

**Witness Name: Dinah Hirani Lambert**

**Statement No: WITN0500001**

**Dated: 01.12.2021**

**ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO ABUSE IN CARE**

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**WITNESS STATEMENT OF DINAH HIRANI LAMBERT**

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I, Dinah Hirani Lambert, make the following statement:

**INTRODUCTION**

1. I was born in 1952 and I am of Ngati Kahungunu descent.
2. I was born and schooled in Te Matau a Maui.
3. My surname before I was married was Black.
4. I am the mother of one stepdaughter and three sons. I have also raised two mokopuna.
5. I am an ordained Priest with the Anglican Church.
6. My current position is the Chaplain at Te Aute College in Central Hawkes Bay. I have held this role for 19 years. Prior to this I was Chaplain at Hukarere Girls College.
7. I am making this statement to the Royal Commission of Inquiry about the physical, emotional and sexual abuse I experienced during my childhood spent in care.

**BACKGROUND**

8. My mother was Māori, and my father was Pakeha. He was born in New Zealand, but his parents' marriage split up and he was raised in Australia with his dad.

9. My father was in the Australian Army and then he came back to New Zealand when he was 40 after the second world war and married my mum who would have only been 16 or 17 years old.
10. From what my father talked about, there was a time when my brother had meningitis in Napier hospital and my mother had tuberculosis. She went on to Pukeora TB Sanatorium, then spent time in Wellington Hospital and then eventually came back and spent time under the verandas at Napier hospital, which was the process at the time.
11. There was six of us children – I have five siblings: two older brothers, a younger brother and two younger sisters. John is the eldest, then Peter, then me, Mary and GRO  
B who was just a baby.
12. I think life for my father was just trying to juggle us all and still try and keep working while my mother was sick and in various hospitals. He also had members of my mother's family, her siblings with us that were still going to school, it must have been chaos.
13. My parents eventually split up, I don't know exactly what happened, but I do know my dad was very frightened that we would all get TB.
14. After my parents split, we stayed with my father for a while. He tried to keep us all together in one unit rather than for us to be fragmented all over the place, but he couldn't get a housekeeper to stay and work with us out in the country.
15. My father was a hard drinker. He had a bad temper which was worse when he was drunk, but he did the best he could. He was left trying to juggle us and all these bits meant he just couldn't cope.
16. There was a lady that lived down the road, Valley Road in Raukawa - Mrs Natusch, she was involved in Red Cross. Occasionally she would come around to see if we were okay. There was another lady as well, Mrs Mcfarlane.
17. I'm not sure if it was an intervention by them or something else but it all went to smithereens really and we were all split up and ended up in care, over the years in different institutions and with other people.
18. The welfare system at the time was a lot harder and stricter. My siblings and I were split up and went to various places.
19. My youngest sibling GRO  
-B was placed with another family, the GRO-B family in Hastings. Initially they couldn't have children of their own; she wasn't adopted but GRO  
-B ended up staying there for so long that she ended up calling them mum and dad and so our dad

- backed off and just became an uncle to her. Later the GRO-B did have a daughter, so GRO-B has a sister there too.
20. I remember sometimes dad would go and see GRO-B and we others would stay outside in the car and wait for him while he was visiting her.
21. GRO-B must have known about us because later when she was 16 and getting married, somehow, she got in touch with our brother GRO-B who happened to be living here in Hawkes Bay. She refers to the GRO-B as her whanau.
22. I didn't meet up with GRO-B again until I was 36 years old. We still have a sort of relationship now, it's not a real close one but I know who she is, and she knows who we are. So that's cool.
23. I don't remember what happened to John and Peter initially, they may have just stayed with people my dad arranged.
24. After my parents split, my mother went on to remarry and have 4 more children. I didn't see her again until I was in my twenties.
25. I have no memory of my mother from when I was a child, I don't remember her face. When we did finally meet, she was embarrassed, it was horrible, it wasn't a good meeting.
26. I've only got vague memories of the home I was placed in first, it was in Hastings at a nursery type thing, it was near the racetrack. I think it was just for little children, like pre-5-year-olds, after that was Randall House which was on the top of the hill on Napier terrace and later to Abbotsford Home in Waipawa.
27. In between the different children's homes, I can vaguely remember times living at home with our dad.
28. My dad was always trying to get us back together, to get us out of the 'Homes'. I must have been living with him when I turned five as I started school at the 'old school' at Raukawa which was between Bridge Pa and Raukawa itself. It was an old-school on the bend on the hill.
29. I can remember another new school after that down Valley Rd, but I don't know how long we were there, and eventually three of us, myself, Mary and GRO-B ended up at Randall House.
30. I think after Randall house I went home again with Dad for a while, then later I went to Abbotsford, and it was there I met up again with Mary and GRO-B Peter joined us later at Abbotsford as well but again I'm not sure of timeframe.

31. I think there was another children's home somewhere in the middle as well, but I can't remember what it was called. Abbotsford was the last children's home I lived at.
32. I'm not sure of my age during this period but when I left Abbotsford, I was 15 years old, and I had been there about four or five years.

## **ABUSE IN CARE**

### **Randall House**

33. Randall House is the first Children's home I have a clear memory of. It was on Napier Terrace. Napier Terrace school, where we went to school, was right next to it.
34. Randall House wasn't an Anglican home, but we did go to church while we were there, we would walk down the road to go to church every Sunday, maybe it was to the Cathedral which is Anglican, but I'm not sure. A man would visit every so often. We called him 'Uncle Arthur – I think he was the Mayor of Taradale?
35. I do not have a lot of memories of Randall House, but I do remember it seemed very unfair there. It was the words used to and about you, and then having to always try to show a face that didn't show how much it affected you. That did more damage than anything physical.
36. There was an old lady there, I think her name was Miss Hall. She seemed quite elderly, she was lovely actually – I remember her with fondness and so do my brother and sister
37. There was another lady, GRO-B who came after Miss Hall, she wasn't so good – she was quite cruel.
38. GRO-B was very strict and didn't smile. She would always punish us in public (in front of the other staff and children), so everyone could see us. She would pull our pants down, we had to bend over, and she would strap us. It was humiliating. We learned very quickly to shut off and never show that it hurt. Others were not allowed to comfort you.
39. I tended to be the one looking after my sister and brother, it was my sole aim in life, I think I got that from my dad, I remember him saying to me when we were put in care, "Look after your brother and your sister", I took that very seriously.
40. I remember running around after them, and taking GRO-B up to the hospital. He had to wear an eye patch as the meningitis drugs he was on affected his eyes – if it came off, I would have to plaster it back on. I was the dreaded sister making sure he did what he was told. I was still only very young.

41. We would come back to the home from school for lunch each day. You would come through the gate in the fence to Randall House. I remember a sort of quad area that was open space. There were buildings around the edge but it was mainly open space. There were toilets there. We would have to sit on the toilet and 'produce' each time.
42. If you didn't 'produce' you stayed there until you did produce, until you could show them and say "There, there's my number 2s".
43. If you didn't produce, you'd just have to keep sitting there so you'd be late back for school and get yelled at.
44. Older girls – I remember GRO-B would have to monitor us and check and you could see the whole thing with the senior children was they would get angry with us for keeping them there if we couldn't produce.
45. There was the humiliation of things, if you were in trouble, it was always very public, in front of everyone at the Home. All that just put you always on edge.
46. We had to pick up all the leaves from the front lawn with our hands. My hands would be freezing, and the wind would blow additional leaves off the trees as you were working, but you had to keep picking them up. We were punished if it didn't look neat and tidy. If you didn't hurry up and finish your chores there was punishment, and you would feel bad because you would be letting the others down - blanket punishment.
47. I don't remember being allowed any personal toys or any toys being there to play with. We never had a lot, even with my dad, but at Randall house particularly, I don't remember any toys. That's not to say that they weren't there, I just don't remember them.
48. Some of our meals were just crusts off the bread, with meat paste. That would become an actual whole meal. We used to laugh about it. So, they would get 2 meals out of the bread – the piece for the sandwich at one meal and then the crusts with meat paste as another whole meal. I remember the dreaded tripe meal.
49. I don't remember a lot else about the meals. We weren't very well off at home, so food was food, it never mattered to me what it was. We were bought up to eat everything on your plate.
50. I used to sneak around looking for my brother and sister at night, and being punished for it, but I had to know where they were. Especially as my sister was quite sickly as well, she was asthmatic. Mary always seemed to be breathless and had eczema and things like that, she used to walk around holding onto my dress or whatever I was wearing, she was like a little shadow all the time

51. So, if I knew she wasn't well I would go looking for her at night, to check on her. They discouraged us a lot for looking after one another or comforting one another. If my brother or sister were upset I would go to comfort them and if I didn't stop I was punished.
52. There were a lot of kids at Randall House. I'm not sure how many of us there were, but when the boys got to a certain age, they had to go to another place called France House, a farm place, which is where Hukarere girls' school is now out at Eskdale.
53. Dad was pushing for us not to be there anymore as he wanted us to be together and GRO-B was getting to the age where he would have to leave Randall House and go to France House perhaps.
54. He was always asking if he could take us out for holidays or weekends – and there would always be some excuse as to why he wasn't allowed to. My brother has since requested his records from Randall house, and he received the monthly minutes, and you can clearly see in them where dad has been trying to visit us, but the staff have determined to make excuses like "Mary has a cold, so they can't go with their father" and things like that.
55. You could see written in the record "Mr. Black is requesting..." it just seems like a cruel thing to do to him and to us. We were very estranged from any wider family, so our father and 2 older siblings was all we had. But who cared?
56. My dad managed to get me out of Randall House, but GRO-B and Mary were still in care. I went home to live with my dad, but eventually we all ended up back in care together. For a time, I went to St Joseph's in Opunake. This was arranged through Father Darning of the Catholic Church in Hawkes Bay. It was a Catholic School. I boarded along with other girls, some from Hawkes Bay and we went to the Day Catholic School. I got so homesick.

### **Abbotsford House**

56. I'm not sure about the circumstances as to why I went back into care, but I met up with Mary and GRO-B at Abbotsford House and later my brother Peter joined us.
57. Abbotsford was Peter's first taste of a children's home. Peter didn't want to be there, he hated it. He was crying and begging my dad to take him home. I would tell him it will be alright you'll be ok; that I would look after him, but it took him a while. I suppose as kids you adapt. You have to, there is no choice.

58. The oldest one John never came, dad always found a way to farm him out, I think at that time dad was scrub cutting, fencing all that sort of thing and so he found him odd jobs. For a while John went to Hato Paora, but fees couldn't be paid. Some of those private homes had people who would lock him out of the house and he would find a shed or old car to sleep in. They treated him very cruelly.

59. Abbotsford was a big place. There were around 30 plus children most of the time, mostly multiple kids from the same families. Some children were just there by themselves, but most were from families.

60. There was the [GRO-B] family, [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] and they were joined by [GRO-B] so there was at least five of them, the [GRO-B] family from Patea, they were [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] and then [GRO-B] came later as well, so seven of them. So, it tended to be families mainly. The two [GRO-B] girls - [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] and others.

61. [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] were in charge at Abbotsford when I arrived. They were still there when I left. I gather they had come from Christchurch somewhere. They had five children of their own. The whole family lived in.

62. Their children were [GRO-B] [GRO-B] [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] who was a baby and then they adopted [GRO-B]

63. There were also some other staff - gardeners (Mr Beck) and his wife who worked inside, they were lovely. Other people came in – someone to help with laundry and someone to do the mending and so on.

64. I'm not sure of their exact age but I assume [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] were in their 40s. [GRO-B] wasn't very tall, but he was muscular and fit.

65. There were some good things that happened at Abbotsford House.

66. We were divided into different groups as you would expect and rostered certain duties. We would have weekends when we got out to the river. We had this big old truck and a horrible old butcher's van for the juniors. My job was to sit in the front and look out for and entertain the juniors and make sure they all did as they were told while [GRO-B] drove the van. We loved going to the river and on trips. There was one time, I'm not sure how we did it as there was so many of us, but we went down to Christchurch which was quite a neat trip, we just stayed in church halls and things like that.

67. Later, we got bikes, GRO-B helped us, and we went around all the rubbish dumps in Hawkes Bay and got every bike part available and we put them all together which was great, we painted them all up and we all had a bike each, that was cool.
68. At one stage while I was at Abbotsford someone had given us kids photography equipment and so we were able to take our own photos and develop them – it was fun. That was one of my jobs, developing the photos and putting them into the albums. One still survives today and is kept at the Anglican Cathedral in Napier.
69. There were no cuddles or touching at Abbotsford, we didn't have get or give any hugs. It was almost like they were scared you would do something sexual if you touched each other. I'd go and cuddle and comfort my younger brother and sister if they were upset. But I would be told to leave them alone. It was like you'd done something wrong and yet they were the very people that were touching and doing wrong.
70. When we were at Abbotsford, we would go to the 8 o'clock church service and then the Sunday School service. Sometimes we went to Evensong as well. We would also have chapel every weeknight. We would have to read the bible, learn the hymns and do all that sort of stuff. There was no choice. You did as you were told and went where you were told.
71. GRO-B could be kind. Like when he got us all together to make those bikes, and making rafts for river races, he was fit and athletic, he could be fun. But when I think about how you can make a person feel just with how you talk to them, GRO-B could cut someone down like that, and he would watch for their reaction. Sometimes he would deliberately belittle GRO-B in front of us. I look back now, and I think he was quite clever the way he went about things.
72. It was a difficult situation with boys and girls of all different ages living together. I don't think we were protected enough. I remember at one stage boy-friend girl-friend sort of relationships going on amongst the children. Nothing serious.
73. Every so often a 'committee' would come to visit, and we would make the cups of tea and get it all ready and they would ask you how you were, and we would all say, "It's all really nice thank you". It never occurred to us that you should tell them the truth, and they would listen, and they might take you seriously because nobody did.

#### **Family and being Māori**

74. We weren't encouraged to see our parents, and they were almost treated like the enemy. We didn't see my dad a lot, at times we wouldn't even recognize him when he came to see us. And when he did, we would be left very unsettled, so seeing him wasn't



- encouraged. It would tear you apart emotionally, and you would forever be trying to remain and act strong like you were okay, and yet you weren't.
75. I know he had to pay a certain amount for us to be in the home. At times we would just forget who he was. I can remember when he came to visit once saying "There's this old man at the front door and I don't know who he is, but he knows me".
76. There was a couple of times when he walked up the drive at the Home and he would say hello to my sister and me, and we would sort of say "hello" and then suddenly it would click, he was our father.
77. Dad would turn up at Waipawa Primary school a few times and I would get a message from one of the teachers-Mr Cannon, Mr Lawrence, or Miss Towers saying, "Dinah you need to get your brothers and sister now and go to the front gate", so I would do that.
78. My dad would be there, and apparently there would be this thing where the police would be called and so he would just sneak off. It wasn't nice. Yet it was good to see him for that small time.
79. I now know that I am of Ngati Kahungunu descent, but that wasn't always the case.
80. We were brought up very 'Pakeha-fied' within the children's homes.
81. Māori was almost like a dirty word. There was no encouragement to say where you were from, none of that. It was never ever spoken that I was Māori, and it never occurred to me that I was, unless it was pointed out, usually in a derogatory way.
82. I guess there was just this sort of thing with some people, they didn't blatantly say it, that I was Māori. But you watched them, and you could sort of tell from their expression.
83. Like when we were going to get pipis, they would say something like "Do you like pipis Dinah? All Māori like pipis". Well, pipis were food. Of course, I liked them! It was just a subtle thing the way it was put.
84. I was doing Highland dancing somewhere and there was this pakeha lady that was watching. She said, "Doesn't that look stupid, there's a Māori and they are doing highland dancing" and I remember thinking 'oh it must be wrong', so I stopped dancing, lots of things like that.
85. There were Pakeha and Māori children at school in Waipawa, maybe half and half. We at Abbotsford weren't encouraged to mix with the Māori children. They never blatantly said we can't play with the Māori children, it wasn't spoken, it was just a subtle thing that you didn't, you know, there was this unspoken disapproval. I wasn't allowed to go play with friends or have them visit or ring. Even at College you were encouraged for want of a better word not to mix with Māori students.

86. Māori kids were the first to be lined up and treated for lice whether they had it or not.
87. Once we were at a competition, I think it was a competition the Hawkes Bay high schools all took part in, it was broadcast on the radio and 3 of us from Central Hawkes Bay College had to perform a couple of songs in Māori. I was singing, and I wouldn't have a clue what I was singing about.
88. One of my teachers taught it to us and we sang it, but at the children's home it was sort of like "Well you shouldn't really be doing this".
89. So, you back off and you don't talk about it because it's just unspoken, you know there's disapproval, so you don't go down that track.
90. You know, this sounds horrible, but it was almost as if "Aren't you lucky that you are here". In terms of being in the home instead of being left to be brought up Māori, it was quite derogatory.
91. In much later life I have connected to my mother's side of the family, so I would know who my whanau were. When my boys went through school mostly all of it was in Southland and we moved back up to Hawkes Bay I was very curious as to where and who we were from.
92. By the time I came back to Hawkes Bay my brother was married to a lady from Porangahau and he is probably the most family orientated of us. He has a better memory of our younger years and is immersed in his wife's family. So, all of a sudden, I started doing the same and it grew from there really – who am I, where am I from?
93. Meeting my mother and her family and realizing there was more than just the six of us and my father. All that sort of came together. Just learning where I am from, who's my mother, then it grew. I met family down south and then here in the bay. We connect with the East Coast, Hawkes Bay and Taranaki. But my tuakana, my oldest brother, learnt that all first and then I developed a love for wanting to know too.
94. My sister Mary has no real interest in her whakapapa at all. I'm her Mum really, rather than our own natural Mum who she couldn't really gel with.
95. So that reconnection with our mother's family has come about. I'm not terribly close to her family but I've found where I fit and from there a real love for it.
96. It has been essential so that my boys hopefully had more grounding in whanau.
97. I now know that its ok to be Māori. But I had to 'come to me' first.
98. I think the Kohanga movement came at the right time for us, not for my children but at least for my grandchildren.

99. I think my father although he married a Māori, he didn't really want us to have a lot to do with them but for me it's been very valuable. He would dress us up to the nines and I think projected that because we were Māori, we had to try extra hard to look good.
100. If I could go back, it would have been neat to just be able to be Māori rather than not even realize that you were Māori.

### Humiliation

99. A lot of things were unfair at Abbotsford. Public humiliation happened a lot. I think it was the easiest way to control us. I have such terrible memories and it was just so unfair. Whenever I see blanket punishment even now, I hate it.
100. Physical abuse wasn't such a big thing for me, it was more the demeaning things, the cruel mental games that got to me. We would get picked on for small things. It wasn't across the board with everyone, some kids had it worse than others. Because of this we were sort of turned on each other, friends one minute and then pitted against each other the next.
101. That whole thing if you were a girl, you'd get all the boys on the side and just using really stink words at you, how that makes you feel, and these were boys you were having fun with, getting on fine with, but the moment that turns, the whole herd/pack thing comes and they join in – whether they wanted to or not, and sometimes you could see that they didn't want too, it was just humiliating for us all.
102. One of the boys, [GRO-B] was so badly picked on by [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] he was one of those kids that would immediately go red and look guilty if someone said, "Who did that?" and you immediately knew you could conquer him. It was just horrible and in all the time I was there it was like that for [GRO-B] It was just horrible and cruel to see.
103. [GRO-B] would get to a point where he just couldn't even speak properly. He'd get all jumbled with his words and in the end, he wouldn't even speak, he'd just twist his little body around. That was just one of the most horrible things, he was just an easy kid to pick on.
104. It would get to the point where I would just cry for [GRO-B] Sometimes I would say "I did it" or own up to something just to take the heat off some of the younger ones.
105. It wasn't for anything huge, it would just be continuous, "Why didn't you do your job?" or "Was that your group?" or "Was that you that did that?", it was always constant, I think it was just to get to us, and keep us in line.

106. Another child, a girl, really didn't like fruit cake and she would just leave it or try and pick out the fruit, GRO-B would just stand there and tell her she had to eat it, until she would be gagging, and it was like a joke that she was gagging.
107. You'd look at the boys, the boys you'd been playing with minutes before, and they would join in with GRO-B because he would be laughing the boys would also laugh. She would be crying. What fun is it to belittle someone like that?
108. She was a stubborn thing and so was her sister, and they would hold to it and be as brave as they could. But GRO-B would just keep going at them all the time.
109. I remember her vomiting into her plate and then had to keep eating the vomit because GRO-B was telling her she must keep eating.
110. Another example is that our butter was divided up into small portions for the table for economy's sake, but if you didn't ask for it in the correct or expected manner you would just be told to leave the table and you wouldn't get to eat your meal. So, you would then pretend you weren't hungry to save face.
111. If someone had done something wrong GRO-B would get the boys to help hold you down to restrain you, I don't remember that with me a lot, but I can remember it with others. One girl would fight back hard.
112. We used to be given horrible haircuts and I think sometimes it was done on purpose to humiliate you. So, you would just pretend it was fine and that you didn't care, but you did.
113. One instance a girl was saying she didn't want her hair touched and telling them to leave her alone but the big boys, older ones were holding her down on the kitchen floor and she had her haircut. We tried to make it better back in the dorms. Same with some of the boys.
114. You could see that pack mentality in the boys I suppose, I remember talking to one of them and asking, "Why did you do that, why did you help hold her down?", and I remember him saying "Because then they'll leave me alone".
115. Again, it's just things that were constantly belittling. I learnt to be hard, you had to be. I would continuously pretend it didn't matter.
116. Several children including my brother had their birthdays changed to other dates. It was supposedly so that each child felt special having no one celebrating close to your birthday and taking the shine off your day. It left our family confused for years as we were used to having Peters birthday on their changed date for him. As an adult when

- he saw his Birth Certificate he realized the dates were different. We still celebrate his birthday on the wrong date. Habit.
117. It just seemed the whole public humiliation was the thing we used often at that home, GRO-B and GRO-B and us kids learnt to do it too, yeh we did. A lot of it was spoken stuff. That affects you mentally in how you see yourself, on edge a lot.
118. It wasn't the same across all the kids, some got it more than others, those two sisters GRO-B and GRO-B, GRO-B, GRO-B got it an awful lot, and GRO-B it just seemed to be the pack mentality I don't remember the physical stuff being the worst thing. It wasn't a huge apparent thing to me, it was the demeaning stuff.
119. When we started our periods, we were treated cruelly. We were only allowed three sanitary pads a day, if you needed more you were made to feel so bad, it was horrible. The pads would get all soggy and if you needed to change and you had nothing to use you would just wrap the already soggy pad in toilet paper and continue to use it. Or another way to cope with it you could just wrap toilet paper in bulk, like a wad of paper for a pad. But then we would get told off for using so much toilet paper.
120. I learnt to go into the storeroom and steal old sheets and pillowcases and rip them up to use for pads and then when I was finished with them hide them in the rubbish or even bury them, do anything to get rid of them because you feel stink.
121. It was the remarks from the adults that I found the worst, on occasion you would ask the adults at school if there was a spare pad you could use, and the response would be something like "Oh another Abbotsford Home... such and such", all that sort of stuff and comments. The words are intended to hurt you, that's why they are said.
122. We had to wear black silk pants during our menses and we would have to wash them out and hang them on the line. Everyone saw, and you got teased something dreadful. Even by GRO-B Everyone knew when you had your period. It was just another form of humiliation. Again, it's the cruelty of belittling someone, and how you cope inside yourself, and pretend you don't care.
123. I had a good friend, GRO-B at College, who believed me and helped me, in fact at one stage she used to buy me tampax and I would keep it at school in my locker.
124. I remember with GRO-B when he was abusing me, and it wasn't just his hands he was using, and it got to be quite bad, and I was dealing with a man's private parts and even if I had my period he didn't care, it didn't stop him.

125. Later in life I learnt that being Māori especially, that is such a stink thing to do to someone who has their period, he still carried on sexually with me when I had my period.

### **School Life**

125. All the Abbotsford kids went to Waipawa Primary and then on to Central Hawkes Bay College.
126. Instead of going down Abbotsford Road we would just walk over the hill at the back/side of the Home and would come out just before the first shop on the main road as you get into Waipawa and continue along to school.
127. The Waipawa school was quite big. It wasn't just for the kids from Waipawa itself, you'd get the little surrounding country town kids as well. It was a good size.
128. At school we were known as the Abbotsford Home kids. We stuck together and tended to be a whanau. We learnt to be very tough together. We were often referred to as the Orphan's or the Home kids. Some names weren't nice. We just got on with it.
129. We didn't have a great reputation at school, if anything went wrong, it was the Abbotsford kids' fault. We were punished at school, and then when we got back to the Home we would be punished again – for being punished at school.
130. We were picked on, and that didn't just come from the children, but also the adults. We used to get called some pretty stink names, but we just learnt to pull it together. It was the whole expectation of 'what do you expect? You're Abbotsford Home kids', it wasn't very nice at all.
131. I think anything that puts you out front or different as a kid, puts you in the firing line, so you tended to have to be tough.
132. The kids pick up on what the adults were saying. However, I do remember a couple of teachers at Waipawa primary who were fantastic and very encouraging towards us kids from the Home.
133. The Home kids were fantastic at sport, we used to go to the Country Sports days and just burn everyone else off, we just arrived on the day and loved it, we tended to have to be a whanau anyway to survive and so we learnt to be the best at something to burn them off, it was a way to feel good and fit in and yet you didn't really fit in.
134. I suppose in your head you think you are going to fit in that way, if you can be the best, perhaps then 'they' will see that you are ok or worthy. We were the 'Abbotsford Home' kids, but even though that's how we thought of ourselves it wasn't very nice having

other people refer to us as that in a 'put down', on the outside. We learnt to be tough together.

135. I loved school because it was an outlet. It was nicer to be at school than at Abbotsford. For me, the safest place was at school, it wasn't at the Home, it never was.
136. It was the same at college, you go there until 3pm, and then you go home, but I could put up with what happened at home so long as I knew I was going to be able to go back to school the next day.
137. I just remember school as always being the safe place.

### **Sexual Abuse at Abbotsford House**

139. For me a lot of the abuse was behind closed doors.
140. The first time GRO-  
B sexually abused me we were down at the river, we were making rafts up or something and we were put into two or three kids on each raft, and we were going down the river, it was good, it was fun.
141. I was on a raft with GRO-  
B just me and him. I just had togs on. I remember the zip being pulled down at the back and just freezing on the spot. He just sort of giggled and laughed.
142. I felt his hands on me, back and front, and I just tried to shut my zip and tried to wriggle away, it wasn't so much saying don't touch me, I would just freeze really.
143. It started off with things like that, at the river, or I'd be called down to the office.
144. At Abbotsford Home there was a big foyer. On the outside on the front verandah -porch was what was the chapel to your right, and then inside the front door on the right in the foyer was the office. The staircase was off the foyer too.
145. I'd be called down to the office and once again I would be fighting his hands all over me or sometimes, I would just freeze. It would be silent. I used to just pretend I wasn't there really.
146. Often nothing was said. Maybe he would start off saying something like "This is to let you know you swore three times this week, so you've got nothing in there, what do you think about that?" (no money in my tin money box) and he would watch for my reaction.
147. Every time we swore there was supposed to be a fine, so money would be taken out of our little tin money boxes as payment of the fine.
148. I just didn't give a hoot. By that time, I'd learned to defend myself by my attitude, and I'd just shrug my shoulders and say, "Well I don't care".

149. I would pretend I just wasn't there. I didn't want to be there, so I'd just pretend I wasn't. I'd go off into my own dreamland, think about anything but being there. Or I would just put myself into a room in my head and go to sleep there. Sometimes it worked.
150. I tended to withdraw a lot then, that's what I mean, school was a great outlet.
151. He never talked about it or spoke to me when he was abusing me. Never.
152. The only thing I remember him ever saying was treating it like a joke – laughing and saying, “What are you upset about?”
153. It would happen in all sorts of places, I remember him saying we would go down to the river, we used to swim in the deep water if you had things coming up like swimming sports or whatever, because I was a pretty good swimmer – that was just to take you down there to abuse you and you never spoke about it.
154. And his hands would be everywhere on me, rather than saying anything, I would just sort of bunch myself up and try and hide myself and/or pretend I didn't care.
155. I'd wake up at nights sometimes and I'd be in the bathroom, I wouldn't know how I got there, and I'd be sitting on him, he'd just have his hands all over me, and again there was no words spoken, never any words, just silence, heavy breathing, and sometimes this sort of high sounding giggle. At one stage, because of the sexual abuse, I ran away on a school day thinking I would find my father. My sister Mary nagged to come too and another girl. I had no idea how I was going to get there, where ever my dad was, just desperate for something to change and something to stop it happening. We were found and taken back to the Home.
156. The sexual abuse would also go on at night-time, and he'd take you away from the dorm. It would involve his private parts, his fingers, hands, my breasts and private parts and inside my private parts. There was a storeroom that was full of shelves and boxes and had all sorts in it, all the clothes that were donated to the home and things like that. It was opposite the Girls Dorm at the end of Corridor. He would take me there, or to the girls' bathrooms. At some stage the Girls and Boys Dorms had swapped.
157. He would make excuses for us to go with him like “Come with me we have to pick something up” and you would know what was going to happen, so I'd try all sorts of things, pretend I was sick or get someone else to come with us, just anything so you didn't have to go there by yourself, because if someone else was there he wouldn't try it on.
158. I think GRO-B knew. She would come near the room or place and call out to him, when he was prowling around or touching and abusing you, and she just stood near and



- didn't say anything, and then she left, that happened a few times or she'd be around close by.
159. I think that was one of the worst bits, that I believed [GRO-B] knew and did nothing to stop it, and she picked on you, and yet she could be a nice person. But she would just find little subtle ways to pick on you.
160. I used to have to go with her in the old butcher's van to make sure the junior kids behaved, and I used to ask if someone else could do it so I could go with my own age group, but she wouldn't let me, I thought it was her way of picking on me. She would go out of her way to make sure I felt stink. But then maybe she was protecting me?
161. If she gave me a haircut for example it was the same thing, I just knew it was going to be a stink haircut and she'd do it and it was a joke – but, who believes you.
162. Because the sexual abuse got that bad that in the end, it's not that you don't care, but you put on an indifference to survive. Eventually though, I stopped caring.
163. Sometimes we would be down the river and we would know what was going to happen, so we would make excuses so that we didn't have to go by ourselves or not go at all. It was best not to be alone with him because he wouldn't do anything if we were there with someone else.
164. It wasn't just me he abused.
165. I know he never touched my brother or sister, but he was touching other girls.
166. Another girl at the Home, [GRO-B] was a person that was easy to pick on, like [GRO-B] she was easy to cry, she was an easy person to upset. I don't know if he ever touched her, she stayed and worked from the home when she finished school. I often wondered if [GRO-B] was sexually interfering with some of the [GRO-B] girls because [GRO-B] and [GRO-B] just hated him so much.
167. [GRO-B] was a person that would do things to please people, she was an easy person. She was nice, but she would be silent so as to always keep the peace and through fear.
168. At night-time I'd go to bed with knives, or I'd stay up, sometimes myself and the other girls would make sure one of us had our eyes open, so [GRO-B] would see that someone was awake and then he would go away. We had an intercom system in our room, so we would know if he was coming down the hall.
169. I think he tried to do it to [GRO-B] she was a bit older than me, but I think she tried to fight him. [GRO-B] gave me a knife for protection because she had one too. [GRO-B] mucked around

- with us as well sexually. Which we didn't like, but we learnt to shut up because she was bigger than us and hit us.
170. She was older than me and left Abbotsford before I did. [GRO-B] had a way of controlling us by getting us blamed for something, so we couldn't partake in sports. I loved sports and I knew I'd really do well, and I'd get into really good stuff. But, if you were selected for regional, or the like, in sports or invited to join athletics, or swimming training you just knew he or [GRO-B] would find something wrong by you so you couldn't go.
171. I don't know if there was sex going on between the boys and girls, but I know sometimes being frightened by a boy's advances, I tended to run to my brother Peter who is a year older than me. I remember going to him and saying a boy was touching me, but at the same time I had an adult doing it. If you did complain, you would be the one accused of causing it or it was you lying etc.
172. There's that part of you that doesn't understand stuff. How you should behave. I can remember getting my first bra and running down to the boy's dormitory to show my older brother Peter. Proud of the fact that I had a new bra because you didn't get new things.
173. They would farm us out for holidays to people within the parish, so we may go in twos or just ones. I remember them being to good people and families. But I wouldn't show that I liked being there.
174. If they asked for you again or I showed I was happy I knew I wouldn't get to go back. It seemed like another form of punishment, a way to stop you being happy.
175. I tended to be sent to people that had kids to look after. Looking back, it was quite prophetic.
176. A couple of times I'd gone with [GRO-B] to places and once again I didn't have a choice, because I was there alone with her, she would muck around with me sexually. She would use fingers, and her private parts. She didn't speak about what she was doing, she would just do it and you would shut up. I would be petrified and felt helpless. You just had to pretend it didn't happen. You have no one to confide in.
177. I think my sister Mary knew what was going on, she always had a way of gunning in on something you'd done and making you feel stink about it. But I remember a few times [GRO-B] telling her to lay off me.
178. I didn't tell my older brother that [GRO-B] was sexually interfering with me. Peter is a year older than me, and I always thought if I told him then [GRO-B] would pick on him, so I didn't.
179. I didn't know my brother was leaving until the night before he went. We were at

- chapel and then we were told "So, Peter is leaving in the morning", something like that, which meant he couldn't go and see his friends at school to say goodbye or anything like that. And it always happened this way when people left.
180. We weren't allowed to have time alone together either to say goodbye. We were separated, and I even tried sneaking down the hall to see him, but it was like they checked to prevent it, so I went off to school that day that Peter left, and we never even got to say goodbye. Your world just seems to fall apart, but you're helpless. Who cares? Where's this God who you are told several times a week who supposedly loves you? Why does God not help? Obviously, you are not worth being helped, you must deserve it. There were many times I had cried out to God in prayer for help but eventually you give up.
181. There was a whole feeling of alienation and that you are all alone and how will you manage alone. That utter helplessness that no one is listening or cares.
182. And yet these were the same people that always looked good. You know that the community thought they were lovely people, looking after you, aren't they wonderful? And you think "yep, right", you can't say anything.
183. Or you would tell them, and they would just nod and pretend that you didn't say it.
184. I pretended to be sick at one stage, so I could go to the Doctor, I told the Doctor what was happening thinking at least they would listen, and they just talked over me like I hadn't said anything. So did the other adults I approached, they just pretended not to hear or understand.
185. That doctor, someone that I thought would hear me either didn't listen or didn't believe me. I hoped like mad that someone would believe me.
186. And then you just give up. I stopped caring. I think that's why they moved me on.
187. I remember seeing somebody and I don't know how it came about, who I thought was a doctor, (separate to the first one) because I went through a stage where I stopped talking, where I couldn't be bothered talking to anyone – so I didn't, I just didn't give a hoot about anything anymore.
188. I don't know whether it was depression or not and I left not long after that. I know the Doctor tried to talk to me about stuff and that, but I just wouldn't talk to him, I suppose it was depression. I had stopped caring about everything in some sort of sense.
189. When I look back, I think that's why they moved me on from the home although

- I didn't realize that at the time. I didn't want to live. I didn't want to do anything. I'm glad I had a brother and sister there because that sort of holds you a little bit, keeps you plodding on.
190. I really didn't give a damn about anything at that stage. I had given up. The person I had been, that could stand there and defy whatever came her way, just gave up. I had thought I was pretty strong.
191. In fact, I can remember I'd get called into the office and I'd just stand or sit there and take it.
192. It was "I don't really care what you do. You can't hurt me anymore". It's that sort of a feeling. You sort of look through them like they are not there.
193. He'd make a joke or try and be nice or say something nice to me and I'd just think "Yeh - you just don't exist mate". It was horrible.
194. I don't specifically remember a social worker checking on us at all during our time at Abbotsford.
195. In 1967 when it was my time to go, I didn't know in advance that I was to leave, we were all just told at chapel one night, it was a surprise to me. I went down later that night to see my brother and sneaked down, I was caught, snapped, couldn't get to say goodbye. My sister was discouraged from talking to me, and others. It was like you had done something wrong.
196. I tended to be the mother duck in the family, and I never even got to say goodbye. You carry that guilt. I still carry that guilt. So you are trying to make up for it for the rest of your life.
197. When I left my father came to pick me up and I thought I would be going back to school, I wasn't able to go into school and say goodbye to my friends, nothing.
198. When I left Abbotsford the only dread about leaving was that I was leaving my brother and sister behind. I used to ring up as much as I could to try and see if they were all right.
199. If GRO  
B answered the phone he would tell me that I couldn't keep ringing, that I wasn't allowed to ring up all the time and I would say to him "Don't you touch my sister". I think I got braver with my words when I wasn't looking at him.

#### **LIFE AFTER ABBOTSFORD**

200. I think the worst thing for me about it is that when I left the home my father placed me at a private house where it just happened again.

201. Dad took me to GRO-C where he was living with my older brother, and I was thought 'wow' that sounds great, thinking there must be another school, perhaps I'm going to another school.
202. But I wasn't going to another school, he just stuck me with a family. They had some twins, babies, and he said to me you stay here and help her. There was a couple of other kids as well and the parents drank a lot, and the place was filthy. I had come from an institutionalized place where everything was put away and clean and all that, and this other place just threw me. It was horrible.
203. I just cooked and cleaned and that was it. I helped feed the babies, changed them, played with them. I was like the housekeeper. They drank an awful lot and would fight and argue. There was no more school.
204. My father would go out fencing and my brother would go with him. But in the end my father just got to be on the booze with these other people, he and my brother argued and fought, and my brother left.
205. There was still this whole thing with me and authority, it didn't matter what an adult said you just did it. Whatever they asked you to do, you did it. As a result, I was sexually abused there as well, by drunken men.
206. After that place I moved on to another place arranged by my father
207. I was constantly raped by a guy and became pregnant. His marriage split up and I was left looking after all his children, big kids and little kids, I'm carrying a baby and have no idea what I'm doing and waiting for someone to rescue me, where's my brother, where's my father?
208. I was still only 16 at the time.
209. You are ignorant, people just walk all over you, and you've got no idea how to stand there and say, "Don't do that", you're not prepared for the world.
210. Mary, my sister got pregnant to a boy from Abbotsford home. When I asked her what happened, she also said she couldn't say no and didn't know what to do. So, she came to stay with me.
211. About that time there must have been some sort of an investigation into Abbotsford Home, because Stuart Reddy came to talk to me about the home and my experiences there. I didn't say a lot because I didn't know him. But he told me that they GRO-B and GRO-B weren't allowed to have children in their care anymore.
212. I thought that's good to know, but too late mate! The damage is done.

213. Peter and I were close in the home, but not so when he left, I think he was just so relieved to be out of the place, I think we all were when it was our time to go, so I don't blame him.
214. I am very close to my sister Mary, but I tend to be more of a mum to her.
215. My other brother GRO-B left the home and turned up where I was living once, I thought oh I wonder who that is because I hadn't seen him for a while.
216. GRO-B lives just over the hill from me in the next valley. I don't see him that often. He's a bit of a loner. He's always been like that. If he needs me, he'll call me, and I'll be there for him.
217. I've never told him anything. He thought GRO-B was wonderful, to where he went to the funeral when GRO-B died. He asked me to come, and I just said no.
218. Later my brother John was living down south in Riverton and we went to visit him there. We liked what we saw and as a result we ended up moving down there for many years. That's where my kids went to school.
219. My mother remarried and had 4 more children. I met them when my kids were going to school, they live not far out of Riverton. We all look alike really. We get on ok.
220. My sister asked me to go with her and visit GRO-B and GRO-B much later in life, I think she thought it would be healing for me. I'd do anything my sister asked but I remember thinking how do you forgive someone that has done that to you?
221. When we visited, he GRO-B was trying to be so nice, and there was this nice polite chatter like nothing ever happened. I never wanted to do or say anything about what happened to me while they were alive, I didn't and I don't, want to hurt their family.
222. I'm an ordained priest now, When I moved back up to Hawkes Bay from down south permanently, I was approached by Kaumatua who asked me if I would consider coming back into the Anglican church, specifically Tikanga Māori. They thought I could share what I knew and asked if I would be interested in bringing it back to my own people and would I consider training. This was a bit of a shock to me.
223. I think coming back to Hawkes Bay I realised that there are an awful lot of our own people that really had no idea that the Anglican church had now divided into 3. There was now a specific Tikanga Māori branch, it was a wonderful thing to see. When I was going to church as youngsters, there weren't many Māori attending our church - they seemed to gather separately.

224. I told them I couldn't afford to train as I was bringing up grandchildren by then, but that I was interested in attending Church and taking bible studies and it sort of went from there really.
225. We had a lovely Arch Bishop, Brown Turei, and he approached me, asked if I was interested and convinced me, and my family also bullied me along a little bit, and so I trained as Minita a Iwi.
226. I was interested in bringing my faith to my people and my journey to ordination began there.
227. I trained with some ministries in Hawkes Bay. I did my studies with them. Then I did Tikanga bicultural training. After that and out of the blue the Bishop asked me at a hui if I would be interested in doing a bit more.
228. He was a very astute, wise old man and he said, "If you can be of help there you can be of help here, whatever you've got can you share it?". So, it sort of went from there really. I love my work. It just seems like as I say Gods great sense of humour that I'm here, in the same place that was quite painful for me.
229. In a twist of fate, I also took some services up there at Abbotsford before it shut, at that stage it had changed, and it was a place for whole families to stay, there was a couple from Tikitiki running it.
230. I love being able to work with our boys at Te Aute, there's not many of our school families that aren't touched by some sort of trauma these days. It's nice to be able to encourage Māori teenagers that they have an opinion and that their opinion matters. I have tried to be always available to listen to what they say and don't say also. I like to encourage them to speak their truth, to show all the available help-lines for them to always know there are people to talk to, to seek help from, and to be confident in sharing their stories with myself and others to help them.
231. Trying to enable them to see how magnificent they are, to instill in them that if they are respectful, they have a right to speak and so does everyone else and you do have to listen to their point of view. I want all the best for our boys of Te Aute College
232. If I can enable them in some way, I want to be valuable to them in that respect. I was never allowed to be enabled, to speak and to be heard.
233. I love that I am now okay to be Māori and that I have reconnected with my mother's family. I have found where I fit, and from there it has grown.
234. I think if I didn't have my faith and hadn't met some great people along the way I wouldn't be here.

**IMPACT**

235. When I was 16 I was pregnant and in an abusive relationship which became an abusive marriage.
236. Most girls who left Abbotsford Home got pregnant. We had no idea what a relationship was. We were just sort of thrown out and didn't know how to survive, we didn't know how to say no to people, didn't know what to do. When we tried to say something, no one listened.
237. I was rather naïve when I left the children's home, but I didn't see that. It's that vulnerability that you are placed under that affects you, it affected my marriage, it affected everything. I ended up with someone I didn't want to marry, I ended up with someone I couldn't say no too. I was raped but I just didn't know how to say no. I told no one for years. Kept it like a dirty secret because I never want my eldest son to know his beginnings.
238. I had this horrible dependency because I didn't know how to cope by myself and was waiting for somebody to tell me what to do. It's like I didn't have a say in my own life, and I was just waiting for someone to say, "Do this, do that". You're a bloody victim, and you don't know how to get out of it.
239. You don't see yourself as a victim you just think that's what life is. You are at the mercy of everything going on and you don't know how to get off it or how to get out of it, or what to do.
240. The point I'm trying to make is that because you have to do what you are told at the home, follow the rules-fair or unfair, be polite, just do as you are told, don't speak or argue back. Because of that, you just take it with you, the end result of that sort of abuse is that it continues in your life, that institutionalization. And you don't see it as you have a problem, you don't even know you are doing it, it's almost like the big 'V' is there on your forehead. Victim-Pick me!
241. For me, the biggest thing was meeting my mother when I was in my mid-20s, I had only ever known my father, there had been no one else. I had never said the word 'mum' to anyone, or Aunty, or Uncle, or Cousin etc.
242. Somewhere obviously there was a mother, but dad never spoke about it so nor did we. You weren't allowed to speak about things.
243. Even now when I talk to my sister from my mother's first marriage, I can't refer to her as Mum – I will say "Your mother" or "our mother" and I don't even realise I'm saying it.



I also do it with my step-sisters and step-brothers from our mothers second marriage, like "Your mother".

244. My father told me one day out of the blue that my grandmother had died, I didn't know I had a grandmother. She was my mother's mother. As a result of growing up in Abbotsford I didn't understand the concept of wider family or whanau.
245. John and I went to the funeral because our father commanded it, there was a couple of hundred people there and so that meant most of them were related to us, I couldn't fathom it. I still can't understand the relationship between second cousins and that. To know there was even cousins was hard to understand. We went from five or six of us and Dad to hundreds. I couldn't take it all in. Still can't, although we are not close to them really.
246. My father had a sister in Australia who was also named GRO-B and she came over at one stage for a visit, but I never met her as I was already in the children's home. So, whanau was just 3 brothers and 2 sisters and my father.
247. The concept of family is very hard for me, it's very precious now, but it took years to accept that I have this huge whanau. We're not close to them at all but I know who they are, and I want my kids to know who they are.
248. It's overwhelming to me to look at a whakapapa that's huge. It's the same for my father's side. He never really spoke about them. Many years after he died we looked up our genealogy, what a journey. He had a son and divorced a wife before WW2 and we never knew.
249. When I left the home, I didn't know anything about being Māori. It's taken years for me to click in to what whanau really means. Now I have ended up working at a Māori boy's boarding school for many years. Hukarere was Maori teenage girls. Te Aute College is teenage Maori Boys. Gods got a great sense of humour!
250. I still find it very hard to be accepting of myself as I am. This whole thing was years of self-hatred. I can tell everyone else to accept and love themselves but to tell myself, I just can't see it in myself. I struggle to even accept that I am ok.
251. Over the years it's taken an awful lot to put things into perspective and to say, "He did this to me". It was hard not to be able to grasp properly the far-reaching effects of not being enabled to have an opinion. To be able to see that a small mistake isn't a big failure bringing rejection. I have stopped trying to be acceptable to others all the time and its ok if I'm not.

252. It's all of that and because you have never been allowed to talk to people about stuff that's private, you just don't because you think that there's going to be a consequence that you can't live with. Or you might not be believed
253. Much later I found out my eldest brother John had never been into a children's home, I thought he must have been safer, but he was just farmed out to people that were horrible to him. His wasn't a great life anyway.
254. Years later after Abbotsford Home, by chance my sister Mary and I met up with GRO-B and GRO-B on the beach in Porangahau, with my children who were young.
255. I remember standing there looking at them thinking they were so little I couldn't get over how little they were. In my head they were still big, and they were still the authority, I went straight into that mode, I couldn't get over it.
256. In the end I think it's just because they are the authority and you are in an institutionalized setting, and it had happened at other places after Abbotsford, not just at Abbotsford, because the authority is an adult. It doesn't matter whether it's right or wrong you just do it because you are told too. That took me into a horrid marriage for many years, a huge price for some of my children's younger years.
257. So, whether it was chores, humiliation of others or sexual abuse, you do it because you are told too. It continued in my life after Abbotsford, and I didn't even realize I was doing it. The vulnerability they put us under affected me deeply.
258. GRO-B was an adult in charge of children, and he knew how to sneak you away in such a way that you didn't tell anyone and when/if you did, no one is going to listen to you anyway.
259. I also ran into GRO-B the boy who was always picked on years later. I could see that how he had been treated as a child had had an impact on his life. He stole from us and did all sorts, but to me he just seemed like a lost soul.
260. I thought because of my own experience I would always know if it was happening to my own kids, and I talked to my kids about safety and that you don't go with this person, you don't go with that person and why. I thought I had them really schooled up beautifully to where it became quite a talking point that my young son one day wouldn't accept a ride home in the rain from his principal.
261. But my youngest, my stepdaughter was sexually abused right under my nose, and I never picked it up. She couldn't talk to me about it, she was scared something would happen to me or I would leave her or something

262. I didn't find out until much later when she was an adult, and I was separating from my husband that she told me he had sexually abused her. I had been nursing when she was young, and I had wondered why when I was working late, she would always still be awake, I didn't realize at the time she was too frightened to go to sleep.
263. Two of my sons have also been sexually abused by schoolteachers. Finding this out has caused me a lot of grief and guilt because I thought I would have seen the signs and picked it up.
264. I was sexually abused myself I should have picked up the signs and known it was happening to them.
265. I think life at Abbotsford put a lot of the kids off church and religion. When I left there, I went right away from church. I mean all the time these things are happening in my life God's obviously not interested in helping me. I certainly didn't see him how I see him now. In fact, I eventually ended up in charismatic sort of churches and I loved those as well as our Mihinare Church in Te Pihopatanga o Aotearoa.

## **REDRESS**

267. I was at the Cathedral in Napier one day years ago, more than 19 years ago, for some bicultural training with Bishop Mills and something came up about the Catholic Church, and the bishop said thank goodness we don't have anything like that here. I told him something about what happened to me briefly.
268. He said I hope nothing ever comes out and I said to him "Well it's going to come out, remember it will come at you one day" At that time I'd realised the Anglican Church was associated with Abbotsford. I went to the Napier Cathedral and asked if they had anything about Abbotsford home in the archives and I was shown a photo album.
269. In the photo album were some of the photos that us kids including myself had taken and developed. There was even my handwriting labelling some of the photos. I got some of those photos copied and have since passed them on to whoever I know from the children's home.
270. It's something to hang on to for the former residents as we have no records of our own, nothing to prove we even existed at that time in our lives. Now we have those few photos.
271. More latterly I told a lady called Anne van Gente who was then Director for Anglican Schools, so chaplaincy came under her. She said that I should talk to Bishop Andrew Hedge about it.

272. After I spoke to her, Bishop Andrew came to me and said he had heard I might have something to say about the Royal Commission and what happened at Abbotsford Home, regarding the Anglican Church, I just said yes and not much more. He did say if there's anything we can do to help etc.
273. He sort of put on his polite face and smiled. I don't mean to be rude or to sound derogatory, Bishop Andrew is a genuinely loving Bishop, whom I have great respect for, but I just turned off because it felt like it didn't really matter to anyone, because it was years ago. That's as far as I went really.
274. I didn't think to make a claim with ACC. I always thought ACC is when you get a sore back or something. I didn't know you could make a claim for this sort of abuse.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

275. I always wondered why we weren't checked up on and why our father wasn't allowed to visit us. Our father to them was like the enemy but he didn't sexually abuse us.
276. Children in care, should be able to have contact with their parents, siblings and wider whanau.
277. If I think about places like Randall house, Abbotsford and the others. And the other places you were sent and where there were adults around. We were put into unsafe places and situations.
278. It wasn't only GRO  
B that was cruel in our past. There were people like that everywhere. Other staff were abusive too. Women could be just as cruel and deliberate. Why weren't we, and them, checked up on? Why was it just trusted and assumed that because they were adults that they would do the right thing?
279. If children are taken from their families for any reason and placed in others care, there must be a process to check up on them and a responsibility to act if issues are found, and they must be taken seriously.
280. The process of checking must include discussion with the actual children in a setting where they would be safe and likely to disclose any abuse or ill treatment.
281. I didn't have proof that I even existed as a child until I went to the Napier Cathedral and found that photo album, it was huge for me seeing those photos. There were no other records kept about me. Detailed records of all the children should have been kept and offered to us when we were old enough or after we left.

282. All I received was a small piece of paper with my brother [GRO-B  
1] full name, Peters and mine also, then three words "mother in sanitorium.' I think she may have been in a sanitorium for Tuberculosis treatment.
283. I rang and inquired through Social Welfare, CYPFS and other similar type organizations many years ago to see if there was any information or files about us in care in not – either in the Anglican or State system. I was told that a lot of records had been stored in Palmerston North in a basement in a big building, but they had been destroyed by fire many years ago.
284. Records need to be made available to all adults who have been in care as children. This needs to happen in every case.
285. It has been really hard to write this report. It has been traumatic. When I first told my brothers and sister about this they listened and then just sat and didn't know how to respond. They found it really hard to talk about but have encouraged me to tell my story.
286. Several years ago, one of the [GRO-B] brothers, whose name was [GRO-B] was dying of cancer. His brother [GRO-B] was my brother in law for many years. I was sitting beside his bed the week before he died, and we were talking about some of the good things that happened and some of the horrid things that happened to us at Abbotsford. He was crying. He had some deep hurts from some things that had happened to him there too. I told him that one day I would tell our story. I have forgiven [GRO-B] a long time ago, and when memories come and go, I affirm my forgiveness to him, and to [GRO-B]
287. I don't have accurate dates and times for this report. I apologize. They are too hard to remember. I have moments when I remember smells, the feelings, emotions, sounds, the flashes of faces, laughter and tears, the memories.

Naku noa

Na,

The Venerable Dinah H. Lambert.

GRO-C

Sign	GRO-C
Date	