

Special Inquiry into St Andrew's Hostel

Hearing

Held at: Katanning Magistrates Court,
Clive Street,
KATANNING WA 6317

Friday, 2 March 2012 at 10am
(Day 8)

Before: The Hon Peter Blaxell

1 HIS HONOUR: Please be seated. Yes, Mr Dobson.
2
3 MR DOBSON: Your Honour, I call Kenneth Reddington, and Mr
4 Reddington will be sworn.
5
6 <KENNETH REDDINGTON, sworn:
7
8 <EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR DOBSON:
9
10 MR DOBSON: Q. Your full name's Kenneth Reddington?
11 A. Yes.
12
13 Q. Now, I understand you're 63 years of age?
14 A. Yes.
15
16 Q. And you're a farmer at Bremer Bay?
17 A. Yes.
18
19 Q. You're also the father of Belinda Reddington. She was
20 a student at Katanning senior high school, commencing there
21 in 1990?
22 A. Yes.
23
24 Q. And she went on to also stay there in 1991; is that
25 right?
26 A. Left in end of first term 1991. We took her out, yes.
27
28 Q. At the time that Belinda went to Katanning senior high
29 school, where were you living?
30 A. At Bremer Bay.
31
32 Q. And what was her schooling before going to Katanning
33 senior high school?
34 A. Primary school at Gairdner, district high school at
35 Jerramungup to Year 10, and then like all parents, faced
36 the dilemma of where to go for 11 and 12.
37
38 Q. So junior high - it's the first three years of high
39 school?
40 A. Yes.
41
42 Q. And then you had to make a decision?
43 A. Yes.
44
45 Q. And you decided on Katanning senior high school?
46 A. Yes.
47

1 Q. Why was that?
2 A. Friends had sent kids there, had heard good reports
3 about it. It was not a lot of choice. It was either
4 Katanning or Albany. We had friends in Katanning
5 which - where she could - I guess there was a bit of
6 support. Also, thinking back, there was a fairly heavy
7 recruitment drive by the hostel, and Dennis McKenna in
8 particular used to do deputations to P&Cs and that in the
9 feeder school, I suppose, so the profile of the high school
10 and the hostel was fairly high.
11
12 Q. I understand that you're also aware that he'd been
13 chosen as Citizen of the Year for Katanning as well?
14 A. Yes, there was - I was aware of that, and there was
15 fairly sort of glowing reports about him and how the hostel
16 was run - that sort of thing.
17
18 Q. All right. And when Belinda starts in Year 11, was
19 it?
20 A. Yes.
21
22 Q. She stayed at Reidy House?
23 A. Yes.
24
25 Q. Do you recall who the principal was, the principal of
26 the high school at that time?
27 A. It was Ian Murray.
28
29 Q. Now, you went there and it seems that you had a pretty
30 positive view initially?
31 A. Yes.
32
33 Q. What can you say about your view after Belinda started
34 at the school, and boarding at Reidy House?
35 A. Well, she was upset by a lot of things, the control
36 and - I guess we started to question the amount of control
37 - one phone call home a week, and things like that, and
38 when we queried it it was, "Oh, well, it's to deal with
39 homesickness and that sort of thing".
40
41 Q. So when you say one phone call a week --
42 A. Yes, home.
43
44 Q. -- is that the students - the students are allowed
45 that?
46 A. Well, they didn't like us ringing more than once a
47 week either. There was sort of one contact a week that

1 was - and that came back quite clearly to us through
2 Belinda, "Oh, you shouldn't be ringing, mum, dad" you know,
3 "I'm only allowed one call a week".
4
5 Q. All right. Were you ever told that or was that passed
6 on through Belinda?
7 A. It was passed on through Belinda. The pressure was
8 coming on her not to have contact with the parents.
9
10 Q. All right. And how was she reacting to all of this?
11 A. Well, not well. She - not good. She didn't like it,
12 and we would sort of put a positive spin on it and say -
13 and say, "Well, look, you know, it's the best option that
14 we have and you'll get to like it", and things like that,
15 but the more it went on, the more we started to find it
16 harder to defend that position because of the amount of
17 control that the hostel wanted to exercise and, indeed,
18 then some of the things that we observed that were
19 happening that we didn't think were right.
20
21 Q. And I don't want you to go into it at the moment, but
22 there was some illnesses. She fell ill during her time?
23 A. She did.
24
25 Q. And ultimately did you take her from the hostel?
26 A. Yes.
27
28 Q. Took her out?
29 A. Yes.
30
31 Q. When was that, please?
32 A. It had been about April, I think, in 1991. Reidy
33 House closed at the end of 1990 and they moved the
34 students, the year 11 and 12 students there from memory, I
35 think it closed. They certainly moved Belinda and others
36 up to the hostel because there was - up to St Andrew's, the
37 main part, where she hadn't been before, and that's where
38 she got really upset and unhappy and found it difficult to
39 cope there, and that's when she got ill.
40
41 Q. So you noticed there was a noticeable change when she
42 moved from Reidy House to the actual St Andrews facility?
43 A. Yes, extremely unhappy.
44
45 Q. So you took her out. And what did you do?
46 A. Well, we - prior to that we - she sort of come up with
47 stomach cramps and ill feeling and all that sort of thing,

1 and we made a doctor's appointment and took her to the
2 doctor and he just - and that was the Dr Chapman, and then
3 we got told that we weren't to make doctor's appointments,
4 that the hostel had their own doctor, and they sort of went
5 crook at us for doing that.

6
7 Q. Who told you that?

8 A. It was someone in authority at the hostel there. I
9 just can't remember. My wife might remember.

10
11 HIS HONOUR: Q. Was Dr Chapman in Katanning?

12 A. Dr Chapman was in Katanning and he said to us, "The
13 best thing you can do is take your daughter out of the
14 hostel. It's upsetting her too much. She's too" --

15
16 Q. Were you told who the hostel's doctor was?

17 A. I weren't. My wife might have been. I can't recall.
18

19 MR DOBSON: Q. All right. You took Belinda out of the
20 hostel. Did you take her out of the school?

21 A. No.
22

23 Q. Right. So what did you do?

24 A. We had friends in Katanning, good friends, life-long
25 friends, and they offered her board, and it - she was able
26 to live in town and, yes, she - it worked out well for us.
27

28 Q. And she continued her schooling as a day pupil?

29 A. She did.
30

31 Q. And did you make any observations about her physical
32 condition and so forth?

33 A. Yes, she coped with the rest of the year and completed
34 her TEE and was a successful student.
35

36 Q. All right.

37 A. A lot happier; a lot, lot happier.
38

39 Q. And I understand you're aware that she's got
40 information that is of interest to the Inquiry, but she
41 wasn't of a view - wasn't keen on giving evidence, is that
42 correct?

43 A. I know she had spoken to the investigators. She did
44 say that at the moment she would find it hard to give
45 evidence.
46

47 Q. Simply because of the stress associated with?

1 A. Yes, it just - well, it's bringing it all back, it's
2 reliving it.
3
4 Q. With recalling what went on?
5 A. Yes.
6
7 Q. All right. If I can take you to a public meeting. I
8 understand that you attended a public meeting - this is
9 after Mr McKenna was charged?
10 A. Yes.
11
12 Q. Do you recall going to that meeting?
13 A. Yes.
14
15 Q. Who with, please?
16 A. Who with? My wife.
17
18 Q. All right. And do you know who called the meeting?
19 A. I think it might have been John Brett, who was one of
20 Dennis McKenna's strong supporters, him and some others. I
21 know we'd received letters saying that this terrible thing
22 had happened, he'd been charged and the whole parent body
23 needed to get behind and support him, and he was innocent
24 until convicted and, therefore, he should be reinstated as
25 warden.
26
27 Q. Do you recall who the --
28 A. And that was the purpose of the public meeting.
29
30 Q. Sorry, I spoke over the top of you then. Do you
31 recall who that letter was from?
32 A. It came from parents - parent supporters, parents that
33 had kids at the hostel.
34
35 Q. And is the sequence that you received the letter and
36 then you went to the meeting?
37 A. We did.
38
39 Q. You went with your wife --
40 A. Yes.
41
42 Q. -- and you seemed to recall it was run by Mr John
43 Brett; is that right?
44 A. Yes.
45
46 Q. Okay. What - where was the meeting held?
47 A. There was a big hall or rec centre or something at St

1 Andrews. It was held in there.
2
3 Q. And you say it was after McKenna was charged?
4 A. Yes.
5
6 Q. Do you recall how long after?
7 A. Not very long afterwards. It would have been about
8 probably in the October, September/October. It wasn't
9 there long after he was charged, only a matter of a week or
10 two, maybe three.
11
12 Q. I appreciate this is a fair while ago, but do you
13 recall - are you able to provide an estimate of how many
14 number of people might have been at that meeting?
15 A. It was well attended. There was a lot of parents
16 there. It wasn't - the hall was more full than empty,
17 let's say. It would have had to have been 100 there,
18 possibly more. It was well attended.
19
20 Q. All right. What can you tell us about the meeting?
21 A. They wanted to - the parent body, to request or
22 endorse the reinstatement of Dennis McKenna as warden of
23 St Andrews.
24
25 Q. Sorry, who wanted that?
26 A. The people that were running the meeting, specifically
27 John Brett. And there was no - there was - there was talk
28 from the floor - occasionally there was talk about
29 reinstating him, but the overwhelming majority of parents,
30 from memory, were a bit shell-shocked by it all, and the
31 fact that it - and they didn't like what had happened, but
32 the opinion seemed to be, "Well, he's been charged, let the
33 legal system take its course", and under the circumstances,
34 there was no support to reinstate him, but they did keep
35 on - it was quite --
36
37 HIS HONOUR: Q. Just to clarify - you're saying that
38 people on the floor of the meeting --
39 A. Yes.
40
41 Q. -- were saying those things, "Let the justice system"
42 take its course?
43 A. That was the comments that were made. There was
44 people spoke from the floor. The odd one supported, but
45 the majority of people said, "No, it's a serious matter, we
46 hope it's not true, but let - under the circumstances
47 it's - it's too serious, he should not be reinstated as

1 warden." That was the general opposition to it, but the
2 people running the meeting kept on. They didn't take that
3 for an answer, they kept sort of banging on about having
4 him reinstated, so in the end people just walked out.
5
6 MR DOBSON: Q. When you say these people were banging on
7 about it, were they insisting that Mr McKenna should be
8 reinstated?
9 A. Yes, yes, that was their whole - it seemed that was
10 their whole objective, to get him reinstated.
11
12 Q. All right. Now, you mentioned Mr Brett as being a
13 person involved in running the meeting and being positive
14 or pro-McKenna?
15 A. Yes, I think the letter that came, he signed it, from
16 memory. It was just a group of parents, and maybe some
17 hostel board members, I'm not sure, but certainly -
18 certainly John Brett seemed to be the leader of that group.
19
20 Q. All right. Do you recall - you said "group" and
21 "other supporters". Do you recall any other names who were
22 in support of Mr McKenna.
23 A. Yes, the Kypers, Dick and Jan Kyper from - they were
24 very, very thick with John Brett, you might say, and they
25 were at the meeting.
26
27 Q. So were they supporters of the people who were saying,
28 "No, let justice take its course", or were they supporters
29 of McKenna?
30 A. I was firmly of the impression that they wanted him
31 reinstated too.
32
33 Q. Anyone else that you can recall who was pro-McKenna?
34 A. Not off the top of my head, no.
35
36 Q. Do you recall the Chairman of the Board at the time?
37 A. Yes.
38
39 Q. Was he there? I should say the Chairman of the Hostel
40 board?
41 A. Yes, it was Garth Addis. I'm pretty sure he was
42 there --
43
44 Q. All right.
45 A. -- but not 100% sure.
46
47 Q. And were there any students at the Katanning senior

1 high school that played a role in that meeting that you
2 recall?

3 A. Yes. Clint Beck was sort of head boy at the high
4 school, and sort of head of the boys at the hostel, and he
5 got up and spoke and said that they - all the students must
6 support Dennis McKenna, and if they didn't, they'd have him
7 to answer to. And he was kind of the leader of a group of
8 boys that seemed to be strong supporters of Dennis. It
9 appeared Dennis had actually cultivated them in as much as
10 they were kind of a bit like his Stormtroopers, because I
11 know our daughter sort of lived in fear of being reported
12 on, and these - this group of boys, senior students, seemed
13 to have these sort of special inside privileges.

14

15 Q. So you referred to them as "Stormtroopers", and they
16 stayed at the hostel, is that right?

17 A. Yes, yes, I did, yes. But simply because of the fear
18 that the other students had of them. Everything was sort
19 of spied on and reported back. That was my daughter's firm
20 impression, that everything was spied on and reported back.

21

22 Q. All right. And now you've already mentioned, I think,
23 you end up walking out of the meeting, did you?

24 A. Yes.

25

26 Q. And that was you and your wife?

27 A. Yes.

28

29 Q. What about other people?

30 A. Other people followed. We probably weren't the first
31 to walk out. There was another couple walked out just
32 ahead of us.

33

34 Q. Right.

35 A. But the meeting finished really - well, hadn't
36 finished, they kept going on, but, you know, I guess they
37 couldn't accept the answer that the meeting was giving, so
38 there was no point in continuing, so we left.

39

40 Q. And do you have a view now of that meeting, of how it
41 should or shouldn't have taken place?

42 A. Well, I was a little bit - I have a view now that I
43 had then - I don't think the meeting should have happened.
44 It's such a serious matter and the law was taking its
45 course. He'd been charged, he was going to get a trial and
46 here we are trying to - a meeting's been asked to sort of
47 almost interfere with the course of that trial by giving

1 him the credibility of being reinstated. It was such a
2 serious matter that it should never have - the meeting
3 shouldn't have been allowed, and - and I wonder what the
4 board knew about it, and why the board let the meeting
5 happen - they are supposed to be the governing body of the
6 hostel.

7

8 Q. So that was your --

9 A. To me that's irresponsible.

10

11 Q. So that was your view at the time, Mr Reddington?

12 A. Yes, yes, still my view.

13

14 Q. All right. Now, after that, what - what happened with
15 the hostel. They're without a warden?

16 A. I don't really know, except that I mean we lost touch
17 with it then, but I did know that Con Burros was appointed
18 as warden - no, I beg your pardon, Neil McKenna, his
19 brother, was appointed as warden.

20

21 Q. All right.

22 A. So - and he was already working at the hostel, so
23 whilst Dennis didn't get reinstated, his brother did.

24

25 Q. Did you form a view about Mr McKenna being appointed
26 warden of the hostel at the time --

27 A. Neil McKenna?

28

29 Q. -- not now, but at the time.

30

31 HIS HONOUR: You mean Neil McKenna?

32

33 MR DOBSON: Q. Neil McKenna, sorry.

34 A. Yes, that shouldn't have been allowed either. It
35 should have been entirely separated. There should have
36 been an arm's length. The McKenna family are - should not
37 have been in charge and how the board allowed that to
38 happen, I don't know; sort of defies belief.

39

40 Q. Was that your view at the time?

41 A. Yes.

42

43 Q. Put aside sitting here now, but was that your view at
44 the time?

45 A. Yes, definitely.

46

47 Q. Why Neil McKenna? Why did you think he should not

1 be --
2 A. Well, him and Dennis were close. It's pretty obvious
3 that he would be sympathetic to his brother, and you could
4 think that, well, he had the power that - he had the power
5 of warden. He had the power that Dennis had. He could
6 intimidate, he could - all those options were open to him.
7 It should have been - he should have been removed totally.
8 It should have been totally at arm's length from the
9 McKenna family.
10
11 Q. Were there any other things about Mr McKenna, Neil
12 McKenna --
13 A. Yes.
14
15 Q. -- I'll make that clear, that gave you concern as to
16 him being appointed ward of the hostel?
17 A. Yes.
18
19 Q. Go on.
20 A. Well, just coming back through our daughter, there
21 were rumours about him and his relationship with some of
22 the girl students, the senior girl students.
23
24 Q. Were they day pupils or boarders?
25 A. Boarders.
26
27 Q. So your daughter Belinda had relayed information to
28 you and your wife, had she?
29 A. Yes, yes.
30
31 Q. And there was some concern about his dealings with
32 female boarders?
33 A. Yes.
34
35 Q. All right. Now, are there any specific instances that
36 you recall, and without naming any of the female boarders,
37 were there any incidents that you recall?
38 A. Yes, Belinda rang up once, she was upset. They had a
39 camp at Cape Riche and they all went down to Cape Riche to
40 the camp. Neil McKenna went along as part of the camp
41 leaders, I suppose, and he took one of the girls off in the
42 bus on a bus ride. Where they went, I don't know, but when
43 she came back this girl Belinda knew quite well, and she
44 got off the bus and she was distraught, distraught. And
45 when they asked her what happened, what happened, she said,
46 "I can't say", she wouldn't say. She was just distraught.
47

1 Q. And is this during the period when your daughter
2 Belinda is staying at the actual St Andrews facility or at
3 Reidy, do you recall?
4 A. I think it was when she was at Reidy House.
5
6 Q. All right. Now, you've already said after you took
7 your daughter out of the hostel, she stayed with friends in
8 Katanning?
9 A. Yes.
10
11 Q. Was there another incident while she was staying at
12 friends, with the friends? So she's left the St Andrew's
13 facility - was there another incident that you recall?
14 A. Yes. One night there's a knock on the door where she
15 was staying, and a girl that she - she knew quite well was
16 there distraught and had nowhere to go. She'd left the
17 hostel and she said she had been sexually assaulted by Neil
18 McKenna.
19
20 HIS HONOUR: Q. So Belinda told you about this?
21 A. She did. She rang us straightaway, "What do I do,
22 mum? What do I do, dad? I've got this friend here and
23 she's distraught".
24
25 MR DOBSON: Q. And was it your understanding at the time
26 this was happening, that you're getting it from Belinda --
27 A. Yes.
28
29 Q. -- but she has got that information firsthand from the
30 very girl who's been sexually assaulted?
31 A. Yes, the girl was there on the doorstep.
32
33 Q. What did you do, if anything?
34 A. I rang - I don't know whether I rang Susan Wasley
35 first or whether I rang Graham Wasley, her husband. Graham
36 was OIC, he was Sergeant of Police here, and this girl
37 obviously needed help, and Susan Wasley had - she'd been a
38 supervisor at Reidy House and she had a good rapport with
39 the girls, and something had to be done for this girl
40 pretty well straightaway, and they took it in hand, Susan
41 and her husband.
42
43 HIS HONOUR: Q. So did you speak to both Susan and
44 Graham Wasley?
45 A. I think so.
46
47 Q. And did you ask them to do anything, or what did you

1 say?
2 A. Just told them what had happened, and that was
3 something that needed to be done. This girl needed help,
4 and there was something serious - seemed to be something
5 seriously happening to girls at the hostel.
6
7 Q. And were you told by either of them what they intended
8 to do about what you told them?
9 A. I know they attended to it.
10
11 Q. No. Well, what did they say at the time they were to
12 do?
13 A. That they'd take care of it, yes.
14
15 Q. Do you remember specifically anything beyond that?
16 A. I can't remember specifically, but I did follow it up
17 with them. I think I had a phone call back saying that
18 they'd - they'd been - I don't know whether they collected
19 the girl, I think they did, and they made arrangements -
20 maybe her parents came and got her, I'm not sure.
21
22 Q. That would have been some time in 1991, after the end
23 of first term, would it --
24 A. Yes, it was.
25
26 Q. -- while your daughter was staying in Katanning?
27 A. Well, it was later in the year, towards - it might
28 have been September/October 1991, late 1991. It was just
29 before the final exams. I think they had their - might
30 have been a month to go to exams, the final exams.
31
32 MR DOBSON: All right.
33
34 HIS HONOUR: Q. And apart from what you were told by the
35 Wasleys, what they were going to do, did you receive any
36 information back from any other source, like from your
37 daughter or the girl or anything like that, about what
38 might have happened?
39 A. We would have discussed it with our daughter, but I
40 know I made contact with Sergeant Wasley and I - in fact, I
41 once went to the police station to see him and I was told
42 that the board were dealing with it. By that time Neil had
43 left. Sergeant Wasley told me that they had five girls
44 that had made complaints of sexual interference and that it
45 was so close to their final exams they'd made statements,
46 but there was - they wanted to get their exams out of the
47 way, being the TEE year, before an action would be taken

1 after that. And he also said to me, I can remember this,
2 he said, "If ever you have got information or you want
3 anything or that, don't talk to - make sure you speak to me
4 at the police, don't speak to other policemen there" - the
5 inference was, I got from that.

6
7 HIS HONOUR: Q. Did he say why, why you shouldn't talk
8 to other policemen?

9 A. No, the inference was you can't trust everyone in the
10 police station. That's the inference I drew from it - make
11 sure you speak to me, and don't take this information to
12 others there.

13
14 MR DOBSON: All right.

15
16 Q. So to the best of your knowledge, Sergeant Wasley
17 followed up your complaint, did something, and got - got
18 back to you and told you some information?

19 A. Yes.

20
21 Q. And I think you mentioned that the girls weren't
22 prepared to take it further because it was close to their
23 exams, or something similar?

24 A. Well, that was his explanation to us.

25
26 Q. His explanation to you?

27 A. But after that, you know, something would be done.

28
29 Q. All right. And are you aware of what became of Neil
30 McKenna in all of this?

31 A. No, except that he just left the board. I know the -
32 I was told that the board had dealt with the matter, and it
33 appeared he was just quietly allowed to leave.

34
35 HIS HONOUR: Q. If you can just go back. At one stage
36 when you were talking about - you were narrating a
37 conversation with Sergeant Wasley, you said you were told
38 that the board had it under control, I think is what you
39 said you were told.

40 A. Maybe Sergeant Wasley didn't say that, but I was given
41 the impression that the board was dealing with it too, the
42 board knew about it.

43
44 MR DOBSON: All right. Thank you, your Honour.

45
46 Q. Did you follow up with Wasley - you said it was just
47 your understanding, you drew an inference from the way he

1 was talking about the other local officers. There was
2 nothing directly said by Wasley about the other local
3 officers?
4 A. No, no, just that, "If you've got anything - if you
5 need to talk on this matter or any other information, make
6 sure you only talk to me." That's what it was.
7
8 Q. And you, in fact, did approach him immediately you got
9 that serious complaint?
10 A. That was after the complaint he told me that, "If you
11 need any more follow-up or any more information, make sure
12 you speak to me no one else."
13
14 Q. So that came afterwards?
15 A. Yes, after the complaint.
16
17 Q. All right. So Neil McKenna simply disappears, as you
18 recall it?
19 A. Well, I don't live in Katanning, and I suppose
20 socially I wouldn't know what - there's no connection, so
21 people he might know what happened to him, but I know he
22 left the hostel and left town and that sort of thing.
23
24 Q. Right. Are you aware - are you aware who was the next
25 warden appointed?
26 A. Yes, Con Burros.
27
28 Q. And at the time did you form a view about that
29 appointment?
30 A. Well, I thought it was a little bit too much in-house
31 because I did go to the trial because it was so serious. I
32 thought as a parent you had to know the truth, and I said
33 to my wife, "I'm going to try and go to the trial", and I
34 did and I can remember that he was a witness for Dennis
35 McKenna in the witness box. He was a character witness, if
36 you like, and gave evidence about how wonderful Dennis was,
37 and what a role model he was as a supervisor, et cetera, et
38 cetera, as a warden.
39
40 Q. Sorry, are you saying Con Burro gave evidence,
41 character evidence? Was he the warden at the time he gave
42 that?
43 A. No.
44
45 Q. No?
46 A. He was employed at the hostel in Albany at the time as
47 a supervisor, I think. They'd had a social interchange

1 between Katanning and the elderly hostel. That's how
2 he - from memory, that was how his evidence ran, "I worked
3 with Dennis and he's wonderful, and he's a great warden",
4 and that's basically what his evidence was. It was more
5 character evidence.

6
7 Q. You mentioned earlier about having been approached
8 while you were involved in the lower levels of schooling,
9 junior schooling, and being involved with parents'
10 associations?

11 A. Yes.

12
13 Q. Was there ever any occasions when you spoke to Dennis
14 McKenna - this was while he was warden - about the
15 management of the hostel. Can you tell us anything about
16 that?

17 A. Yes, we'd always been involved strongly in the local
18 P&Cs at the schools where our children had gone, especially
19 at Gairdner.

20
21 Q. When you say "we", I think it's obvious, but just for
22 the transcript, is that you and your wife?

23 A. Yes.

24
25 Q. Yes.

26 A. But me more in an active role, like being president,
27 secretary - all those sorts of things - and on committees
28 and stuff. Just took an active role in the schooling and
29 the governance of the school, and I just - we just
30 continued it on when we came up here. If there was a
31 parents' meeting, we came to it. I spoke to Dennis. I
32 knew there was a board. It wasn't sort of advertised or
33 made public about the board and how it was constituted and
34 all that, but I was aware that there was a board and that
35 Garth Addis was the chairman and there was various people
36 on the board, and occasionally you might be told, "Oh, so
37 and so's on the board", and I just wondered how the board
38 was run. Obviously the board was - consisted of parents
39 and other people in the community, so it must have been
40 elected - or I assumed it was elected somehow.

41
42 Q. Do you remember any one particular time you spoke with
43 him and asking him questions about how the board operated?

44 A. Yes, once there at the hostel I had reason, I'm not
45 sure why, to sit in his office and have a talk to him, and
46 I pursued the matter of the board and I asked him how it
47 was constituted, how people were represented on the board,

1 how they became to be represented on the board, and what it
2 consisted of; just the certainly sort of, you know, how
3 does it work.

4
5 Q. And how did he deal with it, those questions?

6 A. Well, I can still see him - he sat right back in his
7 chair and pressed his fingers together like this and he
8 looked me up and down for a long while, and I thought - I
9 could see his mind working, and then the reply was, "The
10 board chooses the people to go on it and then they are
11 invited to join." He said, "Myself and the board choose
12 the people to go on it and they're invited to join." Which
13 I thought was a little strange because you can hardly get a
14 representative body that way.

15
16 Q. So are you certain that he included himself in the
17 selection process then, in his own words?

18 A. Yes, I'm pretty sure, pretty sure.

19
20 Q. All right. And you say your reaction to that was it
21 seemed strange?

22 A. I thought it was a little bit irregular.

23
24 Q. All right. Did you ever get invited to go on the
25 board?

26 A. No, no. I won't after this gong either, will we?

27
28 Q. No surprise there. Now, you've already spoken about a
29 group of senior male students behaving like Stormtroopers?

30 A. Yes.

31
32 Q. How did they fit in with Mr McKenna and his running of
33 the hostel?

34 A. Well, what was relayed back to us by our daughter was
35 that they had special privileges, there were trips when
36 they went to Perth with him, things like that, but they had
37 special privileges. That was her impression, and that's
38 what she told us, and also she was fearful of them. If you
39 went down the street, you weren't to speak to this one or
40 that one. I well remember when Todd Jefferis was expelled,
41 she was walking down the street once in Katanning with my
42 daughter - with my wife, and I can remember my wife saying
43 that she dragged her across the other side of the street
44 and said, "Quick, quick, there's Todd Jefferis coming. I'm
45 not allowed to be seen near him or speak to him", and we
46 thought that was rather strange, and the idea was that if
47 anyone at the hostel ie the informers, saw that happening,

1 they would report it and she'd get into trouble. That's
2 the sort of level of fear and intimidation there was.
3
4 HIS HONOUR: Q. Now, you just said "when Todd Jefferis
5 was expelled"?
6 A. Yes.
7
8 Q. Why do you say that? Why do you say he was expelled?
9 A. Because there was a meeting there where the students
10 were told that he was a bad person. The inference was that
11 he'd stolen money or something, and Dennis had expelled
12 him.
13
14 Q. Now, you weren't at that meeting?
15 A. No, that was just where the students were told.
16
17 Q. So did you believe he had been expelled for stealing?
18 A. I'm not sure why he was expelled, but he was expelled,
19 but Belinda said they - she told us. She thought the
20 reason was there was money missing.
21
22 Q. So you always believed and you still believed he was
23 expelled, do you?
24 A. Yes, yes, yes. And not only that, they were told that
25 they were not to have any dealings with him or listen to
26 anything he said or to, you know, to avoid him. Which --
27
28 MR DOBSON: Q. So on seeing Todd Jefferis in the street,
29 is it Belinda that takes your wife by the hand and gets --
30 A. Crosses over the road. This is in the main street of
31 Katanning, yes.
32
33 Q. But Belinda actually leads your mother away in order
34 to avoid Todd Jefferis, is that what you're saying?
35 A. Yes, yes.
36
37 Q. Okay. You mentioned earlier about going along to the
38 trial?
39 A. Yes.
40
41 Q. Is that the trial of Dennis McKenna? Was it in
42 Albany?
43 A. Yes.
44
45 Q. Why did you do that?
46 A. Well, it was such a serious matter and there was so
47 much public pressure. There was letters, there was a

1 support group, you know, and everyone was wringing their
2 hands and saying, "Oh, it's terrible what happened to
3 Dennis McKenna", and I'm sort of thinking, "Hang on, these
4 are serious charges", you know, and there was people that
5 were friends of ours saying, "It's awful what's happened,
6 you know, and poor Dennis", and I thought, "Where's the
7 truth lie?", I thought the only way to find out the real
8 truth is to go and sit in the court and listen to the
9 evidence, so I said to my wife, "I'm going to go to the
10 trial", which I did.

11

12 Q. Right. So you're talking about different views
13 amongst groups in the community?

14 A. Well, groups in the community and parents. I didn't
15 have a lot to do with Katanning, but certainly, you know,
16 in the hinterland - I mean, down our way, Jerramungup,
17 Ongerup and Ravensthorpe and that, there was a lot of
18 support for him.

19

20 Q. So there was some who supported, some didn't?

21 A. Yes, most people - the supporters were the vocal ones.
22 The ones that didn't support him were, "Let justice take
23 its course", probably were silent and sat back, but there
24 was a very orchestrated sort of well-resourced campaign to
25 support him.

26

27 Q. All right. And did you, in fact, watch the trial?

28 A. I did. It went for four days. One day I weren't
29 there, I couldn't go, I had to go to sale, and I missed the
30 start of the second morning because I had a physio
31 appointment; but, yes, I basically heard all the evidence.
32 I missed a bit of the summing up because I weren't there on
33 the third day, and the fourth day was when the verdict was
34 delivered.

35

36 Q. All right.

37 A. But I heard the five boys give evidence. I heard
38 their evidence, I heard the cross-examination. I just sat
39 there just as an interested parent and member of the
40 public.

41

42 Q. All right. And did you take any sides or do anything
43 during the trial in relation to pushing a particular view?

44 A. No, no.

45

46 Q. No. And he was convicted?

47 A. He was.

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Q. What followed after the conviction?

A. Well, there was an appeal which surprised me, and then there was a newspaper article, and I could tell by the newspaper article that they - that I was the subject of the appeal which just kind of flawed me a bit, and then the whole thing ground on as it does, and I got subpoenaed and everything. I had to go to Perth, to the Supreme Court, yes.

Q. You must have a very strong --

A. Yes, I got caught up in a whirlwind, basically.

Q. You must have a very strong presence, Mr Reddington, to form the basis of an appeal. Was there anything else they were alleging?

A. Well, they were alleging that I had influenced the jury.

Q. Right.

A. Yes, which --

Q. What came of the appeal?

A. The appeal was dismissed. I think there was either three or five judges on the bench, it was at the Supreme Court and it was rejected unanimously.

Q. Did you give evidence?

A. I did.

Q. In the Supreme Court?

A. Yes.

Q. And it was --

A. I weren't the only one. Janet Kyper was - she spoke first, so therefore I weren't allowed to be in the court. I still don't know what she said, except the line of questioning to me was that I knew a juror, a big man in a grey jumper, and I was seen conversing with this juror on a certain day, and the day they chose was the day I weren't there, so they come unstuck - quite strongly, actually. And I remember the judge saying, "Did anyone see you at this clearing sale?" And I said, "Well, there was about 300 people there", so the appeal was thrown out because of that. And also "a big man in a grey jumper" - well, I did know two jurors, but they were little men, one had a limp and - so it looked a bit silly in the end; but, anyway, I

1 weren't happy at the time because to get dragged through
2 that process simply because you - you want to see where the
3 truth lies and see justice done.
4

5 Q. All right. Going back to the original trial, what
6 level of support - did you make any observations about any
7 level of support for the five boys?

8 A. I can remember the Child Sex Abuse Unit was there.
9 There might have been three, but there was certainly a lady
10 policewoman and a man, and they were there just sitting in
11 the court and I guess supporting the victims that were
12 giving evidence.
13

14 Q. What about --

15 A. I didn't see any other support. They may have had
16 family there, I don't know. I don't know their families,
17 but --
18

19 Q. Was there support for Dennis McKenna during the trial?

20 A. Well, there was; quite strong.
21

22 Q. From whom, do you recall?

23 A. John Brett, Dick and Janet Kyper, and there was a
24 string of people that - there was Brian Singleton QC was
25 his QC, and he read out a list of people that they had
26 letters from saying - like character references. I can
27 remember Jan Savage, President of the Gnowangerup shire was
28 one. There was numerous. There was probably about 10 or
29 12 people that were giving - prepared to give - be called
30 as witnesses basically to give a glowing report of him, I
31 suppose.
32

33 Q. And you mentioned Janet Kyper - she was one of the
34 supporters?

35 A. Definitely.
36

37 Q. And she's the person that saw you talking to the big
38 man in the grey jumper?

39 A. Supposedly. That's the evidence she gave in the
40 Supreme Court I was told later.
41

42 Q. It seems that was rejected?

43 A. Yes.
44

45 Q. All right. Did you form a view at the time about the
46 level of support for Dennis McKenna during the trial?

47 A. Well, I did. It seemed that he virtually had a cheer

1 squad there, which surprised me. There was always a group
2 there that was the same - the same basic group, and they
3 were always sort of talking together. I knew them, and
4 sort of said, "Giddy", but suppose because I weren't part
5 of the group they quickly formed the opinion that I must be
6 somehow against them. A bit illogical, but that's --

7
8 Q. Both of us have mentioned the five boys. Did you
9 speak with them after the trial, do you recall?

10 A. I remember seeing them across the road on the nature
11 strip and thinking how lonely they looked. I may have - my
12 vehicle was parked over there. I think I walked across to
13 my vehicle, and I might have just - I might have just said,
14 "Well, done, you brave boys". I might have said that,
15 something like that, but I didn't talk to them. I didn't
16 stop and talk to them and have a conversation with them.

17
18 Q. Did you see any board members, Katanning high school
19 employees or anyone else, with them at that time, after the
20 trial?

21 A. Not that I saw, not that I saw. I remember thinking
22 how lonely they looked. My heart went out to them,
23 actually.

24
25 Q. All right. Going back to when McKenna was at the
26 school, was there any occasions when you got called into
27 the hostel and saw events that disturbed you?

28 A. Yes. There seemed to be concerts and that, and we
29 called in to collect Belinda one night, we were going on to
30 Perth and there was a bit of a concert going on, and there
31 was a boy up on the stage and he was dressed as a girl,
32 totally dressed as a girl - you know, fake breasts and hair
33 and make-up and all that, and in women's clothes. And he
34 was performing something, and I can't forget - remember
35 what, but I was really disturbed because Dennis McKenna was
36 sitting right down the front stretched out in his chair
37 looking up at him and I just didn't like the look on his
38 face. To me it was a leer, and also I just didn't like his
39 demeanour and that. I thought, "This is unbecoming". It
40 sent a cold shiver up me spine and I immediately - he had a
41 clipboard over his lap and his hands were under the
42 clipboard and I just didn't like where his hands were. It
43 just didn't look right, it upset me. When I collected
44 Belinda I went out to the car and I said to my wife, "I
45 just don't like what I saw going on in there, it's just not
46 right and proper".

1 HIS HONOUR: Q. It's not necessary to be shy. In your
2 evidence you said he had a clipboard on his lap and his
3 hand under the clipboard?
4 A. Both hands under the clipboard; yes, I can remember
5 that because that's what sort of upset me, and I didn't
6 like where his hands were.
7
8 MR DOBSON: Q. How old was the boy, do you recall?
9 A. No. An older boy, not a younger boy.
10
11 Q. Right. And when you say "leer", I've got in my mind
12 what you mean, but just to be clear, are we talking about
13 basically like - and I'll pick on blokes - but like blokes
14 might perv at a girl at the beach when they're really
15 making it obvious?
16 A. Yes, it was just - it was just a leer, a sort of - as
17 if he was really enjoying it in a way that you shouldn't
18 enjoy it.
19
20 HIS HONOUR: Q. Now, who was there? Was it a concert,
21 was it?
22 A. Yes, an impromptu sort of concert, I think, used to
23 have entertainment like that.
24
25 Q. So there was students there?
26 A. Beg your pardon?
27
28 Q. There were students there?
29 A. Yes, yes.
30
31 Q. About how many students do you think?
32 A. Probably all the hostel.
33
34 Q. Yes. Were there any other adults there, apart from
35 McKenna?
36 A. There would have been supervisors around, I suppose,
37 but it seemed to me that the clipboard was to score. I
38 don't know whether he was rating the acts as they came up
39 and that was what it was, it was some sort of a
40 competition.
41
42 Q. So apart from the hostel, students and staff members
43 and you and your wife were both there, were you?
44 A. The wife didn't come in.
45
46 Q. All right.
47 A. She stayed in the car with the other three children

1 and I went in to collect Belinda because we were going on
2 to Perth.

3
4 Q. Were there any other adults from outside the hostel
5 there, or just the students?

6 A. Not that I can recall. It was just in normal - I
7 think it could have been a Friday night. They used to have
8 a get-together up there - you know, a concert or something.

9
10 MR DOBSON: All right. And just to finish up - sorry,
11 your Honour, I should have asked if you've finished.

12
13 HIS HONOUR: I've finished, yes.

14
15 MR DOBSON: Q. Just to finish up, have you since learnt
16 that Todd Jefferis wasn't, in fact, expelled?

17 A. No.

18
19 Q. All right.

20 A. No, but that's what the students were told.

21
22 Q. You're comforted to know now that he wasn't?

23 A. Yes, right.

24
25 Q. Everyone was told that, but he was not.

26 A. Yes.

27
28 MR DOBSON: All right. We were going to take you to some
29 other areas, but because of an occurrence on our side of
30 things, I'm not going to ask your view on certain matters
31 because it's been covered. But those are my questions
32 thank you. Thank you, your Honour.

33
34 HIS HONOUR: Mr Hammond.

35
36 MR HAMMOND: A couple of quick ones.

37
38 <CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR HAMMOND:

39
40 MR HAMMOND: Q. At the trial, Mr Reddington, do you
41 remember if Mr Murray, the principal of Katanning senior
42 high school, was there?

43 A. Yes, I do.

44
45 Q. Do you remember Mr Murray giving character evidence
46 for Mr McKenna?

47 A. I do. I remember it strongly. I sort of - well, they

1 made much of the point that he'd flown specially from
2 London where he was on long-service leave or something, and
3 he'd flown specially from London back to be a character -
4 or to, yes, to give evidence at the trial, which turned out
5 to be really a character evidence, and I can remember him
6 saying about him and Dennis had talked about these sort of
7 issues, and how they both said they had to be on their
8 guard and never to - they made an agreement that they would
9 never interview students alone in their office and all this
10 sort of stuff. It was trying to set the tone that both of
11 them were very careful to --
12

13 Q. Was the tenure of the character evidence given by Mr
14 Murray to the effect that Dennis McKenna couldn't have done
15 such a thing?

16 A. Yes, yes, yes.

17
18 Q. He was 100% behind Mr McKenna?

19 A. 100%, without a doubt, and much was made of the fact
20 that he had flown back from London because he felt so
21 strongly about it and it could never have happened because,
22 you know, he was such a wonderful person. Basically that's
23 what it was.
24

25 MR HAMMOND: I don't have any further questions.

26
27 HIS HONOUR: Mr Jenkin.

28
29 MR JENKIN: No, sir.

30
31 HIS HONOUR: Very well. We've got no counsel in Perth.
32 So I take it you've got no re-examination?
33

34 MR DOBSON: Nothing arising, thank you, your Honour.

35
36 HIS HONOUR: Well, thank you very much, Mr Reddington,
37 your evidence has been very helpful.

38
39 THE WITNESS: Thank you.

40
41 HIS HONOUR: Thank you.

42
43 <THE WITNESS WITHDREW

44
45 HIS HONOUR: Yes, Mr Dobson.

46
47 MR DOBSON: Thank you, your Honour. We call Janice

1 Elizabeth Reddington, and just for the transcript, first
2 name is J-A-N-I-C-E. Mr Urquhart has just asked me
3 Elizabeth with a "Z" or an "S", your Honour, it's with a
4 "Z". Thank you.

5

6 <JANICE ELIZABETH REDDINGTON, sworn:

7

8 <EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR DOBSON:

9

10 MR DOBSON: Q. Your full name is Janice Elizabeth
11 Reddington?

12 A. Yes.

13

14 Q. You're 63 years old?

15 A. Yes.

16

17 Q. And you work on a farm at Bremer Bay with your
18 husband?

19 A. Yes, that's right.

20

21 Q. Now, just to be clear, you've been outside of this
22 hearing room immediately prior to you coming in now?

23 A. Yes.

24

25 Q. You weren't in here for the evidence of your husband?

26 A. No.

27

28 Q. All right. Thank you. Yes, if you've got the
29 statement there with you, just turn it down and put it to
30 one side. Thank you. Now, you're the mother of Belinda
31 Reddington?

32 A. Yes, that's correct.

33

34 Q. And she was a student at Katanning senior high school?

35 A. Yes.

36

37 Q. Started there in 1990?

38 A. Yes.

39

40 Q. I think she boarded at Reidy House initially?

41 A. That's right.

42

43 Q. All right. I don't want you to say the words that
44 were used, but on the day that Dennis McKenna was arrested,
45 your daughter was at school?

46 A. Yes, that's right.

47

1 Q. Okay. And did she later tell you about a meeting that
2 was called by the school principal?
3 A. Yes.
4
5 Q. All right. Now, again, you don't need to tell me what
6 was said, because we covered that elsewhere, but you had a
7 discussion with your daughter about that meeting?
8 A. Yes, that's right.
9
10 Q. All right. And she told you a lot of information?
11 A. Yes.
12
13 Q. Now, speaking of your daughter, I understand that
14 during her time initially at Reidy, and then at St Andrews,
15 she was physically unwell?
16 A. That's right.
17
18 Q. Can you explain to us a bit about that please?
19 A. Well, when she was at Reidy, she had two incidents
20 where she wasn't well, so I rang them and told them that
21 I'd made an appointment to see a doctor in town, and the
22 supervisor told me that it wasn't policy for them to see
23 another doctor. They had their own doctor that they
24 prepared the students to see, and that they preferred to
25 make the appointments.
26
27 Q. Well, if I could just interrupt you there, do you
28 recall who the supervisor was you spoke with?
29 A. It was Gunda McKenna.
30
31 Q. Sorry?
32 A. Gunda McKenna. She was their supervisor at Reidy
33 House.
34
35 Q. Supervisor at Reidy.
36
37 HIS HONOUR: So that's Gunda, G-U-N-D-A?
38 A. Yes.
39
40 MR DOBSON: Q. And this is - if your daughter's at
41 Reidy, it follows that this is in 1990, do you --
42 A. That's right, that was when.
43
44 Q. Do you remember when? Are you able to say when this
45 might have been?
46 A. Well, I could give you the dates, they would be
47 recorded at home, but one was in the early part of the

1 year, and then another one was in sort of the latter part
2 of the year.
3
4 Q. So you made an appointment with your own doctor to get
5 your daughter attended to?
6 A. Yes, I took her myself.
7
8 Q. But then you were told by Ms McKenna, Gunda McKenna,
9 that you're not to do that?
10 A. Yes.
11
12 Q. Did they tell you which doctor she should go to?
13 A. No, and I didn't ask.
14
15 Q. Did they tell you in particular why it needed to be
16 their doctor?
17 A. No. I just said, "I'll take her to my own doctor."
18
19 Q. So you stood your ground?
20 A. Yes.
21
22 Q. All right. And I think you mentioned there was - you
23 may have said there were two occasions during the Reidy
24 House period?
25 A. Yes.
26
27 Q. There comes a time when Belinda moves up to
28 St Andrews?
29 A. That's right. That was in the beginning of 1991, when
30 they shut down Reidy House.
31
32 Q. All right. And was there any occasion there when
33 Belinda needed medical attention?
34 A. Yes, they rang me. It was towards the end of March,
35 saying Belinda was unwell and that they'd taken her to the
36 hospital, and --
37
38 Q. When they rang you - I just talked over the top of you
39 then, sorry.
40 A. Right.
41
42 Q. Did they describe anything about why or how it was
43 that she was unwell?
44 A. She just had severe cramps in the stomach, very,
45 very --
46
47 Q. All right. So she's taken to the actual hospital, not

1 to the doctor?
2 A. She's taken up to the hospital --
3
4 Q. Yes.
5 A. -- the doctor on duty that night was the doctor that
6 she'd seen before, our own doctor.
7
8 Q. Do you recall the doctor's name, please?
9 A. It was Dr Ralph Chapman.
10
11 Q. Right. And you went there?
12 A. I came up first thing in the morning, because this was
13 at night, about 8 o'clock at night.
14
15 Q. And you've got to drive from, what, Bremer Bay, I
16 think?
17 A. Yes, it was --
18
19 Q. All right. So you get to the hospital the next day?
20 A. Yes, and I stayed a period of five days. They kept
21 her in five days. They were doing tests all that time.
22
23 Q. So from being taken from St Andrew's Hostel, she
24 stayed in hospital for five days?
25 A. Yes.
26
27 Q. Did the test resolve anything?
28 A. No, no, she was just very - always getting stomach
29 cramps, and always upset.
30
31 Q. What did Dr Chapman, if anything, say to you about her
32 condition, and what should happen with her, to assist her
33 recovery?
34 A. He said he couldn't find anything medically wrong with
35 her, but he did advise us to take her out of the hostel and
36 to find private board for her.
37
38 Q. Would it be a fair summary to say that essentially
39 he's talking about what now might be termed stress related
40 and so forth?
41 A. Yes, possibly that was it.
42
43 Q. All right. Belinda was unhappy at the hostel?
44 A. Very.
45
46 Q. Were there some incidents that, if I can say, deeply
47 disturb her - things that she saw?

1 A. Yes. Not long after she went there the - they'd held
2 a movie night at the cinema --
3
4 Q. Again, I'm interrupting you, but just so we're clear,
5 we're talking St Andrews, not long after she went to
6 St Andrews?
7 A. Well, she went to the hostel in 1990, and she was at
8 Reidy House, but they used to go up there for activities.
9
10 Q. They used to go - yes.
11 A. And this night, not long after she'd been there, they
12 had a cinema night and they showed all these horror films.
13
14 Q. Did she tell you anything about what was in the horror
15 movie?
16 A. Just lots of murder scenes and axe murders and things
17 like that, and she just sat there with her hands over her
18 face. She said she couldn't watch it.
19
20 Q. And what, she's Year 11, 16?
21 A. Yes, 16.
22
23 Q. Turning 16. Yes, 16. Okay. Was there anything else
24 that happened later that evening?
25 A. Yes, they were put on a bus and taken up to the
26 cemetery and the Year 12 boys were dressed up in ghost
27 outfits, and the Year 8 students were - the young ones were
28 brought in and made to run through the cemetery, and the
29 Year 12 boys were supposedly scaring them.
30
31 Q. And you might have said it - I might have missed it -
32 what time of the day or night? When is this?
33 A. This would have been in the evening, late at night.
34
35 Q. So they watched the horror movie, and then they're
36 taken to the cemetery?
37 A. Yes.
38
39 Q. And scared by the older boys?
40 A. Yes, Belinda hopped off the bus and hid behind the bus
41 because she was so terrified, and when the kids sort of all
42 disappeared she got back on the bus and hid there until the
43 other students came back after doing what they'd done.
44
45 Q. All right. And while we're speaking, I'm just going
46 to finish up briefly. But while we are speaking now
47 about - you say "Linda", but I've been calling her Belinda.

1
2 A. Belinda, yes.
3
4 Q. Is it fair to say that the thought of coming here to
5 give evidence today was too much for her, that it just
6 brings back too many memories?
7 A. Yes, she gets really upset about it.
8
9 Q. And you're aware that we, the inquirers, have obtained
10 a statement from her, which we'll read?
11 A. Yes.
12
13 Q. All right. Simply because she doesn't want to be
14 here?
15 A. Well, she even had difficulty ringing the lady up and
16 giving that statement. She was in tears, apparently.
17
18 Q. All right. I just want to speak to you, if I can,
19 about Dennis McKenna, and I think there's a picture on the
20 wall at the - or you recall a picture on the wall. What
21 can you tell me about that?
22 A. It was a big picture in the dining room, and it had
23 this chap there with these young Balinese boys, and I asked
24 him once what - what that was all about, and he said, "Oh,
25 they're orphans in Bali that we support".
26
27 Q. All right. And when you say on the wall of the dining
28 room, we're talking about St Andrews, of course?
29 A. Yes.
30
31 Q. Was there any other --
32
33 HIS HONOUR: Q. Who was in that photo - some adult you
34 didn't know?
35 A. Yes, there was an adult in it, but he looked like a -
36 about a 20-year-old, long hair. The photo should be around
37 somewhere. It was quite a big photo.
38
39 MR DOBSON: Q. So a 20-year-old with Balinese children?
40 A. Yes.
41
42 HIS HONOUR: Q. And a European person, the 20-year-old?
43 A. Yes, yes, he - yes, a young-looking fellow.
44
45 HIS HONOUR: All right.
46
47 MR DOBSON: Q. Now, is there any other information you

1 have in relation to Bali? Do you recall anything else
2 about Dennis McKenna and Bali?
3 A. Well, he used to go there quite a bit. I know that
4 the Year 12 boys were selected to go with him.
5
6 Q. And what was the purpose of that? Was it school
7 related or anything else were you aware?
8 A. Well, I remember one trip was held during the
9 Christmas holidays.
10
11 Q. And McKenna went with who, do you recall, as in not
12 naming them - what type of people? Was there a mix of
13 adults? Were there parents? Were there children?
14 A. Well, this particular trip it was only boys, Year 12
15 boys that went.
16
17 Q. How are you aware of this?
18 A. Well, a friend of our son went.
19
20 Q. All right. Well, I don't want you to name that boy,
21 but I assume then that he was a Year 12 boy?
22 A. Yes.
23
24 Q. All right. Okay. Now, if we can move on to some
25 events surrounding a young man, Todd Jefferis?
26 A. Yes.
27
28 Q. Was Belinda at the hostel at the time that Dennis
29 McKenna offended against Todd Jefferis?
30 A. Yes, she was.
31
32 Q. Do you recall her telling you anything at the time?
33 So put aside what you now know, but at the time, were the
34 students told anything about Todd Jefferis?
35 A. Yes. They had a meeting and --
36
37 Q. Sorry, who's "they"?
38 A. The students and the hostel - I think it was Dennis
39 brought them all together and told them that they weren't
40 to have anything to do with him, that he'd stolen a lot of
41 money, and he'd been expelled from the hostel.
42
43 Q. All right. And did you ask her, Belinda, any
44 questions about the money, the amount?
45 A. Well, actually, the day that I had taken her down to
46 see the doctor, she wouldn't get out of the car because she
47 was so upset, and I said, "Whatever's the matter?", and she

1 said, "Oh, there's a fellow along there that we're not
2 allowed to talk to." And I said, "Who was that?", and she
3 said, "Todd Jefferis", and then she told me all what had
4 gone on.
5
6 Q. Sorry, so on actually seeing Todd Jefferis, she became
7 even more upset?
8 A. Yes, she wouldn't hop out of the car until he'd walked
9 past in the street.
10
11 Q. Because she's not allowed to talk to him?
12 A. No.
13
14 Q. Did she say what would happen to her if she did speak
15 with him?
16 A. They'd be in trouble. She would probably get expelled
17 from the hostel.
18
19 Q. Who told her that?
20 A. Well, that was the opinion that she got from the
21 meeting that had been held telling the students not to have
22 anything to do with him.
23
24 Q. And who was telling the students that?
25 A. Dennis McKenna.
26
27 Q. Did you find out how much money Todd was alleged to
28 have stolen?
29 A. Belinda had the idea that it was about \$80, but she
30 wasn't sure.
31
32 Q. Again, at the time you formed a view about that amount
33 of money and what should happen?
34 A. I just said to Belinda, I said, "That's weird." I
35 said, "That should have been reported to the police if
36 there's that much money involved."
37
38 Q. Were you aware whether it was reported to the police?
39 A. No, I didn't do anything about it.
40
41 Q. Was Belinda ever - did Belinda get told at the meeting
42 that the police were involved with the stealing, the
43 alleged stealing?
44 A. No.
45
46 MR DOBSON: All right. Those are my questions, thank you.
47

1 HIS HONOUR: All right. Mr Hammond.
2
3 MR HAMMOND: Thank you, sir.
4
5 HIS HONOUR: Most people want to leave. Mr Hammond, ask
6 your question.
7
8 MR HAMMOND: I thought Mr Dobson was going back for more.
9 I'm glad he's finished
10
11 <CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR HAMMOND:
12
13 MR HAMMOND: Q. Mrs Reddington, in relation to the visit
14 to Dr Chapman with your daughter Belinda --
15 A. Yes.
16
17 Q. -- were you present during the consultation with
18 Dr Chapman?
19 A. Yes, I was in the room with her.
20
21 Q. And he formed a view after consulting your daughter,
22 that she should immediately be removed from the hostel?
23 A. Yes, he said it would be better if we took her out.
24
25 Q. And did he tell you that he had concerns about the
26 hostel?
27 A. No, he didn't say anything about the hostel.
28
29 Q. Did you draw that inference that he did have concerns
30 because he recommended that she be withdrawn from the
31 hostel?
32 A. I could see that it would probably be the best for
33 her, because she was so stressed being there.
34
35 Q. And she, in front of you, had complained to Dr Chapman
36 about her treatment at the hostel?
37 A. No, Belinda didn't complain about that, she just was
38 sick and just was, you know, upset about it - being there.
39
40 Q. By the end of the day the recommendation was to take
41 her out as soon as possible?
42 A. Yes.
43
44 Q. In relation to the photograph you've described, was
45 that in the dining hall, I think you said, at the hostel?
46 A. I'm pretty sure it was in the dining hall above where
47 the servery was.

1
2 Q. And did that photo stick in your mind because it was
3 somewhat obscene?
4 A. No, it just struck me as - as strange, having a group
5 of Balinese boys and this sort of young fellow looking
6 after him, and when I sort of questioned him he said,
7 "They're orphans."
8
9 Q. Were the people in the photo - what were they wearing?
10 A. The one person, the man, sort of had long hair and he
11 had sort of a shirt on, but the children, I don't - I can't
12 remember what they had on.
13
14 Q. And moving to the - my final question about Todd
15 Jefferis, you said Belinda had told you all that had gone
16 on between Todd Jefferis and that was in relation to - what
17 was that in relation to?
18 A. The stealing.
19
20 Q. The stealing?
21 A. The stealing episode and him getting expelled from the
22 hostel.
23
24 MR HAMMOND: Okay, thank you, sir.
25
26 HIS HONOUR: Nothing from you, Mr Jenkin?
27
28 MR JENKIN: No, thanks.
29
30 MR DOBSON: Nothing arising thanks, your Honour.
31
32 HIS HONOUR: All right. Well, thank you Mrs Reddington,
33 that completes your evidence.
34
35 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
36
37 HIS HONOUR: Thank you very much.
38
39 MR DOBSON: Your Honour, I propose to read into evidence a
40 statement of Belinda Hadlow, nee Reddington, formerly
41 Belinda Reddington.
42
43 HIS HONOUR: Yes, please do.
44
45 MR DOBSON: And as you heard, your Honour, Ms Hadlow is
46 not in a position to come to the hearing to give her own
47 evidence, to give oral testimony.

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HIS HONOUR: Yes, I accept that.

MR DOBSON: Thank you your Honour, I'll begin. Belinda Hadlow states:

I was a student at Katanning senior high school and boarded at Reidy House in 1990, and St Andrew's Hostel in 1991. I recall many occasions when students would be pulled apart and verbally attacked by Dennis McKenna. There were incidences where people were just ridiculed by him in front of everyone. Sometimes you would get a dressing down from other students and get the blame for things you had never done. You would always be in fear of whether or not you would be next to get picked on by Dennis.

I remember an eight-year-old - I beg your pardon - I remember a Year 8 boy who was ridiculed by Dennis in a swimming pool. Dennis pulled the bathers off him and was ridiculing him when he was naked in the swimming pool. Todd Jefferis, who was another student, went and got the boy's bathers and gave them back.

When Dennis McKenna was arrested, Ian Murray, who was the principal of Katanning senior high school, came over to the hostel at lunchtime to talk to all of the hostel students. He told us that Dennis had been devastated by allegations that had been made by past students from a long time ago. He told us that we were not allowed to talk about Dennis's arrest, and there is to be no discussion about this among students.

He referred to Dennis's arrest as tragic news. We were encouraged to get behind Dennis and to support him and the hostel. I now know that there was several victims of Dennis McKenna who were in the room at the time. We were told that a good friend of Dennis was going to relieve him in the

1 post. His name was Con Burro. I remember
2 thinking that students would not want to
3 approach Con with any concerns as we had
4 been told he was a good friend of Dennis.
5
6 I remember Todd Jefferis who made the
7 allegations of sexual abuse against Dennis.
8 He was a lovely likeable young man who was
9 full of life and energy. He was expelled
10 from the hostel and Dennis told us we were
11 not to have contact with him as he had been
12 stealing.

13
14 I remember from my diary that Ian Murray
15 used to come to the hostel every Tuesday to
16 help the boys with their homework. This
17 would happen in the boy's dorm. He would
18 very occasionally go to Reidy House to help
19 the girls, but this did not happen very
20 often. I only kept my diary for the first
21 month or two I was at the hostel. After
22 that we were told we were not allowed to
23 keep diaries.

24
25 And that's the statement of Ms Hadlow, your Honour. Thank
26 you.

27
28 HIS HONOUR: All right. Thank you. That will be simply
29 received. There's no need for it to have an
30 exhibit number. Thank you.

31
32 MR DOBSON: Your Honour, we can call Thomas Wesley Fisher,
33 please. I believe he's in the hearing room.

34
35 <THOMAS WESLEY FISHER, affirmed:

36
37 <EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR DOBSON:

38
39 MR DOBSON: You don't mind that I stand like this, it's
40 just that I have a bit of a bung knee.

41
42 HIS HONOUR: Not a problem.

43
44 MR DOBSON: I'm just resting it, thank you.

45
46 HIS HONOUR: Right.

47

1 MR DOBSON: Mr Urquhart just tried to damage it even
2 further.
3
4 Q. Your full name is Thomas Wesley Fisher?
5 A. Yes.
6
7 Q. I understand you're 63 years old, a farmer at Upper
8 Kalgan?
9 A. Yes.
10
11 Q. You're the father of two boys, Luke and Matt Fisher?
12 A. Yes.
13
14 Q. And they were boarders at St Andrew's Hostel in
15 Katanning?
16 A. Yes.
17
18 Q. And I understand Luke started in 1987 and Matt a
19 couple of years later?
20 A. Yes.
21
22 Q. All right. Before Luke started, were you approached
23 by a person and spoken to about that hostel?
24 A. Yes.
25
26 Q. Was it the year before? Was it 1986?
27 A. 1986, yes.
28
29 Q. Who approached you, please?
30 A. Noel Parkin.
31
32 Q. And can you tell us what that was about?
33 A. About his concerns that Dennis was a paedophile and
34 that he wished to warn the boys to look out for any
35 behaviour that they felt was abnormal.
36
37 Q. All right. When you say "Dennis", just to be clear,
38 who are we talking about, please?
39 A. Dennis McKenna.
40
41 Q. So Noel Parkin has approached you. Do you recall
42 where that was?
43 A. In our shearing shed.
44
45 Q. On your farm?
46 A. Yes.
47

1 Q. So you've had a discussion with Noel, and he's spoken
2 to you about Dennis McKenna?

3 A. Yes.

4
5 Q. All right. But it seems that despite that warning,
6 Luke started in - at St Andrew's as a border, so he could
7 go to Katanning senior high --

8 A. Yes.

9
10 Q. -- in 1987. Are you able to say why you made that
11 choice, please?

12 A. Well, really, we discussed it with the boys and my
13 wife about their future schooling after they left the
14 primary school, and we wanted them as close as we could
15 have them so that we could have as much contact with them
16 as possible, and that was Katanning. Our choice was either
17 to send them to Jerramungup up to the high school, and that
18 would have meant meeting a bus, 46 round trip night and
19 morning over roads that were largely untraffickable except
20 if you had a four by four, so we decided for continuity, so
21 that they would go right through the high school, we'd send
22 them to Katanning, but the reason we chose Katanning was
23 its proximity to us, and it was our business centre and we
24 felt we could at least maintain contact with the boys.

25
26 Q. All right. Prior to Luke starting, whether it be the
27 first day or the days leading up, can you tell me if you
28 recall anything, did you have a chat about anything with
29 Dennis McKenna?

30 A. I did.

31
32 Q. Can you tell us the substance of that chat?

33 A. I told him that if he ever touched either of my boys
34 physically in anger or in any inappropriate manner, he
35 would spend a great deal of time in hospital.

36
37 Q. All right. So, Mr Fisher, is it fair to say from
38 that, whether or not you believed or disbelieved Mr Parkin,
39 you did form a view you were concerned about your boys, and
40 you gave McKenna a warning?

41 A. Yes.

42
43 Q. But because of your isolated farming existence, you
44 still had to send your boys away somewhere?

45 A. Yes, and the fact that they had to be booked into the
46 hostel so many years in advance, it became impractical to
47 try to then change their destination.

1
2 Q. All right. Now, some time later were you approached
3 in relation to allegations, some allegations. Did a fellow
4 name Bob Hendry --
5 A. I approached a gentleman by the name of Bob Hendry,
6 who at the time --
7
8 Q. Sorry, you - I'm talking --
9 A. I approached him.
10
11 Q. You approached him?
12 A. Yes.
13
14 Q. I got that wrong, I'm sorry. I approached him with
15 the allegations that Noel had been making, and although he
16 couldn't comment, and I believe he had absolutely no
17 knowledge of those allegations at the time, he did tell me
18 that, as advised, I should believe whatever the boys told
19 me and act on what they said, and then sort out whether
20 they were telling the truth later with regards of actions
21 of anyone in the hostel, but particularly Dennis McKenna.
22
23 HIS HONOUR: Did you say when that was? I'm sorry, you
24 were about to ask that.
25
26 MR DOBSON: I was about to say - sorry, your Honour.
27
28 THE WITNESS: It was either 1986, it was at a tennis
29 tournament and it was either November 1986 or very early
30 1987.
31
32 MR DOBSON: Q. And just to be clear, it seems you're
33 saying that from that chat with Bob Hendry, he had no
34 direct knowledge?
35 A. I believe he had no direct knowledge of any
36 impropriety, yes.
37
38 HIS HONOUR: Q. Now, who was Bob Hendry?
39 A. He was a - to my knowledge, an ex-board member at the
40 time.
41
42 Q. An ex-board member?
43 A. Yes.
44
45 MR DOBSON: All right.
46
47 Q. Can I assume that before your sons went there, you

1 told them to be aware?
2 A. Most definitely.
3
4 Q. All right. We've come to a point where Dennis McKenna
5 is charged?
6 A. Yes.
7
8 Q. Do you recall a meeting happening after that?
9 A. Yes. As I recall the meeting was run by a group of
10 people calling themselves the Friends of Dennis, and it was
11 to reinstate Dennis after he had been suspended.
12
13 Q. Do you remember where this meeting was, please, Mr
14 Fisher?
15 A. In the rec shed.
16
17 Q. The rec shed at the hostel?
18 A. The rec shed at the hostel.
19
20 Q. Evening, day time - can you recall?
21 A. Probably early afternoon.
22
23 Q. And are you able to cast your mind back and think
24 about a number of people that might have been there?
25 A. There would have been at least 100, perhaps 150.
26
27 Q. These Friends Of Dennis, do you remember who among
28 them might have called the meeting. Was there any?
29 A. Well, John Brett chaired the meeting.
30
31 Q. Sorry, John Brett?
32 A. Yes.
33
34 Q. Right. Anyone else?
35 A. No, I can't recall who else was running the meeting.
36
37 Q. Before the meeting, did you take any action yourself?
38 A. Yes, I was so concerned that the meeting was coming
39 up, and that Dennis may be reinstated that I rang the Child
40 Abuse Unit in Perth and spoke to a detective there
41 eventually, and he asked me to please - although he
42 couldn't allow me to give any indication of what he had
43 told me at the meeting, he did tell me that he believed the
44 charges against McKenna were sound, and that there'll be
45 more charges laid, and please to keep Dennis McKenna from
46 being reinstated as warden.
47

1 Q. So that detective encouraged you to speak out?
2 A. Yes.
3
4 Q. What did he say in relation to the information he'd
5 given to you? Was that to be shared or was that for
6 your --
7 A. No, it was for me alone and I was not to share it at
8 the meeting. So I went to the meeting armed with a missile
9 that I wasn't allowed to shoot.
10
11 Q. So in effect he's saying - between you, me and the
12 gatepost - "This bloke's a villain, speak out but you can't
13 repeat what I've said"?
14 A. Yes.
15
16 Q. And did you speak out?
17 A. Yes.
18
19 Q. Were you in a minority or a majority in speaking out
20 against McKenna?
21 A. I felt that it was a minority that were actually going
22 to speak out or were given the opportunity to speak out.
23 We were told we were only given one crack at the cherry,
24 you might say, and I moved a motion that was rejected, and
25 really didn't have a chance to either amend the motion or
26 speak for the motion.
27
28 Q. I'll come to that motion in a minute, but, sorry, are
29 you saying that someone has told people at the meeting that
30 you only get to have one say?
31 A. Yes.
32
33 Q. Who said that?
34 A. That came from the chair.
35
36 Q. John Brett?
37 A. Yes.
38
39 Q. Did he direct that at everyone or just the people
40 opposing?
41 A. It seemed to be directed at those who were wishing
42 that Dennis wasn't reinstated. Those who wished him to be
43 reinstated seemed to have endless opportunities to speak.
44
45 Q. Do you recall what the motion was that you made? Not
46 word perfect, I don't expect that, of course.
47 A. No.

1
2 Q. All right.
3 A. Although the greater number of people within this
4 building believed Dennis to be innocent, I believe until
5 the charges are heard and dealt with, he should be removed
6 from the - having anything to do with the hostel.
7
8 Q. That was your motion?
9 A. Yes.
10
11 Q. Let's begin with John Brett. What was his reaction to
12 that motion?
13 A. He rejected the motion as being contrary in terms and
14 wouldn't allow the motion to go forward.
15
16 Q. Anyone else have a negative reaction?
17 A. Not to my knowledge, no. Not to my recall.
18
19 Q. You mentioned wanting to amend it?
20 A. Yes. I actually turned to some people behind me and
21 asked for help in how I would be able to make the motion
22 acceptable to the chair so that it could be voted on.
23
24 Q. All right. This business about it being contrary in
25 terms, is that just that it's contrary to what John Brett
26 wanted?
27 A. I think he was saying that we could not say that we
28 were all supporting Dennis McKenna and at the same time
29 wish him to be removed from having anything to do with the
30 hostel.
31
32 Q. All right. What was your aim? What was your basic
33 aim in making that motion?
34 A. The safety of the students, my boys included.
35
36 Q. Who would have thought. What was your view on level
37 of support at that meeting for Mr McKenna?
38 A. I thought there was an enormous amount of support for
39 him, especially from the student body, yes. I felt that
40 there wasn't much spoken against him. There may have been
41 people who thought that, but there weren't too many people
42 who were actually prepared to speak out against him being
43 reinstated.
44
45 Q. Right. Before you get to people speaking out, you
46 mention the student body in support as well. Anyone or
47 anything in particular stand out about the student body?

1 A. Yes, I can remember Clint Beck claiming that 99.9% of
2 the students were behind Dennis, and I can remember
3 challenging him on that statement and asking him had the
4 student council voted, to which he replied no.
5
6 Q. And that was Clint Beck?
7 A. Yes.
8
9 Q. Now, you mentioned some people speaking out. Other
10 than you, did you recall anyone?
11 A. Tom Hart.
12
13 Q. Anyone else?
14 A. Not to my knowledge.
15
16 Q. All right. Now, I understand that your initial
17 concerns about Dennis McKenna, you didn't pursue them with
18 the Education Department prior to placing your boys at St
19 Andrew's?
20 A. No.
21
22 Q. I don't want you to tell me the exact reason or name
23 anyone, but was there a reason why you didn't pursue that
24 with the Education Department?
25 A. Yes, because when I was President of the Ongerup P&C,
26 two families had approached me regarding an incident with
27 the headmaster there, where he'd been removing their pants
28 to check --
29
30 Q. All right. So --
31 A. Sorry.
32
33 Q. -- I have to stop you, but --
34 A. Okay.
35
36 Q. No, that's all right. There'd been a serious
37 allegation about a teacher --
38 A. Yes.
39
40 Q. -- and did you do anything about that allegation?
41 A. Yes, I approached the superintendent in Albany, who
42 was his superintendent.
43
44 Q. And then?
45 A. And he phoned me back and said he had told the said
46 person that he had been a naughty boy and he agreed he was
47 a naughty boy and that was the end of the story. I then

1 approached the parents to see whether they would take civil
2 action, which they declined due to the fact that they felt
3 that had they lost the civil action, their children could
4 really still only attend the Ongerup primary school and may
5 have been victimised because of it.

6
7 HIS HONOUR: Q. I think it is appropriate to know the -
8 without naming any person, the nature of the allegation
9 against that person, in terms of what he did.

10 A. The allegation was that on a Monday morning he would
11 get the Grade 7 students to remove their pants so they'd be
12 checked they had clean underpants.

13
14 HIS HONOUR: Right.

15
16 MR DOBSON: Q. Right. Now, following that complaint and
17 how it was handled, did that leave you with confidence or a
18 lack of confidence about approaching anyone about McKenna?

19 A. A lack of confidence, really.

20
21 Q. You took steps to ensure that your own two boys, or
22 your own boys were safe?

23 A. That's exactly right.

24
25 Q. All right. Before we finish, is there anything else
26 you want to say about this?

27 A. Yes. I'd like to say that my wife and I as parents,
28 feel utterly betrayed by the fact that a government
29 institution could allow such abuses to occur over such a
30 period of time, and we would hope that this Inquiry at the
31 very least would set up a series of protocols so that in
32 the future every student who has to board will have a safe
33 environment in which to do so.

34
35 HIS HONOUR: I agree with that statement.

36
37 MR DOBSON: I have nothing further. You may wait, if you
38 could please. Thank you.

39
40 HIS HONOUR: Yes, Mr Hammond.

41
42 MR HAMMOND: I don't have any questions, sir.

43
44 MR JENKIN: Sorry, I just wonder if --

45
46 HIS HONOUR: Yes.

47

1 MR JENKIN: -- the witness could be asked when that
2 incident in Ongerup occurred, so we can fix a time.
3
4 HIS HONOUR: All right.
5
6 Q. Do you remember what year it was?
7 A. Possibly 1983, or maybe 1984.
8
9 Q. Right. And you spoke about it to the Superintendent
10 of Education - of the district?
11 A. Who was based in Albany --
12
13 Q. -- based in Albany. All right.
14
15 MR DOBSON: Nothing arising, thank you, sir.
16
17 HIS HONOUR: Well, thank you very much, Mr Fisher. Your
18 evidence was very helpful. Thank you.
19
20 <THE WITNESS WITHDREW
21
22 MR DOBSON: I called the last witness of the morning,
23 Thomas Lance Hart. The last witness of the day, your
24 Honour.
25
26 <THOMAS LANCE HART, affirmed:
27
28 <EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR DOBSON:
29
30 MR DOBSON: Q. Your full name's Thomas Lance Hart?
31 A. It is.
32
33 Q. You're 57 years old, and I understand you're involved
34 in real estate sales?
35 A. Correct.
36
37 Q. And you still retain an interest in a farm, or
38 certainly as an owner who leases it out?
39 A. That's correct.
40
41 Q. And you're based in Ongerup?
42 A. Yes.
43
44 Q. Now, I believe you're the father of what is now a
45 young man, Lance Hart --
46 A. Yes.
47

1 Q. -- who's a student at St Andrew's - boarding at St
2 Andrew's Hostel?
3 A. That's right.
4
5 Q. That was in 1987?
6 A. Yes.
7
8 Q. And he went to the Katanning senior high school?
9 A. That's right.
10
11 Q. And I think you also had two daughters who were
12 students at the senior high school, and they also boarded
13 at the hostel?
14 A. That's correct.
15
16 Q. All right. I want to take you to a period just before
17 your son Lance - Lance's Year 12 exams. Can you tell me
18 did you receive any phone calls?
19 A. Yes. A few. I can't remember how many weeks before
20 his final exams in Year 12, about 11 o'clock on the Monday
21 night Neil McKenna rings me up and says Lance has been
22 stealing and sneaking out to parties and he's been
23 suspended, and told me to hop in my car and drive to
24 Katanning and pick him up.
25
26 Q. I'll just interrupt you then, if I could interrupt you
27 now. He started in 1987 - lawyers are not the best with
28 numbers. Would that mean his Year 12 is 1991?
29 A. 1991, yes.
30
31 Q. So just before his Year 12 exams, you get a phone
32 call?
33 A. That's right.
34
35 Q. I may have missed this. Did you say what time of the
36 day that phone call was?
37 A. It was 11 o'clock on a Monday night. Around
38 11 o'clock.
39
40 Q. And who from?
41 A. Neil McKenna.
42
43 Q. And there was an allegation made about Lance?
44 A. Yes.
45
46 Q. And can you say, again, what was that?
47 A. He said he's been stealing and sneaking out to

1 parties.
2
3 Q. Did he say what he'd been stealing?
4 A. No.
5
6 Q. And sneaking out to parties?
7 A. Yes.
8
9 Q. All right. What was said then?
10 A. Plenty from me. I was - been asleep for a couple
11 of hours. I go to bed early usually, most nights, and I
12 was woken up from a deep sleep and having these - being
13 told I was going to drive to Katanning to pick up my
14 naughty son, so I said plenty. Anyway, just - he said,
15 "Well, he's been suspended and he's got to go home. We'll
16 take him home if need be." So I said, "Well, I'll ring
17 Garth Addis", the Chairman of the Board, which I duly did.
18 Garth wasn't very receptive. I probably got him out of bed
19 too, I don't know.
20
21 Q. But just wondering, if I can interrupt. Is that on
22 that night? Is that --
23 A. That was on that night.
24
25 Q. This is all happening one after the other?
26 A. Yes, about 11 o'clock at night.
27
28 Q. Did Mr Addis say anything to you about Lance?
29 A. Yes, he did. He said he should be ashamed of himself,
30 he's a disgrace to the hostel, and I should go and pick him
31 up, and then he hung up.
32
33 Q. Forgive this if you think it's a dumb question. How
34 did you feel after that?
35 A. I was very angry; very, very angry. Outraged.
36
37 Q. What happened then?
38 A. I had a chat with my wife and we elected to - well, we
39 had to do something. So instead of them bringing him all
40 the way home I rang back Neil and said I'd meet him in
41 Gnowangerup, so he headed to Gnowangerup, and I headed to
42 Gnowangerup, which is about half way, and I picked Neil
43 up - picked Lance up in Gnowangerup.
44
45 Q. And was it actually Neil McKenna who met you?
46 A. Yes, it was.
47

1 Q. All right. Now, when you collected Lance, you had a
2 conversation with him?
3 A. Yes.
4
5 Q. And it would be fair to say you talk about the
6 allegation with him?
7 A. Yes.
8
9 Q. What did he have to say about that?
10 A. Well, he told me that recently he'd gone into Neil's
11 office, the door was shut --
12
13 Q. Well, we'll get to that in a minute though.
14 A. Okay.
15
16 Q. What did he say he was alleged to have stolen?
17 A. Well, he didn't say what he'd stolen.
18
19 Q. All right. And the business about sneaking out of the
20 hostel --
21 A. Lance said, "It's rubbish", he hasn't been sneaking
22 out.
23
24 Q. In any event, him being a young bloke, would you have
25 been all that concerned about him sneaking out?
26 A. It wouldn't have been the end of the world.
27
28 Q. All right. Now, did Lance go on to explain how these
29 allegations arose?
30 A. Yes, he did.
31
32 Q. Now, without naming the young lady, can you explain -
33 you were about to say that Lance had walked in?
34 A. He walked into Neil's office, or the office - I'm not
35 sure which office.
36
37 Q. Yes.
38 A. The door was shut, and Neil had one of the young girl
39 students in there, in - in an uncompromising situation. I
40 don't - he didn't know what was going on, but things were
41 going on that shouldn't have been going on.
42
43 Q. Now, did he explain what time of the day or night he'd
44 walked into the room?
45 A. No, no.
46
47 Q. Now, as, again, I said to you I don't want you to name

1 the girl, but was that girl's name given to you by Lance?
2 A. Yes.
3
4 Q. And are you aware that she actually exists?
5 A. Yes.
6
7 Q. And is it correct that Lance has actually recently
8 made a statement to the police about this event?
9 A. Yes, it is.
10
11 Q. And is this in about 1991 or --
12 A. Yes.
13
14 Q. -- it is in 1991, isn't it?
15 A. Yes, it is in 1991.
16
17 Q. All right. Now, after that did you attend any
18 meetings?
19 A. We went to - we were summoned to front - to go to the
20 board, there was a board meeting to discuss Lance's future
21 at the hostel.
22
23 Q. When you say "we", Mr Hart --
24 A. My wife and I.
25
26 Q. And that's Georgina, I believe?
27 A. That's right, Georgina and I attended a board
28 meeting - I can't remember, probably a few days later or
29 fairly soon after that event. It might have been two days.
30 I can't remember how many days later. So we went to the
31 hostel, we went into the office. The board was there,
32 there was - I can't remember exactly how many people, but
33 five to eight, I would say.
34
35 Q. Do you remember - are you able to name any of the
36 people that you recall being there?
37 A. Garth Addis was there and Irene Campbell was there.
38
39 Q. And her role, as you understood it?
40 A. Irene was the secretary, I believe, and there may -
41 I'm not sure whether John Marshall from Broomehill was a
42 board member or not, but I remember he did speak at the
43 other meeting about Dennis.
44
45 Q. All right.
46 A. And something rings a bell that he may have been
47 there, but I'm not sure about that.

1
2 Q. So you think about five to eight. You used the word
3 to begin with, you were summoned to the meeting. Do you
4 know who called you there to go?
5 A. Yes, Neil McKenna.
6
7 Q. All right. And at the meeting what took place?
8 A. They said that Lance had been stealing and sneaking
9 out to parties, and he's suspended for the rest of the
10 year, basically.
11
12 Q. Did you respond?
13 A. Yes. I responded by saying, "I hope you're aware that
14 Neil McKenna's interfering with the girl students."
15
16 HIS HONOUR: Q. Was Neil McKenna there at the time?
17 A. I can't remember. I don't know that he was. I don't
18 remember if he was there or not.
19
20 Q. All right.
21 A. My wife doesn't either, we've talked about it.
22
23 Q. All right. Was there any reaction from anyone in the
24 room when you said that?
25 A. They all stared at me in stunned disbelief, as though
26 I had two heads. I was some creature from outer space.
27
28 Q. Was there any response, any questioning of you, any
29 request for details?
30 A. No, there certainly wasn't. Garth may have had a bit
31 of a mutter about something; but, yes, after my
32 conversation with Garth, the 11 o'clock at night
33 conversation, I wasn't feeling very friendly towards him
34 and he towards me, I'd suggest.
35
36 Q. Right. The lack of response - how did that make you
37 feel?
38 A. Made me feel even more angry because things were going
39 on, and it was just - nothing was done, nothing was said
40 then. We were shown the door, effectively, and we were
41 never told of any resolution to our - my allegations. And
42 it wasn't long before Neil went after that though, but
43 within a week or so, I'm not positive, but pretty soon Neil
44 had gone.
45
46 Q. When you say "Neil had gone"?
47 A. He left or he was - whatever happened to him, he was

1 no longer at the hostel.
2
3 Q. No longer at St Andrew's?
4 A. That's correct.
5
6 HIS HONOUR: Q. You think that was a week or so
7 afterwards?
8 A. I think it was about a week or so.
9
10 MR DOBSON: All right.
11
12 Q. Now was there another meeting, a more public meeting,
13 that you attended?
14 A. Yes, my wife and I attended the public meeting about
15 reinstating Dennis McKenna after he was charged. I've been
16 thinking about the numbers. I reckon there was probably
17 closer to 200 people. There was a lot of people there.
18
19 Q. All right. Can I just interrupt you. Do you know
20 what time of the day and where this meeting was?
21 A. Yes, it was after lunch in the rec shed at the hostel.
22 It might have started at 1.30, or something like that, and
23 there was - it went on and on and on, all these people
24 standing up giving glowing reports about Dennis and how
25 wonderful he was. It went on and on and on.
26
27 Q. And I should have made clear we are dealing with this
28 out of sequence.
29 A. Yes.
30
31 Q. This is the meeting about Dennis McKenna --
32 A. That's right.
33
34 Q. -- the year before, when he was charged?
35 A. Yes, that's correct.
36
37 Q. All right. Okay.
38 A. Our children were with us.
39
40 Q. Beg your pardon?
41 A. Our children, Lance and Caroline. Our two children
42 who were at the hostel, they were with us at that meeting.
43
44 Q. At the Dennis McKenna meeting?
45 A. At the Dennis McKenna meeting.
46
47 Q. All right. And do you know who organised that?

1 A. Well, I - the only person I remember speaking was John
2 Brett, but I've learnt that today. I couldn't remember who
3 had organised it, but I remember John Marshall standing up
4 and going on and on about how wonderful Dennis was as well,
5 and letters were read out. I remember Jan Savage's letter
6 read out. There were - I remember Tom Fisher trying to get
7 something concrete happening. I remember Ross Strachan
8 from Ongerup got up and spoke and said, you know, if
9 there's any doubt he should be proved innocent. I got up
10 and had my two bob's worth. I said basically the same
11 thing, you know, if there's any doubt, let it be proved
12 he's an innocent man, you know, it shouldn't be allowed
13 but, yes.

14
15 Q. In saying that though, let's just make clear, were you
16 for Dennis McKenna to be reinstated or to remain stood down
17 while he's dealt with by the court?

18 A. No, remain stood down until he was dealt with by the
19 courts.

20
21 Q. Ros Strachan - what was his view?

22 A. Definitely remain stood down until dealt with by the
23 courts.

24
25 Q. All right. So you were opposing this move to get him
26 reinstated?

27 A. Absolutely. But I had the feeling we were the quiet
28 majority. I had the feeling that most people - there was a
29 lot of verbal - everybody was up saying how wonderful he
30 was, and he should be reinstated, he's innocent until
31 proven guilty, but the quiet people were sitting back,
32 were, you know, wanting - well, these are our children, our
33 babies.

34
35 Q. Right. And so you've got supporters of Dennis
36 maintaining that he be reinstated. What came of all that?

37 A. Well, what happened, there was a walkout. This
38 meeting went on and on, and eventually there was a walkout.

39
40 Q. Right.

41 A. So that's what happened.

42
43 Q. And when you say "walkout", were you able to work out
44 amongst the group were the ones for reinstatement who
45 walked out, or the people who wanted to maintain --

46 A. No, the ones that wanted him gone. The ones that -
47 the ones that were so angry that they were trying to keep

1 him there. The ones like the Strachans and us. We walked
2 out, out of sheer frustration, but they just kept going on
3 and on, "We've got to get him reinstated", and I had the
4 feeling that it was the quiet - the majority that weren't
5 saying too much, they're the ones that walked out in the
6 end, out of sheer disgust, because the chair wouldn't
7 accept the argument against him. That was the feeling.
8
9 MR DOBSON: All right. I've nothing further. No, sorry,
10 should have asked.
11
12 Q. What came of Lance and his schooling so close to
13 exams?
14 A. Yes, well, we got private board. He was - the board
15 suspended him while - and we - my wife had family in
16 Katanning, and he got private board for his exams.
17
18 Q. So he finished his Year 12 exams?
19 A. Yes.
20
21 Q. Did you ever find out what he was alleged to have
22 stolen?
23 A. No.
24
25 Q. Were the police ever notified that he was allegedly a
26 thief?
27 A. No.
28
29 HIS HONOUR: Q. So you were never told by Neil McKenna
30 or by the board when --
31 A. No.
32
33 Q. -- you were summoned, what he was supposed to have
34 stolen?
35 A. No.
36
37 MR DOBSON: Q. And the Katanning police didn't contact
38 you about him allegedly being a thief?
39 A. No. No.
40
41 Q. But he was able to stay at the school and finished?
42 A. He stayed at the school and finished, yes.
43
44 MR DOBSON: All right. I have no further questions, thank
45 you.
46
47 HIS HONOUR: Mr Hammond?

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<CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR HAMMOND:

MR HAMMOND: Q. Yes, Mr Hart, do you remember who chaired the meeting at the rec centre?

A. Well, I - I do after today, because I've heard his name, John Brett. I remember - I remember the guy, but I didn't know him personally, so - yes. I remember the meeting well, but, I mean --

Q. And do you remember those - the identities of those people who spoke for McKenna?

A. I remember the ones that personally that I knew, yes; some of them.

Q. And who were they?

A. John Marshall, Jan Savage - they were two that spoke. John Marshall spoke at length in front of the meeting. Jan Savage - it may have just been a letter read out from Jan Savage.

Q. And was it clear to the meeting what Dennis had been charged with?

A. I don't know that it was. No, I don't know that it was.

Q. It was just understood he'd been charged with some criminal --

A. Yes.

Q. -- offence?

A. Yes, that's right.

MR HAMMOND: No further questions.

HIS HONOUR: Nothing for you, Mr Jenkin?

MR JENKIN: No.

HIS HONOUR: Nothing for you.

MR DOBSON: Nothing arising.

HIS HONOUR: All right. Thank you, Mr Hart, that completes your evidence, you're free to leave.

THE WITNESS: Thank you.

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HIS HONOUR: Yes, Mr Urquhart.

MR URQUHART: Yes, sir, that now concludes the Inquiry's hearing Katanning. The public hearing, sir, will reconvene in Perth next Tuesday, 6 March - Monday being a public holiday.

Sir, on Tuesday the Inquiry will hear from a clinical psychologist who will give evidence regarding, amongst other matters, the grooming behaviours of paedophiles, some reasons why victims do not always complain immediately after they have been abused, and the increased risk of suicide in later life by victims who have suffered sexual abuse in their childhood.

Sir, also next week Mr David Trezise, a witness who testified earlier this week in Perth, will complete his evidence on Friday, 9 March at 2.15. Sir, as this Inquiry remains an ongoing investigation, there may well be other witnesses to be called in the first phase of these public hearings, prior to the commencement of a second phase, which is scheduled to commence on 2 April. If that is the case, then notice will be given to the public of the dates of those hearings on the Inquiry's website.

Sir, the second phase, to repeat, of these hearings, will include evidence from persons who we have heard from witnesses in the past two weeks, who were told of Dennis McKenna's behaviour. That will give them the opportunity of giving their account of what was said to them and what action or lack of action they took.

Finally, sir, I just wish to state that this Inquiry has been greatly assisted by those persons who have come forward and provided important evidence of what took place during the period at Katanning hostel from 1975 to 1991. The Inquiry fully understands that for many of those persons it has been an unpleasant experience to recall events that have greatly traumatised them back then and continues to do so until this day.

So on behalf of the Inquiry, I extend our gratitude to those brave people.

Sir, there may well be others who have relevant evidence that could be critical to the Inquiry's

1 investigations who are reticent about coming forward. The
2 Inquiry readily appreciates the reasons for that
3 reluctance. But, sir, I wish to stress that the Inquiry
4 has its own counsellor to provide services to anyone who
5 wants to use those services. The Inquiry also has an
6 experienced team of investigators with expertise in the
7 area of investigating child sexual abuse and are therefore
8 very respectful of the sensitivity of the subject matter.
9

10 Sir, I also wish to stress that those persons with
11 relevant information that have not come forward, but who
12 wish to have their details dealt with confidentially, will
13 be able to do so. Thank you, sir.
14

15 HIS HONOUR: Well, I think I should endorse those remarks
16 from you, Mr Urquhart, and I do repeat that it is highly
17 desirable that anyone with relevant information to this
18 Inquiry, who can help us get to the bottom of what really
19 did happen - they should come forward, and if they're
20 reluctant to do so because of fear of publicity or because
21 of embarrassment or because of emotional turmoil, then we
22 have arrangements in hand to cater for those problems.
23

24 And the fact that they come forward and give us
25 information doesn't necessarily mean that they will have to
26 give evidence, but that information, if it is relevant, may
27 well be very helpful and provide us with investigative
28 leads which can be followed up with other potential
29 witnesses.
30

31 So with those words I will now conclude today's
32 proceedings, and we'll adjourn until next Tuesday in Perth
33 at 10am.
34

35 AT 11.43AM THE HEARING ADJOURNED
36 TO TUESDAY, 6 MARCH 2012 AT 10AM
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