

**Witness Name:** Steven James Long

**Statement No.:** [WITN0744001]

**Exhibits:** [WITN0744002]- [WITN0744027]

**Dated:** 15 October 2021

## ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO ABUSE IN CARE

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### WITNESS STATEMENT OF STEVEN JAMES LONG - relating to the St John of God Order Investigation

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I, Steven James Long, state: -

#### INTRODUCTION

1. My full name is Steven James Long. I was born in Napier on **GRO-C** 1966.  
I am NZ European.
2. My mother's name was **GRO-B**. My father's name is **GRO-B**.
3. I have one sister **GRO-B**. She was born on **GRO-C** 1967.

## BACKGROUND

4. My mother once told me that I had meningitis when I was very young, and she believed that that resulted in me having mild brain damage.
5. My early years were not happy. Child Welfare became involved when I was four months old, as my parents had temporarily separated [GRO-B]  
[GRO-B] There were also a lot of complaints from neighbours and from the police that I was not being fed or changed regularly.
6. Child Welfare had serious concerns about me being neglected from July 1966, but they left me at home with my mother for nearly two years.
7. When I was about 18 months old, my father was put in prison for 6 months [GRO-B]  
[GRO-B]
8. This happened at about the same time my sister was born. It was not long before complaints started being made that [GRO-B] being seriously neglected by our mother.
9. [GRO-B] I were often left alone in the house while our mother was out drinking.
10. In March 1968, when I was two and my sister [GRO-B] was nine months' old, our mother ran off to Australia with another man and left us with a neighbour. Our father was still in jail and his sister was the one who found us.
11. [GRO-B] I kept being moved to different homes. I was in six or seven different foster homes between April 1968 and July 1968.

12. When I was two years old, on 23 August 1968, I was made a State Ward. I would remain a State Ward for over 14 years. **GRO-B**
- GRO-B**
13. I was moved into another foster home in 1969, and then another one, before I was even four years' old. This was the start of Child Welfare moving me from pillar to post, never knowing where to put me.
14. I found all this moving around extremely disruptive. I had no stability or regular family contact. Child Welfare wouldn't let me see my father when he was released from prison. I started acting up and wetting the bed, and my records from this time describe me as being hyperactive and destructive.
15. In one of the foster homes I was placed in, the foster mother broke my arm when I was four years' old. While I do not remember this incident, I know from my records that she told my social worker that it was an accident that had happened when we were playing together. Instead of asking me about it, the social worker just told me off for misbehaving and threatened to move me to yet another foster home if I was not good. **[WITN0744002]**

#### **ADMISSION TO TERRACE STREET FAMILY HOME**

16. On 7 April 1971, after a period in yet another foster home, I was admitted to the Terrace Street Family Home in Palmerston North. I was five years old.
17. I remember on one or two occasions, to punish me and some of the other children for something we had done, the Family Home foster mother, Mrs **GRO-B-1**, turned the stove on and put our hands on it.
18. Mrs **GRO-B-1** used to give me Disprin every night "to slow me down". This was not prescribed by a doctor.
19. At age five, I was seen by a pediatrician, who described me as being "a typical example of the hyperactive, minimally brain damaged child with compulsive

behaviour and minimal powers of concentration.” He said that for children like me, both the medical literature and his own experiences recommended “controlling their hyperactivity with tranquilisers short of doping them into a sort of “zombie” state.” [WITN0744003] He prescribed me a tranquiliser called Melleril.

20. I was on tranquilisers like Melleril for much of my childhood – that seemed to be their solution to everything, drug me up and move me somewhere else. Maybe that is why I turned to drugs to cope when I was older.
21. On 16 December 1971, I was admitted to the short-stay unit at Levin Hospital and Training School (Kimberley Hospital), to give the Family Home foster mother a break over the Christmas period. On 28 January 1972 I was returned to the Family Home.

#### **ADMISSION TO MARYLANDS SCHOOL [‘MARYLANDS’]**

22. On GRO-C 1972, I was admitted to Marylands School in Christchurch, on the recommendation of the pediatrician referred to above. I was sent there even though my family was not Catholic. [WITN0744004]
23. I was admitted on my sixth birthday and I was the youngest boy there. Child Welfare knew I was considerably younger than was usual for boys to be admitted to Marylands. [WITN0744005]
24. All the staff at Marylands were quite strong disciplinarians. On the very first day at Marylands, I was shown around by Brother Griffin. He showed me the gym and the squash courts etc. After showing me around, Brother Griffin called me back down to the squash court in the gym. Someone had defecated there, and Brother Griffin accused me of doing it. He physically rubbed my face in the faeces, and sent me back to the section I had been assigned to, the red section, which was for the youngest boys. All the other boys there laughed at me.

25. Brother Griffin treated me all right after this, however he left Marylands shortly after I got there, and Brother Bernard McGrath replaced him as being in charge of the red section. Before long, Brother McGrath's true colours came through. I could see that Brother McGrath had a mean streak, he was really sadistic. We all learned to fear him.
26. One time, a couple of boys at Marylands caught a rabbit and made a pet of it. One morning we were all woken up and taken to where the rabbit was. It had been murdered and we all knew that Brother McGrath had done it, although he tried to put the blame on us boys. Brother McGrath picked on one boy, seemingly at random, and bashed him around.
27. I remember another time, I got called in to see Brother McGrath along with two boys from the green section ([GRO-B] and [GRO-B]). Someone had taken a Coke can that Brother McGrath had been drinking earlier, and had used it to slice up the pool table. We didn't own up to doing it. Brother McGrath got angry and blamed another boy, [GRO-B] and put his hands around his throat and accusing him. We couldn't do anything about it - there was no way you could stand up to Brother McGrath.
28. I remember seeing a boy, [GRO-B] make a joke at a meeting once. Brother McGrath picked him up and threw him against the wall.

### ***Sexual and physical abuse***

29. Brother McGrath was a sexual predator. I started noticing some of the boys at Marylands developed personality traits with sexualised behaviour after a while, and he really took advantage of that.
30. The first time that Brother McGrath sexually abused me, I was sitting on his knee in the TV room. There were no other boys there, and he started 'twitching' his penis against my buttocks. It was like he was acting out some of his fantasies.

31. Later that same evening, Brother McGrath told me to come into his room. There I was involved in masturbation and oral sex with him. I had no prior experience of this, and had no idea what was going on. Afterwards, I was horrified and scared. I knew that I had to say something about what had happened, so I went to Brother Garchow. I tried to tell him what had happened, but he started getting all loud at me, and told me not to stir up trouble.
32. The next morning, Brother GRO-B a school teacher, gave me a beating, supposedly because I was doing something wrong in class. He then said that I had been lying about Brother McGrath and told me not to cause trouble. I don't know how he heard about what I had said about Brother McGrath.
33. Later that afternoon, Brother McGrath came and called me out of the classroom. He took me to one of the offices which was being used for storage. He stripped me naked and beat me with a cane. I was curled up in ball on the ground. He beat me so severely that my knees cracked, and I still have scars. He then sodomised me, either with his finger, penis or the cane, I'm not sure. As noted below, this assault was the basis of one of the charges (count 11) that he was convicted of in 2006.
34. I did not tell anybody about this incident of abuse at the time, because I was too scared after what had happened the first time that I told Brother Garchow.
35. After this, I always tried to avoid Brother McGrath, but I was not always able to. He used to come in to the dormitory and 'cuddle' us boys, and would often make suggestions to us about 'cuddling' us.
36. Brother McGrath used to take me into an office, where we were alone, strip me naked and beat the crap out of me. Then he would sexually abuse me. If I refused to go to 'cuddles' with him one night, the next day I would get a beating from him.



37. Brother McGrath would always threaten me to keep my mouth shut, and told me that no one would believe me if I said anything. We always knew that there would be repercussions for doing so, as we had all seen what Brother McGrath did. He put the fear into us all.
38. There was a hallway from the red section to the church. Once, Brother McGrath took me to the church to do a job for him. He took me down the stairwell to one side of the church, down where there were coffins, and he made me strip naked to clean out one of the coffins. He then slammed the coffin lid down on me. I was crying, scared and defenceless. He lifted the lid, grabbed me around the throat, and said "this is where you're going to end up" if I said anything about his abuse. After this, he sodomised me again.
39. The other major incident occurred when I was a bit older. The Brothers had a batch on Waikuku Beach, north of Christchurch. I remember Brother McGrath taking us kids there. On this occasion there were some other young kids there, from the yellow section. One of them was called GRO-B-2 he was everyone's favourite, as he was a cute French kid. While we were walking on the beach, GRO-B-2 started getting grizzly and hanging back. Brother McGrath went to get him, put his hands over his throat and swung him around, then he threw him out into the surf. This was a dangerous beach, and I knew that GRO-B-2 couldn't swim. I just looked at Brother McGrath, and he looked at me in an "I dare you" sort of way. GRO-B-2 went under the water and I ran out and hauled him up. He was choking and terrified. I pulled him back onto the beach. Brother McGrath then kicked me, picked me up and pulled me over to the sand dunes. Then he made me masturbate him in front of everybody, which I think was his way of reducing the mana of what had just happened.
40. One Sunday, I was sick so I couldn't sing in church, even though it was compulsory. Brother McGrath saw this and was giving me these dirty looks throughout the service, as he thought I was just lip syncing. As I was leaving the church, Brother McGrath came up and smashed me over the ear. He hit me so hard, I couldn't hear properly for 15 or 20 minutes. I think it actually caused

me brain damage because I started developing facial and bodily tics afterwards, like with Tourette's Syndrome. I ended up being prescribed Haloperidol for these tics.

41. After this assault at the church, I started to run away from Marylands. One time, Brother McGrath caught me running away and smashed me again, badly. I got a bleeding nose and something happened to my jaw. I could also only just see out of one eye, I was so badly bruised. After beating me, Brother McGrath locked me in a room for a month, near the dormitory, and I received one meal a day. He took everything out of the room, except the mattress and sheets. He only gave me a meal of mashed potatoes once a day. He sexually abused me a few times in that room too. I used to scream and yell for ages in there.
42. Brother McGrath used to kick me between the legs all the time. Once he did it and my testicles blew up, they were really swollen. Because of this, I thought I could never have kids, so my son being born in 2019 was a real shock.
43. I was also sexually abused by Brother Moloney, who was really cunning. He ran the place and had the pick of the boys. He'd leave a few chocolate biscuits on a bench for me to find in the Brothers' mess, as a trap or a bribe. Then he would come in after me and make me feel him up, or get me to be involved in oral sex. This happened 4 or 5 times. He forced me to do it, just reduced me into submission. If I refused, he'd beat me around, or he'd make it so Brother McGrath would get on my back and beat me.

#### ***Other experiences at Marylands***

44. When I was about 10 years old, I was caught holding cigarettes for another boy, although I had never smoked before. The very next day there was a big meeting after breakfast. I had to sit in front of the kids from the red section, the section Brother McGrath was in charge of, and he made me smoke two whole packets of cigarettes. He told me that he wanted to hear me inhale. I was very sick, but later that day, I wanted to smoke again. I still smoke to this day.



45. After a while, I learned that if I wanted to have something, like biscuits, I should just take them without asking, while the Brothers were not looking. That way, I would not be forced to exchange sexual favours with the Brothers for them. This is how I first learned to steal, it became normal for me. I did not have any feelings of guilt for taking what I wanted, it's like I lost my morals.
46. I remember attending school at the classrooms at Marylands, although I had some difficulties concentrating. It's fair to say that I was a late starter, especially in terms of writing.
47. When the school holidays finally came, I was allowed to spend them with my mother in Auckland, or I was sent to a foster home or Boys' Home. Pretty much every time I was sent on holiday, my social worker commented that I had totally inadequate clothing with me, but nothing was ever really done about that.  
**[WITN0744006]**
48. I only remember being allowed to go to my father's once or twice for a holiday. I still do not know why Social Welfare was always anti- my father being involved with me, even though he repeatedly asked to have contact with me. I think it was partly due to my stepmother not liking me and talking to social workers behind his back, making the social workers think that he wouldn't be able to handle me. The few times I was allowed to be placed with him, everything went smoothly.
49. My parents never sent me any letters while I was at Marylands. My father was not even allowed to visit me at Marylands, even though he asked to. My mother was allowed to visit me there. However, because I had had so many different placements and I had not seen her for about four years, I thought she was just another foster mother until I was about ten.
50. Social workers visited me every now and then at Marylands, but not often. They never spoke to me alone, or asked me if I was happy and well cared for at

Marylands. They just relied on what the Brothers told them about how I was getting on, even though I was a State Ward.

51. The Catholic Brothers had influence everywhere and were more powerful than even, say, the Salvation Army – in some senses they were even higher than the police. I wouldn't be surprised if the Da Vinci Code was true. All the Brothers knew it too, you could see that mentality in how they acted. They were so sure that they were protected, they could do anything they wanted to us kids in Marylands. We had no hope of being heard, and we were afraid of what the Brothers would do to us if we did try to speak out.
52. After the sexual abuse started at Marylands, I underwent a dramatic change of behaviour. I became very angry and anti-, and I started to buck the system. I kept trying to self-destruct, thinking that if I did well, it would be taken off me in the end. I put up barriers, shut down and closed off. I could not put any trust in anyone, and I hurt those who tried to help me, like my own parents. I started recreating the bad things that happened to me at Marylands.
53. By May 1974, when I was eight years' old, I started acting out sexually. This behaviour was a response to the repeated sexual abuse I was suffering. **[WITN0744007] [WITN0744008] and [WITN0744006]**
54. I also began reacting violently to the other boys when they bullied and picked on me. Maybe because of this, I didn't get into too many real fights, compared with the violence I experienced later in the Boys' Homes. There was a group that went around stirring up trouble at school at Marylands at one point, acting like a gang and picking on me. I didn't want any part of this, so I backed myself up and protected myself from them, because the staff didn't do anything to protect me. **[WITN0744009 and WITN0744010]**
55. I also started getting depressed. At one point, while I was on holiday from Marylands, my mother told me that I was a mistake and that I shouldn't be alive.

**GRO-C** because I was so unhappy and I ended up vomiting for days. I was nine years old.

### **ADMISSIONS TO WESLEYDALE BOYS' HOME ('WESLEYDALE')**

56. In January 1977, while I was placed with my mother for the Christmas holidays, she told my social worker that she could not handle me. I was reported to have been destructive and to have stolen a neighbour's watch.
57. On 10 January 1977, I was placed at Wesleydale for the rest of the holidays. I was ten years old and the youngest boy there. My admission records noted that I suffered from facial tics.
58. I had three admissions to Wesleydale in 1977, during holiday leave from Marylands: from 10 January 1977 to 31 January 1977, from 17 August to 5 September 1977, and from 14 December 1977 to 31 January 1978.
59. I remember getting a 'christening' beating or 'blanketing' on my arrival at Wesleydale, the first time I went there. I think everyone got them. I was just going to sleep when someone threw a blanket over me, and a group of boys started punching and kicking me. I think the staff were checking on another wing at the time I got my christening, as it was after bedtime. There were far too many boys for the staff to supervise.
60. I was treated badly by the other boys at Wesleydale, each time I was there. My facial and bodily twitching attracted unwanted attention. I was threatened, bullied and picked on by the other boys. Because the staff did nothing about it, I had to learn to become aggressive and fight back to protect myself, like I had started learning to do at Marylands.
61. I remember learning about taking cars and doing burglaries, because the boys would talk all about that and the staff did not do anything to stop it. I was also able to smoke cigarettes at Wesleydale.

62. I didn't go to school during some of my admissions to Wesleydale, because it was the school holidays. However even during other admissions, I do not remember getting much schooling at Wesleydale at all. I just remember having to stand in line for hours and having a lot of rest periods. I don't think they even had a classroom.
63. I kept running away from Wesleydale, and the Superintendent used to strap me with the belt as punishment for this when I was returned. I would sometimes cry when I was caught because I did not like being at Wesleydale, but they kept sending me back.

### **READMISSION TO MARYLANDS**

64. On 31 January 1977, I was returned to Marylands. The abuse continued just as before.
65. One time, during a holiday in Auckland towards the end of my stay at Marylands, my social worker **GRO-B** came to pick me up. I told her that I had something personal to say, because I wanted to tell her about the abuse at Marylands. She took me to the Department of Social Welfare office in New Lynn. There, I talked to **GRO-B** and two other social workers – including **GRO-B** **GRO-B**'s supervisor, who I think was named Mr **GRO-B** - about pretty much all the incidents of physical and sexual abuse at Marylands. Nothing was done, even though I saw that it was all written up at the time. I am aware that this is not even in my social welfare file. Nobody listened to me – maybe they thought I was making it up. I was just sent back to Marylands.
66. This was a total betrayal by my social workers, which I am still very angry about.
67. The Department of Social Welfare basically abandoned me at Marylands for six years. They knew that my mother would not have me back and they did not want me to go back to my father for some reason. They knew that my behaviour was deteriorating at Marylands and becoming sexualised and violent. They also knew that I was not gaining anything educationally and that I was quickly

becoming institutionalised and deeply unhappy. Even though experts said that I was not appropriately placed there, they just left me at Marylands for years and then moved me to another institution, then to another. **[WITN07440011, WITN07440012, WITN07440013 and WITN07440014]**

### **ADMISSION TO HOLDSWORTH SCHOOL ('HOLDSWORTH')**

68. On 22 May 1978, I was transferred from Marylands School to Holdsworth. I was twelve years old. This was only meant to be a three or four month trial placement, but I ended up being there for twice as long as that.
69. I received a christening beating on my admission to Holdsworth, which again, I later found out that all of the new boys were given. I was asleep when someone threw a blanket over me, and a group of boys started punching me repeatedly. The staff were somewhere else when this took place. Because of this assault, and the way I was treated by other boys here, I started sleeping in strange positions and I became really restless at night, in case it happened to me again. This may be one of the reasons I have insomnia now.
70. Holdsworth was terrible too, because of the other boys bullying me so much. They used to taunt me a lot because of my tics, and I was called heaps of names suggesting that I was homosexual. The staff did nothing about it, because they didn't like me either, and they wanted me to go somewhere else. I ended up getting into a lot of fights with other boys at Holdsworth. **WITN07440015, WITN07440016 and WITN07440017]**
71. There was a lot of sexual activity going on between some of the boys at Holdsworth, although it was consensual, and not abusive like what happened to us at Marylands. Whenever we were caught, staff would punish us by strapping us or physically forcing us to stand in the corner. I was caught doing this once, but I do not recall which staff members caught me. I remember being given the strap for it, but that's all they did.

72. I remember learning more about crime at Holdsworth. This was more of the same type of things that I had learned about at Wesleydale – how to commit burglaries and steal cars, the kinds of offences that the boys had done that got them put into the Boys' Homes. Staff just did not care that the boys talked about how to do these crimes. The Boys' Homes were just a breeding ground for criminals.
73. On 18 December 1978, I was discharged from Holdsworth, and I returned to live with my mother and her new fiancé. However, it was not long before my mother told Social Welfare that she could not cope with my behaviour once more.

#### **WESLEYDALE (READMISSION)**

74. On 27 December 1978, I was returned to Wesleydale.
75. I continued to have to fight back to protect myself when the other, bigger boys picked on me. Sometimes, I got injured during these fights. For example, in January 1979 I broke my thumb in a fight.

#### **VARIOUS FOSTER HOMES**

76. After several weekend leave placements with a potential foster parent, on 16 March 1979 I was placed in her home. There were other children there too, and they picked on me.
77. This placement didn't last long. The foster mother told Social Welfare that I had been making sexual advances and suggestions to some of the male and female children there, as well as to neighbouring boys, and that I had exhibited other disturbed behaviour, including theft and possibly breaking my thumb again on purpose. **[WITN07440018]**



78. On 25 April 1979 I was readmitted to Wesleydale. I continued to get into fights. On 4 May 1979 I was again discharged from Wesleydale and placed with new foster parents.
79. On 7 June 1979, these foster parents took me to the Henderson Police Station. I had committed several burglaries and thefts, which I had learned how to do when I was in the Boys' Homes. I was placed in a Family Home overnight, and then readmitted to Wesleydale.
80. Social Welfare continued to struggle to find any appropriate placement for me, even when it was clear that I was being seriously affected by my treatment by the other boys at Wesleydale. **[WITN07440019]**
81. On 3 September 1979 I was placed with foster parents on a trial basis, but I was sent back to Wesleydale after only four days.
82. On 14 September 1979, I ran away from Wesleydale and turned up at my mother's home. She kept me overnight then returned me to Wesleydale the next day. This was my seventh admission there. **[WITN07440020]**
83. I ran away from Wesleydale again on 19 September 1979. The next day, I was found at the home of my former temporary foster parents. I was picked up by police and I was placed in Owairaka Boys' Home overnight.

#### **ADMISSION TO CARRINGTON HOSPITAL ('CARRINGTON')**

84. On 21 September 1979, I was admitted to Ward 5 of Carrington for psychiatric assessment, with a view to a possible committal at Lake Alice Hospital. I was 13 years old and I did not understand why I was put there.
85. I remember being very angry and depressed at Carrington. I got into fights with other patients. I had a death wish because of all the rejection. Once, I found some broken glass in the recreation hall and cut my thumb open, which had to

be stitched up. For me, it was a choice between either doing it to myself, or doing it to someone else.

86. One night, an adult male came into my room at Carrington Hospital and started masturbating me while I was asleep. I woke up and hit out at him, yelling and swearing at him, and he took off out of the room. This really shook me.
87. I ran away from Carrington several times, because of how I was feeling. I was repeatedly put in the Seclusion Unit at Carrington as punishment for absconding, or for other misbehaving. This even happened after I was made an informal patient.
88. I was made an informal patient on 12 October 1979 because I was considered to be not certifiable and I had no psychiatric illness. Because Social Welfare couldn't find a place for me in the community, they left me at Carrington for nearly another month before another institutional placement could be approved.

#### **ADMISSION TO HOKIO BEACH SCHOOL ('HOKIO')**

89. On 6 November 1979, I was discharged from Carrington Hospital and admitted to Hokio. I was 13 years old and one of the only boys there who wasn't Māori or Pacific Islander. Once again, all the other boys were older and bigger than me.
90. Hokio was really bad. A whisper had got around about my Tourettes, so I got the nickname of "Twitchy". I got badly picked on and bullied there too, and got into a lot of fights with older boys. Staff did nothing about it, they didn't care.
91. On my very first day there, I got a new boy's stomping, also known as 'the blanket treatment'. Like before, this meant that after bedtime and lights out, boys snuck into my room while I was asleep. They threw a blanket over me, so I couldn't see who it was, and then gave me a beating. This happened to me five times in total at Hokio. The staff were nowhere to be seen. I saw it happen to other new arrivals as well.

92. A lot of the staff at Hokio didn't like me, so I got beatings from them too. I remember a school teacher named Mr **GRO-B-3**. If you didn't do things his way, he would belt you over the head, shoulders and back with a 2x4 piece of wood. I saw him doing this to other boys and I was always afraid of him.
93. One time, Mr **GRO-B-3** forced me to bend over a sewing bench in front of the whole class. He hit me on my bare bottom with his 2x4, about six times. Another time, he hit me around the head and backside with this piece of wood.
94. I smoked cigarettes at Hokio, it was easy to get them. Staff didn't try to stop us from smoking.
95. I was put into the secure unit in Hokio maybe three or four times, for stealing cigarettes and tobacco. I was in there for about a week each time. It was cold, and I was only allowed to wear shorts and a singlet. I wasn't given any educational material while I was in there.
96. Instead, I had to do a lot of Physical Training (PT) outside the secure unit, in front of everyone. I had to do press-ups, sit-ups, burpees and running until I was exhausted and I couldn't do it any longer. Then, a Māori staff member nicknamed **GRO-B** would start kicking me between the legs, because I couldn't keep up.
97. Staff at Hokio sometimes set up fights between boys in the gym. This happened to me once, when Mr **GRO-B-4** took me and another boy into the gym, supposedly to clean it. The next thing I knew, this boy attacked me. Mr **GRO-B-4** was telling me to fight back, saying that it was the only way for me to get out of it. He just stood back and watched, making no attempt to stop the fight. The boy got his legs around my waist and his arms around my neck and put me in a choke hold and squeezed. I passed out, and when I came to, I was lying in a corner of the gym alone. I had to get out of the gym myself, and the staff never did anything about it.

## ADMISSION TO KOHITERE TRAINING CENTRE ('KOHITERE')

98. On 20 December 1979 I was transferred to Kohitere, as Social Welfare had nowhere to put me for the Christmas holiday period. I was 13 years old and I was the youngest boy there.
99. The first night I was at Kohitere, I was assaulted by other boys with a piece of wood with nails in it. When I told staff members about this assault, I received medical treatment and I was locked in the secure unit for the rest of the holidays, for my protection.
100. The secure unit was like prison, but at least I wasn't assaulted in there. Again, I had to do lots of PT with medicine balls, as well as duck walking and burpees. I didn't have to do quite as much PT as the other boys who were also in the secure unit, because of the injuries I had sustained from the beating.

## READMISSION TO HOKIO

101. On 9 January 1980, I was returned to Hokio from Kohitere. Once again, I was constantly badly treated by other boys. I hated being there. [WITN07440021]

## PLACEMENT WITH GRO-B-5

102. On 23 December 1980, age 14, I was discharged into the care of Miss GRO-B-6 GRO-B-6, who had been a patient at Carrington with me, and her 'friend' GRO-B-5 GRO-B-5, a psychiatric social worker who worked at Carrington. I had already stayed with them once before, on holiday from Hokio.
103. Social Welfare did not properly vet or approve these caregivers. It seems that they were desperate to put me anywhere that would take me.
104. Although they told Social Welfare they were only friends, GRO-B-6 and GRO-B-5 were in a sexual relationship. I caught them having sex with each other once. After that, GRO-B-5 really changed her attitude towards me, and became very anti-

me. She became really bad to me and drove me like a slave. She started making me do all the work around the house, to keep me out of the way. It was really excessive. I had to do all the dishes, the vacuuming, cleaning the toilet and the bathroom, cleaning the kitchen and mowing the lawns. She really turned against me.

105. One evening, out of nowhere, **GRO-B-5** came in and accused me of molesting some other kids that had also been living there, which was absolutely untrue. Although I did not realise it at the time, she just made this up because I had caught her having sex with **GRO-B-6** and so she wanted me out of the house. **GRO-B-5** and **GRO-B-6** got my social worker **GRO-B** involved and **GRO-B-5** told them that I had admitted to her that I had molested these children, which was a total lie. It doesn't look like anyone even asked the children if anything had happened. I wish they had called the police, they would have investigated properly and found out that it was all a lie.

106. I have attached some records of these events. The records stated that **GRO-B-5**'s main concern was getting me out of the house immediately, and that I had walked in on "a couple" who were undressed in a bedroom, which is a veiled reference to when I walked in on **GRO-B-5** and **GRO-B-6** having sex. The records also said that I had admitted feeling one of the girls, and other children, but that is not true at all. **GRO-B-5** was just putting words in my mouth. She really got her revenge on me. Thinking about this now makes me extremely angry.  
**[WITN07440022]**

107. What did happen is that on 21 February 1981, I told **GRO-B-6** that I had been regularly and repeatedly sexually assaulted by Brother McGrath at Marylands. **GRO-B-6** and **GRO-B-5** then told **GRO-B** this, on 23 February 1981, and **GRO-B-6** asked **GRO-B-5** to record this in a statement, which she did.  
**[WITN07440023]**

108. As I have said, I also remember telling Mrs **GRO-B** about this abuse in around 1977, while I was on holiday leave from Marylands, in Auckland. Just like the

first time I told **GRO-B**, nothing was done about my disclosure in 1981. At least it was documented this time, although I don't know what the point of that was. **GRO-B** was only interested in interrogating me about **GRO-B-5**'s allegations. I did not get any counselling or other support after disclosing the abuse at Marylands. I wasn't even encouraged to go to ACC for help or to make a police complaint.

109. I don't know why nothing was done. The Brothers were treated like a law unto themselves. Even when I disclosed this abuse in 1981, Marylands was still open. Although I am aware that Brother McGrath had left the country by 1981, he went on to sexually and physically abuse dozens of boys in Australia and New Zealand for another eleven or so years. Social Welfare should take some responsibility for this, because I told them that he was an abuser. They had made up their mind to treat me as if I was an offender and not a victim. They had completely given up on me. I was just sent straight to a Boys' Home and locked up in the Secure Unit, and no one ever spoke to me about it again.

#### **ADMISSION TO OWAIRAKA BOYS' HOME ('OWAIRAKA')**

110. On 23 February 1981, I was placed in Owairaka. I was 15 years old and I did not understand why I had been put there, or what I was being punished for.
111. I remember that I was livid and completely ropeable about **GRO-B-5**'s lies that I had molested those kids, but I did not realise at the time that that was why I ended up in Owairaka. While I was in Owairaka, I tried to contact **GRO-B-6** to get her help, to get someone to ask the kids themselves whether I had done any of that stuff. **GRO-B-5** had said I had done, but they obviously didn't even bother asking them that, because I was just left in the Boys' Home. I should never have been put there in the first place.
112. I think I spent a few weeks in the Secure Unit on arrival. It was like another taste of jail and I did not know why I had to be in the Secure Unit. Maybe every boy had to go through it on admission.



113. Some of the boys at Owairaka remembered me from Wesleydale, and before you knew it, the trouble had started. People wouldn't leave me alone. I was picked on and beaten up, although I did fight back. This even happened in the Secure Unit, when staff weren't around.
114. I learned more about how to commit crimes while I was in Owairaka, from hearing the other boys discuss it openly.

### **ADMISSION TO LAKE ALICE HOSPITAL ('LAKE ALICE')**

115. On 2 June 1981, I was admitted to Lake Alice as an informal patient and placed in the Maximum Security Villa, Villa 14. I was 15 years old and, once again, I did not understand why I was put there.
116. I do not remember my social worker visiting me throughout the nearly eight months that I was placed at Lake Alice, despite her promising me that she would visit me every month.
117. On my admission, I was placed in the secure room for three days. It was a padded cell.
118. I saw so many things that I should not have seen at Lake Alice, there were so many scary adults there. I used to see a lot of violent fights, every day. The staff would just stand around and watch patients fight each other, without intervening. I saw someone get stabbed once, and I saw someone GRO-C themselves. I saw people getting Electro Convulsive Therapy (ECT).
119. I remember a 7 foot tall patient who put his hands around my neck and squeezed, threatening to strangle me to death, because he thought I might have narked on him. I thought I was going to die. He released me before I blacked out, but he told me that my life would be over if he discovered I had in fact narked on him.

120. I was so afraid while I was in Lake Alice that I asked to be put in isolation, but they refused. Staff saw that I was shit scared and they just gave me a whole lot more medication, even though I didn't want it.
121. I was medicated with a lot of Largactil at Lake Alice, which dried out my skin, nose and mouth. I could not do or say anything as a result, and I was not allowed to refuse the medication. When I tried to refuse and put up a fight, some of the staff bashed me, held me down and hauled me to the padded room. Then they gave me an injection in my buttocks that completely put me out. I was then locked in the padded room for three to five days. This happened at least twice.
122. In August 1981, the Lake Alice Patients Review Panel unanimously recommended that I was not committable, and that I should be returned to the care of Social Welfare prior to my 16th birthday, because they could not legally hold me after that time. Nobody knew what to do with me, so they just kept me locked in that terrifying place. They totally bought into **GRO-B-5**'s lies. My social worker even tried to get me put on medication to kill my sex drive, at age 15.
123. By early January 1982, I was being locked up most of the time in the padded room at Lake Alice because of industrial action – not for anything I had done to deserve it. They tried to put me in Owairaka as soon as they could, but apparently it was overcrowded and short staffed there as well.

#### **VARIOUS PLACEMENTS**

124. On 30 January 1982, I was discharged from Lake Alice and put back in Owairaka. I was 15 years old.
125. I was again assaulted by other boys at Owairaka. I told staff about it, but nothing happened.

126. On 26 February 1982, I was placed at Penman House in Auckland. This was a supervised board placement. I ran away from this placement, and I was allowed to stay with my mother.
127. On 14 May 1982, I was placed at Owairaka Boys' Home when my placement with my mother broke down again.
128. On 17 May 1982 I absconded from Owairaka. The following day, I contacted a social worker to state that I was now staying with my girlfriend's family in Pakuranga. I started attending work adjustment classes at the Rehabilitation League.
129. On 16 June 1982, I took off from my girlfriend's home, and her father contacted Social Welfare to say that \$400 had been stolen from their neighbours.
130. The next day, I was picked up and placed in Christchurch Boys' Home. I was then sent up to Auckland, but I left the train at Levin. When I was found, I was readmitted to Hokio, but I ran away again. The police picked me up on charges of burglary, and I was placed in the Kohitere Secure Unit the following day.
131. On 25 June 1982, I appeared in the Levin Children and Young Persons' Court on two charges of burglary, and I was remanded in police custody. I was then placed in the Manawatu Youth Centre.
132. On 30 June 1982, I escaped from custody, burgled a home in Levin and I stole a car. I was caught, and returned to Court that day. I was remanded back into police custody.
133. I had another brief placement in the Kohitere Secure Unit before being placed at the Anchorage Hostel in Hamilton.

134. On 10 August 1982, I went missing from the Anchorage Hostel and I was arrested later that day in Auckland, on a charge of unlawfully taking a boat. I was remanded in police custody.
135. On 24 August 1982, I appeared in the Hamilton District Court on three charges of burglary, one charge of escaping police custody, and two charges of unlawfully taking a motor vehicle. I was sentenced to three months' Corrective Training, which I served at Hautu in Turangi.
136. On 21 October 1982, two months into my sentence of Corrective Training, I was discharged from the care of the Director General of Social Welfare, on the basis that the Corrective Training sentence would automatically be followed by a period on probation, and because the Department of Social Welfare had nothing else they could offer me.
137. I found out about being discharged from Social Welfare, care when Mrs **GRO-B** told me in a letter, while I was in Hautu. She did not even bother to visit me in there. After 14 years of institutionalisation and abuse, I was left with no support in the community and nowhere to go.

#### **AFTER SOCIAL WELFARE CARE**

138. In November 1982, shortly before my sentence of Corrective Training was finished, I escaped from Hautu. I ran away because I did not know where I would go or live once I got out, and because I suddenly found myself very fit from the Corrective Training. I was caught and subsequently sentenced to a second period of Corrective Training at Hautu.
139. After my discharge from Social Welfare care, when I was in the community I lived on the streets and in various short-term placements. I got involved with the ACSK (Auckland City Street Kids) gang and started taking drugs. I became reliant on them, to 'darken' or block out my bad memories. I sniffed glue, smoked pot, took LSD and drank alcohol. I also committed offences while I was

drunk, particularly theft and burglary, which was the only way I knew how to support myself on the streets, and also so that I could get more drugs.

140. Within three weeks of my release from my second lag at Hautu, I stole a car. As a result, on 3 March 1983 I was sentenced to another period of corrective training.
141. Later in 1983, I was sent to prison for attempted theft, burglary, unlawfully taking a motor vehicle, and for driving while disqualified.
142. I was in and out of prison from this point on. I learned to survive behind closed doors. Whenever I was out in the community, I couldn't cope, so I ended up back in the jail. Sometimes I committed crimes just so that I could get back into jail. Between 1983 and December 2011, the longest time that I had been outside of prison was 6 months.
143. I had been in institutions for so much of my childhood, it was just preparation for prison. Jail was like home for me for a very long time, because I had been institutionalised. I was an IDU (Identified Drugs User) in prison.
144. In about 1997, my sister found out who I was and we reunited. This was mind blowing. I don't know why Social Welfare would not let me see her or know how she was, when I was in care. She told me that I was an uncle, which was great. I now have a great time together with her boys. I give them everything. Her husband is a great guy. My sister and I are close.
145. I started seeing a psychologist in prison in late 1997 and I started to open up about my experiences. She helped me start making sense of why I was offending and running away all the time, and why I had been abusing drugs. She told me that I had Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and chronic anxiety, and she also thought that I had symptoms of Dissociative Disorder with amnesia when I was triggered and going into survival mode.

**EFFECTS**

146. I feel like I have no morals, and I have become emotionally dead. I know that in order to cope, I have to deal with my emotions first. I have tried to sort this out and I am a little better nowadays, but I am still in turmoil. I've worked so hard to get as far as I have but I still have to break the cycle. It's something I still have to learn.
147. I have difficulties controlling my anger, but I am getting more control of it, with a lot of effort.
148. I have been drug-free for some time. I do not wish to indulge in drugs any more.
149. My education has suffered because of my experiences in care, and because I was constantly moved from placement to placement around the country so I never settled. I have now completed an NCEA course.
150. I have a lot of poor relationships, especially with my father. I also struggle with my intimate relationships, and I have difficulties trusting people. I suffer from low self-esteem.
151. I have trouble sleeping, but I am used to it. I suffer from nightmares, and flashbacks. I do not know what triggers these, but the nightmares and flashbacks are sort of about all the things I have experienced, rolled into one. It's hard to explain.

**LEGAL PROCEEDINGS**

152. In July 2002, while I was in prison, I met with Brother Peter Burke and Michelle Mulvihill to discuss the abuse I suffered in Marylands. I did this because there were unanswered crimes that needed to be answered. I also felt that I deserved compensation and an apology for the abuse and how it had affected me.



153. I met Brother Burke again in August 2002 and gave him more information about what had happened to me. He encouraged me to make a police complaint, which I did. I wanted justice for what had happened.
154. I think the police got my Social Welfare records after I spoke to them, which showed that I had complained to **GRO-B** about the abuse I suffered in Marylands, and that nothing was done about it. I worked with the police on their cases over the next six years, including preparing a Victim Impact Report. I found the whole police investigation and trial process daunting, and a horrible experience to go through.
155. In about August 2002, I first met with Ken Clearwater from the Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Trust, and he provided me with support in prison for a number of years. Ken Clearwater remains very supportive of me and other survivors.
156. At some point in 2002 or 2003, I was contacted by law firm Grant Cameron Associates about my Marylands claim, offering to represent me. I do not know how they found out I had been at Marylands or how they tracked me down, but I did not trust them, so I said no.
157. In October 2002, Brother Burke sent me a newsletter saying that he and Michelle Mulvihill had now met with almost each and every Marylands complainant and would begin the process of mediation shortly, once the police had finished interviewing everybody.
158. In November 2002, Brother Burke wrote to me to say that the Order had engaged Sir Rodney Gallen to review their resolution process. He sent me \$1,500 as a gesture, to help me out while I was waiting for the offer that he expected to make in 2003.
159. In March 2003, I met with Brother Burke in prison again. He offered me \$95,000 compensation in relation to the abuse I suffered in Marylands, and an apology, which I accepted. He put the offer in a letter too. Brother Burke told me at the

meeting that it was a “goodwill” payment, not compensation or a full and final settlement. I did not have to sign anything to accept it, I just sent him a letter saying that I would accept the cheque. **[WITN07440024]**

160. In late 2003, the police laid charges against Brothers McGrath and Moloney, including charges relating to their abuse of me. They also charged a few other Brothers in New Zealand and in Sydney at around the same time. I know that they tried to extradite Brother Moloney and some of the others from Australia, but they fought it for a long time. They successfully extradited Brothers Moloney and Garchow, but two of the Brothers were not extradited. That really ripped me up – they should have faced up to the music.
161. After I got out of prison in about late 2003, I moved to Napier to try and re-establish a relationship with my father. I found a job, but I had to quit because I was still abusing drugs. My relationship with my father broke down before too long. I started feeling very intense, frightening and angry emotions. I ended up getting drunk and high and stealing a car, just so that I would go back to prison. I guess I was just going back to my old self-destructive self because I didn't know how to cope.
162. On 27 May 2004, I was sentenced to four and a half years imprisonment on burglary charges, and concurrent sentences of three months' imprisonment in relation to offences of dangerous driving and unlawfully taking a motor vehicle.
163. In August 2004, I started seeing an ACC counsellor in relation to the abuse that I had suffered at Marylands. This is because I had started to realise that children who had been abused often take on abusive characteristics themselves.
164. In March 2006, Ken Clearwater referred me to Sonja Cooper in relation to the abuse I had suffered in care. I had heard about the work Ms Cooper was doing from Detective Sergeant Earle Borrell, who was in charge of the Marylands criminal trials.

165. Later that month, I spoke to a lawyer from Ms Cooper's office who said that the firm could act for me on a legally aided basis in relation to my experiences in Social Welfare care and the psychiatric hospitals. Although they were not sure they would be able to get me any more compensation from the St John of God Order, they said that they would try to help me with that too. The lawyer I spoke to warned me that it could take years to resolve these claims.
166. Also in March 2006, I gave evidence in the trial of Brother Bernard McGrath, which I found really hard and scary. There was a whole lot more to this case than the media has revealed. A lot of the stuff Brother McGrath did wasn't even brought out in the court hearings. He was painted in court to look good, but in the end he got convicted on a number of charges.
167. In his remarks on sentence dated 27 April 2006, Justice Chisolm discussed one of the counts that Brother McGrath was convicted of, relating to his abuse of me:

*[4] As to the offending itself, it involved touching, fondling, masturbation and oral sex. There has also been a good deal of discussion about count 11 which involved penetration of the victim's anus by your finger, penis or by a cane. That victim gave evidence about a beating preceding that offence. This is from the transcript of the trial when the victim was responding to questions from the Crown prosecutor:*

*"...at the end I am on the ground curled up in a ball and just taking the blows. I don't know how or why, I just sort of shut it out.*

*Q. What do you then remember.*

*A. I shut all of it out and the next two things I felt was pressure on my back and I had been forced on my front and pain in my anus.*

*Q. What do you mean pain in your anus.*

A. *It could have been either the cane or himself. At the time I didn't really understand.*

Q. *Could have been the cane or himself doing what.*

A. *Sodomising me. After that I think he just told me to get dressed, not say anything, or it will come back again. And I remember going to the toilet first because I was bleeding.*

Q. *Bleeding from where.*

A. *My anus.*

Q. *Did you tell anyone about this.*

A. *No.*

Q. *Why.*

A. *Too scared.*

Q. *Scared of what.*

A. *Him.*

*No doubt the jury accepted the evidence necessary to create the elements of that offence. I heard that evidence, Mr McGrath, and I believe the complainant about all the things that he spoke about in the passages that I have read."*

168. Brother McGrath was only sentenced to five years' imprisonment. This is partly because he had already served time for sexually abusing street kids. After so many years, I had finally worked up the strength to open up and reveal what

had happened to me, but I felt shot down by the result, and discredited. I try not to feel angry about the outcome of the trial, but I just can't help it.

169. In July 2006 I met with a lawyer from Sonja Cooper's office, and I gave a detailed interview about my experiences in care.
170. I am aware that following this meeting, my lawyers requested my records from a large number of organisations, including the St John of God Order, the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) and District Health Boards. I am also aware that these took some time to be provided – for example, my Department of Social Welfare records took nearly ten months to be provided to my lawyers.
171. On 15 August 2006, Ms Cooper received a letter from Saunders Robinson, the law firm representing the St John of God Order, stating that I had already received a “pastoral payment” for the abuse I suffered in Maryland in full and final settlement of my claim. **[WITN07440025]** As a result, I agreed with my lawyers that we would not pursue this claim further. However, this is not what Brother Burke had promised me three years earlier – I had understood that the Order would be giving me further compensation, especially after I gave evidence in court and Brother McGrath was convicted of offending against me.
172. After the experience with Brother McGrath's trial and then the response from the St John of God Order about not giving me any more compensation, I felt like giving up on the rest of my claims. I was just worried that I wouldn't be believed, especially because of my own convictions. At the same time, I was still working with the police in relation to Brother Moloney's trial, and I wanted closure so that I could move on. I didn't give up, in the end, but I came close.
173. In mid 2007, once my records had all been provided, a lawyer from Sonja Cooper's office started working them and putting it all together into a lengthy document, along with the information I had already provided at my interview. This document was sent to me to review and answer questions on and would form the basis of my formal statement of claim.

174. In December 2007, Sonja Cooper's office (which was by now called Cooper Legal) filed proceedings in the High Court against both the Ministry of Social Development and the Crown Health Financing Agency (CHFA), which was responsible for claims relating to Carrington and Lake Alice.
175. I am aware that from this time, my claim was being case managed as part of a much larger group of filed claims, but from my perspective nothing happened in relation to my claims for years. I contacted Cooper Legal on a regular basis to ask for an update, as I was getting very distressed with the length of time it was taking. My lawyers would always write to me or speak to me on the telephone to let me know what had been going on, but they could not tell me how much longer it was going to take for the claims to be settled.
176. In June 2008, I gave evidence in the trial of Brother Rodger Moloney, which was also really difficult. He was found guilty on seven charges and was found not guilty on a number of other charges, like sodomy. I believe that he was convicted of the two charges that were brought in relation to his abuse of me. He was sentenced to a period of imprisonment. Although I was unsettled after this trial ended, I felt some closure. However, I felt really bad for the other guys who had come so far, but did not end up with their charges found proved like I did.
177. I know that at around the same time, the charges against Brother Garchow were dropped because he was too sick to stand trial.
178. At around this time, Legal Aid started saying that they wanted to withdraw funding from the historic abuse cases, including my claims. Cooper Legal had to spend a lot of time fighting over the next few years to make sure that they could continue acting for me, and other clients. I found this frustrating as I never knew if my cases would be closed out of the blue and it seemed to make things take even longer.



179. After giving evidence in the two Marylands trials, I started trying to change myself and become a good inmate, so that I could stay out of prison when I was released.
180. In December 2011, I was released from prison and lived in the community in Christchurch.
181. I have not been back in prison since then. I found a job and bought a car, which I needed in order to work as there were public transport issues in Christchurch after the earthquakes, and I thought that my claims would be settled soon so I could afford it.
182. In February 2012, Cooper Legal wrote to me about my psychiatric hospital claim, advising that CHFA had made a settlement offer of \$8,000 as a "wellness payment", as well as a letter of apology and repayment of my legal aid debt in relation to that claim. This was not as much as I thought I deserved but because I needed to pay off the car, and because I had been waiting nearly six years after instructing Cooper Legal, I accepted the offer and my claim was discontinued against CHFA. I am still dissatisfied with this outcome. I feel like I was just dealt with and put aside.
183. After this, Cooper Legal asked MSD for an unredacted copy of my Social Welfare records, which was not received for many years. In July 2013, Cooper Legal applied to the High Court for orders requiring MSD to provide them with my unredacted records, which they finally did - 12 months later.
184. In September 2014, Cooper Legal sent a 28 page letter to Crown Law, offering to settle my claim against the Ministry of Social Development for \$65,000 plus legal costs and a letter of apology. The letter expanded on the statement of claim that had been filed in the High Court back in 2007. At my request, the letter also asked for an explanation as to why I was only allowed minimal contact with my father during my childhood, and why I was not allowed any contact with my sister.

185. My lawyers and I never received any answer to these questions, or a detailed response to the allegations set out in the letter of offer.
186. In April 2016, I opted into MSD's Fast Track Process ("FTP") assessment of my claim. In October 2016, Cooper Legal received MSD's offer to settle my Social Welfare claim for \$5,000 under the FTP, plus a letter of apology and payment of my legal aid bill. The offer was non-negotiable. **[WITN07440026 and WITN07440027]**
187. To put it mildly, I thought this offer was a complete joke after all that I had been through, and after I had been dragged through more than ten years of fighting through my lawyers and jumping through all the hoops to get here. The offer was nowhere near what I thought I should be offered, I felt really ripped by it and angry. However I was in financial difficulty, with people breathing down my neck for payments I owed them, and I could not keep waiting. I wanted closure. I was also worried that Legal Aid would shut down my file and I would be left with nothing. I signed a settlement document and received an apology letter.
188. I am still angry and let down by this settlement. \$5,000 after everything I went through, and how long they made me wait to get it? It was crap, just rubbish.
189. Since this time, I have continued the long process of improving myself, getting my life together and becoming somebody. I got into a relationship for a period of time and we had a son. I have been learning to control my temper. I am currently receiving ACC counselling again, to help me identify and resolve my problems.
190. I am angry that throughout my childhood I was put in danger and in unjust situations where I was harmed. I am angry that I was not heard and that my father was not given a decent chance with me. I feel that things would have been different if I had been placed with my father. I think it is wrong that no police investigations into the physical and sexual abuse that I experienced in the institutions took place until 2002.

191. Justice needs to be done. That includes being paid proper compensation rather than just being shut up and put aside. This has got to come out.
192. I want to give this statement because even when I spoke about what happened to me at Marylands before, which resulted in Brother McGrath and Brother Moloney being convicted, I was only acting as the speaker for my demons. The full story couldn't come out about how powerful the Brothers were - they had us all to themselves, and they could hurt any defenseless little kid they liked. Now, I want my demons to be able to speak out about what happened in full detail. I want to be heard.

**Statement of Truth**

This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and was made by me knowing that it may be used as evidence by the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care.

Signed

**GRO-C**

Dated:

15/10/2021

**Not relevant to Natural Justice process**

Signed... **GRO-C** .....

Date... *15/10/2021* .....