when she
32 says she pressed you to express any remorse towards the
33 victims, you refused?

34 A. No, I don't recall that at all, but this is a few
35 minutes conversation in a busy morning in my kitchen. I
36 think you're asking too much to recall what I might have
37 said to a surprised phone call 20 years ago.

38

39 HIS HONOUR: Q. I didn't quite hear what you said
40 earlier. Did you say there was some conversation about the
41 commercial benefit of the hostel?

42 A. Oh, I probably did, yes, because I think that there is
43 a community benefit for having it.

44

45 Q. Can you explain in what context that comment was made
46 by you?

47 A. That she was keen on closing it down.

1
2 Q. Closing down --
3 A. By being - oh, you're getting - it's getting very
4 confusing. By not - by putting out possible bad vibes,
5 possible slander, possible recriminations about the hostel,
6 it could've indicated that the hostel may not operate.
7
8 Q. At what time are you talking about putting out these
9 recriminations?
10 A. Oh look, this was - no, I don't know the time. It -
11 I'm trying to say, it's a spasmodic - an out-of-the-blue
12 phone call in my kitchen one morning and I can't recall all
13 the things that - I don't doubt that I said it in some
14 context, but I can't recall all the --
15
16 Q. Are we talking about what had happened back in 1985?
17 A. Since 19 - yes.
18
19 Q. When you are talking about the commercial benefit of
20 the hostel in the conversation in 1991, were you talking
21 about in reference to what had happened in 1985?
22 A. Oh look, I think so but I really don't know. I'm
23 confused about all of that. I don't know. I have a
24 perception that I wanted the hostel to operate and
25 supporting it as a local, and if she - and I saw - perhaps
26 at that time I saw her as some sort of threat to it, but -
27 oh no, I - sorry --
28
29 Q. "As" what, sorry?
30 A. If - yes - oh look --
31
32 MR URQUHART: Q. "Some sort of threat to it" I think you
33 said?
34 A. To the hostel.
35
36 MR URQUHART: Yes.
37
38 HIS HONOUR: Q. When did you see her as that threat? In
39 1985, are you saying?
40 A. Oh no, I don't (indistinct) 1985. I'm finding it very
41 difficult to recollect. It's a short phone call, it's
42 20 years ago, off somebody that I hadn't heard from for a
43 long time. No, I think this is all getting, you know, too
44 airy-fairy. I can't comment on that. I just --
45
46 MR URQUHART: Q. In fairness to you, Mrs Evans, it should
47 be asked of you whether you did regard Mrs Dawkins as a

1 threat to the hostel or to the economic viability of the
2 hostel in 1985?
3 A. Yes - perhaps you better put that in some other words.
4 There was always a threat. She didn't like the hostel -
5 well, she didn't like Dennis.
6
7 Q. You knew in 1985 --
8 A. Yes. I saw --
9
10 Q. -- that she didn't like the hostel or she didn't like
11 Dennis, or both?
12 A. No, probably - no, probably - I said that wrong.
13 Probably it was her falling out with Dennis that was a
14 problem and because Dennis was the epitome of the hostel,
15 then I saw the hostel being under threat if Dennis wasn't
16 part of it.
17
18 Q. I see.
19 A. Yes.
20
21 Q. You believed in 1985 that she did pose a threat to
22 Dennis because she didn't like him?
23 A. She (indistinct) - yes, yes, I think that's the answer
24 to that question. I'll probably think of something else
25 when I go home, but --
26
27 Q. Well --
28 A. Yes. No, I realise that you're trying - I can - I'm
29 finding it very difficult to recollect a lot of that. A
30 street corner conversation or a two minute conversation to
31 an acquaintance is very difficult. I don't deny that it
32 happened; I'm sure that, you know, I had those thoughts and
33 all that.
34
35 Q. I'm sorry, we will have to clear this up.
36 A. I don't deny that I had the conversation. I certainly
37 saw the hostel as an economic benefit.
38
39 Q. No, no. We better make sure we get this right here.
40 When you say you don't deny the conversation, are you
41 saying you don't deny that you had a conversation with
42 Mrs Dawkins when she rang you up in 1991?
43 A. Yes. No, I don't deny that, but I don't recall
44 everything I said.
45
46 Q. But you do recall her saying to you that --
47 A. The purpose of --

1
2 Q. -- as far as she was concerned, she was right and you
3 were wrong?
4 A. That was the purpose of her call.
5
6 Q. Yes?
7 A. She didn't ring to comment on the price of sheep or
8 the weather; she rang to tell me that she was right.
9
10 Q. Yes, and you were wrong?
11 A. Yes.
12
13 Q. Did you know what that was about?
14 A. Dennis had been charged, that's all.
15
16 Q. What Mrs Dawkins is saying, I think, is that she was
17 ringing you to say that that conversation she had with you
18 in 1985 --
19 A. Eight years before - seven years before.
20
21 Q. Yes, about her stating to you that she had heard that
22 Dennis McKenna had been sexually abusing boys and that she
23 wanted something done about it, what she is saying is that
24 you refused to have anything done about that when she spoke
25 to you in 1985.
26 A. Yes, that's - yes, I - I didn't refuse. I just didn't
27 do anything about it.
28
29 Q. That is her account of it, you see --
30 A. Yes.
31
32 Q. -- Mrs Evans, but you are saying you don't recall her
33 having this conversation with you about an allegation of
34 Dennis McKenna sexually abusing a boy there?
35 A. In '85. No, I don't recall that conversation, that's
36 what I've said.
37
38 Q. In fairness to you, I am just asking you whether you
39 can recall this conversation she had with you in 1991 and,
40 if you did recall that conversation, whether what she is
41 saying is, in fact, correct?
42 A. No.
43
44 Q. What she is saying is that she rang you to say: You
45 were wrong, I was right, when I complained to you about
46 Dennis McKenna sexually abusing a boy.
47 A. I recall that she phoned, I recall that we had the

1 conversation; I don't explicitly recall the dialogue that
2 went on.

3

4 Q. Other than --

5 A. I commented to my husband, "Guess who I heard from
6 after all these years."

7

8 Q. And "She has complained to me" or "She has been saying
9 to me" - "The reason why she rang me is to say she was
10 right and I was wrong."

11 A. No, I don't think I would have even gone that far to
12 explain.

13

14 Q. No. I suppose the best way of dealing with this,
15 Mrs Evans, is to ask you what can you recall of this
16 conversation --

17 A. That it was --

18

19 Q. -- that Mrs Dawkins had with you in 1991?

20 A. I recall that she phoned and I was surprised to hear
21 from her after several years and the fact that she had
22 found us at a change of address and things like that, and
23 that's particularly in my mind, and that she - I think she
24 - well, no. Look, I'm just starting to surmise and guess
25 that - she knew that Dennis had been charged, that was the
26 reason for her call. The way I interpret it now after that
27 time, yes, she called me to say she was right and I was
28 wrong.

29

30 Q. But can you yourself recall what she said to you in
31 this conversation?

32 A. I - I don't think I can, sorry. No, it was a very
33 short telephone call. We didn't chat at length.

34

35 Q. But do you understand that she's saying that what
36 she - you said to her --

37 A. Yes.

38

39 Q. -- in this conversation is that you --

40 A. Yes, I understand what you're saying, that she - she
41 says that she had told me, and I didn't --

42

43 Q. Yes. What she's saying - well, what she's saying --

44 A. I can't see that that two minute telephone call
45 20 years ago - I can't recall it. I can't see it's got a
46 big relevance to anything either.

47

1 MR URQUHART: All right. I think it might be best if we
2 just leave it.

3
4 HIS HONOUR: Sorry?

5
6 MR URQUHART: I think it might be best, sir, if we just
7 leave it at that.

8
9 Q. I know it's a long time ago --

10 A. Yes.

11
12 Q. -- but Mrs Dawkins is saying something there that
13 doesn't reflect well on you, Mrs Evans. She's saying
14 that - she's saying that you - that you said to her that
15 she had threatened the economic prosperity of the town?

16 A. I quite - I - that would have been something I would
17 have said, yes. I don't recall saying it, but I don't
18 doubt that I would have said it.

19
20 HIS HONOUR: Q. So just on that, why would you have said
21 that she threatened the economic prosperity of the town?

22 A. Because if the hostel didn't operate, it was a
23 significant commercial feature that wasn't operating and
24 wasn't bringing in an income.

25
26 Q. And so why did you think in 1985 that she was a threat
27 to the hostel?

28 A. Because she seemed - she didn't like the hostel and
29 she didn't like Dennis, and I perceived it all as being the
30 same thing, that she didn't want it, that - yes. Look --

31
32 MR URQUHART: Q. And did you know - but can you recall
33 why it was that she didn't (indistinct)?

34 A. Only because she didn't want Dennis to be there. She
35 didn't, no.

36
37 Q. Yes. And what she's saying is she didn't want Dennis
38 McKenna there because an ex-student --

39 A. Yes.

40
41 Q. -- was alleging that he had sexually abused him?

42 A. Mm.

43
44 HIS HONOUR: Q. Was that right?

45 A. Well, that's the way I remember it, yes, but anything
46 that was a threat to the hostel, I would have supported the
47 hostel because we need it. We needed it. I feel as though

1 - that we're getting tied up in knots about something. I
2 don't doubt that I said that, but taking it out of
3 concept - context, and taking a conversation, as we said,
4 many years ago, those words could have easily come out, but
5 whether it was in - whether it was in another paragraph or
6 a different sentence, I don't know.

7
8 Q. So do you remember thinking, back in 1985 when the
9 Westrek program was going, and towards the end of the
10 program, do you remember thinking that she was a threat to
11 the hostel?

12 A. Well, yes, I do remember thinking that, but I'm just
13 saying that now, yes.

14
15 Q. And do you remember what it was you thought she might
16 do that might threaten the hostel?

17 A. No, look, sorry, I'm going to come back to that. In
18 '85 I don't know that I saw her as a threat to the hostel,
19 but in '91 when things were erupting, I saw her as a threat
20 to the hostel. I've tried to say I find this particular
21 phone call quite difficult to recall, and quite confusing
22 at this stage. I remember - I remember being in my kitchen
23 with my kids and lots of busy time; but, yes, I had - do
24 receive a lot of phone calls.

25
26 MR URQUHART: Q. And the threat that you saw to the
27 hostel in 1991 was the fact that its warden had been
28 convicted --

29 A. Yes.

30
31 Q. -- of serious sex offending --

32 A. Yes.

33
34 Q. -- against some of its students?

35 A. Yes, and it turned out to be right, so --

36
37 MR URQUHART: Thank you, Mrs Evans, I have no further
38 questions for you.

39
40 HIS HONOUR: Yes, Mr Hammond.

41
42 MR HAMMOND: If it please your Honour.

43
44 <CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR HAMMOND:

45
46 MR HAMMOND: Q. Councillor Evans, I represent 21 of the
47 victims of Dennis McKenna.

1 A. You'll have to speak up, sorry, yes.
2
3 Q. Sorry. Councillor Evans, I represent 21 of the
4 victims of Dennis McKenna.
5 A. Yes.
6
7 Q. Would you agree that what has happened to the victims
8 of Dennis McKenna, and what happened in the town of
9 Katanning, is the greatest tragedy ever to befall the town
10 of Katanning?
11 A. I agree it's a great tragedy. I don't know that I can
12 be rash enough to say the greatest tragedy.
13
14 Q. Do you know of anything else that parallels the harm
15 that's been done to so many young people in Katanning?
16 A. No. If you're saying to young people --
17
18 Q. No, answer the question, Councillor --
19 A. No, no, I can't answer that question. If you're
20 inferring that it is the greatest harm to young people,
21 yes, it is the greatest harm; but if you're saying the
22 greatest tragedy to the town, that's another story, but
23 if - to young people, yes, it certainly is the greatest
24 tragedy that's ever happened to young people in the town.
25
26 Q. And in your time as councillor, have you ever
27 encountered anything worse that has happened in the town of
28 Katanning?
29 A. To young people, no, no.
30
31 Q. Well, to anyone as a group?
32 A. I'm finding that question difficult. Withdrawing the
33 railways was a huge tragedy to the town and to a group of
34 people, but it was 30 or 40 years before that. You're
35 asking me for a 100 years of history of the greatest
36 tragedy --
37
38 Q. So, Councillor Evans, do you put the withdrawing of
39 the railways in a similar basket to the sexual abuse of
40 countless men at St Andrew's Hostel?
41 A. No, but you're asking for the greatest tragedy. If
42 you're saying to young people that was the greatest
43 tragedy, it's huge, but I'm not saying it was the greatest
44 tragedy we've ever had, but it is for young people. It's a
45 huge tragedy.
46
47 Q. But in your view --

1 A. I don't think you can compare things. You're
2 comparing apples with oranges.
3
4 Q. I'm just trying to bring to you my clients'
5 perception. I'm putting to you that this is the worst
6 thing that's happened in the town of Katanning full stop.
7 A. I can understand they think that, and I accept their
8 thoughts.
9
10 Q. But you don't share the view that this was the
11 greatest thing that the - the worst thing that's happened
12 in the town of Katanning?
13
14 MR URQUHART: I think that question is a bit unfair, sir.
15
16 MR HAMMOND: Not if this woman is a Councillor, with
17 respect. This woman is a Councillor at the Shire of
18 Katanning --
19
20 MR URQUHART: Mr Hammond, I'm just making an objection.
21
22 MR HAMMOND: -- and I --
23
24 MR URQUHART: Sir, if you just bear with me.
25
26 MR HAMMOND: Yes.
27
28 MR URQUHART: Insofar as what has happened to Mr Hammond's
29 clients - yes, certainly, that's the greatest tragedy for
30 them, but I think that distinction needs to be drawn, in
31 fairness. I don't think the witness is saying that --
32
33 HIS HONOUR: These questions are relevant to Mrs Evans'
34 attitude generally to these matters, which could have a
35 bearing upon her credibility generally.
36
37 MR URQUHART: All right. Very good, sir.
38
39 HIS HONOUR: Yes.
40
41 MR HAMMOND: If it please your Honour.
42
43 Q. I put the question to you again, Councillor Evans. Do
44 you agree that this is the greatest tragedy ever to befall
45 the Katanning town?
46 A. I want - I can't answer that question.
47

1 Q. Why can't you answer the question? You've served on
2 the local council for nearly 20 years?
3 A. If you're asking me if that is right for the time I've
4 served on the council, yes, I will answer the question, but
5 if you're asking me the greatest thing that's happened in
6 the town of Katanning over the last 150 years - no, I can't
7 answer the question.
8
9 Q. So within your personal experience as a Councillor --
10 A. Within my personal - yes, my personal experience.
11
12 Q. -- this is the greatest tragedy in your experience
13 that has befallen the town?
14 A. Yes, in my personal experience it is - that's not -
15 yes, I can answer that.
16
17 Q. So anything associated with St Andrew's Hostel and
18 Dennis McKenna since 1991 would be of great moment to you?
19 A. Yes, well, it is. It's a tragedy, yes.
20
21 Q. And if someone was to ring you about something that
22 had happened to Dennis McKenna in 1991, that would also be
23 of significant interest to you?
24 A. It was of interest, but I tried to say to you the
25 phone call came through at a busy time in my house with my
26 kids all around, out of the blue, something I didn't know
27 about.
28
29 Q. I understand you were in the kitchen, and the kitchen
30 was --
31 A. How I reacted, I can't say.
32
33 Q. I understand you were in the kitchen and the kitchen
34 was busy, but it would have been of great import to you if
35 someone was ringing a former Westrek employee to discuss
36 Dennis McKenna?
37 A. I didn't have a high regard for Maggie, and that she
38 phoned like that - no, I'm sorry, at that time it passed
39 off.
40
41 Q. But your regard for Maggie would have improved,
42 wouldn't it, after she'd been proven right?
43 A. No, I don't know. I don't think --
44
45 Q. You don't know?
46 A. I don't think I can answer that question that it
47 improved. It might have changed.

1
2 Q. It changed for the better?
3 A. On a scale of one to 10 it got - no.
4
5 Q. Did it change for the better, given that Dennis
6 McKenna had now been convicted?
7 A. Okay. Yes, but then why didn't she do more about it?
8 Why did she only tell me? I'm not the only fish in the
9 pond; but, yes --
10
11 Q. She only told you --
12 A. Yes, because --
13
14 Q. -- that Dennis McKenna had been involved in sexual
15 misconduct in 1985, hadn't she?
16 A. Yes, and I --
17
18 Q. Now, I'm going to put that question to you one more
19 time. In 1985, Maggie Dawkins told you that Dennis McKenna
20 had been involved in sexual misconduct, hadn't he?
21 A. No, Maggie Dawkins says she told me. I don't recall
22 her telling me.
23
24 Q. Initially you answered that in the affirmative.
25 A. She spoke to me, yes. She didn't - Maggie Dawkins
26 didn't --
27
28 HIS HONOUR: Just pause there. Just pause and, you know
29 relax.
30
31 Q. You said a moment ago "she only told me". What did
32 you mean by that?
33 A. No, sorry, you'll have to - Maggie Dawkins - she says
34 she told me that - she told me Dennis had too much power
35 over students. That's what she told me.
36
37 Q. But you said, "Why didn't she go to other
38 authorities?"
39 A. Well, that's really - if it had been important, she
40 would have told other people. Why did she leave it all on
41 my shoulders?
42
43 Q. The comment you made was, "Why didn't she go to other
44 authorities, she only told me", and I'm just asking you to
45 explain that comment?
46 A. If something's really wrong you - you follow it
47 through, you don't just tell one person, and when nothing

1 happens, let it go. That was - that was my thought. That
2 was what I said.

3

4 Q. Right. So I just want to clarify. Are you saying
5 that she did tell you something about these things?

6 A. No, she did tell me - let's leave it - I'm getting
7 overdone here.

8

9 Q. I know. Just relax. It will be over soon.

10 A. She did tell me that Dennis had too much power over
11 the students. I don't believe she told me that sexual
12 abuse was involved, and she interpreted the fact that
13 that's what she had said to me, and she did say he had too
14 much power. I remember that conversation in front of the
15 mill there in the street, but that was - that was it. If
16 she had believed that and thought that I didn't act, she
17 never even mentioned it to me a second time, or maybe any
18 other action that I know of. And then she rang me, seven
19 and six years later.

20

21 HIS HONOUR: Right, Mr Hammond.

22

23 MR HAMMOND: If it please you, your Honour.

24

25 Q. Did you ever have boys at St Andrew's Hostel? Did
26 they ever stay there?

27 A. Beg your pardon?

28

29 Q. Did your children ever reside at St Andrew's Hostel?

30 A. No, not at all. They went to functions there, but
31 they didn't ever live in.

32

33 Q. Because when you were asked by Mr Urquhart about the
34 1985 conversation when it was put to you as a hypothetical,
35 "If Maggie Dawkins had told you about sexual misconduct",
36 you said you would have raised it with your boys?

37 A. Yes, yes, I did say that, but if it - I - I would have
38 said to one of - to my boys, "Do you know this kid? Is he
39 in your football team? Where does he live?" I would have
40 if I - if --

41

42 Q. And the kid - you would have asked the boys if they
43 knew the kid?

44 A. Yes.

45

46 Q. Which kid?

47 A. The one that Maggie Dawkins presumes that she told me

1 about. If she had given me a name, I could have followed
2 it through. The boys all attended school together with the
3 hostel kids, so they did mix at different times.
4

5 Q. And in relation to Dennis McKenna, whilst you've been
6 on the shire here and a resident of the town, would you see
7 him more than once or twice a week?

8 A. No, I doubt it. Probably once a week, perhaps -
9 depending on what was happening. Perhaps two or three
10 times one week, then not for a month.
11

12 Q. He'd been to your place for dinner?

13 A. Never.
14

15 Q. Never?

16 A. No.
17

18 Q. Did you ever have dinner at the hostel?

19 A. Quite often - no, well, when there was football
20 wind-ups, different things like that. Not dinner with
21 Dennis as such, but as a function at the hostel, yes -
22 Christmas parties.
23

24 Q. But you'd sit with Dennis McKenna as the warden, and
25 you as the Councillor?

26 A. No, I'd sit with my kids - no, I'd sit with my boys.
27

28 Q. But you'd also sit with Dennis McKenna?

29 A. If he was at the top table, I would have sat there,
30 yes, but not regularly. If I was the Council's guest that
31 time and I was put at that table, that's where I would have
32 sat.
33

34 Q. And you heard Dennis McKenna being strict with the
35 boys?

36 A. He had good management - yes, I thought he was fairly
37 strict with them.
38

39 Q. And why did you think he was strict?

40 A. They had to wear full uniform when they went to
41 school, they always turned up on time for functions that we
42 were involved in. He had them very well organised for
43 community work projects that I saw them doing.
44

45 Q. And you knew that Dennis resided within the hostel,
46 next to the dormitory, in a room adjacent to the dormitory?

47 A. I knew he resided there, I had no idea where it was

1 within the whole facility.
2
3 Q. But you'd been through the whole facility, haven't
4 you?
5 A. I have been there, yes, but I don't - hadn't ever been
6 particularly to Dennis's apartment or any staff apartments.
7 I've been to the kitchens, I've been to the dining room.
8
9 Q. But you understood his apartment was right next door
10 to the dormitory?
11 A. No, I didn't understand that.
12
13 Q. You didn't know that?
14 A. No.
15
16 Q. But you knew where the telephone was?
17 A. I knew - the telephone episode was after this, and the
18 telephone - yes, I knew where the telephone was, down the
19 corner, down the thing, but that was an after --
20
21 Q. But you described the telephone as being moved to
22 right outside Dennis's --
23 A. Well, it's there. It was there in recent times, yes.
24
25 Q. And where was the telephone moved to, Councillor
26 Evans?
27 A. If - when you don't know the property, it's a bit
28 hard. I can only say through the front doors on the
29 right-hand side.
30
31 Q. Opposite where Dennis resided?
32 A. Near the main offices.
33
34 Q. And opposite where Dennis resided, isn't that right?
35 A. No, I don't, well, I don't know where he resided, but
36 it was his office, and I don't know that he resided in his
37 office. I - I think he had accommodation other than in his
38 office. It was shifted to next to his office, not his --
39
40 Q. So he could listen to the telephone calls of the
41 students?
42 A. I don't - well, as somebody else said, he could listen
43 if the window was open. I think he was more observing
44 which students were using the phone.
45
46 Q. Yes, because he told you that didn't he?
47 A. Yes.

1
2 Q. He wanted to know what students were saying to their
3 parents?
4 A. No, what students were saying - whether they were
5 setting up night-time or other activities and that, and
6 it's --
7
8 Q. So Dennis wanted to know what the students were doing
9 at night, that's what he told you?
10 A. Not necessarily the night, during the day it could
11 have been.
12
13 Q. You've just mentioned night-time --
14 A. Yes.
15
16 Q. -- activities. What sort of --
17 A. No, other activities. Look, it gets --
18
19 Q. Councillor Evans, you just mentioned night-time
20 activities. What sort of night-time activities?
21 A. Meeting other friends, getting a pizza delivered.
22
23 Q. In your evidence you said that you didn't think that
24 Dennis listened to telephone calls?
25 A. No, I have got no proof that he listened to telephone
26 calls. I know that he would have been able to observe that
27 they were phoning, but whether the window was open or not,
28 I don't know. I wasn't on the premises at that time.
29
30 Q. You say you now know that he would have been able to
31 observe students making telephone calls?
32 A. He would have been able to observe if the students
33 were phoning or not.
34
35 Q. How do you know that?
36 A. You can see if somebody's picking up a phone.
37
38 Q. Because you know the layout of the dormitory and the
39 hostel very well?
40 A. No, no.
41
42 Q. You don't?
43 A. No, I don't know it very well. I know it, but I don't
44 know it very well. I don't know different wings and things
45 like that, but the phone, as far as I know, is still in
46 the - by the main office window.
47

1 Q. When Dennis was awarded Citizen of the Year, that was
2 in relation to the volunteer work that the children from
3 the hostel performed around the town?
4 A. Yes.
5
6 Q. It wasn't for any work that Dennis did, was it?
7 A. It what?
8
9 Q. It wasn't for any work that Dennis did?
10 A. No, it was for - he organised the young people to do
11 the work, transported them there and back again.
12
13 Q. He didn't actually pick up rubbish himself, did he?
14 A. Not that I know of, no.
15
16 Q. And he didn't do any gardening himself, did he?
17 A. I've got - I can't answer that, I've got no idea.
18
19 Q. And Dennis was the go-to man in Katanning if it was to
20 involve youth affairs; is that right?
21 A. Yes.
22
23 Q. If that's the case, and Maggie Dawkins comes to you in
24 1985 and complains that Dennis McKenna has too much control
25 over the boys, that in itself would be a worry for you,
26 wouldn't it?
27 A. No, it wasn't a worry to me.
28
29 Q. For an employee of Westrek to formally complain to you
30 that Dennis had too much control over the boys?
31 A. I thought it was a good thing that he had the control
32 because previous wardens hadn't had any control, and I had
33 nothing to judge too much on.
34
35 Q. When you spoke to the '7.30 Report' recently, you made
36 mention of the complaint that Dennis McKenna - that Maggie
37 Dawkins made. You said to the '7.30 Report':
38
39 Maggie put in a complaint. "Yes, she did",
40 Councillor Evans said.
41
42 Do you remember saying that to the '7.30 Report'?
43 A. No, I'm sorry, I don't.
44
45 Q. :
46
47 I didn't take any notice of her. She had

1 blown in town for five minutes and she was
2 criticising someone who had been there for
3 10 years.
4
5 A. I did say that, yes. I did say that, but frequently
6 somebody comes into town, they're there for five minutes
7 and start criticising people you've known for
8 several years, and I believed that he was in good repute,
9 and I didn't - no.
10
11 Q. When Maggie Dawkins was criticising Dennis McKenna to
12 you, what were the words you remember that she said to you
13 about - what was the criticism?
14 A. He has too much control over the students.
15
16 Q. And you left it there, you said --
17 A. Yes, I left it there.
18
19 Q. You didn't ask what the control was?
20 A. No, it was a street corner conversation, and I left it
21 there. I had nothing to judge too much on. I haven't -
22 yes.
23
24 Q. That's right. You had nothing to judge it on?
25 A. I didn't know what - too much control, that was - that
26 was her thing. I wasn't a part of the hostel.
27
28 Q. But you were a Councillor?
29 A. Yes.
30
31 Q. And you've got a Westrek employee, a Government
32 employee from out of town complaining about the warden of
33 the hostel, haven't you?
34 A. Yes, yes.
35
36 Q. And to the '7.30 Report' you said:
37
38 Dawkins said McKenna had too much control
39 over the children in his care, but did not
40 refer to sexual abuse specifically.
41
42 A. No.
43
44 Q. Did she vaguely allude to sexual abuse or some sort of
45 other abuse such as - of a physical nature?
46 A. I don't think so.
47

1 Q. You don't think so?
2 A. Too much control - whether they got to school or
3 whether they did what they did on time - the right ones had
4 to turn up for the right work projects.
5
6 Q. Did she allude to physical abuse by Dennis McKenna in
7 1985?
8 A. No. Too much control is all she was saying.
9
10 Q. It's not the question I'm asking.
11 A. No, I understand that, but I don't.
12
13 Q. It's a very simple question, with respect, Councillor
14 Evans. Did she allude to any --
15 A. No.
16
17 Q. -- physical abuse?
18 A. No.
19
20 Q. And when she raised her complaint about McKenna, you
21 took that to nobody, did you?
22 A. No.
23
24 Q. Do you agree in hindsight that you should have taken
25 that complaint to somebody?
26 A. It's very easy to be clever in hindsight. I don't
27 know who I would have taken it too - probably the Shire
28 CEO; but, no, I didn't even consider taking it to anybody.
29
30 Q. I'm asking you with the benefit --
31 A. No.
32
33 Q. -- of hindsight, do you believe you should have taken
34 that complaint to somebody?
35 A. I had - no, because I had no proof and no facts. I
36 only had a conversation with one person.
37
38 Q. But as a Shire Councillor, do you not believe you
39 should have investigated that complaint further?
40 A. No. Given the climate at the time, no, I don't
41 believe I should have.
42
43 Q. So you were just prepared to turn a completely blind
44 eye to the complaint made by Maggie Dawkins?
45 A. One complaint in one conversation, yes.
46
47 Q. Did you also say to 'The West Australian' that you

1 supported the control that McKenna had over the children at
2 the hostel?

3 A. There was a bit of poetical licence taken by 'The
4 Western Australian' at that time, but the words that I said
5 were, "Yes, I did support the fact that Dennis McKenna had
6 control", because as I have already told you, previous
7 wardens did not have sufficient control.

8
9 Q. Did you not say:

10
11 McKenna was good because the children
12 weren't roaming the streets at night and
13 they were all tucked up in bed, for better
14 or worse.

15
16 A. No, I didn't say that. Gary Adshead added that little
17 bit. I said that the children weren't roaming the streets
18 at night. I did not add the second part, and I was very
19 distressed when I opened 'The Western Australian' and saw
20 it, very upset and distressed.

21
22 Q. But residents of this town have complained about those
23 words, haven't they?

24 A. They have complained and they were - two residents
25 have, yes. They were complained and they were upset and
26 they had every reason to be; but, no, I did not do that and
27 I would not. That was his licence on it. I said that the
28 children were home at night.

29
30 Q. After Dennis McKenna was convicted in 1991, did you
31 not see fit to have him removed then as the Citizen of the
32 Year?

33 A. No.

34
35 Q. Have you ever sought to speak to any of the victims of
36 Dennis McKenna?

37 A. No.

38
39 Q. Has the Council ever sought to say anything to the
40 victims of Dennis McKenna?

41 A. Not to my knowledge, but they haven't been asked
42 either.

43
44 Q. You knew Peter Kenyon well, didn't you, and still -
45 you know Peter Kenyon well?

46 A. I know - not well. He's an acquaintance, but I don't
47 know that I know him well. I haven't seen him now for

1 some years, but we were on different groups at different
2 times together, yes.
3
4 Q. And over the years you've discussed Maggie Dawkins --
5 A. Never.
6
7 Q. -- claiming she'd been run out of town?
8 A. No, no reason to discuss Maggie Dawkins with him at
9 all. I didn't - I wouldn't have even known that he knew
10 her.
11
12 Q. I just want to take you back to the 1985 conversation
13 with Maggie Dawkins, the one that Mr Urquhart has taken you
14 to at length, and in response to Mr Urquhart you indicated
15 that you were very confident that you wouldn't have
16 suggested that Maggie Dawkins be removed from the town?
17 A. I didn't have the power to do that. I was a
18 once-a-week volunteer, I wasn't in management, I didn't
19 know the management team. As a four-hours-a-week
20 volunteer, you don't have the right to hire and fire.
21
22 Q. As a Councillor, your word would carry some weight.
23 Do you agree with that?
24 A. Yes, I do agree with you, but it was minimal.
25
26 Q. Your word in this town would carry substantial weight
27 as a long-serving counsellor, even in 1985?
28 A. Yes, I do agree with what you're saying, but I still
29 don't believe it gave me the right to hire and fire an
30 organisation that I had no management role in.
31
32 Q. So you do agree that in 1985 you did have some power
33 as a counsellor?
34 A. Power is probably the wrong word. Just use the word
35 influence.
36
37 Q. I want to put to you before I finish, Councillor
38 Evans, that Maggie Dawkins did say to you in 1985, Dennis
39 McKenna was involved in sexual misconduct with one of his
40 students. She told you that on the side of the road.
41 A. I refute that she said that.
42
43 Q. You've now become more confident, haven't you, about
44 what happened in 1985?
45 A. No, no, she didn't say - she said management power.
46 I've - I've said what I --
47

1 Q. So on your oath, Councillor Evans --
2 A. Mm-hmm.
3
4 Q. -- on your oath you now deny --
5 A. No.
6
7 Q. -- without equivocation - without equivocation - that
8 Maggie Dawkins alleged sexual misconduct against Dennis
9 McKenna - on your oath, sitting there?
10 A. No, hang on. No, don't - sorry, no. Come back --
11
12 Q. No, no, it's a very simple question, Councillor Evans.
13 On your oath, which you swore on that bible --
14 A. I did, yes.
15
16 Q. -- you now say - you say to the Inquiry - that Maggie
17 Dawkins did not raise any allegations about sexual
18 misconduct?
19 A. When we had a conversation --
20
21 Q. No, the question is very simple.
22 A. No, hang on. No, no, I'm sorry. No, I had --
23
24 Q. If the witness could please answer the question, Mr
25 Inquirer. It's a very simple question. She's refusing to
26 answer it because she's worried about telling a lie.
27 A. No, that's not my answer. I'm asking you are you
28 talking about the conversation that we had in the street
29 one day, or the telephone conversation in my house? Which
30 conversation are you referring to?
31
32 Q. I made it very clear that there was one in the
33 street --
34 A. All right, then --
35
36 Q. -- in 1985. On your oath, which you swore on that
37 Bible --
38 A. Yes, I and --
39
40 Q. -- I'm putting to you that Mrs Dawkins did say that
41 there was sexual misconduct involving Dennis McKenna at St
42 Andrew's Hostel?
43 A. She did not - she may have said it, she did not say it
44 to me.
45
46 Q. She may have said it, but who did she say it to?
47 A. She didn't tell me that there was sexual misconduct.

1 She said there was too much management, too much power.
2
3 Q. So you're not prepared to openly say to me on behalf
4 of the victims that she never said that? You just do not
5 refute it, Councillor Evans. You've had numerous
6 opportunities to say, "No, it didn't happen", but you keep
7 prevaricating?
8 A. That's my decision on what I've done. I --
9
10 Q. You're going to keep prevaricating, aren't you?
11 That's your --
12 A. Yes.
13
14 Q. Yes.
15 A. Yes.
16
17 MR HAMMOND: I've got no further questions, sir.
18
19 HIS HONOUR: All right. Well, is there anything from you,
20 Mr Urquhart?
21
22 MR URQUHART: No, there's not, thank you, sir.
23
24 HIS HONOUR: All right. That completes your evidence,
25 Mrs Evans, you're free to go.
26
27 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
28
29 HIS HONOUR: Unless you want to say something else.
30
31 Q. Is there anything else you want to say?
32 A. I want to go home.
33
34 HIS HONOUR: Very well.
35
36 MR URQUHART: I did actually say, sir, that she would be
37 extended the opportunity of --
38
39 HIS HONOUR: Yes.
40
41 MR URQUHART: -- of giving an (indistinct).
42
43 HIS HONOUR: Yes, all right, then.
44
45 <THE WITNESS WITHDREW
46
47 MR URQUHART: Sir, we might --

1
2 HIS HONOUR: We'll adjourn until --
3
4 MR URQUHART: We do need to have a five minute break to
5 set up the --
6
7 HIS HONOUR: That's right. So I'll adjourn for a short
8 time.
9
10 SHORT ADJOURNMENT
11
12 HIS HONOUR: Mr Dobson in Perth, you intend to examine
13 Mr Renk at this point; is that correct?
14
15 MR DOBSON: Yes, your Honour, that's correct.
16
17 HIS HONOUR: Mr Renk, If you would like to come forward,
18 thank you.
19
20 <JOHN ALLAN RENK, sworn:
21
22 <EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR DOBSON:
23
24 MR DOBSON: Q. Mr Renk, you have heard my name is Dobson.
25 I am in Perth. I will be examining you this afternoon. Do
26 you understand that?
27 A. Yes.
28
29 Q. Your name is John Renk?
30 A. Yes.
31
32 Q. Do you have a middle name, please?
33 A. Allan.
34
35 Q. Do you currently live in Narrogin?
36 A. No, Katanning.
37
38 Q. I beg your pardon. You are retired now?
39 A. Yes.
40
41 Q. What was your previous occupation, please?
42 A. I was the regional rural officer for the Commonwealth
43 development bank, based in Katanning from December 1972.
44
45 Q. At the time you started there, Mr Renk, what
46 qualifications did you have?
47 A. A Diploma of Agriculture from the Roseworthy

1 Agricultural College in South Australia.

2

3 Q. Did you do any further study while you were at
4 Katanning?

5 A. Yes, I - no, not at Katanning. When I joined the
6 development bank in 1970, I had six months in Perth and
7 then two years as an assistant rural officer in Albany and
8 down there I studied - oh, I can't remember what it's
9 called, but I did a course on valuation and - just did the
10 course and eventually passed it.

11

12 Q. Is that property valuation?

13 A. Yes, because valuation was part of the job that I did
14 with the bank.

15

16 Q. Is it correct that part of your employment while you
17 were at Katanning was to value properties and approve
18 loans?

19 A. No, no, I didn't ever approve loans. My job was to
20 inspect properties and assess the applications that were
21 made and make recommendations in my report that were sent
22 up to Perth, where the decisions were made.

23

24 Q. During the course of those assessments, you would have
25 visited other towns so you could get to farming properties?

26 A. Yes, I visited farming properties out to Lake Varley,
27 down to Ravensthorpe and back around through Jerramungup to
28 here.

29

30 Q. That would encompass places such as Tambellup and
31 Ongerup?

32 A. Ongerup, yes. I don't think I ever did any work in
33 Tambellup.

34

35 Q. Through the course of your employment, you would get
36 to know various farmers?

37 A. No, not really "get to know" them. I would visit them
38 for one day only on their property to inspect it.

39

40 Q. While you were there, though, you would chat with them
41 and, aside from valuing the property, you must have
42 exchanged some information during the course of chatting?

43 A. Oh yes, yes, because we had to do a balance sheet and
44 go through what their actual farming program was, so that
45 we could do assessments of their applications.

46

47 Q. Did you swap small talk; talk about families and

1 things like that?
2 A. Oh, you talk about all sorts of things over a cup of
3 tea when you're having a bit of a break.
4
5 Q. When you socialised - I assume you had a social life
6 while you were in Katanning. Were you a member of any
7 sporting clubs?
8 A. No.
9
10 Q. What did you do? How did you socialise? Could you
11 briefly tell me, please?
12 A. Well, I joined the Masonic Lodge and that was about
13 the only thing, I guess.
14
15 Q. So you are a mason?
16 A. Yes.
17
18 Q. What about Rotary?
19 A. No. I am a member of Probus now.
20
21 Q. What about Lions, were you a member of Lions while you
22 were employed --
23 A. No, no.
24
25 Q. Did you take an interest in local politics?
26 A. No.
27
28 Q. Were there any other interests you had outside of your
29 work?
30 A. No, nothing that comes to mind.
31
32 Q. Did you have any children while you were living in the
33 town?
34 A. No. We already had our two children before we came
35 here.
36
37 Q. Did they go to any of the schools in Katanning?
38 A. Yes, yes.
39
40 Q. Which schools?
41 A. They both went to Katanning primary school and to the
42 Katanning high school.
43
44 Q. Let's start with the eldest, please. When was the
45 eldest at the Katanning high school? When did the eldest
46 start there?
47 A. I don't recall exactly. It would have been about, I

1 think, 1974, but that's a guess.
2
3 Q. What about your youngest child, when did the youngest
4 child start at Katanning high?
5 A. Well, he was two years behind his sister, so if '74 is
6 right then it would have been about '76.
7
8 Q. If 1974 is right, they go there for five years?
9 A. No. Sue only went for, I think, three years.
10
11 Q. Which one is that, please, when you say "Sue"? Is
12 that the eldest or the youngest?
13 A. Sue is the eldest, yes.
14
15 Q. Mr Renk, the Inquiry records show us that you were a
16 member of the Katanning school hostel board. Is that
17 correct?
18 A. I believe so, yes, but I have no recollection of it
19 whatsoever.
20
21 Q. Does it sound right to you that you were elected to
22 the board in about October 1973?
23 A. Well, I have no idea. If their records show that then
24 obviously it would be correct, but I couldn't confirm or
25 deny it.
26
27 Q. You said to me a short time ago that you had no idea.
28 Why is that?
29 A. I have no recollection whatsoever of my time as a
30 member of the board. I had a transitory ischemic attack in
31 November 2000 and it does seem that it has wiped some of my
32 memories out. My time on the hostel board is the third
33 item that has been brought up which I should remember but
34 have no recollection of whatsoever, and I cannot confirm or
35 deny anything in relation to this particular problem.
36
37 Q. What is the first item of memory that has been wiped?
38 A. Well, the first thing I found out was that I was best
39 man at the wedding of a lad who was my best friend back at
40 school over in South Australia. We met by chance and he
41 made reference to his wedding and I have absolutely no
42 recollection of that whatsoever. I don't know where it
43 happened, whether it was over here or over in South
44 Australia. It's very hard to believe that anybody wouldn't
45 remember being his best mate's best man, but I do not
46 honestly remember it.
47

1 Q. How did you come to know that you did not remember
2 something like that?
3 A. Because somebody brought the subject up.
4
5 Q. What was your response?
6 A. My response was amazement that I could have forgotten
7 something like that.
8
9 Q. What was the second thing? What is the second thing
10 that has been erased from your memory?
11 A. Another friend from a fair way back who made reference
12 to him and one of our best friends - who, sadly, left us
13 many years ago. He and that lad's father went up to
14 Kununurra, I think it was, for six months or something and
15 he spoke of it as something that I would have known all
16 about and I had absolutely no recollection of it
17 whatsoever.
18
19 Q. The third thing you have mentioned is your service on
20 the St Andrew's hostel board?
21 A. Yes, that's right.
22
23 Q. Do you remember anything of your service on the board?
24 A. Nothing that I can recall, no.
25
26 Q. When and how did you become aware that you had no
27 recollection of this?
28 A. When the question was brought up.
29
30 Q. What question?
31 A. Well - oh, it's hard to recall. I received information
32 from the people conducting this Inquiry of two men who said
33 that they had contact with me in regard to the hostel board
34 and that was when I knew that, well, I had absolutely no
35 recollection of it whatsoever.
36
37 Q. When you say two men who said that they had spoken to
38 you about some matters to do with the hostel board, was one
39 of those people Noel Parkin?
40 A. I think that may be the case.
41
42 Q. So someone put to you that Noel Parkin had mentioned
43 you?
44 A. I was given a printout of what he said to the Inquiry
45 up in Perth back in February some time, I think.
46
47 Q. The other chap who is said to have spoken about you,

1 is his name Bruce Carmichael?
2 A. Well, I don't remember but, yes, I think it probably
3 was.
4
5 Q. When was this that someone tried to jog your memory
6 and you had no memory?
7 A. When I was contacted by telephone by somebody from the
8 Inquiry, that was when I first realised that - I can
9 remember that I was on the board of the hostel, but I have
10 no recollection of the actual time and what happened then.
11
12 Q. Let's just go back to my question, please. When did
13 you become aware that you had no memory of these people?
14 A. Back in February some time.
15
16 Q. Was that a telephone call from an investigator with
17 this Inquiry named Barratt?
18 A. I don't remember that.
19
20 Q. On 6 February 2012, an investigator named Barratt
21 telephoned you?
22 A. That could well be, yes.
23
24 Q. Did you agree with him that you had been the secretary
25 at the St Andrew's hostel board for a number of years?
26 A. Yes, I think I did.
27
28 Q. Did you also tell Mr Barratt that you had been on the
29 board when Mr Dennis McKenna was first employed?
30 A. I don't remember, but I guess I probably could have,
31 yes.
32
33 Q. Let's just make sure we are talking about the phone
34 call, we are not talking about a long-term memory.
35 A. Mmm.
36
37 Q. Did you tell Mr Barratt that you were on the board
38 when Dennis McKenna was first employed?
39 A. I don't recall saying that but if that's what he says
40 I said then, yes, I'm sure that would be correct.
41
42 Q. Did you also tell Mr Barratt that, to the best of your
43 memory, you had not been informed by anyone about child sex
44 abuse during your time?
45 A. I would have told him that, yes.
46
47 Q. Why are you so confident that you would have told him

1 that?
2 A. Because I have no memory of it ever occurring. If he
3 asked that question, I would obviously have had to say that
4 I didn't know about it.
5
6 Q. You also told Mr Barratt that you did not have any
7 children staying at the hostel?
8 A. That's right. We lived in town so they didn't need to
9 be at the hostel.
10
11 Q. So that is quite correct. You mentioned that you were
12 employed as a loan manager at the Commonwealth Bank
13 development section?
14 A. No, I've never said that. I was the regional rural
15 officer, I was not a manager.
16
17 Q. You also stated to Mr Barratt that the only person you
18 could remember being on the board with was Glenda
19 Wellstead. Do you recall telling Mr Barratt that?
20 A. Yes, but it's Gwenda, G-W not G-L, and I recall her
21 only because we regularly go to Monkey Mia every year and
22 we used to meet Gwenda and her husband Jim up there for
23 several years.
24
25 Q. I will return to the issue of sexual abuse shortly.
26 You have told us about this medical condition. Can you
27 tell me in layman's terms what it is that brought about
28 your memory failure in these three areas of your life?
29 A. Well, the TIA that I had back in November 2000, which
30 is a type of stroke.
31
32 Q. That is what I was going to ask you about because it
33 did sound like you were talking about your heart. You had
34 a type of stroke, did you?
35 A. I believe that's what it is, yes. As far as I'm
36 aware, that's the only thing that has ever happened to me
37 that could have wiped out a memory like being best man at
38 my best mate's wedding, and that sort of thing; things that
39 you would expect anybody with half a brain would
40 automatically remember.
41
42 Q. You say there was a second thing, and then the third
43 thing that has been wiped is the whole of your recollection
44 or nearly all of your recollection to do with your service
45 on the board at St Andrew's hostel?
46 A. Yes. I have no memories of that at all. I don't
47 recall where the meetings were held and when, or anything

1 about it whatsoever.

2

3 Q. If I said to you that you continued serving on the
4 board through until October 1986, does that sound correct?

5 A. I guess it could be correct, if there is information
6 that confirms it. I can't confirm or deny it because I
7 can't recall it.

8

9 Q. Thirteen years of memory wiped out about one
10 particular matter; is that your evidence?

11 A. I don't know whether it was 13 years.

12

13 Q. Let me just say to you that they are the records that
14 this Inquiry has obtained and I would not ever knowingly
15 mislead you, Mr Renk. If you were to accept what I am
16 saying, is it your evidence that 13 years of your memory
17 about one particular part of your life have been wiped?

18 A. Yes, that seems to be what the case is, yes.

19

20 Q. When did you have the stroke, please?

21 A. In November 2000.

22

23 Q. Who is your specialist, please?

24 A. That I can't tell you. Whoever was on at the hospital
25 that weekend was the person who did it.

26

27 Q. That's in relation to the stroke, but there must have
28 been follow-up treatment, Mr Renk?

29 A. No, there - well, very little. I was in the
30 hospital - I went into the hospital on the Saturday and I
31 left on the Monday. On the Saturday the doctor diagnosed
32 me as having Type 2 diabetes, and on the Monday before I
33 was discharged I had to do a glucose test. I had to drink
34 a glass of terribly sweet water, and then they tested my
35 glucose level, and it's the Type 2 diabetes that's been
36 treated since then.

37

38 Q. All right. What about your memory? What have you
39 done in relation to your memory? What efforts have you
40 made to have that treated?

41 A. I haven't made any efforts to have it treated. I've
42 racked my brains trying to remember things, but it hasn't
43 had any treatment.

44

45 Q. Well, the way you - sorry, I spoke over you. The way
46 you've spoken about losing the memory of your friend - you
47 portrayed yourself as being concerned, slightly upset about

1 that. You haven't sought any treatment from any
2 specialists about your memory?
3 A. No, I haven't.
4
5 Q. What about in 1990 when Mr McKenna - Dennis McKenna
6 was charged with committing acts of sexual abuse against
7 young lads at the hostel. You weren't on the Board then,
8 were you?
9 A. Well, I don't think so. I know I would have been very
10 surprised by it.
11
12 Q. I've already - just - just stop, please. I've already
13 said I won't mislead you. If I do, I'm confident his
14 Honour will pull me up. Now, I've said to you that you
15 stopped serving on the Board in 1986. So when McKenna was
16 charged, your memory's not wiped, is it?
17 A. Well, I don't know. There's nothing about it that
18 tells me whether my memory has or has not been wiped. I
19 don't specifically recall him being charged.
20
21 Q. I just asked you a direct question: what is your
22 recollection of your reaction when Dennis McKenna was first
23 charged with abusing young boys?
24 A. I have no recollection of my reaction at all.
25
26 Q. Let me say to you, Mr Renk, that your loss of memory
27 is just convenient so you don't have to deal with this
28 issue?
29 A. No, I don't agree with you there at all because I've
30 read a fair bit in the papers about what's happened and
31 seen a lot on the television news about what's happened,
32 and I'm very, very regretful that I'm unable to make any
33 positive contribution to the Inquiry that's going on. I
34 should be able to, but I cannot. I just can't simply
35 confirm or deny anything that's claimed to have been said
36 or done because the memory just does not exist.
37
38 Q. Mr Renk, I've been led to believe that you were
39 prepared to talk to investigators, and at that time you
40 were of the belief that if you talked to investigators you
41 wouldn't be called to give evidence, but when you were told
42 otherwise, that there was a two-stage process and interview
43 followed by giving evidence in public, you decided not to
44 talk to us; is that correct?
45 A. No, that's not correct at all. I've no objection to
46 talking to you. I wish I could offer you something useful,
47 but I - regrettably I can't. I would if I could.

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Q. All right. What I propose to do, Mr Renk, purely in fairness to you, is go through - initially I'll just mention names to you, and if you have no memory of these people telling you things, I'll move on to the next person, but you must understand, please, sir, that people have given evidence - either under affirmation or under oath - and they have named you. Do you understand that?

A. I do understand that, yes.

Q. And now is your time to comment. If you so desire now is your chance, all right.

A. Sorry, I didn't catch what you said then, I had to cough at the crucial moment.

Q. I said if you so desire, now is your chance, you're getting a fair chance to have your say; all right?

A. Well, okay.

Q. In about June 1980 - in about June 1980, Noel Parkin went to the Country High School's housing authority offices in Perth and caused a big disturbance.

HIS HONOUR: That's the Hostel Authority.

MR DOBSON: Now, I'll just outline to you - beg your pardon, sir.

HIS HONOUR: You said "housing authority". You meant Hostel Authority.

MR DOBSON: I beg your pardon, your Honour, yes.

Q. Hostel Authority, Mr Renk, and he caused a big fuss, and it was to do with an allegation that Dennis McKenna was sexually interfering with Mr Parkin's son Bradley. Do you understand that so far?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you have any recollection of that?

A. No, unfortunately, I don't.

Q. And Mr Parkin has also said that upon returning to Katanning or to the area, he telephoned you. You were one of several other people, but he said that he telephoned you because he was aware you were on the Board, and he told you about the sexual abuse of his son. Do you recall that?

1 A. No, I have no recollection of that.
2
3 Q. There's a fellow named Bruce Carmichael who also says
4 that he spoke with you and on one occasion, it was in
5 person, and on another occasion it was on the telephone.
6 Do you recall Carmichael speaking with you?
7 A. No, I do not.
8
9 Q. I'll read out to you what Carmichael says - bottom of
10 transcript page 611, your Honour. Carmichael stated in
11 evidence that this is what he told you:
12
13 I would have told him about the special
14 boys spending time in his rooms at
15 night-time, late at night, the porno
16 videos, and the grog that he was feeding to
17 them. They were my concerns at that time,
18 that I thought it was not appropriate for a
19 man in that position of authority in the
20 hostel.
21
22 Do you have any recollection of that?
23 A. No, I have no recollection of it. I can't confirm it
24 or deny it. One thing I am quite certain of is that if I
25 was given that information, I would have taken it to the
26 next Board meeting that I attended, and the Board would
27 have acted on it to some extent I feel perfectly certain.
28
29 Q. All right. Carmichael says this was in 1980. Now,
30 I'll move on. Carmichael was asked in evidence as to
31 whether you listened to him and took his Inquiry on board,
32 and his complaint on board, and he said - transcript
33 page 611 still:
34
35 He heard me out. He did not argue the
36 point or tell me it was bulldust and hang
37 up the phone or anything. He heard me out
38 and said he would look into it.
39
40 So from what you've just said, that's something that you
41 might have said?
42 A. Yes, yes, I expect that that's how I would have
43 reacted. I would certainly have taken it to the Board. I
44 would certainly not have just sat --
45
46 Q. Independent of --
47 A. -- on something like that.

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Q. Right. Independent of what you would have done, can you actually remember saying that to Mr Carmichael?

A. No, I'm sorry, I cannot.

Q. And then Carmichael has said in evidence - it's the top of transcript page 613, your Honour - he said that you rang him back a few weeks later and told him that as far as you were aware, it was not a problem. Can you tell us about that?

A. Well, no, I can't. I have no recollection of it, and quite honestly it does not sound like anything I would have done.

HIS HONOUR: Q. Why do you say that? Why do you say it doesn't sound like something you would have done?

A. Well, I don't believe I would have rung somebody back - what did he say - some time later, not just --

MR DOBSON: Q. A few weeks later.

A. A few weeks later.

Q. The only reason I can imagine that I might have called him back and said that, would be if I had presented it to the Board and the Board had stated that there was nothing wrong. And, of course, from what we've read in the newspapers and seen in the news in recent times, there does seem to be a possibility that it could have been quashed. We were told in the news that an attempt to make an Inquiry was quashed by a politician up in Perth, I think.

Q. All right. Just put that to one side.

HIS HONOUR: Just a moment, Mr Dobson.

Q. Now, you say that if these complaints are being made to you, you would have taken them to the Board?

A. Yes.

Q. Why do you say you would have done that? What makes you say you would have done that?

A. Well, if I was a member of the Board - and obviously it was the hostel that was affected - that's what I would have done with them. The only other thing I would have done would have been to take them to the police, and I can't quite understand why nobody did that.

1 Q. Now, you did say earlier that you do recollect that
2 you were on the Board. You do recollect that?
3 A. Not specifically. I accept it, but I don't have any
4 memory of it whatsoever.

5
6 Q. What you said earlier, I'm quoting you, you said:
7
8 I can recollect I was on the Board, but
9 cannot remember what happened there.

10
11 That's what you said at one stage.

12 A. Right, yes, well - and I suppose in a sense I was
13 aware of that because as I said earlier, meeting up with
14 Mrs Wellstead and discussing things --

15
16 Q. So what do you recollect about being on the Board?
17 A. Only that Gwenda Wellstead was a member. I'm aware
18 now of two other people who were members, but only because
19 I had direct contact with them in the last few weeks.
20 Keith Stephens rang me from Albany to find out whether
21 anybody had rung me regarding the Inquiry, and they had,
22 and he told me then that he was on the Board, and I had no
23 memory of that, but I did know Keith quite well because he
24 was one of our clients out north of Nyabing. Now I've
25 sidetracked myself.

26
27 Q. Do you know where the hostel is?
28 A. Yes, I know where it is.

29
30 Q. Have you ever been there?
31 A. I have no recollection of that. Not - not that I can
32 remember, no.

33
34 Q. You can't remember ever going there at all?
35 A. No.

36
37 HIS HONOUR: All right, Mr Dobson.

38
39 MR DOBSON: Thank you, your Honour.

40
41 Q. Just returning to Mr Parkin - I mentioned him a short
42 time ago, and I said it was June 1980. I'll just read to
43 you what Mr Parkin gave in evidence to the Inquiry -
44 transcript page 505:

45
46 I rang the bloke from the bank. I guess it
47 was the Commonwealth Bank, I think, and

1 told him, and he wouldn't listen to me, and
2 thought I was sick in the head.
3
4 Do you recall that at all?
5 A. No, I do not.
6
7 Q. And is that because of your memory loss?
8 A. Yes. I find it difficult to believe that I would have
9 said anything like that to anybody over the phone.
10
11 Q. Right. Do you recall, in about 1985, a State
12 Government initiative called Westrek - Westrek?
13 A. No.
14
15 Q. People coming to Katanning, young people, early 20s,
16 late teens, to do work. It was a State Government
17 initiative.
18 A. No, I have no recollection of that whatsoever.
19
20 Q. Do you recall a lady who was involved in a supervisory
21 role with Westrek, and her name was Maggie Maruff then?
22 A. No.
23
24 Q. Maggie Dawkins now?
25 A. No.
26
27 Q. Do you recall - putting aside the name - do you recall
28 anything to do, in 1985, with a person - a lady from
29 outside the town causing a great deal of trouble about
30 Dennis McKenna's name, telling people that he was
31 interfering with boys?
32 A. No, I don't.
33
34 Q. Do you recall anything like that?
35 A. No, I don't have any recollection of that at all.
36
37 Q. All right. Do you ever recall anything about a ward
38 of the state and an issue at the hostel in 1983 involving a
39 ward of the state?
40 A. No.
41
42 Q. I won't say the surname, but a boy with a surname that
43 started with "S"?
44 A. No.
45
46 Q. He was expelled at a Board meeting?
47 A. Sorry, I've no recollection of that whatsoever.

1
2 Q. If I said to you that at times you were the Secretary
3 of the - of that particular Board at that hostel, do you
4 recall that?
5 A. I don't recall it, no, but I believe if it was the
6 case, that that could have been the case.
7
8 Q. You told his Honour that had some complaints been made
9 to you, you would have acted on them, you would have taken
10 them to the Board; is that right?
11 A. Yes, I believe that is what I would have done. I
12 think that's what any sensible person would have done.
13
14 Q. I can tell you now that the Inquiry, it's
15 investigators, and through taking evidence, have found no
16 record of you telling the Board anything about Dennis
17 McKenna in relation to interfering with boys or watching
18 porno movies, or supplying them with alcohol. What do you
19 say about that?
20 A. Well, if there was no record of it, then I guess I
21 didn't do it, but that wouldn't mean that I didn't discuss
22 it privately with a member or some members of the Board,
23 would it?
24
25 Q. No, it doesn't, and that's why I asked you and said to
26 you that this is your chance to explain your conduct, and
27 if there is - if there is something that you need to tell
28 us, this is the time, please, Mr Renk.
29 A. I can't tell you --
30
31 Q. We're quite prepared to listen to you.
32 A. I can't tell you anything positive about it, but what
33 I can say is that if I mentioned it to, let's say, the
34 Chairman of the Board or something like that, and was told
35 that the - an Inquiry, which had been mooted, had been
36 quashed by the politician, I guess I would have accepted
37 from that that, well, there's nothing wrong.
38
39 Q. All right. Are we talking hypotheticals here, or are
40 you saying you have some recollection that you tried to do
41 something at that stage?
42 A. No, I have no actual recollection of it whatsoever.
43
44 HIS HONOUR: Q. So what do you say is --
45 A. Well --
46
47 Q. -- the significance of the matter being raised with a

1 politician and being quashed? What are you saying about
2 that?

3 A. Well, only that I read it in the paper and saw it on
4 the television news, that that is what happened - somebody
5 was going to commence an Inquiry and it was stopped by a
6 politician. I am sure that was in the paper.

7
8 Q. So why do you think if you'd gone to the chairman,
9 back at the time when you were on the Board, why do you
10 think you might have been told about the politician
11 quashing an Inquiry?

12 A. Well, I don't know whether that's what it was, but
13 what I imagine could have happened is that if I had done
14 that, I might have been told that it had been brought to
15 the Board's notice and nothing was amiss, but this is
16 guesswork on my part, your Honour. I cannot confirm or
17 deny anything, unfortunately. I wish I could be of use.

18
19 HIS HONOUR: Mr Dobson.

20
21 MR DOBSON: Q. Mr Renk, the business you're talking
22 about with that particular boy, and the fact that the
23 Inquiry may have been stopped, was more likely than not
24 1983. I've said to you now, that at least three years
25 earlier, three years earlier, you were told by people.
26 Now, in fairness to you, I want to say if - if now, looking
27 back years and years, you wished you'd done something more
28 - put that to one side. If you did go to someone on the
29 Board - Chairman, be Garth Addis or anyone - you should
30 tell us, please.

31 A. Well, I cannot tell you that because I have absolutely
32 no recollection of it whatsoever.

33
34 Q. And that loss of memory is the same loss of memory
35 that you've done nothing about?

36 A. Yes.

37
38 Q. What about in 1990 when McKenna first got charged?
39 Did you think then, "Gee, it would be nice to recover a few
40 memories of that period, it might help some people in this
41 town?"

42 A. No, I didn't.

43
44 Q. No?

45 A. No.

46
47 Q. What about when he got charged the second time with

1 his gross abuse of young men, young boys? Did it cross
2 your mind to go and see if you could get treatment for your
3 memory?

4 A. No.

5

6 Q. And what about when this Inquiry was announced late
7 last year, did you think, "Gee, I've been in this town for
8 a fair while and my good friend Gwenda tells me that I was
9 on the Board, maybe I could help them if I recovered my
10 memory". Did that cross your mind?

11 A. No - well, I - in a sense, yes, I guess because I've
12 racked my brains for quite some time trying to remember
13 things, but it's never occurred to me to try and see a
14 specialist about it or anything. In retirement on a fixed
15 income, I very much doubt I could afford it anyway.

16

17 Q. All right. But you say that if something had been
18 reported to you, you would have taken it to the Board?

19 A. I believe so, yes. I don't believe I would have just
20 concealed any information like that without taking some
21 reasonable action on it.

22

23 Q. All right. Again, I'm not misleading you. I can tell
24 you that at almost every Board meeting Denis McKenna sat in
25 on the Board meetings. Do you still say you would have
26 taken the complaint to a Board meeting?

27 A. Well, yes, I think that's what I would have done, but
28 I had no idea that he attended the Board meetings; but, as
29 I say, I've got no memories of it at all.

30

31 Q. All right. I'll give you another name, a gentleman
32 named Peacock.

33 A. No.

34

35 Q. Do you recall a father named Peacock? He went by the
36 first name of John, I believe.

37 A. No, no.

38

39 Q. He was a farmer in an area called Frankland. Do you
40 remember that?

41 A. No, I'm not quite sure where that area is. I think
42 it's west of here, south-west of here, and that's not the
43 area that I was working in. The area that I did work in
44 was all east of here. If the Commonwealth Bank had a
45 branch in Lake Grace, that's where I would have been.

46

47 Q. Don't worry - please don't worry about your work in

1 relation to this man. This man was a Board member from
2 1983 to March 1986, a Board member at the hostel. Do you
3 remember the name?

4 A. No, I don't.

5

6 Q. All right. Now, that falls within the period that you
7 were a Board member. Do you have any recollection of a
8 Board member who was making unannounced visits to the
9 warden's quarters to try and catch him out with young boys.
10 Did you know anything about that?

11 A. No.

12

13 Q. And, again, is that because your memory's failed?

14 A. I don't know. I've got no way of knowing that.

15

16 Q. I could stand here all day and ask you question after
17 question about the Board, the Hostel Board, and your
18 service, and you just say, "I can't recall"?

19 A. Well, in all probability that's what would happen,
20 unless you can find a question that somehow springs a
21 memory for me, but that hasn't happened as yet.

22

23 Q. Well, you've heard me talk about a man who grossly
24 defiled young boys, plied them with alcohol, made them
25 watch porno movies. What else? What do you need to have
26 your memory jogged, sir?

27 A. I honestly don't know. I do know that that's what Mr
28 McKenna was gaoled for.

29

30 Q. 13 years you had on that Board. Do you wish you could
31 help shed some light on how that Board operated?

32 A. Yes, I certainly do. I - as I say, I don't know when
33 I joined the Board or when I left it, how long I was there
34 or anything that actually occurred on the Board.

35

36 Q. Well, I'm telling you, sir, you had 13 years service,
37 and you were the Secretary for a good part of that time.
38 Don't you wish you could offer us something?

39 A. Yes. I've said that on more than one occasion, I wish
40 I could be of assistance, but unfortunately I can't because
41 I don't have any memory.

42

43 Q. And in the 20 years since McKenna got charged or
44 whatever, the first time, 22 years, you've done nothing
45 about that loss of memory?

46 A. No, I wasn't really aware.

47

1 Q. I can't see that I can take --
2 A. I wasn't aware that I had lost any memory in relation
3 to the Hostel Board until quite recently when this Inquiry
4 started up. Up until then I hadn't had any reason to need
5 to think back on it.
6
7 Q. That's not entirely true, sir. I asked you earlier
8 how did you react when McKenna was charged, and you told me
9 you couldn't remember?
10 A. No, I don't remember what I - how I reacted.
11
12 Q. That's 1990. That's four years after you ceased -
13 nothing to do with your memory loss, is it?
14 A. No, not that I'm aware of. It's just something I
15 don't have any recollection of.
16
17 Q. And 1990 - before you lost your memory in any event?
18 A. Well, quite probably yes. Who knows.
19
20 HIS HONOUR: Q. Do you remember Dennis McKenna?
21
22 MR DOBSON: Q. Well, wouldn't you have turned around --
23
24 HIS HONOUR: Q. Do you remember Dennis McKenna?
25 A. I remember the name. I have seen photos of him even
26 back in the time when he was at the hostel, and I don't
27 even recognise the photos.
28
29 Q. That looks like a fourth thing you've forgotten.
30 A. I beg your pardon?
31
32 Q. Looks like there's a fourth thing you've forgotten,
33 Dennis McKenna?
34 A. There's a --
35
36 Q. Looks like there's a --
37
38 MR DOBSON: Yes, your Honour, I was --
39
40 HIS HONOUR: Q. -- there's a fourth thing that you've
41 forgotten, and that's being Dennis McKenna, and what he
42 looked like?
43 A. Yes, yes, I see what you're getting at. Yes.
44
45 HIS HONOUR: Yes, Mr Dobson.
46
47 MR DOBSON: Thank you, your Honour.

1
2 Q. Mr Renk, what I don't understand is you finished
3 serving on the Board in 1986. 1990 Dennis McKenna gets
4 charged. In that local area, Dennis McKenna being charged
5 with those offences was big news; correct, or did you
6 (indistinct)?
7 A. Yes, I guess it was.
8
9 Q. And it's not until November 2000 that you have this
10 memory loss?
11 A. Yes, I believe so.
12
13 Q. A stroke, November 2000, okay. The stroke was in
14 November 2000?
15 A. Yes.
16
17 Q. Well, I'll ask you again: what was your reaction when
18 McKenna was charged - Dennis McKenna we're talking about -
19 was charged for the first time in 1990?
20 A. I don't recall what my reaction was. I probably was
21 horrified.
22
23 Q. So that's the sixth thing, if I'm - I'm just trying
24 to - or the fifth thing. I'm trying to keep track of his
25 Honour's counting. Is that the fifth thing that you can't
26 recall now?
27 A. No, I don't really know.
28
29 Q. What about when he was charged a second time. How did
30 you react? That was only a while ago.
31 A. I don't think I reacted at all.
32
33 Q. Didn't you talk to anyone locally - you've got your
34 friend Gwenda?
35 A. About it? No.
36
37 Q. What, McKenna gets charged again with these vial acts
38 against young men, and you just don't talk about it with a
39 local?
40 A. Well, not that I can recall, no.
41
42 Q. Is it more the case that you just don't want to recall
43 about Dennis McKenna and your service on that Board, Mr
44 Renk?
45 A. No, I don't think that's the case. I think what
46 probably I should be explaining is that these times that
47 you're talking about when I didn't discuss things with

1 people in the town, I was still working, and my work took
2 me out of town for days at a time on occasions, and I had
3 very little contact with people in town, except at lodge
4 meetings and in the Rostrum Club, which we had for quite
5 some time back then.

6
7 Q. Yes, but another view could be taken of your position
8 in the town, and the other view could be that you held a
9 very responsible position, you mixed with a lot of people
10 and visited a lot of farms and you were on the Board and
11 you were the Secretary and you had a lot more financial
12 expertise than the others, the farmers and so on, may have
13 had. Another view might be that you were one person who
14 probably would have had access to a lot of people, a lot of
15 information and a lot of gossip. What do you say about
16 that view?

17 A. Well, I don't recall it as being what the situation
18 was.

19
20 Q. And it may be that because people told you bits and
21 pieces, that's been the initial starting point for the loss
22 of memory?

23 A. I don't know.

24
25 MR DOBSON: No, your Honour, I don't know if I can take it
26 any further with Mr Renk.

27
28 HIS HONOUR: Very well. Thank you, Mr Dobson.

29
30 MR DOBSON: I'm not sure of - sorry, your Honour, I was
31 about to say I'm not sure of Mr Urquhart's view, whether he
32 wants this matter stood down before the others, or the
33 others could possibly examine Mr Renk first, sir.

34
35 HIS HONOUR: Well, we don't have any other counsel other
36 than for Mr Jenkin. Mr Jenkin, you've got no questions.

37
38 MR JENKIN: No, thanks, sir.

39
40 MR URQUHART: Sir, I would like to ask some, but
41 ordinarily I would have passed notes to Mr Dobson.

42
43 HIS HONOUR: Well, Mr Urquhart is going to ask a couple of
44 questions.

45
46 MR DOBSON: I'm obliged, thank you, your Honour.

47

1 <EXAMINATION BY MR URQUHART:
2
3 MR URQUHART: Q. Mr Renk, how old are you?
4 A. 76.
5
6 Q. So you had this - it's been described as a stroke, but
7 you would have had that when you were 64?
8 A. Yes, I guess that's right.
9
10 Q. Could you just tell us, please, what exactly it was
11 that you had?
12 A. It was a transitory ischemic attack.
13
14 Q. Transitory ischemic attack?
15 A. Yes.
16
17 Q. Okay.
18 A. TIA.
19
20 Q. And were you hospitalised?
21 A. Yes.
22
23 Q. And you can't remember the doctor that was treating
24 you then?
25 A. No, I can't. I do remember him very proudly telling
26 me that - I think he said I was the seventh person he'd
27 diagnosed with diabetes that week - it was a very
28 fashionable thing for doctors back then.
29
30 Q. I see. Is there a doctor looking after you with
31 respect to this condition that you've got?
32 A. In a sense, I suppose, my GP is. Diet and exercise is
33 controlling the diabetes, and has been all along.
34
35 Q. No, sorry, I'm talking about the TIA problem?
36 A. No. That was only treated in the hospital for a
37 couple of days over the weekend.
38
39 Q. Mr Renk, I think this might have already been asked of
40 you by someone here in the Inquiry, but would you be
41 prepared to provide the Inquiry with a medical report to
42 substantiate your claim about your memory loss?
43 A. Well, I haven't got a medical report. I guess the
44 hospital would have records of the fact that, you know,
45 that I was there with the TIA in November 2000, but --
46
47 Q. Can you recall what hospital it was?

1 A. Yes, Katanning.
2
3 Q. Katanning. Again, getting back to my question though,
4 would you have any objection if some arrangements were made
5 for a medical report to be provided to the Inquiry?
6 A. No, there wouldn't be objection at all.
7
8 Q. That would mean that you would be examined by a doctor
9 for that purpose?
10 A. If necessary, I guess, yes.
11
12 Q. If there is a cost involved, I am sure we can make
13 sure that we haven't - you're not financially burdened in
14 that regard, okay?
15 A. Yes.
16
17 Q. Just with these areas that you've got memory losses, I
18 understand the first area is that you can't recall being a
19 best man at a good friend's wedding. Have you been told
20 what year that was?
21 A. No, I haven't.
22
23 Q. Well, was it some time in your younger days?
24 A. Yes, I guess it would have been. It would have been
25 back --
26
27 HIS HONOUR: You said it was in South Australia.
28
29 Q. When were you in South Australia?
30 A. From when I was born, until March 1955.
31
32 MR URQUHART: Q. That would count as younger days, I
33 think?
34 A. Yes.
35
36 Q. And then the second area was a trip to Kununurra that
37 you can't remember?
38 A. It wasn't a trip that I made, it was a trip that a
39 friend and the father of another friend made.
40
41 Q. Right.
42 A. But I would have thought I would have remembered when
43 he raised the subject when I saw him, or three or
44 four years ago now. I don't know all the things that I've
45 lost memories of. The only ones I know are things that
46 have been brought up.
47

1 Q. Well, this is what I'm going to ask you. So up until
2 20 minutes ago, you believe that there were only three
3 areas - you're best man at the wedding --
4 A. Yes.
5
6 Q. -- being told about this trip to Kununurra by friends
7 of yours, and the third one was anything to do with your
8 involvement with the St Andrew's Hostel Board?
9 A. Yes, that's right.
10
11 Q. But now it looks like we've found out about some other
12 areas, and that is that you don't have a recollection of
13 your reaction when Dennis McKenna was charged back in 1990?
14 A. No, I don't, but that was a fair while ago, and --
15
16 Q. Yes.
17 A. And I wouldn't say that that's necessarily a memory
18 that I've lost.
19
20 Q. But you can't enlighten us as to --
21 A. I haven't got the brightest memory --
22
23 Q. -- what your reaction was?
24 A. -- of all time anyway.
25
26 Q. Okay. And as I understand now, there might be another
27 area because you can't tell us much about Dennis McKenna;
28 is that right, from your own personal experiences?
29 A. No, I can't.
30
31 HIS HONOUR: Q. Well, you said you didn't recognise his
32 photograph in the paper?
33 A. No, no.
34
35 MR URQUHART: Q. I think I'm right here, but I'll be
36 corrected if I'm not. Would it surprise you to hear that
37 you were involved in the selection of Mr McKenna for his
38 job at the hostel?
39 A. Yes, I would be surprised to hear that.
40
41 Q. You see, it's the case, it appears, that you can't
42 remember anything about your role on the Hostel Board from
43 1973 to 1986. I can assure you they were the years that
44 you were a Board member. So I gather though, Mr Renk, you
45 can remember what you did at the bank during those years?
46 A. I suppose I could if there was something I needed to
47 remember, but there hasn't been anything brought up that I

1 do need to remember. I can remember plenty of things that
2 go back way earlier than that.
3
4 Q. Can you remember other things that happened in the
5 early '70s to the mid '80s.
6 A. No, not specifically.
7
8 Q. No. About anything?
9 A. Well, the early '70s, we - I've just got to try and
10 get this right - 1970 was the year that I joined the
11 Development Bank, and we had six months in Perth, and then
12 in December I was transferred down to Albany as an
13 Assistant Rural Officer, and I was there for two years, and
14 in December 1972 I was transferred up to here.
15
16 Q. Yes. Well, let me help --
17 A. 1972 was a pretty poor year, but 1973 was a good year,
18 so it was a good first year for me in Katanning.
19
20 Q. 1974?
21 A. 1974 - I've got a feeling that was the year the season
22 was fairly late breaking.
23
24 Q. Okay. Right. Can you remember - let me ask you this:
25 would I be right - are your children both married?
26 A. Yes, they have both been married and they both
27 separated from their partners.
28
29 Q. Can you remember going to their weddings?
30 A. Yes.
31
32 Q. Would I hazard a guess that that would have been
33 between 1973 and 1976?
34 A. That is a good question.
35
36 Q. Yes. That's why I asked it.
37 A. Yes, I'm not sure which years they were married in.
38
39 Q. Well, how old are they now?
40 A. Well, my daughter Sue is 51. She'll be 52 - she's 50,
41 and she'll be 51 in July.
42
43 Q. And did she get married in her 20s?
44 A. Yes, I think so.
45
46 Q. I can hear some prompting from your wife here, but
47 never mind, yes. Do you remember then going to her

1 wedding?
2 A. Yes, and I remember financing it too. She was married
3 in what is now the Chinese restaurant in Katanning --
4
5 Q. Right.
6 A. -- but back then I think it was the Baptist Church.
7
8 Q. Yes, well I've got a feeling that might have been
9 between 1973 and 1986.
10 A. Yes, I guess it could well have been, I don't know.
11
12 Q. But you remember the wedding?
13 A. Mm.
14
15 Q. Okay. And your son?
16 A. Yes, he got married up in Perth - up at Armadale, I
17 think.
18
19 Q. And how old's he now?
20 A. He's 48.
21
22 Q. Okay. Again, did he get married in his 20s?
23 A. Yes, I think so.
24
25 Q. Do you - have you ever used this expression, "that
26 everything in the garden's lovely"?
27 A. I suppose I have on some occasions.
28
29 Q. That's a phrase that you remember using?
30 A. No, not specifically.
31
32 Q. What about this, "hadn't found a ripple on the water"?
33 A. No.
34
35 Q. Is that something you'd use?
36 A. No, I'm not familiar with that one at all.
37
38 Q. But you're familiar with "everything in the garden's
39 lovely", to describe something as being okay and fine?
40 A. Mm.
41
42 Q. Yes. Does that ring a bell with you?
43 A. Yes.
44
45 Q. I suppose your answer to this question is no you
46 haven't got any recollection, and that is can you ever
47 remember meeting Dennis McKenna?

1 A. No, I cannot.
2
3 Q. Speaking to Dennis McKenna?
4 A. No, I have no memory of him at all.
5
6 Q. Nothing whatsoever?
7 A. No - well, other than what I've seen on television
8 news and in the papers in recent times.
9
10 Q. And I get the impression from what you're saying is
11 before you saw those photographs in the paper or in the
12 news, that if he walked past you in the street, you
13 wouldn't be able to recognise him?
14 A. No, I'm quite sure I wouldn't.
15
16 Q. Mr Renk, has there ever been an occasion where you've
17 walked past someone in the street and they've said, "Hello"
18 to you --
19 A. And I can't remember who the heck they are - yes, that
20 does happen.
21
22 Q. It does happen?
23 A. Yes.
24
25 Q. Prior to November 2000, or since November 2000?
26 A. I think since I got to about the age I am now.
27
28 Q. But the question was --
29 A. I'm good at remembering faces, but not always at
30 remembering names that go with them, and on - I can recall
31 one or two occasions back in history a bit where I've seen
32 someone in Katanning, probably at a service station, and
33 not recognised them at all because they were farmers whose
34 properties I had been on not so very much earlier, but
35 dressed up to come into town, they looked totally different
36 to what they did on the farm.
37
38 Q. All right.
39 A. I do recall that.
40
41 MR URQUHART: Thank you, Mr Renk. That's all I had, thank
42 you, sir.
43
44 HIS HONOUR: Very well. Well, that completes your
45 evidence, Mr Renk, you're free to go.
46
47 THE WITNESS: Thank you very much.

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<THE WITNESS WITHDREW

HIS HONOUR: Now, we are adjourning to Perth tomorrow, and I think it's at 2.15.

MR URQUHART: 2.15 it will be, sir, back in the same room that Mr Dobson is in now.

HIS HONOUR: Very well. Well, I'll adjourn until tomorrow at 2.15 in Perth.

MR URQUHART: Thank you, sir.

AT 4.25PM THE HEARING WAS ADJOURNED TO FRIDAY, 13 APRIL 2012