

Witness Name: Janet Elsie Lowe

Statement No: WITN0066001

Exhibits: WITN0066002 - WITN0066061

Dated: 16.09.2020

ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO ABUSE IN CARE

WITNESS STATEMENT OF JANET ELSIE LOWE

I, Janet Elsie Lowe, will say as follows:

OUTLINE OF STATEMENT

1. In Sections 1 and 2 of this statement, I briefly introduce myself.
2. In Section 3, I first talk about the early years of my life with my parents and brother. I then refer to the periods during which I was at the Hillsbrook Children's Home, the Salvation Army's Whatman Children's Home, and in foster care. In Section 4, I summarise the abuse and neglect I suffered at Whatman and in foster care. I note that I have previously given more detailed statements about my experience in care to the Salvation Army and others. Because the focus of this hearing is on redress, I do not refer to all of those details in this statement.
3. Section 5 summarises the impacts of the abuse I suffered on me, on my family, and on other relationships of mine.
4. In Section 6, I summarise the efforts I have made on behalf of myself and others to obtain redress, and the results of those efforts. Section 7 refers to the other steps which I think need to be taken in relation to redress.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

5. I was born on GRO-C 1948. I have four children, five grandchildren, and one great-grandson. I had another grandson who died at birth. I live in Paraparaumu, with my two dogs.

SECTION 2: WHO I AM

6. I find it difficult to say what my ethnicity is because I find it difficult to identify with people generally. But if I had to choose, I would say that I am New Zealand European. I have a range of medical issues and health concerns which I refer to in Section 5.

SECTION 3: MY TIME IN CARE

7. I would like to begin this section by talking about when I lived with my parents and brother. I then refer to the dates I was in care and the reasons for me being in care.

8. In this statement I refer to the Department of Social Welfare (**DSW**). I think that DSW had a different name when I was a child and there were a few name changes over the years. For ease of reference in this statement, I refer to the state authorities responsible for child welfare when I was a child as DSW.

Life with my parents and my brother

9. For the first nine years of my life I lived with my parents and **GRO-B-100** my younger brother. **GRO-B-100** was born when I was four. My father was in his late 60s, some 30 years older than my mother. This did not matter to me and I was not aware of the unusualness of this as a child.
10. We lived on farms in the Hawkes Bay. We were at Makotutu until I was two and then we moved to a sheep station out of Waipukurau. We were a long way from any school, so my schooling started with correspondence lessons.
11. When I was 5 and a half we moved to Glen Afton. This was another sheep station at Raukawa. I started going to school then. I remember being excited about going to school, and I have a lot of memories of our home at the station.
12. I also remember going for outings with Mum, Dad and **GRO-B-100** and the things we used to do together. We belonged to the Salvation Army church in Hastings, and we went to Sunday school picnics and trips to the river, and to the sea in Napier with other church members. I remember visiting other family members, and Christmases with my parents and **GRO-B-100** (always a time of great excitement).
13. I have a lot of good, strong memories from these times. I felt very safe and special sitting on my dad's knee while he read to me or with my mother sitting on my bed telling me stories. I had my own toys and lots of books. My parents loved and cared well for me, and I have no memory of being smacked or of being unhappy at this time. The adults in my extended family were my friends and I had no fear. Carefree is a word that seems to sum up these early years of my life.
14. After Glen Afton we moved to a bach at Frimley, very near Hastings Hospital. I did not know at the time, but I now think this move was because my mother had cancer. Following that, we had a couple of moves in Hastings, and I went to Parkvale and then Mayfair school. I was put up to standard one part-way

through the year at Parkvale, and I was very proud of this. So were my parents, who praised me for it. I would write stories at night time and take them to school the next day. At Parkvale and Mayfair school I had friends, and after school there were always places to go to and other kids to play with.

15. I think Mum may have been in hospital for some of this time. I remember ordinary things about her rather than things about her illness. These included decorating my tricycle with crêpe paper, and Mum and Dad helping me to do that, the scent bottles on her dressing table and perfume put on the edge of hankies when we went out, and the Salvation Army band coming to our house at Christmas time and playing Christmas carols. One time I saw Mum being wheeled from her bed into the toilet on a chair with wheels. I felt shy and awestruck by this but did not know why. I certainly had no awareness that she was very ill and would die.
16. My memories of Dad at this time include going to sleep listening to him playing hymns on the pedal organ in the lounge, eating the toffee and fudge he made, and of him being very gentle when he was brushing knots out of my hair.
17. Mum passed away from cancer in 1956. My dad told me Mum had gone to heaven to live with God. He was 73 and I was eight. Dad was crying and this frightened me. I don't think I understood the finality of things then. I thought we would keep on living with him, the same as before. I told him that I would help with GRO
B-100 We did not go to Mum's funeral. Maybe keeping us away was done to protect us, but in retrospect it also kept me from knowing where Mum was. We would go to the cemetery and put flowers on this place, but I didn't connect it to my mother at all.

Going into care

18. After my mother passed away, GRO
B-100 and I first lived mainly with Dad, but we also stayed with other people for periods. I think Dad arranged these stays because he was struggling to look after both of us on his own.
19. Later, I found out that a Mrs Cox in Hastings had contacted DSW. Mrs Cox expressed concerns that I was living with Dad and being expected to do the housework. She also claimed that we had inadequate clothing and bedding.

20. I do not recall any feelings of deprivation about those times. However, shortly after Mrs Cox raised her concerns, GRO-B-100 and I moved into Hillsbrook Children's Home in Havelock North. I also think that Dad may have been ill at this time, with pneumonia. This was in 1957. I did not want to go to the Home and was very upset at leaving Dad.
21. However, once there, the Home was not too bad. The Home itself was a large two-storey house, plenty of outside space and playing equipment, and small enough (I think 15 children when I was there) to retain some semblance of non-institutional life. It was run by the Presbyterian Social Service. It was good to have GRO-B-100 with me there, and I looked out for him.
22. We had outings, including visits to the sea and the river, and sometimes other children (not Home kids) came with us. There was a dairy across the road and every Saturday we were given 3p to spend there. On Sundays we would walk to the Presbyterian Church, dressed in blue pinafores and Panama hats.
23. There were not a lot of rules at the Home. We made our own beds and help set the table, but that was all the work we did. The playroom downstairs had books, puzzles, a blackboard and a window seat with toys. There was a tent set up outside and I would take books in there and read after school. I don't remember any male staff from Hillsbrook, but I do remember some female staff and being hugged by them. We had Christmas at the Home in 1957, and I have good memories of this.
24. Shortly after Christmas in 1957, we went home again with Dad. For a time after the Home, I also went to stay with a family called the GRO-B-101 in Ormondville for a time, and to the GRO-B-102 in Taihape. I think these stays were both over holidays as I did not go to school during them.
25. In 1958, my father asked the Salvation Army in Hastings for help. By this stage, he was 74 or 75. On 7 July 1958, the Hastings Corps of the Salvation Army wrote to the Salvation Army's Children's Aid Secretary, asking whether Whatman in Masterton could take us. That letter refers to Dad's age and says that he had managed looking after both of us for a year after my mother's passing, but was finding it too much [WITN0066002]. It also said that my father

was thinking of trying to obtain accommodation in Masterton if we went to Whatman.

26. My father formally applied for me (and I think my brother) to be admitted to Whatman on 28 July 1958 [WITN0066003]. There was some correspondence between the Salvation Army's Children's Aid Secretary and the Hastings Corps, because my father could not afford to pay the full cost of us boarding at Whatman. Instead, he offered to do odd jobs at Whatman or help in any other way possible, as well as paying to Whatman the family benefit he would receive for me and my brother. I note that my understanding is that at the time the family benefit was 10 shillings per child per week, and from 1 October 1958 it was increased to 15 shillings per week per child [WITN0066004].
27. On 19 August 1958, the Children's Aid Secretary advised Hastings Corps that we would be accepted at Whatman [WITN0066005].
28. As part of us going to Whatman, my father signed an "Agreement as to Control and Maintenance" for each of us. Amongst other matters, the agreements stated that we would be placed under the control of the Manager of Whatman until my father was able to provide for our maintenance and custody, or until we turned 15 [WITN0066006].
29. The agreements also set out various other matters, including how much my father would pay to Whatman's Manager. It is not clear to me from the agreements how much this was. My agreement refers to my father having to pay "15 each (Plus) Family Benefit. only.", and I think the reference to "15" is to 15 shillings. My brother's agreement, however, refers to "(Plus) Family Benefit. only.", and there is no reference to "15". And, other correspondence refers to my father not being able to pay more than the family benefit.
30. I have always wanted, but never obtained, clarity on how much the Army received for my care from my father and other sources. It has also always been my impression that the Army must have received much more money for our care than it spent on our care. This includes because as well as the family benefit, my understanding is that the Army received what was called a capitation grant for me of 10 shillings a week from the government. I

understand this was a payment government made to registered children's homes, including Whatman, for each child in the home.

31. GRO-B-100 and I were admitted to Whatman on 5 September 1958. I was 10 years old and he was six. Dad moved to Masterton too. When he first went to Masterton he lived in a boarding house in Church St. Sometime after that he moved to the Kandahar Old People's Home.
32. As referred to below, GRO-B-100 was adopted and left Whatman before me. I stayed until 15 April 1961, for approximately 2 and a half years in total. I set out in Section 4 below what I understand about why I left Whatman.

My brother's adoption

33. My brother was adopted from Whatman and I didn't know until he had gone. I don't know quite when this was. I hadn't seen GRO-B-100 for some time and asked where he was. One of the Whatman staff, Captain Anderson, told me he had left, I couldn't see him, and that he had been adopted.
34. It was devastating for me that I'd lost my brother and I was still left at Whatman. I did not see GRO-B-100 again until I was 19. I found him after phoning many of the schools in Wellington to see if they had a GRO-B-100 (GRO-B-100 was his adoptive name). I had one photo of him, I think he was about six years old in it. I took it with me in my lunch hour and went to Hutt Valley High School. I asked someone at the gate to get him for me. This large, hairy near-man came out (he was 15 at that time). I showed him the photo and asked if he was my brother. He remembered me and asked if I was his sister. We both stood there crying. It was very poignant and the best thing that had happened to me up until then.
35. GRO-B-100's adoption had been broken and he was in Epuni Boys' Home. I met his social worker and stayed in touch with GRO-B-100 throughout a number of foster homes he subsequently had.

Contact with my Dad

36. My memory is that I did not see Dad all that often when I was at Whatman. He occasionally did the gardens there, and when he was at the boarding house in Church St he had a car. So over that period he would have come in the car to

do that work. But, as I remember it, after he was in Kandahar he did not have a car any more. Also, for a while I saw him at church on Sundays but this stopped when he changed to the Baptist Church. Whatman also did not allow us to telephone each other.

37. While I was at Whatman, no-one spoke to me about Mum, Dad, or my brother.

Multiple foster homes

38. After leaving Whatman, I went to a foster home for approximately 8 months. My Dad had organised this. Later, in Christmas of 1961, I went to live with another foster family, who I will refer to as the Ms. I stayed there until August 1962.

39. After the Ms I was placed in a series of other foster homes. Between August 1962 and February 1963, I had 6 changes of foster homes (some of them are ones I went to twice). I only stayed at some of these homes for very short periods, such as 9 or 13 days. From the time I left Whatman in 1961, and through until 1966, when I was 18, I moved 19 times.

SECTION 4: THE ABUSE AND NEGLECT I SUFFERED AT WHATMAN AND IN FOSTER CARE

40. In this section, I first talk about life generally at Whatman. Then I refer more specifically to the most significant abuse I suffered there.

Whatman buildings, daily routines, and rules

41. When I began at Whatman in 1958 I think there were about 75 children there.

42. Whatman looked and felt like an institution [WITN0066007]. It was a vast concrete structure divided into three main sections, and was built like a large hospital. There were separate buildings for the schoolhouse and houses for other staff, including Major and Mrs Hill and their son [GRO-B-104]. Major Hill was Whatman's Manager at the time. I remember feeling that the buildings there were enormous, unlike at Hillsbrook Children's Home.

43. Whatman had a room called the playroom, but this was large and bare. Along its sides were wooden benches and two older style radiators that were warm only if one was leaning on them. Unlike in Hillsbrook, there were no books, toys, games or pictures on the wall. If it was wet, we stayed in this room until it

was time to do something else, like eat, go to school or go to bed. We lined up in here when the bell rang for meals and filed singly along the passage and into the dining room.

44. Life was very regimented. Bells rang to wake us up, summons us for meals, and for bedtime. For some things, whistles were blown.
45. Our daily routine was to get up and get dressed (school clothes were kept in the locker room by dorms), make beds, and wait in the playroom until the breakfast bell went. After breakfast we waited for the bell to say we could go to school. Those on dishes or with other tasks did them before school.
46. Then we would walk to school, walk back to Whatman for lunch, go back to school again in the afternoon, come back to Whatman after school, and then go to our chores. These usually lasted until dinnertime. We would then eat dinner and hang around until a bell went for bed. There would be Bible readings and prayers, and then sleep.
47. In the girls' downstairs bathroom there was no bath as such. There was just a foot bath, one toilet and three hand basins. Wednesday nights were bath nights, in the upstairs bathroom. We all stripped off in the locker rooms and stood in a line waiting to go in the bath, which was in the middle of the room. There were no doors for younger children (there was however an enclosed bath for older girls). A member of staff would wash us two at a time. We would get in and out quickly. There was no privacy, and I was very uncomfortable when my body changed, having to wait with the younger kids. If one was at the back of the line, the water was most likely cold and dirty.
48. A saucer of salt was kept by the basins in the girls' bathroom. This was for cleaning our teeth with. We did not have toothbrushes or toothpaste. I could never understand this, as when I lived with Dad I always had a toothbrush. Occasionally someone new would arrive with a toothbrush and I (and many others) would use it, if no one else was looking.
49. There was a book room upstairs, but we were not allowed to go in there. Boredom was a constant, as apart from fixed swings and roundabouts in the front yard, there were no toys and only limited activities. In the summer we

were sometimes allowed in Whatman's swimming pool after school or on weekends.

50. We had to eat all of our meals. There was a no talking rule in the dining room. If a child spoke, or was in trouble for some other reason, the child had to stand and eat his or her meal. I found this a particularly humiliating experience and I hated it when it happened to me.
51. After meals, the dining room was also where Major Hill did strapping. The person in trouble would be called out in front of everyone and strapped on the hand a number of times. I was strapped at times, including one time after I had run away and been brought back to Whatman.
52. Birthdays were not celebrated individually at Whatman. Rather, they went unnoticed. As I remember it, there was one day each year when the staff sang "happy birthday to all of you." I had a cake brought in by Dad one time but I wasn't allowed it. It stayed in the kitchen, and I don't know who ate it.
53. At Whatman, I was always dressed in second-hand clothes (for school or while we were at Whatman) or Whatman's uniform (for going to church, choir or to places other than school). I do not remember being given any new clothes all the time I was at Whatman. One time, my half-sister came to Whatman with Dad to visit me. My half-sister was then the Director of Nursing in New Zealand at the Health Department. The staff at Whatman gave me a bra and nice clothes to wear for the occasion, and I thought they would be my clothes. When my half-sister had gone, however, I had to take everything off. I never saw these clothes again.
54. The staff used to cut our hair. Unlike at Hillsbrook, we were not given any pocket money. I do not recall Whatman arranging doctor's visits.

School

55. All of the children at Whatman went to Cornwall Street School. I had been in Standard Three but I think I was put back to Standard Two at this school. I do not remember anybody explaining to me why this was, but I wonder if it was regulated by age rather than ability.

56. The "Home Kids", as we were known as, didn't mix with "outside" children. Also, unlike at Hillsbrook Children's Home, and the other places I had lived, I did not make friends at Whatman. Rather, I became a loner.
57. We always had hot meals at lunchtime. This meant walking home from school very quickly (a 20 minute walk) and getting back in time afterwards. I remember most times being late back to school. I had to stay in after school when I was late back and I then would be at trouble at Whatman for being late home.
58. I didn't excel at learning. Unlike life with Dad, no one ever asked me about school or what was happening for me. So, school soon became just a place to go to get away from Whatman.
59. Sometimes ventriloquist or travelling drama groups would perform at the school. I did not go to these things and, as I remember it, neither did other Whatman kids. I think this was because they cost money to attend. Instead, we were set some school work and had to sit in a room by ourselves and do this. I felt very different from the other kids and didn't like being lumped in with the others from Whatman. I was very unhappy but don't think that anyone noticed it.
60. We were also separated from people in other ways. For example, when my dad went to the Salvation Army Church in Masterton I'd see him there, but I was not allowed to sit with him. Instead, I had to sit with the other "Home Kids". We all wore the same uniform when we went out anywhere. Also, I did not sit with my brother at meal times, and my memory is that this was also how it was for other children with family members at Whatman. I do not know the reason for this but I think now it may have been because seating was arranged by age. So families would not sit together unless the children were close in age.

Weekends at Whatman

61. Saturdays were work days. After breakfast we would be sent to our jobs at the Home. The floors were all washed, waxed and polished, the silver and brass cleaned, table scrubbed, playroom floors swept, scrubbed etc. We would do this until lunchtime. Saturday afternoons were free time, unless (as I did when I was 11 years old), one went to work in the community. I was often on laundry which meant folding all the washing, ironing the sheets etc.

62. When I was 11, I was sent to work at two places on Saturday afternoons. This was after working at the Home in the morning. I was lent a bike and cleaned two houses for people. I did not know them from church so I am not sure how they acquired our services (a few other girls worked also). I did the carpet sweeping, dishes, floors and bath, basin and toilet. I was paid five shillings which I had to take back to Whatman. As referred to below, this money was never returned to me.
63. Sundays were church days. After breakfast, there was Sunday School and prayers at the Home. Then church at 11am in the Salvation Army Church at Masterton. Home for lunch, Sunday school at the Home in the afternoon, dinner, open-air Salvation Army meeting in Masterton streets and church at night. Apart from school and church, there were very few occasions we would leave Whatman.

Physical and emotional abuse at Whatman

64. There were two staff at Whatman who regularly abused me emotionally and physically.

Mrs Irvine

65. Mrs Irvine managed the laundry, and I remember being on laundry duty often. I was very afraid of Mrs Irvine, as she was unpredictable and I was never sure how to act. If I did something like putting a crease in the wrong place or making some other mistake, Mrs Irvine would hit me around the face and head, or pinch me on the back or arms. She also threw things at me. She called me a stupid girl, told me I had an ugly face and was no good. When I cried (as I always did), she would call me sook-a-baby. She would tell me to stop crying and hit me some more.
66. One time she hit me on the head and I couldn't straighten my neck up. It was very sore and I couldn't sleep properly on it. When I went back to the laundry with my neck crooked, she kept telling me to straighten up. I couldn't. She pulled my neck round which hurt unbearably.
67. I told another woman staff member but she did not do anything about my sore neck. I think I told Lieutenant GRO-8-105 or Captain Moreland.

68. On another occasion Mrs Irvine hit me very hard on the head. I was putting sheets through a roller, and one went through crooked. Mrs Irvine looked over, leapt out of her chair and whacked me on the side of my head. I couldn't hear out of my ear. It was all muffled and it was very sore.
69. Again, nothing was done after I told someone (again, I think Lieutenant GRO-B-105 or Captain Moreland). I wasn't taken to a doctor. I don't know how long the muffled hearing and pain lasted for, but I remember being at school and not hearing properly.
70. When I told the staff members about my sore neck and my hearing, I didn't say that Mrs Irvine had hit me. I just said that my neck was sore, and the other time I said I couldn't hear and I had an earache. I was too scared to tell them that Mrs Irvine had hit me because of what she might do to me if she found out that I had told. I also saw Mrs Irvine hit other children too.
71. On the way home from school, before laundry duty, I would feel sick, have diarrhoea and feel 'unreal' before I went to work there. The only time I felt safe from Mrs Irvine was when I left Whatman. Then I had dreams about still working with her.
72. I had always thought that no one knew about what Mrs Irvine did at Whatman, but in 1997 I visited Mrs Hill (the wife of Whatman's Manager when I was there, Major Hill). I had not seen Mrs Hill since I left Whatman in 1961. I told her about the things that happened to me. She said Mrs Irvine was "a vicious woman" and had been warned by the Hills not to hit children. When I asked why she was able to stay on at Whatman, Mrs Hill said was very hard to find people to work in the laundry and that was why they kept her.

Captain GRO-B-106

73. Captain GRO-B-106 who worked mostly in the kitchen, was the other person who actively abused me. Most of the staff ignored me, which was preferable. She was less overt than Mrs Irvine but as vicious, mostly hitting out with spoons etc or pinching. She would also slap hard on the legs and pull hair. These would be for things like burning the toast or being late down to duty, but would also occur when I did not know what I had done wrong.

74. I dreaded her being on bath/bed duty because she also slapped me when she was doing this. She accused me of talking after lights out one time (I wasn't) and I was sent to the small dormitory to sleep for a week. The small dormitory was where little kids slept. Captain [GRO-B-106] would also get me to stand up and eat my meals. She would say I was useless and the more she did that, the more I made mistakes.
75. When I spoke to Mrs Hill in 1997, as referred to above, she acknowledged knowing or suspecting that Captain [GRO-B-106] was abusive. Mrs Hill said however that she had trouble "catching her at it".

Lieutenant [GRO-B-105]

76. Lieutenant [GRO-B-105] was a staff member who helped with the kids. She would get me to rub her feet and her back. She would usually call me into her room and tell me to do it. She would take her top off, undo her bra and then lie on her stomach and I would have to rub, stroke and tickle her back. Her door would be shut and I could hear kids playing outside. My arms would be tired but I couldn't go until she told me I could.
77. I am not sure if this was abuse or not, but I didn't like doing it and I didn't have a choice about doing it. I don't know if there were others made to do this by Lieutenant [GRO-B-105] or if it was only me.

Neglect

78. As well as the physical and emotional abuse I have referred to above, my main sense of Whatman was one of neglect.
79. I had very little contact with adults there. There was no one to talk to about things. Most adult communication came in the form of punishment for some infringement. We were never treated as individuals, and I do not remember ever being hugged by any staff or praised for anything. One time, Lieutenant Liddy (a male staff member) was kind to me after I had been in trouble for something. I remember this because it made a difference to me at the time.
80. I had varucas on my feet which were excruciatingly sore in the winter, but nothing was done. I had boils and had to have sulphur and molasses, but kept going to school even though I couldn't sit down properly.

81. On another occasion, I had measles and was by myself in the sick room. Meals were usually brought in by staff or older kids. There was nothing to do but lie in bed, as no staff came in during the day. I remember waiting for dinner to come and it didn't. No one came to turn the light off either, so I think I was forgotten about.
82. Another time, I had glass in my foot and told a staff member at Whatman. Nothing was done and at school I asked my teacher why I had a red line all up my leg. My Dad was contacted and I think arranged for me to go to the doctor.
83. Much later, I found what I think is a DSW file note dated 7 March 1961 **[WITN0066008]**. This refers to my Dad having contacted DSW about my foot. The note records that Dad was "still concerned" about me being at Whatman and he did not think I had had the right treatment and care for my foot. It also states my Dad's view that the Whatman staff were "too impersonal and too hard on the children". Further, it states he was "an elderly man who is genuinely concerned for his child", he had had differences with the Salvation Army authorities, and he was resigning his position in the Army.
84. The note goes on to say that he had called Mrs Hill at Whatman to ask about my foot. She "became very excited and irate on the phone", and said to him that he could remove me immediately. According to the file note, Mrs Hill was apparently not very well. The note also records that its author had had a similar reaction from Mrs Hill to the one my father experienced, when the author had enquired with Mrs Hill about another child. Further, the note states that Dad had been advised to make an appointment with Major Hill, and then if he decided that I should be moved DSW would assist with my placement.
85. Another document I found on my DSW file was a letter from a "Senior Child Welfare Officer" to a Department of Education psychologist **[WITN0066009]**. I think this letter was sent on 2 August 1962. The letter refers to Dad being concerned about my welfare at Whatman. It also refers to him having "a series of small clashes" with the Whatman authorities, and them asking him to place me in a foster home if he were not satisfied. As set out below, Dad decided to do this in April 1961.

86. The letter also records that Dad met me at the Baptist Church regularly every Sunday. I think the note was written well after I left Whatman, as during my time there, and as set out above, I attended the Salvation Army Church on Sundays. It was only after I left Whatman that I changed to the Baptist Church.

Sexual abuse of other children

87. I was not sexually abused at Whatman. I remember however that one morning [GRO-B-107] came into breakfast, we all sat at the same table and he said that Lieutenant [GRO-B-108] had been "playing with his diddle". This didn't make sense to me at the time. Other people I spoke to later however remembered Lieutenant [GRO-B-108] taking [GRO-B-107] and [GRO-B-109] into his room after lights out in the dormitory.
88. I also remember an incident involving the intercom. A female officer, I think Lieutenant [GRO-B-105] was telling Major Hill of sexual abuse that was going on. He was refuting it and saying that the children should be punished for lying. They were shouting at each other and everybody could hear it because the intercom had been left on and the discussion was broadcast over the Whatman grounds.

Required to work outside of Whatman and pay the earnings to the Army

89. As set out above, from when I was 11 years old at Whatman I had to do cleaning in other people's homes on the weekend. I had to give the money I was paid for this work to Mr and Mrs Hill at Whatman.
90. I later discovered when I got my DSW file that Dad wrote to Major Hill in April 1961. This was just before he took me out of Whatman [WITN0066010].
91. In the letter Dad advised that he had arranged a private home for me, and that he would call the following Saturday (15 April 1961) to collect me and my belongings. He asked that I be provided certain clothes before I left. He also referred to a similar request he had made in relation to my brother before he left Whatman, and which Dad said in his letter had not been met.
92. My father also referred to [GRO-B-100] and I being "oversupplied" with clothes when we came into Whatman (and I note in this regard that when we were admitted to Whatman it was recorded on a Salvation Army form that our clothing was "very good") [WITN0066011]. He said I had gone into Whatman with "a good tweed

overcoat, which has been worn until very recently by one of the younger girls", and he asked that this be replaced by Whatman. He further asked for the return of two pictures and for the family benefit book, as the payments would be transferred to my new foster home. He referred as well to social security payments being adjusted by DSW.

93. In the letter, Dad referred to his understanding that my "Saturday morning wages have been kept in the office as a fund for new Sunday Shoes, and they should be supplied if possible in readiness for the change to her new home". Whatman did not however supply me with these shoes, return the money, or give me the clothes Dad asked for. Instead, I remember my first foster mother after Whatman taking me to buy new clothes and shoes.

Abuse in foster care

94. Two of the foster homes I had after Whatman were good. The others mostly were not, including that I suffered abuse at many of them. The worst was the Ms. Because I am providing this statement for the purposes of the Commission's hearing into the Salvation Army's redress processes, I do not detail here all of my foster care experiences. I do however wish to say the following. I also wish to record that I think the way I was treated at Whatman had a considerable effect on how I felt about myself after leaving, and the way I responded to situations which arose in foster care.
95. My understanding is that DSW were aware that Mr M had had several nervous breakdowns [WITN0066009]. Despite this, I went there and started third form at Wairarapa College, as Janet M. Also, the letter from a DSW Senior Child Welfare Officer, which I referred to above, records that my first foster father had had significant concerns about me going to the Ms. He had said the Ms' house was no place for a girl to be because of Mr M's "sexual proclivities" [WITN0066009] (although I am not sure when DSW became aware that he had said this).
96. I was at the Ms from Christmas of 1961 to July 1962 (ie. from 13 to 14 years of age). During my time there Mr M sexually abused me on many occasions, including raping me. He used to say to me that this is what all fathers do with

their daughters, but if you talk about it people might not understand, and you will be sent back to Whatman. I was very afraid of this.

97. When I first went to the Ms, the plan was that they would adopt me. I had however talked to my father and DSW about some of the things Mr M was doing. DSW asked the Ms about this and Mr M denied any wrongdoing. After that they said they did not want to adopt me and I left their home.
98. In July 1962 I went into the care of the Masterton Child Welfare Family Home. In late July 1962, Mr M spoke again with DSW and said he told a lie when he originally spoke with them. He said that he had bathed me without Mrs M being there.
99. On 1 August 1962 I became a state ward. I understand that on 2 August 1962, DSW requested a report on me from a Department of Education psychologist (the Senior Child Welfare Officer letter referred to above) **[WITN0066009]**. At that time, I was 14 and in the care of the Masterton Child Welfare Family Home. The letter stated:
- I have the impression that when Janet first went to the Ms she was fairly innocent sexually but during her stay with them something has awakened her to this side of life. She had put herself in a false situation and did not know how to get out of it. After lengthy discussions with the Ms I do not think Mr M has been other than foolishly demonstrative with her. When she first went there she asked them to treat her as a small child but the situation she herself has created has become a great embarrassment to her.
100. The letter also referred to me having difficulty "orientating" myself, and asked for advice to assist to ensure that I developed "normally".
101. On 21 August 1962, I said to DSW that Mr M had been sexually abusing me. DSW met again with the Ms, and Mr M denied this. DSW also met with my father, and advised him that a criminal trial against Mr M would not be in my interests. As far as I know, no complaint was laid with the police about Mr M. I had remembered going to Court around this time, but this was to break the adoption. It wasn't a trial against Mr M for having abused me.
102. A psychologist provided DSW with a report on me on 27 September 1962 **[WITN0066012]**. The report states that according to standardised tests at the

time, I was of "low average and general intellectual ability" with a verbal IQ range of 89-99", and a range of 83-96 on the "Ravens Progressive Matrices". The psychologist stated that these results suggested I was unlikely to be suited to an academic course.

103. The report went on to say:

[T]he foster father appears to have been somewhat unwise in his treatment of the girl, being somewhat over-demonstrative to the extent that Janet alleged that he had made sexual advances towards her. It seems doubtful that this was the case, but there is no doubt that she has learned to display herself physically and recognises that this brings the attention she is seeking.

104. The report stated that I was "suffering from some deep-seated psychological difficulties", and that a psychiatric interview, "preferably over an extended period", was desirable.

105. Despite this, I did not receive any counselling or other mental health assistance from DSW during all the time I was in its care and/or foster care. Rather, I remember a social worker, Mrs Stride at the Masterton Child Welfare Family Home, telling me to put out of my mind anything that had happened at the Ms and to get on with my life.

106. Later on, I went to live with a different half-sister in the United States. This was also abusive and my time in the States ended with me being sent back to New Zealand. Whatman also surfaced for me when this happened. I thought that if my own family didn't want me, no-one else would want me. I thought people could see the badness I felt was inside myself, because of the way I was treated at Whatman (i.e. I had been treated badly at Whatman because I must have been bad).

My father's passing

107. My father passed away in 1963. I was 15 years old and in foster care at the time. I had not seen him much in the previous years.

SECTION 5: IMPACT OF THE ABUSE ON ME AND OTHERS

108. I think that the abuse and neglect that I suffered at Whatman and afterwards affected all aspects of my life.

Disassociation

109. When I was at Whatman, I first experienced what a psychologist of mine called disassociation. I was sitting on the roundabout in front of Whatman. Everything went unreal around me. I felt physically sick and that I wasn't real. Nothing about my body felt normal. I could hear things in the distance, colours were different and I thought it meant I had gone insane. My body felt prickly and I was sure that people could see what was happening.
110. I didn't tell anyone that this had happened. After the first time, it happened quite often and I would be detached from my surroundings and other people. It was very frightening and it went with me to other places after I left Whatman. It still happens if I am very stressed.

Stress, alienation, depression and suicidal thinking

111. I feel that when I went to Whatman I lost my home, my toys, books and other belongings, my school and my friends. My first memories of being hit, and of being afraid, not liked and not cared for, come from Whatman.
112. A number of my difficulties that I have had throughout my life started at Whatman. There was no proper social, or any sexual, education, and it was an abusive and emotionally barren environment. I did not feel that I mattered at all to anyone there. I didn't know how to act to avoid being picked on by some adults and I stopped feeling things there.
113. My view now is that with all that had happened and was happening, I was constantly stressed, distracted, and acting out. I also now believe that for most of my childhood I was depressed, and no-one recognised this. I had little self-esteem or confidence and an overwhelming sense of being different from everyone else. I did not feel like I fit in anywhere.
114. I have experienced significant episodes of depression, including being in Wellington Hospital Psychiatric Ward for approximately a three-week period in 1971. While there I miscarried the baby I was expecting. I have seen from hospital notes of that time that I was on suicide watch, but I don't remember feeling suicidal. After that, there were many other times that I felt hopeless, and I have been on antidepressants many times.

115. In 1981, close to the time I was diagnosed with cervical cancer, I found out about a Psychiatric Unit in Tauranga Hospital. After a meeting with a psychiatrist there I decided to book in and try to resolve all of the things that were wrong with me 'once and for all'. This was the theory but the reality was that it was a waste of time. It was all group therapy rather than one-to-one. I didn't know what or how I was to work things out.
116. The first conscious suicidal thinking I had was in around 1983 when a relationship I was in finished. I experienced the thinking again when my children and I were living in Australia in 1985.
117. I refer below to obtaining my file from DSW. When I did this and started looking through it, it was overwhelming. Again the pointlessness of my life and continued living was an issue for me. This has happened four or five times since then. At one stage, my suicidal thinking became more specific and I worked out how and when I would do it. I bought a piece of tubing to put in my car. Any thinking like this was detached and quite clinical.
118. I am not in the same place now but the idea of suicide has never gone away properly. It is always an option.

Other medical problems

119. In the 1970s, I had my hearing checked. I was advised that I had lost 30% of hearing in my left ear due to nerve damage. Much later I asked an audiologist if it could have been caused by being hit on the ear. He said it could have been. I cannot say for certain that my hearing loss was caused by Mrs Irvine hitting me, but I suspect it was. I always had problems hearing after Mrs Irvine hit me very hard on the side of my head. I have tried hearing aids, but they do not help. I think this is perhaps because of the nerve damage.
120. From my late teens onwards, I have had back and neck problems. Mostly this was because of my neck bones being out of alignment.
121. I have a range of other medical problems, including neurological and autoimmune conditions. My symptoms include numbness and tingling in patches, balance problems, an acute attack of optic neuritis which has left my left eye blurry, fatigue, muscles jumping/buzzing, icy cold sensations in parts of my

leg/feet, lots of sensory bizarre sensations, and decreased coordination and strength in my limbs.

122. I have back problems from a fall in Sydney in 1988. I have had thyroid issues, and carpal tunnel surgery on both my hands. I have also had a large fibroid removed which had grown from my uterus into my cervix.
123. There have been very few periods in my life that have been low stress. I should be healthy because I have been a vegetarian for decades, walk my dogs daily and eat organic and whole foods, and I do not smoke or drink. So, given those things, I believed unresolved stress must be what's causing my 'unhealth'.

Poor and abusive relationships

124. I think that many of the problems I have had in my life come from or were contributed to by Mr M's abuse. These include considerable difficulties I have had with relationships, trust and sexual things, and the cancer of the cervix I was diagnosed with when I was 32. The surgeon I consulted about the cancer said that my having started intercourse at 13 (when I was first raped by Mr M), combined with multiple partners, were most likely contributing factors to having cancer at 32.
125. There were also no stable and decent role models in my life. By the time that I was 18, I feel like I was a lost soul. I had an obsession about finding my brother and very confused views of what relationships were about. I had distorted views of sex and friendship, and by 17 I was having sex indiscriminately. For a while, I had sex with anyone who asked or expected it. I would describe the relationships I had as transient and/or abusive. I had no understanding of choosing people on their qualities and got into relationships basically because someone was there.
126. The father of my first daughter left when I got pregnant, and I had only known him for a few months at the time. He had no part in her life and did not support me in any way.
127. I was with the father of my other three children for eight years. The relationship was destructive from the beginning. Both of us frequently yelled at each other and he used to hit me and push me around. I was always told that I was 'fed' in

the head, and he constantly put me down in other ways. Neither of us ever talked about our feelings. I now believe he was an alcoholic but I did not understand that at the time.

128. Early on in this relationship, when we had sex I used to get him mixed up with Mr M. This happened a lot with him (and later with other men), and I stopped having sex with him. This caused a lot of trouble. The most memorable time was when he grabbed me around the throat and said "you'd better cough up soon or else". I went to a lawyer after he had kicked me in the back. I was in bed asleep that night and his kick sent me onto the floor. I applied to stay in the house and he and his son left. After our relationship ended, he was abusive to me in other ways.
129. Following that relationship, I had a number of what I would call inappropriate liaisons. I was then with another man for almost 5 years, until he left and I moved to Australia with my four children. This was in 1985.

Difficulties in raising my children

130. My child-rearing abilities have been hit and miss. With my oldest, I was an unmarried mother, which was quite a stigma in the 1960s. I spent most of my pregnancy in homes for 'girls like me'. These were very reminiscent of Whatman and my pregnancy was a misery, especially as there was pressure from everyone for me to adopt her out. I was actually in the lawyer's office to sign the papers when he told me that she had a hole in her heart and was not adoptable. This is the best of days, as I knew I would keep her. She was in hospital for three months until I could have her.
131. When my children were babies, I managed quite well. I took care of them physically and they went to kindergarten etc. When they got past nine and 10, I lost it. I don't think I met many of their emotional needs and was erratic in my expectations of them.
132. Parenting is still a mystery to me in some ways. I think I'm a better grandparent than I was a parent. I am not able to feel loved and this has always been an issue for me. Sometimes I know intellectually that my grandchildren (for example) love me, but I don't feel it as a sense. The nearest I come to feeling

loved is by my dogs. Although I know with certainty that my parents loved and cherished me.

Insecurity, lack of direction, and limited life skills after care and school

133. I had no goals or plans when I left school, and I wasn't given any guidance. I just muddled through whatever was happening - mostly being either passive or leaping without thinking into situations. I didn't consciously think about Whatman, the foster home in which I was sexually abused, or the other foster homes, but often had dreams about people or things that had happened in my past. These upset me.

134. I think that the constant changes of address, and resulting changes in schools, created insecurity in me. I never felt grounded or that I had anywhere to go back to as a 'Home Base'. Whenever I saw a 'Welfare' car outside when I arrived home from school, I'd expect to be moved, especially when the doors were shut and my foster parents and a social worker were in the lounge. I would go and pack my bags, and expect to be moved not knowing why.

135. I left school and foster care with very few life skills. When I first left school, I did not stay in a job longer than a few months at the most. I changed jobs and living places regularly and often without any particular reason. If I did not like a job, I just wouldn't go back and I don't think I always let my employers know. I think in hindsight that the patterns of moving around were a form of protection for me. If I didn't stay too long, people would not get hacked off with me and ask me to leave. I think I moved before this could happen.

Going to university and my journalism course

136. I started university part-time when I was 29. I was accepted after scoring 128 in an IQ test (a lot higher than the IQ I was assessed as having by the Department of Education psychologist in 1962). The first year I did psychology and sociology and scored an A++ in a psychology assignment. This was the start of an awareness that I was smart and could do things.

137. I didn't however finish that degree. I got offered a job, and thought that I would come back and finish the degree later, but I didn't. Much later, in 2005, I enrolled in a journalism diploma. I completed the diploma and graduated on 16

December 2005. That felt like the first time I had finished something I had started.

Becoming freer from the past

138. Some events have been significant for me in feeling freer from my past.

Reaction following a presentation on children's emotional needs

139. One was an episode I experienced after hearing a psychologist I knew speaking about the emotional needs of children at a foster parent training programme I had devised. After each thing the psychologist said, I listened and thought without emotion "I didn't have that, I didn't have that". I then went home to bed and had a strong physical reaction. I phoned the psychologist and went to her farmhouse. For the next few days I cried most of the time, but the fearfulness was no longer there. At the end of this episode, whatever it was, I felt clean inside. It is not easy for me to describe, but it was as though there was some room inside me and I felt freer somehow.

Meeting one of the daughters of the foster father who abused me

140. Later also I met one of Mr M's daughters. She started crying during our meeting and said that she was sorry. She said she knew or suspected what was happening to me and hadn't done anything about it. We talked and she told me that Mr M had done the same things to all of his daughters. My emotions were mixed with the shock of hearing that all the other girls had the same experience and also enormous relief. Maybe I hadn't done anything to "make" him do those things to me. The daughter also said she was sure her mother knew what was happening to them, something I had also suspected for me.

141. Although I knew intellectually after that day that the abuse had been Mr M's problem, it was still many years later before I stopped feeling dirty, guilty and responsible.

Meeting Captain GRO-B-106

142. In the early 90s I met Captain GRO-B-106 again. This was a milestone and a ghost laying exercise for me. I got Captain GRO-B-106 address from the Salvation Army

headquarters in Wellington, phoned and went to visit. I was very nervous. She remembered me and started talking about Whatman and how much she had loved the dear little children there etc. I had thought for years about the things I would say if I met Mrs Irvine or Captain GRO-B-106 again, and how I would confront them with their abuse of me.

143. But when I actually met Captain GRO-B-106 and although I had worked out my 'speech' to her beforehand, I didn't give it. When I looked at her, I didn't see the woman who had terrorised me and my thinking for years. I saw a shrivelled old woman and knew that she couldn't hurt me any more. I didn't stay long and left feeling peaceful and well-blessed with my family and friends. I was also surprised that I felt nothing-none of the hate that I'd carried over the years-absolutely nothing towards Captain GRO-B-106 I felt liberated somehow.

Meeting Mrs Hill

144. I have already talked above about meeting Mrs Hill in 1997, and some of what she said to me. When we met, Mrs Hill also spoke glowingly of my father and told me what a lovely child I'd been. This did not match up with my memories, and the documents referred to above which record differences between my father and the Whatman authorities [**WITN0066008, WITN0066009**]. When I asked about sending us out to work, she said it was so we could experience family life in small homes. I asked what happened to the money and was told that it had been saved and given to us. Mine wasn't, but there seemed no point in arguing about it with her. I've not seen her since.

The abuse's impact on me: a summary

145. The word that most succinctly describes my life is MESS. When not bouncing from trauma to disaster I've been living backwards, trying to make sense of childhood stuff. I've most often been goalless and continually (and mostly in an unaware way) repeated patterns learned in childhood. I have rarely been confident with, or even known about my abilities, my self-esteem is transient and I struggle to get beyond my insecurities.
146. I look back in shame on my promiscuity and other ways I have behaved in the past. And often wish I had been born as someone else. I never have seen myself as being like other people. I don't belong anywhere and am a solitary

unit rather than being part of a group or family. I am sometimes still surprised that people have me for their friend. I get despondent that I've been having counselling for so long and still I'm not past all this stuff.

SECTION 6: REDRESS

147. In this section, I talk about what I had to do to obtain information about me from, and to reach settlements with, DSW and the Salvation Army. I also talk about the formation of Salvation Army Abuse Survivors (**SAAS**), and the media I and other SAAS members participated in. In addition, I refer to the police complaint I made in relation to abuse experienced in the Salvation Army's care, and to my ACC claim.

DSW

Obtaining information

148. In 1973, I contacted a Mr GRO-B-111 who worked at DSW's Masterton Office. I had read a book about someone who had had numerous foster placements, and I thought that I too would write a book about my experiences. I told Mr GRO-B-111 this when I phoned and I asked him about my foster homes. He suggested I go up and see him and talk about things. He was very pleasant during the call.

149. When I went to the office, however, he was much different. He sat behind his desk and asked me what right I had questioning him and how dare I think I could just walk in and demand information. I asked why I had had so many foster homes. He told me that it was because my behaviour was so bad that no one could handle me and that if I been better behaved I would not have had so many places. I was crying and extremely upset. He also told me that if I ever wrote anything about him or DSW, he personally would sue me. I left there quite destroyed in confidence. I again believed I was this terrible person and all the things that happened had been my own fault.

150. A friend had come with me to the office and waited for me in the waiting room. She heard Mr GRO-B-111 shouting at me from where she was sitting. After that, I did not try to get any more information from DSW for 10 years.

151. It was only after I devised the training programme for foster parents which I referred to above, as part of study I was doing at university, that I decided again

to seek information from DSW. A social worker from DSW, Lorna Booth, who I got to know through my work on the training programme, encouraged me to make up a list of things I wanted to know and write in asking for the information and access to my file.

152. Some years later I did this, with much trepidation and anxiety. This time I was successful. I think it was in 1983 that I had a session with Lorna at DSW's Hamilton Office. Lorna had my file in front of her, and I did not touch or look at it. Rather, I asked Lorna questions. I didn't ask about my time with the Ms or some other topics, as those topics made me the most vulnerable and I still felt to blame for them. But I did find out some important information, including why my brother and me had gone into care.
153. The day was very emotional, draining and frightening. At the end of it, Lorna gave me a hug and said that those things should not have happened to me, and that someone must have loved me very much for me to have survived all that.
154. As I said above, I moved with my children to Australia in 1985. I kept thinking about what else was in my DSW file. I contacted the Masterton Office and asked for a copy of the file to be sent to a New Zealand government office in Sydney. The reply was that the file belonged to DSW and could not leave the country. On another occasion I asked if the material I was allowed by law to have could be photocopied and sent to me. The answer was no. I wrote to the Prime Minister at the time, David Lange, and requested the file again. This request was referred back to DSW.
155. When we got back to New Zealand, one of the first things I did was to write asking for access to my file. Access was initially denied but then granted. I first met with a DSW social worker, Diane Hawkins, at the Paraparaumu Office to apply to see my file. Once access was granted, she brought the file to my house and gave me full access to it.
156. I was so angry about what was on that file. I kept thinking about the shame, anguish and sexual problems in relationships that went back to the things that had happened at the Ms. As a way of coping with my anger, I went to see Jill Moss. She was then a lawyer in Porirua. Through reviewing my file, I found out that, contrary to what Mr GRO-B-111 had told me, it had not been my fault that there

were so many foster homes. Amongst the matters I learned was that in two of the most distressing places I'd been sent to, one foster parent had mental problems, another had marriage problems, and as already stated Mr M who sexually abused me had had mental breakdowns. All of this was known to DSW. I was also sent back to two homes where DSW knew there had been problems.

157. Jill Moss said that I could take a test case against DSW. Ms Moss could not be my lawyer for this because she became a judge. So I asked Sonja Cooper to help me, and she did. She took a claim against DSW on my behalf.

DSW settlement

158. On 31 July 2000, I attended a mediation with DSW about my case. The Chief Social Worker, Mike Doolan, was there. On 16 August 2000, I settled my claim against DSW. The terms included payment to me of \$27,500 and an apology. DSW also undertook to review its policy and practice in relation to accounting for its care responsibilities as young people leave care, and in relation to responding to Official Information Act and Privacy Act requests. The terms also included that DSW would prepare a report on public policy issues arising with regard to historical child abuse [WITN0066013].

159. The settlement terms were confidential but I understand the Crown has waived confidentiality for the purposes of the Royal Commission's Inquiry. I am also willing to waive confidentiality.

160. The apology was set out in a letter dated 10 August 2000 from Mr Doolan [WITN0066014]. In his letter, Mr Doolan referred to experiences of mine when I was in DSW's care. He stated:

I wish to express my deep sorrow, on my own behalf and that of the Department that you had these experiences and apologise unreservedly about the treatment you received.

161. Mr Doolan also referred to the meeting I had with Mr GRO-B-111 when I first tried to obtain information about my foster care. Mr Doolan stated that my account of this meeting indicated that I "underwent a severe humiliation" for which he apologised "most sincerely." He stated that the incident should not have

happened and I should not have faced any other barriers to accessing my information.

162. In August 2001, I received a letter from the Hon Steve Maharey, then Minister of Social Services and Employment [WITN0066015]. The letter referred to the settlement with DSW, including the reviews of DSW practice and the required report on public policy issues arising in relation to historic abuse. The letter summarised the work that had been done and referred to improvements made. The Minister also said he hoped "that the process has helped you in some way to let go of the past and move on with the rest of your life."
163. I feel that the DSW settlement did help me. I felt that Mike Doolan's apology was genuine and that I had been believed, rather than DSW denying what had happened to me. I felt that the blame for what had happened had been taken away from me.
164. I also felt it was important that the settlement included the DSW reviews and reports, the aim of which was to make improvements and reduce the risk of experiences like mine being repeated, and that I received a report back from the Minister on the work done. Because of this, I felt that in some way there was a potential for me to contribute to positive change and that there would be a wider benefit in what I had done. However, this potential was not realised in the end because DSW did not continue to involve me in the reviews as I had expected would happen.

ACC claim

165. I have an ACC claim relating to some of the abuse I suffered. I think this is a sensitive claim for the sexual abuse. Over the years I have had counselling paid for by ACC. Not all of this helped, but one counsellor I had helped me a lot. I may also have received some compensation from ACC but I cannot now recall the details of this.

The Salvation Army

1983

166. On 1 May 1983, I wrote to Captain Mellsop of the Salvation Army asking for my file at Whatman. This request was not granted.

2000-2001*Discussions with Evening Post journalist in 2000*

167. In 2000, I read an article in the Evening Post (a Wellington newspaper, before the merger with the Dominion) about a grandmother who was having issues with DSW. These were similar issues to ones I was having the time. I telephoned the paper and asked that they give my number to the grandmother so that she could call me if she wanted to. Then, the journalist who wrote the article called me. We had various discussions, about DSW and Whatman.

Raising claims with the Salvation Army in 2001, and its response

168. In 2001 I decided to raise my claims against the Salvation Army formally. Ms Cooper did this in a letter to the Army dated 15 February 2001 [WITN0066016].

169. Following that, there was some correspondence between the Salvation Army's lawyers at the time, Bell Gully, and Ms Cooper. The Salvation Army then changed its lawyers to Phillips Fox. On 29 May 2001, Phillips Fox wrote to Ms Cooper about my claim [WITN0066017]. Amongst other matters, the letter stated that they did not believe my "claim would be successful" and that it "could be defeated on a number of fronts" including limitation.

170. The letter stated that my Mum was "at least" Dad's second wife. My Dad had a total of two wives (and he was widowed twice), and to this day I do not know why the lawyer's letter included the "at least". I felt this was a slur on my father and an assertion that he had no right to be married twice. The statement angered me a lot.

171. The letter also said that Dad was "a regular visitor to Whatman, often taking his children for outings on a Saturday", and that some people remembered this happening weekly. This was not right.

172. In addition, the letter stated that there "is nothing in the Salvation Army records to indicate Mr Lowe wasn't happy with the care Janet and [GRO-B-100] had received at Whatman", and that "Mrs Hill also recalls no expressions of dissatisfaction" with the care we received. That may have been the case with Salvation Army records (and I note that in 2005, Murray Houston of the Salvation Army advised me that "the Army ran children's homes and were not experienced record

keepers") **[WITN0066018]**. The DSW documents referred to above, however, include references to my father's concerns about the care I was receiving at Whatman, to disagreements and clashes he had had with Whatman authorities about that care, and to the Whatman authorities inviting him to remove me if he did not like what they were doing.

173. The Phillips Fox letter went on to say that my claims against Whatman and the Salvation Army had been investigated, and that people were "generally outraged" by them. This included that my claims such as being made to queue for baths, being neglected and ignored, and being made to work or disciplined were "resoundly disputed". Other residents were said to have memories of a "happy, caring environment [at Whatman] [...]."
174. The letter further stated that "life was quite different then compared to now", and that "none of us should lose sight of that fact". The letter ended with the following threat:
- The Salvation Army has already been put to significant expense in investigating the claims of Ms Lowe. We do not believe there is any merit in her claims and have advised the Army accordingly. We invite Ms Lowe to discontinue any claim against the Army now. If she agrees, our client agrees to bear its own costs incurred to date.
175. I felt very angry when I received this letter. I felt that they were fobbing me off, denying what had happened, and trying to bargain with me by making threats. Also, and while other people may have experienced Whatman differently to me, I know what happened to me there.
176. I had no intention of discontinuing my claim. Ms Cooper responded to Phillips Fox's letter on 14 June 2001 **[WITN0066019]**. Ms Cooper advised that if the Army's position did not change, then Court proceedings would be necessary.
177. Earlier in the year, I had started the process of applying for legal aid. However, by June 2001, and for the next few years, I was dealing with significant issues in my family life and long periods during which I was unwell. These matters considerably delayed my application and the progress of my legal case. I was ultimately granted limited legal aid funding. However, I do not think I received any further grants after the original grant had been used.

Media in 2001

178. In March 2001, a front-page article was published about some of my experiences at Whatman and in foster care [WITN0066020]. A number of people contacted the newspaper and me after that article. Two women said to the paper they had been hit, and one specifically referred to Mrs Irvine. The other referred to the hitting as being 'how it was then'. Another person also wrote to me, disagreeing with much of what I had said and saying she had had different experiences to mine. She also said that Mrs Irvine had become a Nana to her children, and they missed her. Again, that is her truth. I know what mine is.
179. After receiving the Phillips Fox letter dated 29 May 2001, I decided to try to contact other people who had been at Whatman. I wrote to a number of newspapers, asking people to contact me and providing my contact details. My requests were published. I had a lot of responses from people, many of whom told me they had been abused in the Salvation Army's care. People who responded to my requests in the newspaper that they make contact, and who had been at Whatman at the same time as me, also named Mrs Irvine and Captain GRO-B-106 as habitual abusers. Most of them had had adult lives like mine, including time in psychiatric wards, and abusive relationships.
180. Because of the number of people who had contacted me, I started thinking about us becoming a collective group and pushing to be heard that way.

2002-2003

Formation of SAAS

181. In approximately 2002 I organised a group meeting with a number of the people who contacted me after I put my contact details in the newspapers. All of us had lived in Salvation Army homes when we were children. Together we formed SAAS.
182. To the best of my recollection, all of the SAAS members who had tried to raise issues with Salvation Army told me that they had received a response similar to the response I had had from Phillips Fox.

Media in 2003, appointment of Roger McClay, and my information request

183. On 21 August 2003, the Wairarapa Times-Age published an article stating that the Army had received 3 formal complaints in relation to Whatman, including mine **[WITN0066021]**.
184. Also on 21 August 2003, I gave an interview to Radio New Zealand's morning report. Amongst other matters, I said that I was about to take legal proceedings against the Army and that I wanted it to be proactive in resolving the matter. Major Alistair Herring spoke for the Army. Amongst other matters, he said that the Army had received eight formal complaints of abuse which they were still investigating **[WITN0066022]**.
185. On 26 August 2003, TVNZ's National News aired a story in which it referred to the Army investigating a total of 36 cases of alleged abuse **[WITN0066023]**.
186. On 12 September 2003, I wrote to Lieutenant Colonel Arnold of the Army. I asked for any written information the Army had about me, including about my time at Whatman and the money I earned during that time from cleaning homes outside of Whatman. I also asked for copies of all correspondence between the Army's lawyers and Ms Cooper between 2001 and 2002 (note that the year on my letter to Lieutenant Colonel Arnold is "2002" but this should read "2003") **[WITN0066024]**.
187. In October 2003, the Army announced that it had appointed former Children's Commissioner and former National MP Roger McClay to act as an independent monitor in relation to the allegations of abuse at Salvation Army homes **[WITN0066025]**. SAAS however decided not to talk to Roger McClay as he was paid and employed by Salvation Army. This meant that we did not see him as independent.
188. On 6 October 2003 the Army responded to the request for information I had made on 12 September 2003 **[WITN0066026]**. The Army's response included copies of documents relating to my time at Whatman. As I remember it, only a very limited number of documents were provided. The response said the Army held no information about the money I had earned cleaning houses, and that it would respond to my request for copies of correspondence between Ms Cooper and the Army's lawyers as soon as it could.

189. On 14 October 2003, the Dominion Post published an article about SAAS's refusal to deal with Roger McClay [WITN0066027]. That article refers to SAAS wanting an independent inquiry, and our plans to take a class action against the Army. The article referred to the Army having received 23 formal claims of abuse, most relating to Hodderville and Whatman.
190. In June 2003, I had asked John Miller, a lawyer in Wellington, if he could help me. Mr Miller advised me that he was very busy but he would try to help. On 23 October 2003 Mr Miller wrote to the Salvation Army about SAAS' concerns in relation to Mr McClay's appointment [WITN0066028]. He also referred to the approach the Crown had taken in relation to the Child and Adolescent Unit of Lake Alice Hospital. He proposed that the Salvation Army follow the same approach.
191. On 6 November 2003 I responded to the Army's 6 October 2003 letter regarding my information request [WITN0066029]. I asked why so little information had been provided. I also asked for a timeframe within which I could expect to receive the correspondence I had requested between Ms Cooper and the Army's lawyers. I did not receive a response from the Army, and so I complained to the Privacy Commissioner.
192. There was a further story on Radio New Zealand on 10 December 2003. This was about the team the Child, Youth and Family Service (CYFS) had established for complaints by people who had been state wards and were alleging abuse in Salvation Army care [WITN0066030]. The story referred to complaints by 31 people alleging abuse in Salvation Army homes between the 1940s and 1970s. I was interviewed for this story. I expressed my concern that many of the people who were claiming abuse were not state wards and therefore would not benefit from the CYFS team.

Police complaint

193. In 2003 I complained to the police about the abuse I experienced in Whatman, and other SAAS members had experienced in other Salvation Army homes. On 30 October 2003, I received a letter from the Police regarding our complaints [WITN0066031]. The police asked other members not to report their complaints until police advised how they could respond.

194. I cannot now recall what happened after that. To the best of my recollection, the police said that I should tell SAAS members to report complaints to their local police station. They may have also said that there could be difficulties in taking any action because of the time that had gone by.

2004

195. The Privacy Commissioner wrote to the Salvation Army about my complaint on 15 January 2004 [WITN0066032]. In late February 2004 I received a letter from the law firm McElroys [WITN0066033]. That letter advised that McElroys was now acting for the Army. Copies of what McElroys advised was all correspondence between Ms Cooper and the Army's previous lawyers from 2001 to 2002 were enclosed. McElroys also advised that the Army did not hold any more information on me relating to my time at Whatman.

196. Also, on 25 February 2004 McElroys responded to Mr Miller's 23 October 2003 letter [WITN0066034]. McElroys stated that Mr Miller's reference to the Lake Alice claims and the government's response was "inapt" because the Salvation Army was insured for the claims. The letter also stated that "there is no need, and neither is it appropriate, to establish a private Commission of Enquiry [...]" [WITN0066034].

197. On the same day, 25 February 2004, the Salvation Army invited me to a meeting with senior Salvation Army staff to discuss my claim [WITN0066035].

198. I responded to the Army's invitation to a meeting on 7 March 2004 [WITN0066036]. I said that SAAS members would like to meet with the Army as a group, provided that the Army would pay for our lawyer to be present and for reasonable travel and accommodation costs for SAAS members.

199. On 12 March 2004, the Salvation Army replied to my letter about the proposed meeting [WITN0066037]. In its response the Army set out what it saw as the purpose of its meetings with individual claimants, and said the feedback from other claimants who had attended these meetings had been very positive. The Army also stated that it did not appear to it that a group meeting would achieve the same purpose. I was however invited to advise what SAAS was looking to achieve with the group meeting, so the Army could consider that. The Army

also stated that it was still interested in having the individual meetings with any claimants with whom it had not yet met.

200. On 13 March 2004, there was an article in The Press stating that the Army had started paying compensation to people claiming to have been abused in the Army's care **[WITN0066038]**. It referred to the Army investigating at least 36 formal complaints of abuse. I spoke to the journalist who wrote that article as SAAS's spokesperson. As stated in the article, I said that SAAS wanted "public acknowledgement that the abuse happened and for the Salvation Army to say it's sorry."
201. On 28 March 2004, I replied to the Army's 12 March 2004 letter **[WITN0066039]**. By that stage, Grant Cameron & Associates had been instructed to act for me and other SAAS members. I said that many SAAS members who had had contact with the Army had not found it positive, and that the Army had previously dismissed my claims. I advised that I did not see any point in meeting with the Army.
202. Also, after receiving the February 2004 McElroys letter referred to above in relation to my information request, I reviewed the copies of the correspondence provided. I thought a letter the Army sent to Ms Cooper in mid-2002 was missing. I also thought that information about me during my time at Whatman could be on the Army file for my brother. I raised those issues with the Privacy Commissioner. On 19 May 2004, the Privacy Commissioner wrote to McElroys about these matters **[WITN0066040]**.
203. There was further correspondence between me, McElroys and the Privacy Commissioner (see in this regard and for example a letter dated 18 June 2004 from me to McElroys, a letter from McElroys to the Privacy Commissioner dated 8 July 2004, and a letter from McElroys to the Privacy Commissioner dated 20 July 2004 **[WITN0066041, WITN0066042, WITN0066043]**). In short, McElroys advised that it had provided me with documents from my brother's file on 7 October 2003 and that the letter I thought the Army had sent to Ms Cooper in mid-2002 did not exist or could not be found.
204. Some time later, I advised the Privacy Commissioner that I accepted the 2002 letter could not be found, and that I intended to withdraw the complaint I had

made to the Privacy Commissioner against the Army. I am now aware that on 5 August 2004 the Privacy Commissioner advised McElroys that a decision had been made to take no further action on my complaint [WITN0066044].

2005

205. After we instructed Grant Cameron & Associates, it engaged with the Army's lawyers about our claims. In August 2005, my lawyer advised that the Army wanted to meet with me and all the other clients who had claims against it.
206. I then agreed to meet with the Army. Before the meeting, my lawyer emailed to the Army a series of questions I had [WITN0066045]. I also said that I wanted the Salvation Army to apologise publicly for the abuse, and set out the reasons for that. I said too that I did not think the Army's statements in the media about how many complaints it had received were accurate.
207. I attended a meeting with the Army on 14 November 2005, together with my lawyer. Murray Houston was there for the Army, and there was a person from Victim Support. The meeting was approximately two hours long. At it, I talked about my time at Whatman, the abuse I had experienced there, and the effects of it on me. I also said again that I thought a public apology by the Salvation Army was very important, as this would reach people who had not made complaints.
208. At the end of the meeting, Mr Houston said that the Army considered that one child abused is one too many. He also said that the Army believed what I had said about the abuse I had suffered at Whatman. He said the Army apologised to me for the abuse, pain and suffering that I had endured.
209. Following the meeting, there was further correspondence between my lawyer and Mr Houston about a possible settlement [WITN0066046].
210. On 30 November 2005, Mr Houston wrote to me [WITN0066018]. In that letter, Mr Houston advised that while the Salvation Army would offer individual apologies where appropriate, he and the Army believed that a public apology "was completely inappropriate". This was on the basis that each person's experience differed widely, and that an apology individually tailored to a person's particular circumstances, and offered privately, would mean "a great

deal more.” He also said that a person who had received an apology could go public with the details of that.

211. Mr Houston also responded to various other questions I had raised. The letter included an apology to me for the experiences I had suffered in the Army's care. It stated:

[T]he Army wishes to do its utmost to resolve the pain and suffering experienced by former residents, such as you, due to the actions (or inaction) of a small minority of its former officers.

The Army wishes to unreservedly apologise to you, Jan, for the experiences you suffered at the hands of people entrusted with your care. The Army wishes to do its utmost to heal, and bring an end, unhappiness suffered by you. It acknowledges your entitlement to feel anger and frustration. It thanks you for the work you have done to help others come forward.

212. On 8 December 2005, Mr Houston wrote to me again **[WITN0066047]**. He said that the Army was willing to offer me \$37,500 in compensation, plus \$1,200 to cover the cost of a hearing aid. The Army did not accept other requests I had made, including for payment in respect of the work I had done as spokesperson for SAAS.
213. I signed a settlement with the Army on 12 December 2005. The terms included payment to me of \$37,500, plus \$1,500 as a contribution “towards treatment for hearing loss, associated with [my] experiences whilst in the Salvation Army Home” **[WITN0066048]**.

2006

214. On 1 November 2006, the Press published an article entitled “Group joins call for abuse probe.” That article referred to the SAAS having joined the calls of one of John Gainsford’s victims for an independent inquiry into the Salvation Army homes. Gainsford was found guilty of sexual offending against children in the Army's Bramwell Booth Home in the 1970s. I was quoted as saying that an inquiry was needed and that victims wanted an apology from the Army **[WITN0066049]**. By that, I was meaning a public apology.

215. On 21 December 2006, the New Zealand Herald ran a story entitled "Salvation Army defends response to sex abuse victims" [WITN0066050]. It also referred to the victims of Mr Gainsford calling for a public apology. The Army was quoted as saying that it would consider whether to offer a public apology. As set out in more detail below, however, the Army did make an apology the day the article was published.

2007

216. On 20 June 2007, the Dominion Post published another article, this time concerning the Army's failure to provide SAAS members promised apologies and copies of the recordings of their settlement meetings with Murray Houston [WITN0066051].

217. On 3 July 2007, Mr Houston wrote to me [WITN0066052]. He referred to the 20 June 2007 Dominion Post article and stated that the Army wished to "urgently address any outstanding issues" SAAS members may have. He asked me to contact him. I replied on 6 July 2007, advising that the SAAS had complained to the Privacy Commission [WITN0066053].

2008

218. I cannot now recall what happened to the complaint to the Privacy Commission. I had however also talked to my local MP, Nathan Guy, about the Army not providing all the apologies it said it would and not providing copies of the recordings of meetings with SAAS members. Mr Guy took the issue up with the Army.

219. There were letters between Mr Guy and the Army between, at least, 4 February 2008 and 11 April 2008 [WITN0066054, WITN0066055]. In those letters, the Army accepted that in some cases it had not provided the recordings requested, an apology, or both. From the letters, I understand that on 1 April 2008 the Army delivered to Mr Guy's office apologies and transcripts of the meetings between SAAS members and Mr Houston [WITN0066055]. Mr Guy then arranged for those apologies and transcripts to be given to SAAS members.

220. The correspondence between Mr Guy and the Army also referred to the issue of a public apology. In a letter dated 25 February 2008 to Mr Guy, the Army

referred to my request before my meeting with Mr Houston that the Army provide a public apology. It went on to state that the Army had issued “a public apology to victims of abuse in Salvation Army children’s homes on Mary Wilson’s National Radio programme on 21 December 2006” **[WITN0066056]**.

221. Mr Guy responded on 20 March 2008 **[WITN0066057]**. He advised that the SAAS considered that the apology given on 21 December 2006 was in reference to Mr Gainsford only. Mr Guy also stated:

The group would appreciate a more general apology and that they are notified of times prior to the event. They would like this apology to be wide enough that it will come to the notice of those people and their families who have not approached the Salvation Army with the aim that will aid their healing and/or understanding.

222. On 31 March 2008, the Army responded to Mr Guy **[WITN0066055]**. It said the apology given on 21 December 2006 was to Mr Gainsford’s victims and to any other person who had been offended against at a Salvation Army home. The Army also said that a public statement of regret to victims of abuse had been made by the Army in August 2003 in relation to any wrongdoing by Salvation Army staff, and that the Army “firmly believes that it has made every conceivable effort to apologise to all who are deserving of it, both privately and publicly.”

223. I also received a letter dated 31 March 2008 from the Army **[WITN0066058]**. In it, the Army apologised to me for what I had experienced at Whatman. Amongst other matters, the letter said:

The experiences that you have recounted [about Whatman] were and are undeniably painful for you and I appreciate the strength and forthrightness you showed in reliving the past and sharing your memories with us.

I find it deplorable to now know that the shameful actions and uncaring attitudes of a very few people overwhelmed the good and just work of so many others.

It is clear you have felt much hurt and I unreservedly apologise to you for the pain and suffering you have endured. I am truly sorry for that.

As you move on into the future I trust that sharing your experiences is a step towards finding healing and closure.

2010

224. On 30 April and 1 May 2010, the New Zealand Herald published articles entitled "Salvation Army called to apologise for historic abuse cases" [WITN0066059] and "Sallies need to apologise for abuse, say victims" [WITN0066060]. Amongst other matters, the articles referred to the 2006 apology on National Radio. They also set out statements by me on the SAAS's behalf that none of our members was told that this apology would be made, and that we all missed hearing it.

2020

225. On 16 January 2020, the New Zealand Herald ran a story about the abuse I experienced in foster care and at Whatman ("Abuse in care: Files show government department knew of rape allegations") [WITN0066061].

SECTION 7: WHAT MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE**A public apology**

226. As detailed above, over the years SAAS and I have campaigned for a public apology from the Salvation Army.
227. The individual apologies given by the Army are important, but a public apology would also be very important. It would reach those people who have been abused but could not for whatever reason make claims themselves. It would also publicly validate our claims of abuse. For a long time, I think a general perception was that the Salvation Army only did good, and because of that not many people believed us. I think some people still have difficulty believing us, including those who attended Salvation Army institutions but were not abused. A public apology would put these doubts to rest and assist in rehabilitating us in the eyes of those who have not believed our claims.
228. I understand that there has been a public apology on National Radio. I have also seen the apology in the press release the Army made after John Gainsford's convictions (referred to above). The difficulty with both of those apologies is that the Salvation Army did not tell SAAS members they were going to be made in advance. I also cannot remember when I first found out that they had occurred, and I think that some SAAS members may have missed

them altogether. Further, because the Army did not advise us that the apologies were going to occur, we were not able to arrange to be together to hear them and there was no other event organised in relation to the apologies. I therefore do not feel that a collective apology was given to and received by us.

229. I do not think it is enough for the Army to say, as Murray Houston did to me in 2005, that individuals can go public with the details of apologies they have received on an individual basis, if they wish. That puts all the onus on the individual. There is also likely to be much more attention given to a collective public apology by the Army than there is to the story of one person who received an apology from the Army.
230. I ask the Army to give us this public apology. I would like it to be given at a public event, organised specifically for the purpose, with invitations given to all SAAS members and with funding so that members can attend. Because all SAAS members are getting older, I would like that event to happen as soon as possible. I think that a public apology at such an event would be powerful restitution for all of us who wrongfully suffered as children in Salvation Army homes. It would also be an historical event which would have ongoing significance.

Other steps

231. Over the years, I have felt that my settlement with DSW helped me more than my settlement with the Salvation Army. I think that the reasons for this include that my DSW settlement had steps for DSW to take in relation to reviewing and improving its practices and policies, as part of trying to ensure that what happened to me did not happen to other people. It also had a requirement for DSW to report back to me on these reviews, which DSW did.
232. My settlement with the Army did not include anything like that. This means that in some ways it felt like a payment was made, an apology was given, and from the Army's perspective the matter was at an end. It seems like an easy out for the Army. For me and the others who were abused, there is no out.
233. Other than the Army advising me that it has employment processes to ensure that all staff are vetted before they are appointed, I do not know what framework the Army has in place to prevent abuse, to address any abuse if it is identified

(including removing abusers from its staff), and to compensate those who suffer abuse in its care. I also do not know what framework is in place for monitoring care the Army currently provides, such as for the elderly, who in some ways can have similar vulnerabilities to children. I think all such care needs to be registered and monitored. It would assist me to understand what these current frameworks are, so I can see positive change and progress.

234. I have been asked what would most assist me in healing. This is a really hard question and I don't know if I will ever really heal. Some days I feel like I am making progress and some days I do not. One way or another the abuse is always with me, sometimes deeper and sometimes closer to the surface. I almost always cry when I talk about it and it feels very present, even though it happened years ago. It has and continues to have a huge and dark impact on my life, and as far as I know on the lives of all the SAAS members. Many of us have had hard lives.
235. So I think that all efforts must go into helping people to understand the long-term impacts of abuse, and into prevention. Once abuse has happened, it has happened and it can't be taken away.
236. I think that where there is a will, there is a lot that can be achieved. I am hopeful about what we can do.

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: _____

16th September 2020