

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
LAKE ALICE CHILD AND ADOLESCENT UNIT INQUIRY HEARING**

Under The Inquiries Act 2013

In the matter of The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions

Royal Commission: Judge Coral Shaw (Chair)
Ali'imua Sandra Alofivae
Mr Paul Gibson

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Ms Susan Hughes QC for Mr Malcolm Burgess and Mr
Lawrence Reid
Mr Michael Heron QC for Dr Janice Wilson
Ms Frances Everard for the New Zealand Human Rights
Commission
Mr Hayden Rattray for Mr Selwyn Leeks
Mr Eric Forster for Victor Soeterik
Mr Lester Cordwell for Mr Brian Stabb and Ms Gloria Barr
Mr Scott Brickell for Denis Hesseltine
Ms Anita Miller for the Medical Council

Venue: Level 2
Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry
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Hearing opens with waiata and karakia tīmatanga by Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei

[9.34 am]

CHAIR: Tēnā koutou katoa, nau mai hoki mai ki tēnei hui. Tēnā koe Ms Joychild.

MS JOYCHILD: Tēnā koutou ngā Kōmihana. We have in the witness seated to Mr AA who's going to go by the name of Tom. Mr AA was a resident in Lake Alice between May and August 1975. He was there for three months. I am going to read the beginning of his statement and then he's going to pick up in the middle and then I will read the end.

CHAIR: We'll have the affirmation first. Who's supporting him, who is in there with him?

MS JOYCHILD: Sarah.

MR AA

CHAIR: Hello Sarah, welcome. Hello Tom, thank you very much for coming, really appreciate it, and I'm aware you've been listening at the back for a while as well, getting a sense of it. But it's a big day for you and we do appreciate it.

A. I've been involved with the social worker and the Salvation Army.

Q. Okay, good. Could I just ask you if you could listen and agree to the following affirmation? Do you solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence you will give before this Commission will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

A. I do.

QUESTIONING BY MS JOYCHILD: Tom, I'm going to read about your early childhood up to the point where you came into Lake Alice.

"I was abused in State care while living in many Social Welfare institutions. My experiences of all institutions except Lake Alice are set out in my witness statement prepared by Cooper Legal. Here I give a very brief summary only of what happened to me at those places. Mainly this is about what happened to me in Lake Alice and what I saw happening there.

I'm the eldest of two children. We lived in Wellington. My father was a big drinker and would violently assault my mother and me from my earliest years. Also, when I was young, I would caddy for some local men in the neighbourhood as a means of earning extra pocket money. We lived near the golf club. One man sexually abused me in the clubhouse on two occasions and on another occasion when I had to caddy away from home for the weekend.

As a result of the abuse from my father and the sexual abuse from the man I got caddied for, [sic] I lost the plot and began to act up. The Police were involved in my life

1 from when I was nine. No one ever asked why I was the way I was or if I had been abused.
2 When I was 12 I was taken into the custody of the Department of Social Welfare with the
3 consent of my father. From then on I was moved around a lot of different places before
4 ending up in borstal.

5 At Epuni Boys' Home I was locked in secure as soon as I arrived. I was physically
6 and sexually assaulted there. A staff member who is now dead forced me to engage in oral
7 sex with him about seven to nine times in total. I had five or six admissions to Epuni
8 between 1973 and 1977 and he abused me on every occasion. MSD have accepted this.
9 There was a lot of sexual behaviour going on at Epuni. It was obvious some staff were
10 having sexual relationships. I got assaulted by other boys and staff. I often tried to run
11 away and make my way home. I was always caught and brought back there.

12 I was in another home for six or seven weeks. Staff were free with their hands,
13 slapping and hitting around the head area. At night-time, a female staff member regularly
14 fondled my genitals and other boys when she was on night duty. I ran away from there and
15 was then put into a Social Welfare home.

16 I did my intermediate school years in another home and began high school from
17 there. The people running it were horrible people. I was hit with an open hand or strapped
18 by the foster carer at least twice a week and had welts on my body as a result. They were
19 always strapping children. I recall there was a chef who did lovely baking. We used to
20 pinch the baking, as kids do. Then the people running the home put rat poison dust on the
21 baking tins. We didn't notice it but when our hands touched water it showed up as a dye.
22 That is how they caught us. MSD have accepted these things as true in their settlement
23 with me.

24 I ran away all the time from this family home and would find my way back to
25 Wellington. A friend of my father's drove the buses and he would let me on for free. I
26 would always be picked up from home and brought back again. Shortly after I started
27 college I was taken from that home and put into Kohitere Boys' Home.

28 There was a lot of violence at Kohitere. I was physically assaulted by staff, by
29 kicking, punching and hitting me with an open hand. I suffered bruises, bloody noses and a
30 cut face. I was also assaulted by other residents and had an initiation beating. I learned
31 criminal behaviours at Kohitere. MSD have accepted all of the above. I was sick of all the
32 violence and ran away."

33 Tom, we're at paragraph nine, would you like to take over talking about how you
34 came to be at Lake Alice.

1 A. I was admitted to Lake Alice when I was 14. I was there for three months and released. -
2 I went to Lake Alice after I absconded from Kohitere and had- gone home to see my
3 parents. They phoned Social Welfare and I was collected by two men in a late model car
4 and driven to Lake Alice. No-one told me I was going there or why I was going there.

5 I made a statement about Lake Alice in 2001 for Grant Cameron's class action. It
6 is in my bundle and I confirm it is accurate. In this statement I repeat some of what I said
7 there and summarise others. Lake Alice had to be the worst of all the places I was put in by
8 the Government. The kids who were there were just ordinary kids but what happened to us
9 wasn't.

10 When I arrived the two social workers took me to a very small office where a
11 woman sent me over to the villa. I didn't get assessed by anybody and never met Dr Leeks.

12 To begin with I was put in villa 11. After a few weeks I was transferred to villa 12
13 because of my good behaviour. It was a bit better. We had to walk across the grounds and
14 take all our meals in the main hospital with all the adult patients, except those locked up in
15 villa 8. The food was awful, mass-produced hospital food.

16 I was only there for two or three weeks and then put into villa 7. The authorities
17 had cleared the adults out of it and it became the villa for boys and adolescents. We had
18 our own meals in the villa. I was there for the rest of my time. I describe the layout of villa
19 7 in paragraph 25 of my class action statement.

20 Dr Leeks and an Indian doctor used to conduct therapy groups in the lounge of
21 villa 10 or 11 about once a week or more. That's how I first met Dr Leeks. It is also the
22 only time I saw the Indian doctor. I think he was from Palmerston North. You had to talk
23 about your feelings and stuff like that. If you didn't, you would be getting ECT on Fridays.
24 A lot of guys who didn't talk would get ECT. I didn't while I was in villa 10. I don't recall
25 having any group therapy at villa 7.

26 I got Paraldehyde injections twice for punishment while I was in villa 11. The
27 first time I got one I was outside playing soccer and a boy kicked me. I turned around and
28 kicked him back. A nurse grabbed me by the hair and marched me back to the villa. I tried
29 to tell him the other boy kicked me first but he said he only saw me kicking. He dragged
30 me upstairs and on to one of the rooms which converted into a cell.

31 He then made me drop my pants and he injected Paraldehyde into my backside. It
32 was an intensely painful feeling and it was very sore. The pain lasted for hours and there
33 was a horrible smell that began to develop on my breath. I think he was taken to the dorm
34 room. I had incredible difficulty getting to sleep that night. I had been injected into both

1 cheeks so it wasn't possible to sit down or to relax properly. I had a terrible night's sleep.

2 The second time I got Paraldehyde I was just clowning around. Some staff
3 member told me to settle down. I didn't and he made me go back to villa 11 with him. We
4 went upstairs to one of the cell rooms. Another nurse was present. I don't remember who.
5 I was told to lie down on the mattress on the floor. One of the nurses went downstairs and
6 got a needle and gave it to me again in the butt, both sides. It was just as painful as the first
7 time. It was horrible.

8 Friday was the big ECT day in villa 7. I was petrified about ECT. I always
9 thought that one day my number would be up and it would be my turn. I was right.
10 I managed to avoid ECT at villas 11 and 12 but two of the boys from my dormitory got
11 ECT there. I got it three or four times while in villa 7. Twice when I was awake and twice
12 when I was asleep.

13 Once a week on Friday, the staff would collect those who were scheduled for
14 ECT. Although it seems odd, they seem to wait until everybody was in the shower or the
15 bath in the late afternoon. Dr Leeks would have arrived and would be in the dormitory.
16 The nurses would come into the shower blocks and get people for ECT. We wouldn't
17 usually know who was going to get picked or why a person was getting ECT.

18 The first time I got it I had just left the shower. I only had time to place a towel
19 around myself. I didn't know why they're going to give me ECT. It was always done in a
20 dormitory upstairs next to the shower block, the same dormitory I was in, but it was done
21 on the first bed when you walked in on the left-hand side.

22 What happened was that I laid on the bed with four nurses and Dr Leeks looking
23 on. Then the nurses wet my temples and I bit into a rubber mouthpiece. This was so
24 I didn't bite my tongue off. The nurses held me down and Dr Leeks turned the machine on.

25 The pain was slow at the start, it was a quick intense pain with everything
26 flashing. I got a very tight cramp and that is why the nurses had to hold me down. It was a
27 quick finish and I passed out completely. I can't really explain the pain, it's how you would
28 expect to feel if you were getting electrocuted on the head.

29 When I woke up I was in bed and had pissed myself and had lost control of my
30 bowels. I felt like a cabbage or a zombie for three to five days after. I had no idea why I
31 had been shocked on my head. For a few hours I couldn't remember anything. I assume I
32 was fed afterwards but I cannot remember whether or not I could keep it down. I was
33 disoriented with a painful headache and a really confusing feeling. This happened a second
34 time and I wasn't told why I got it that time either. I'm not sure anybody knew why they

1 got it.

2 As well as Fridays, ECT was also given during the week, which happened most
3 weeks. The nurses would just grab someone, you could be sitting in the day room or
4 outside or anywhere. They would take you upstairs for it, Dr Leeks would always give the
5 ECT. I think it was the same ECT that they did on Fridays.

6 ECT while awake was dished out like lollies. You couldn't predict when you
7 would get it. Dr Leeks was the one who administered ECT from what I saw. Boys ran
8 away all the time to get away from the ECT, but it made no difference, because they just
9 brought them back and gave it to them anyway.

10 Everyone knew if you were going to get ECT while sleeping because the nurses
11 would come and give you a pill on the morning to make you drowsy. You would not be
12 allowed to have breakfast either. After lunch they would come and give you another pill
13 and then take you across to the female villa and you would get ECT. I remember this
14 happening to me. By the time I arrived at the female villa I laid down on the ECT bed and
15 fell asleep. The next thing I knew I woke up in another room still in the girls' villa, totally
16 uncoordinated. My mind was totally confused. There were staff there but I can't say who
17 they were.

18 I got a terrible memory after I had ECT. It ruined it. I have always had to write
19 the simplest things down so as to remember them.

20 I also had to work at things that were very traumatic to me. There was an old villa
21 behind villa 7 where elderly mental patients lived. When one of them died, we had to go
22 and clean up their beds and living space. I had to do this at least three times. This was not
23 something that anyone would want to do. It was disgusting. It usually meant cleaning up
24 their urine. While we were doing this their body would be lying in a coffin. If no one came
25 to claim the body, relatives would pick it up on-, s--orry, staff would pick the body up on a
26 tractor and take it to the other side of the hospital. Staff told me their bodies were
27 incinerated there. That really traumatised me. I believe I could smell burning flesh all the
28 time after that I was told. I had to do this on at least three occasions.

29 Q. Just pause you there Tom. You wanted to correct the word "coffin", what you actually
30 meant by that?

31 A. Yeah, so they used to bring a long like wooden box over on the back of the tractor and
32 they'd put the body in that and take it to the -- on the other side of the hospital where there
33 was an incinerator.

34 Q. While you were cleaning up, was there a lid on the box?

1 A. Yes, I'm pretty sure there was an enclosed, yeah.

2 Q. Thank you. Now if you read from paragraph 29.

3 A. Sometimes the female nurses would take us for walks around the hospital grounds and we
4 would pass the security block and the nurses would say "If you don't behave yourself that's
5 where you'll end up." I was terrified at the thought of being sent there. It was an evil
6 looking place. The only thing you could see was the garden and a tower. I definitely didn't
7 want to go there. I was also traumatised by the locked villa, villa 8. Once a friend whose
8 name was, - I- can't really say.

9 Q. No, don't say.

10 A. And another boy as well were taken there as punishment after they had been caught
11 smoking twice. After they returned they told me that they had been put in cells with adults
12 and they had both been raped in there. I met both of them again in Invercargill Borstal
13 years later and we talked about how yucky Lake Alice had been.

14 I went to school at Lake Alice, it was in an old unused villa, the last one before the
15 big field. School was always upstairs in that villa. It was a bit of a joke really. We had an
16 outside teacher who would come in, but our schedule was sporadic. This seemed to be no
17 set routine for any lessons, it was not the same as an outside school. I couldn't really say
18 whether or not the teachers were generally interested in our education. All I remember
19 doing was a bit of drawing, passing the time, playing games and sport and stuff like that.
20 I regret not having a proper education.

21 There was a community hall which we used to hang out in sometimes when we
22 weren't at school. We would play games like table tennis. They would show movies
23 sometimes. There was a tuck shop as well. The girls would come over from the villa and it
24 was a time when we would socialise. The community hall was the only good thing about
25 Lake Alice.

26 They were visiting days at the villa. I think they were either Saturday or Sunday.
27 My uncle, my brother's brother-in-law would come with his wife and their children once a
28 week to visit. I never told them what was going on at Lake Alice. I'm not sure why.
29 I guess I didn't think they would believe me. When I was an adult,- my mother told me that
30 my uncle had said to her years later that he knew something was not right, but he didn't
31 specify how he could tell.

32 Most staff were not nice. I particularly remember two male nurses at the villa who
33 were awful. There was also a man with glasses who ran the ward and he was a horrible
34 person who operated under Dr Leeks and it was all for punishment. I recall -- he was okay

1 to me apart from when he grabbed me for a Paraldehyde injection.

2 My uncle asked for me to be removed from Lake Alice. I have never asked him to
3 take me out but I assume he must have realised something was not right. My mother told
4 me later that the administration didn't want to let me go but he threatened them if they
5 wouldn't release me he would go and see his MP and the newspapers. I was immediately
6 released.

7 I note Dr Leeks wrote a positive note about me on 1 July 1975 being lively and
8 insightful. This was before I had any ECT. By 22 January 1976 Dr Leeks had described
9 me as insightful with an impulse disorder and his uncle showed a marked degree of
10 impulse disorder also and it was only after a particularly fiery session that he was prevented
11 from moving me then and there. He recommended against my return placement as
12 I required too much staff time. I believe that I didn't require any more time with staff than
13 anyone else, but by then Dr Leeks was worried about my uncle's desire to go to the
14 newspapers.

15 From Lake Alice I was enrolled at GRO-A College. I didn't fit in and was all over
16 the place. My life had been so different to the students there. Before long I was living on
17 the streets and in trouble with the Police. After that I was sent to borstal in Invercargill.

18 I am now 60 and have spent 40 years of my adult life in prison counting borstal.
19 When not in prison I have done mostly labouring jobs, worked in a fishing company in
20 Nelson for a while. I also went to chef school. I worked on and off as a chef but nothing
21 regular.

22 The Crown Prosecutor said I wasn't a risk to the community. My last psychological report
23 classifies me as institutionalised. This is true. It is easy for me to be in jail. I know the
24 system and I do not have problems there.

25 However, I really want to stay out of jail now and have a real quality life. I do
26 know people on the outside who have started their own small businesses and are not in
27 gangs.

28 I have two children, a boy and a girl. They barely knew me growing up because I
29 was in jail so much. I understand why they are annoyed with me for not being there for
30 them. We are not close but if I'm in Wellington I will give them a call and maybe have a
31 catch -up.

32 My youngest brother has a happy life with his family and a home. He was my
33 father's favourite and avoided a lot of what my father did to me. That brother and I have

1 nothing to do with each other. He doesn't want to know me. My mother died a few years
2 ago. She was guilty about my childhood and knew why I had turned to jail. When she
3 spoke to me about it, I told her that it wasn't her fault.

4 The last time I saw my father he was still in denial about what he did to me. I
5 don't know if he's dead or alive.

6 I heard that a lawyer was taking a claim for Lake Alice survivors and I asked to be
7 part of it. A lawyer came to see me in jail and interviewed me and then rang me a few
8 times to get my statement completed. From memory I was offered a sum to settle. I was
9 disappointed and shocked at how little it was. I thought I had no choice but to take it as I
10 was in jail at the time. My capabilities of hiring a lawyer were totally not possible. The
11 rest went to Grant Cameron. I felt very disappointed that it was so unfair at how it turned
12 out.

13 I recall after we settled with Grant Cameron that Justice Gallen had a meeting in
14 Auckland at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, there was about 10 to 15 of us. I think he travelled
15 the country and met class action survivors in the main centres. I was out of jail at the time.
16 Grant Cameron was there and one or two others. I remember Justice Gallen telling us that
17 Dr Leeks would be prosecuted. We felt good. It never happened. I am very angry about
18 that.

19 I have just recently accepted a settlement in relation to my treatment at the other
20 homes when I was in care of the State. If I wanted more and I was advised I might be able
21 to argue for \$5,000 more but I got so sick of waiting. I first went to Sonja Cooper in 2007.
22 I had to wait 13 years for that much.

23 I think the Crown deliberately put road blocks up everywhere and tried to wear us down so we
24 would give up trying to get compensation and justice. I don't think this amount justified
25 what was done to me. I went to Newmarket redress hearing for some of the Crown witness'
26 evidence. I was not impressed with the Crown blatantly saying they could not recall
27 various events. I don't think the Crown have made up for the really terrible way I and other
28 children were treated in their care.

29 I deeply regret the way my life has turned out. If only someone had listened to me
30 when I was 9 --

31 **Q.** Shall I take over from here Tom. "I deeply regret the way my life has turned out. If only
32 someone had listened to me when I was 9 and supported me through the trauma of being
33 sexually abused and living in a violent family. I might have turned out -- life might have
34 turned out very differently for me. The constant conflict with my father was because, as the

1 oldest, I tried to protect my mother from his violence. My younger brother would not
2 understand that. I feel shame at having been in jail. But the State trained me for it from 9
3 years old.

4 I note that in the Department of Social Welfare documents when I was 11 it was
5 written that I had social and emotional problems and was not getting enough love and
6 affection from my mother. I felt the world was against me and preferred to withdraw into
7 myself. They were thinking of a boarding school placement. No-one questioned if there
8 was another problem as well, such as my sexual abuse. It's not a thing I could have brought
9 up.

10 Instead of dealing with my emotional problems I got put into places where, among
11 other things, I was sexually used for a staff member's pleasure, kicked, punched, strapped,
12 and bashed. All I ever did wrong was run away to go home. For that I finally got put into a
13 psychiatric hospital when there was nothing wrong with me mentally and I was traumatised
14 there on so many occasions. Then given cruel and painful treatment as punishments.

15 When I was 16 I was just thrown out of the Department of Social Welfare system as it had
16 "nothing further to offer me." So they made me the way I was but then they just abandoned
17 me at 16. I should have had a mentor given skills, training and a proper place to live. The
18 boarding house I was put in by the social workers was full of alcoholics and drug addicts.
19 I never had training from anyone and I couldn't get a job. I was never supervised or
20 assisted. MSD have apologised for this. How else was I going to live if I didn't steal?
21 I also note a comment in my files that "the best specialist guidance" had been given to me but it
22 had not done me any good. They listed the boys' homes I had been in and Lake Alice.
23 There was never any helpful specialist guidance unless you count abuse, ECT for
24 punishment, Paraldehyde for punishment, physical abuse everywhere. I wonder why the
25 people who wrote these notes didn't know what was going on in these places of "specialist
26 guidance." Or maybe they did know but didn't care. I want the system of locking kids up
27 and institutionalising them when they have become troubled to be gone forever. Kids in
28 lock-up become adults in prisons. They know no better.

29 When I had just turned 15 the State had washed its hands of me. In a letter a
30 social worker wrote that the Epuni Boys' Home management recommended "a secure
31 well-structured environment which could best be provided by the Justice Department." By
32 the age of 15 the Government had given up on me and put me behind bars.

33 I have no material, family or emotional support going into old age. I have no
34 savings as I have rarely worked and been in jail so much. My health is in a poor state. I

1 have only four teeth left and it's difficult to eat. I have a debt with Social Welfare for
2 having to get bonds so I could move into places.

3 I don't sleep, I haven't for years. I snap awake with the memories of incidents in
4 my childhood while in State care. I am on heart medication for arrhythmia. I need hip
5 replacements. I have PTSD and have intrusive memories all the time. I have anxiety about
6 my uncertain future. I am trying my best not to go back to prison. There is so much
7 pressure living on the outside, such as paying bills, being older and unable to get a job?

8 For years and years when I had time out of jail I asked to see a probation
9 psychologist. I was told I would never get it because I was not a violent offender so I didn't
10 qualify. I got out of jail last year and that was the first time I was offered help. The
11 psychologist saw me in prison on remand and when I got out. I had a few sessions. I need
12 ongoing support to get rid of the anger I have from what happened to me as a child and
13 PTSD and frustration.

14 What I want from the Royal Commission. When I think of how my life has been
15 destroyed by how care was handled as a child by the Government, I believe the
16 Government owes me compensation and a lot of support.

17 I wasn't paid the full amount of compensation that Justice Gallen awarded me.
18 The Government should have picked up my legal fees and should repay those legal fees
19 with interest.

20 There have to be lots of protections to stop children and adolescents being put into
21 psychiatric institutions.

22 There has to be a robust employment process that weeds out people with power issues,
23 paedophilia, anger problems, and emotional problems from working with vulnerable
24 children and adolescents."

25 Tom, that's the end of your statement. The Commissioners may have questions for
26 you.

27 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

28 **COMMISSIONER GIBSON:** Thanks Tom. There's a lot in there, just a couple of questions.

29 Did you get healthcare including dental care or adequate health and dental care while in
30 Lake Alice?

31 A. No, nothing like that.

32 Q. Do you think that has contributed to your health issues over time?

33 A. Yeah, apart from the -- also the boys' homes and all that, didn't had a dental regime. Things
34 just got worse, as time went on.

- 1 Q. Another question you might not know the answer to this, but your two friends who got
2 taken from the Child and Adolescent Unit and put in with criminally insane adults.
- 3 A. Villa 8.
- 4 Q. That would have involved, to your knowledge, staff from other parts of Lake Alice, or --
- 5 A. Sorry, I don't understand the question.
- 6 Q. There are staff in the Child and Adolescent Unit and were there different staff?
- 7 A. Oh, yes, yeah, because that was a locked door so it was --
- 8 Q. So other parts of the Lake Alice knew about this and were part of it, would you say?
- 9 A. I would imagine so because the staff would obviously communicate clearly. So they were
10 put in there overnight. Same sort of dormitory we were in, so there was so many beds to a
11 dormitory, so there would be probably 15 to 20 beds in a dormitory. So that would be the
12 same in the adult block, same design, same layout. But the difference is they're all adults.
- 13 Q. Thanks Tom, really appreciate your answer.
- 14 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Good morning Tom, thank you for your evidence this
15 morning. Just two questions if I can. In paragraph 15 you refer to being dragged upstairs
16 into one of the rooms which was converted into a cell. Are you able to recall, can you
17 describe for us what that cell looked like?
- 18 A. It's basically just a room, and what they do is they -- they've got a swinging sort of barrier
19 they can put in and lock, so that's the window gone, so there's no daylight, and then the
20 door can lock as well. There was just a mattress on the floor.
- 21 Q. Just a mattress only, nothing else in the room?
- 22 A. No.
- 23 Q. Thank you. And just one last question. In paragraph 20, you said they waited for you guys
24 usually just while you finished your showers and you'd only had time to put on a towel?
- 25 A. Yeah, it seemed that happened every Friday afternoon, the nurses, female nurses and nurses
26 would supervise us bathing, showering in the bathroom. So it happened every Friday at the
27 same time.
- 28 Q. I'm just wanting to clarify, so you had no other clothes on apart from the towel?
- 29 A. No.
- 30 Q. Thank you, thank you Tom.
- 31 **CHAIR:** Tom, I hope you don't mind one last question. Apart from these Friday afternoons,
32 which I think we've heard referred to as Black Friday, you said that people, including
33 yourself, were taken out at other times during the week --
- 34 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. -- for ECT upstairs, not the ones where you went to the girls' villa, but the ones which you
2 had upstairs, is that right?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. Is that what happened?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. You also said that you spent time at school. I'm just wondering were you ever taken out of
7 class to go to ECT?
- 8 A. No.
- 9 Q. So I'm just wondering about the sort of times of day you might have been taken up for this
10 other ECT?
- 11 A. Well, we weren't -- always went to the school place in the mornings so the afternoon was --
12 we never went back to the school in the afternoons, so we were always in the villa.
- 13 Q. That's helpful. We've heard a lot of versions about the school and what time you went and
14 what time you didn't?
- 15 A. Yeah no, it was only in the mornings.
- 16 Q. So you say it was only in the mornings, other people have said that as well.
- 17 A. Yeah.
- 18 Q. Some other people, maybe the staff have said you were there in the mornings and you had
19 lunch and then you went back again.
- 20 A. No, no, not that I can recall, no, it was always in the mornings and then we went back to the
21 villa and in villa 7 they had a full size snooker table which was -- and that was quite good,
22 and then a TV.
- 23 Q. And is that what you did in the afternoons?
- 24 A. Yeah, we just -- yeah, it was basically just hanging around the villa and -- unless they took
25 us for a walk somewhere or, yeah, it was pretty mundane really.
- 26 Q. I said only one question but that leads me;-- we also heard from some of the staff that you
27 were taken on outings and taken to camps and done things like that, do you remember
28 anything like that?
- 29 A. No, not that I recall, no, I never went on a camp.
- 30 Q. You never went on a camp?
- 31 A. No, I think the most exciting thing we ever did was have a -- was a find chocolates hidden
32 around the bush area.
- 33 Q. Like an Easter egg hunt or something like that?
- 34 A. Yeah, that was -- but there were definitely no camps.

1 Q. Trips to movies?

2 A. Well, there was a community hall there that they showed movies but not out of the hospital
3 grounds or anything, no.

4 Q. Okay. Thank you very much. Tom, thank you for answering my questions and those of the
5 other Commissioners, but most of all thank you for coming, thank you for supporting the
6 work of the Royal Commission. I appreciate that you've spent a lot of time in the back
7 watching and obviously shown a big interest, and that must have been pretty painful for you
8 to have gone through that.

9 A. Yeah, well Social Welfare obviously --

10 Q. You were interested in the redress hearings obviously.

11 A. Yeah, because I had a lot to do with them and then obviously the Salvation Army, because I
12 was abused in their care as well, and [GRO-B], I don't know if I'm
13 allowed to say it, but he's the guy that grabbed me by the hair and took me upstairs and
14 gave me Paraldehyde. And Grant Cameron on Monday.

15 Q. Okay. Thank you for that, but most of all thank you for being brave enough to stand up in
16 spite of all your difficulties and make public your experiences, because that's going to be
17 heartening to other survivors to know that other people have had the same experiences as
18 them, really useful to us for the work that we're doing, and I hope that you find some
19 comfort in the fact that you've been able to do this as well.

20 A. Yeah, it's good for me also, so --

21 Q. Happy to hear that, and I know that you've been looked after by our well-being people,
22 make sure you take advantage of that as well.

23 A. Thank you.

24 Q. Thank you Tom. All right, that brings that evidence to a close, so we'll take a short
25 adjournment before the next witness. [Applause]

26 **Adjournment from 10.16 am to 10.47 am**

27 **CHAIR:** Ata mārie.

28 **MS A THOMAS:** Mōrena e te Kaiwhakawā, tēnā koutou katoa ngā mema o te pānara e nō noho
29 nei, e mihi ana ki a koutou. E mihi ana hoki ki a tātou ko tatu mai nei ki roto i tō tātou
30 whare, e tautoko mārika ana au i ngā kupu kua whakatakotohia i mua ia tātou i tēnei ata,
31 kua tae tātou ki te kaikōrero tuarua o te rā nei.

32 It is my privilege, as always, to introduce our second witness for today, Mr Charles
33 Symes, or Chaz as he likes to be called and Chaz, before we get started with your