

Witness Name: Gloria White

Statement No.: [WITN0068001]

Exhibits: [WITN0068002 – WITN0068007]

Dated: 23 September 2020

ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO ABUSE IN CARE

WITNESS STATEMENT OF GLORIA WHITE

I, Gloria Jane White, say as follows: -

INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Gloria White. I was born in Te Awamutu in the Waikato Region on GRO-C GRO-C 1960. My birth name was Gloria Jane Harris.
2. My birth mother's name was Rongorua Queenie Lihou. She was 20 years old when I was born. She is now deceased.
3. My birth father's name was George William Alexander Harris. He was 32 years old when I was born. He is now deceased.

Details of Siblings

4. My mother had seven children while she was still living with my father. Later, it became known that some of her children were fathered by her long-term de facto partner, **GRO-B**.
5. I am the second eldest child of the seven siblings. I am the oldest female.
6. I also have an older half-sister named **GRO-B** who is my father's daughter. Her mother was my father's first wife and she is approximately 9 years older than me. I will also refer to her in my statement.
7. I was told a few years ago that my father also had another child, who is my half-brother and an adult now.

YOUR EXPERIENCE OF BEING IN CARE

8. Myself and my siblings were brought up in either Salvation Army Children's Homes or Foster Homes.
9. On 3 December 1964, I went into 'The Nest' in Hamilton. I was 4 years old. Two of my sisters (aged **GRO-B** and the other **GRO-B**), came with me. We were signed into the home by our father who paid maintenance. At the time of our admission there were 34 children living in the home.
10. I received a letter dated 21 December 2018 enclosing my childhood records from The Salvation Army. I refer to **WITN0068002** which is a letter dated 8 December 1964 which was written by Matron Major Richardson at 'The Nest' to the Lieutenant Colonel of The Salvation Army. The letter states *"This is the case I mentioned to you over the phone. Quite a bad case and the children had to be removed from their home in a hurry. If we had not taken them, they would have gone to the State. The child welfare say the Home Conditions were very bad"*.

11. This was also recorded by Major Richardson in my Salvation Army childhood records in several places under the pages titled 'History of the Child'.
12. I was discharged from The Nest on 2 March 1965.
13. Another younger sister went to The Nest, having spent some time in a foster family from birth before going to The Nest. She was placed at The Nest by our mother on 27 July 1971.
14. My brother spent approximately 6 months in the care of my grandparents before being sent to Hodderville Boys Home in Putaruru when he was approximately 6 years old.

The Grange

15. I was moved from The Nest into The Grange in Remuera, Auckland on 2 March 1965. I was approximately 4 years and 10 months old at the time and remained under their care until I was 17 ½ years old. The original contract that my father had agreed to was for The Salvation Army to take care of me until I was 15 years old. I am grateful that I was allowed to stay longer.
16. I remember the Matrons who looked after me to be 'Brigadier Blanche Christopher', 'Major Gwyneth Greig' and 'Major Sophie Mehrtens'.
17. My two younger sisters who were placed in the Nest when I was, were later transferred to The Grange.
18. Even though my sisters were at The Grange at the same time I was, most of my memories are of me, not of my sisters. At The Grange we weren't brought up as sisters, we were brought up in my mind as one child of 35 children in the Home or

one child of 17 children in the Home, depending on the total number of girls there at the time. There was no sense of family.

19. I have almost no memory of one of my sisters going to the same high school. I don't remember them at the bus stop. I don't remember them in a school uniform.

20. I have little memory of my sister [GRO-B]. I don't recognise her in photos and that to me seems quite sad. [GRO-B]

[GRO-B]

21. Major Mehrtens, the third matron I had at The Grange, had actually looked after my Uncle and my Aunty when they were in care with The Salvation Army and she'd also looked after my brother in Hodderville, the boys' home in the Waikato.

22. I remained in contact with Major Mehrtens after The Grange closed. She was a marriage celebrant and officiated at my marriage in 1981; an outdoor garden wedding. I also stayed with her at The Nest which is where she was transferred after The Grange closed down. I stayed with her because my grandfather was in Waikato Hospital after suffering a severe stroke.

23. I feel The Grange was understaffed and I knew that it was Major Mehrtens' first job as a Matron, so she was quite inexperienced when she arrived. I now have knowledge of the treatment to [GRO-B] by Major Mehrtens which to me was wrong and neglectful and this makes me very sad.

THE ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT SUFFERED IN CARE

Physical Violence

24. The punishments at The Grange were harsh and the environment was very strict. We would be caned on our naked backside by the Matron as punishment, in particular by Brigadier Christopher. I remember being so little at the time.
25. In 1966, when I was approximately 6 years old, living at The Grange, I was wrongly accused of stealing a girl's watch at Remuera Primary School. The girl who owned the watch was not living at The Grange. I was told as an adult, many years after the fact, that the watch was stolen by another girl from The Grange. I was also told that the girls at The Grange knew this other girl had taken the watch but let me get punished for this crime I didn't commit.
26. After dinner one night at The Grange I was told to go into the Matron's office. She closed the door behind her. The other girls and staff were in the main lounge with the door closed.
27. Once inside the office I was questioned by Brigadier Christopher as to whether I had stolen the watch. She asked again and again whether I stole a watch from school. I kept saying "no". Brigadier Christopher told me to bend over and she pulled down my underwear and smacked me on the bottom with her large bare hand.
28. I was crying loudly at first and saying "*I didn't do it*". She then got a stick and repeatedly hit me with the stick. She hit me harder when I cried out. She told me she would leave me in the office to think about it, still bending me over with my underwear down. I was told not to move. She went away for a brief time and then she came back into the office and questioned me again. I kept saying "*I didn't do it*" and she kept hitting me with the stick, over and over.
29. Eventually when she asked "*Did you do it?*" I just said "yes". I did this just to make her stop beating me. I can see now that her intention was to break my spirit and that

is what she did. I thought that everything would stop once I told her I had stolen the watch, but I was completely wrong. The physical punishment stopped but what followed was long term discipline that was emotionally and psychologically destroying for me and still affects me today.

30. I was ostracized by the other girls because Matron told the girls that they weren't allowed to speak to me or play with me. I wasn't allowed to eat with them. This went on for days and days and days. It felt like a whole school term.
31. I was told by Matron that *"if I had hidden the watch in the garden then I had to find it and dig it up"*. I had no idea what she meant and no idea what the watch looked like. I spent hours and days and days in the garden searching for the watch, digging with my bare hands in an attempt to find it.
32. I would hide in the gardens and hide in the bamboo to get away from the stares, taunts and laughter from the other girls. I would be bitten by mosquitoes and spent all afternoon in the garden, sometimes until the lights went on in the home and someone called me inside. I believe that sometimes the staff only knew I was missing when it came to bed time.
33. This punishment was soul destroying in the extreme and an example of social isolation. I was spiritually disillusioned and felt that God was so cruel. I prayed and prayed for the punishment to stop. I begged for forgiveness for lying to Matron and telling her that I had stolen the watch.
34. I felt abandoned by everyone in every sense of the word. I could be in a room full of people and yet be ostracized and abandoned by them. There were times when I was walking to school or going to Sunday School where I was amongst the other girls but I still felt abandoned and separate. I learned to turn my emotions and thoughts inwards. I came to believe how bad I was, how sinful I was, how disliked I was and how physically dirty I was as a result of quite literally digging like a dog in the garden.

35. The punishment I received from Brigadier Christopher is the deepest hurt in my life because I was punished for something I didn't do.

Sexual Abuse Father

36. I was sexually abused by my father for an extended period of time between the years of 1964 to 1974. The abuse started when I was 4 years old and stopped when I was 14 years old.

GRO-B

GRO-B

37. Even though I was in the care of The Grange, I was still released from their care to stay with my father when The Grange closed down over the school holidays. I was also sometimes released into his care overnight if he came to Auckland to visit us. He would book in to a motel and sexually abuse me in motels in Newmarket and Remuera. These motels were in close proximity to the Children's home. I remember one occasion when a younger sister was also in the same bedsit motel room with a single bed and a double bed side by side. I was sexually abused that night with my sister in the single bed and I was in the double bed with my father. My father would threaten me that he would hurt a sibling if I didn't do what he said or if they were to wake up as a result of me fighting him and pushing him away. Sometimes he would turn up after school unannounced to pick me up, take me back to The Grange and get permission from the Matron to have me stay overnight in a motel with him.
38. I believe that Brigadier Christopher had knowledge of the abuse that was happening with my father but despite that she continued to send me on the 2 hour long bus ride by myself to Te Awamutu or by car with a family member into the care of my father. On the bus I would cry going down to Te Awamutu and I would cry on the bus ride back to The Grange.

- 39.

GRO-B

GRO-B

GRO-B

The Matrons were our guardians and they had a duty of care and I believe they were negligent.

40. I would not have told Brigadier Christopher directly about the sexual abuse. I had suffered such severe punishment for something I didn't do when I was six that I was terrified of her and there's no way I would have told her that I was being sexually abused.
41. I do know that I told **GRO-B**, who was an adult at the time. I know this because she came to visit me when I was living in Tauranga about 10 years ago. She apologised to me for not doing anything about it when I told her as a child **GRO-B**.
42. The hardest part of the abuse was that when I was at intermediate school in Remuera I would have to walk to and from school, directly past the two motels where my father had sexually abused me. So, every weekday morning before school and each afternoon after school I was reminded and recounted the abuse in my head as I walked past those motels.
43. I didn't learn about sex education until the end of my last year of Intermediate school. I would have been about 12 years old at the time. So, for a long time I knew what he was doing to me was wrong, but I didn't fully understand why. There was no sex education at The Grange but if there had been, maybe things could have been different.

Contact with Mother

44. I discovered that at times my mother would be a prostitute in Auckland using the name Rangī and at times she would lend me out to men to engage in sexual acts. On three occasions in Auckland and on one occasion in Tokanui, in the Waikato region, she had pre-arranged for me to have sexual encounters with different men.

This was always without my prior knowledge. Each time caught me unexpectedly and each time in my mind I forgave her, never expecting it to happen again.

45. The first time this happened was when I was 11 years old. My mother picked me up from The Grange and took me on a day outing to a high-class brothel run by Flora MacKenzie at Ring Terrace, St Mary's Bay on the cliffs overlooking the Auckland Harbour Bridge. Whilst at the brothel my mother willingly gave me to a man. This was the first time I was sexually abused by a man other than my father.
46. I remember meeting Flora MacKenzie and I remember being told by her and my mother that I would be going to live there permanently. I was taken to a curtained off area on the downstairs floor, where the curtain went round the bed and a small bedside table. I was told I was going to live and sleep there.
47. I was told to get changed into a long dress that they had given me. Photos were taken of me.
48. I was then given a silky negligee to put on. It was apricot or peach coloured and it had a completely see through separate outer covering. I was then told to go upstairs where I would see a beautiful view over the Auckland Harbour Bridge.
49. I had no idea that it was a bedroom upstairs. It was a big open plan room and there was a large circular bed. I am not sure that I even realised it was a bed at first. The bed rotated. When I walked into the room there was a man in there.
50. That man told me that I would be his little girl and that's pretty much how he treated me but in a sexual way. I knew what he meant because that's what my father did to me. The man asked me my age and I told him that I was 11 years old. Even though he knew my age he still abused me.

51. I tried to turn my head away to avoid what the man was doing to me. It got to the point where I was screaming inside my head. My head was spinning. I just lay still from then.
52. I don't remember him leaving the place; there must have been another exit. I know the name of this man. I have always known his name and where he worked, however I do not wish to identify him in this statement because I fear that there may be photographs and/or video footage of me taken on that day that could surface as a result of me giving a public statement here. I was hurt and confused when my mother returned me to The Grange.
53. I took the negligee back to The Grange and I remember throwing it in the bottom of the wardrobe in a dark corner. Then at some point in my life I had become angry with my mother for what had happened. I don't know why but I started to wear that negligee to bed. The Matrons saw me wearing this item of clothing. The Matrons also knew that my mother had given me a whole thing of adult makeup in a Nutrimetics carry bag. I believe there were a lot of signs that I was being abused and the Matrons chose to ignore the situation or maybe they thought the power of prayer would make everything all right.
54. At some point my mother gave me an envelope with a packet of contraceptive pills and told me to take them every day. I was only 11 when I went to the Brothel and hadn't had my first period. Over a period of time, the situations my mother was putting me in confused me and hurt me to the point where my head couldn't take any more hurt. I had kept this experience bottled up inside me. I eventually gave the pills to Matron Major Mehrtens along with a letter explaining that my mother had taken me to the Brothel. A copy of the letter I wrote to Major Mehrtens and enclosing the contraceptives is at **WITN0068003**. This letter was obtained from my MSD records in the HARRIS family file requested through Oranga Tamariki in 2020 and sent to me on 8 June 2020. The letter I wrote to Matron Major Mehrtens was also mentioned in my Auckland Hospital Reports I obtained through CYFS in 2009 although these letters in my child handwriting were not located on my personal file.

Even though I wrote that letter to Matron Major Mehrtens when I was 14 years old the experiences happened earlier. I just couldn't keep it all bottled up inside me any longer. In the letter I wrote *"Please take these then I know I can't use them. I was so upset last night that I opened them, which is one step closer to taking them."* This was me meaning I was going to take all the tablets at once in the hope of overdosing. I wanted to end the pain.

55. I remember when I spent a school holiday in the Waikato with my father. He dropped me off to visit my mother and my mother loaned me out to a man named **GRO-B-98** who drove me down a long country road and sexually abused me. This was organised by my mother on the pretext of this man taking me to get milk. We did not get milk. When I returned my mother gave me a large gift pack set of towels and facecloths. These were brought into the house by **GRO-B-98** as a gift for me. I was hurt and angry.
56. I remain to this day suspicious of Police and any people in authority. When I was an adolescent and into adulthood my mother had a lot to do with a policeman. This policeman was Detective Inspector **GRO-B-99**. My mother brought the policeman one night to see me and my husband at our house in Mt Eden, Auckland.
57. I also remember meeting Detective Inspector **GRO-B-99** and my mother when I worked at the bank in Queen Street in Auckland. I worked for the securities division as a secretary and I met them at a restaurant for lunch close by. He wasn't a Detective Inspector back then. He had the rank of Detective Superintendent when he retired from the police force. I was always unsure, and curious, of his relationship with my mother. In my mind I felt he was connected with Flora MacKenzie's Brothel.
58. **GRO-B** actually has more knowledge than I do of Flora MacKenzie's Brothel and she has described hidden rooms and pornographic material held there. Her experiences on her visits there are totally different to mine.

Social Workers

59. When I was approximately 12 years old I noticed that The Grange started to receive more welfare children and some of them had been let out of borstal.
60. The State Wards came to The Grange with more than we had: they got more pocket money, they got brand new clothes, they got a Social Worker to themselves. As an adult I can see that they obviously needed the support of a Social Worker. But I was always a bit jealous of the State Wards because unlike them I wasn't offered any support from Social Workers. I now know this was because I had been placed into The Salvation Army's care by my father.
61. There were two families of girls that were visited by Social Workers. One family was called the "GRO-B" sisters and another family called the "GRO-B" girls. Whenever Social Workers came to The Grange they would meet the State Wards in the formal lounge opposite the main front door entrance. The Matron's office was next to the front door on the left as you walked into the Home.
62. On two occasions (and it might have been three, but I distinctly remember two occasions), I hid out by the front door just by the lounge, while the girls were having their appointment with their respective Social Workers. I had to be careful not to be seen. When the girls had come out of their meetings, I snuck into the lounge to see their Social Worker.
63. On at least two occasions, I went in and spoke to the Social Worker and I told them about my father abusing me.
64. I remember clearly that I asked them what a Social Worker does, and I asked them to help me. I told them what my father was doing to me and the second time I asked the Social Worker if my father would go to jail. Nothing ever happened, and I don't know whether the Social Workers told the Matron what I had disclosed.

Lack of Record Keeping

65. I was able to obtain my childhood records from The Grange with the assistance of Murray Houston, Referral Officer and Commercial Manager for the Salvation Army. I received 41 pages of documents including 'History of Child'.
66. I do not believe that The Grange kept adequate records. The records mainly consisted of correspondence with my father about accounts being in arrears. There was no record of the long-term punishments I received at the hands of Brigadier Christopher even though there was a section for punishments to be recorded.
67. I recall two other incidents which I believe should have been recorded by The Grange. When I was at Intermediate School I was caught shoplifting a small square of eye shadow from the chemist in Remuera on the way home. At the time the incident occurred I was under a lot of peer pressure. It was a dare from other girls at The Grange that went to Remuera Intermediate with me. I told myself that I might as well do it because I had already been punished for something I didn't do at age 6 so what did this matter. The Police came to The Grange. I owned up to the incident. I would think that something that significant should have been recorded but it was not.
68. There were no records about a time that I ran away with two other girls and walked along the shoulder of the Auckland Motorway to the Panmure Shops which was approximately 10 km distance from The Grange. My father was called.
69. I believe The Grange should have kept records of when I was taken off the premises by my father, my mother, my half-Sister GRO-B, potential foster families (overnight) and by the family I went to live with when I eventually left The Grange. I believe these records should also have detailed how long I was away from The Grange each time. Failure by The Salvation Army to record my outings meant a failure to understand the signs or reasons for my unsettled behaviour.

70. My records from the Grange show that up until December 1971 I was described as a *“well behaved child”*. However, from December 1971 entries such as *“Gloria is quite well behaved on the whole but easily led by older girls”* began to be recorded about me.
71. In February 1973 a note records that *“Father has started to get a bit possessive now that she is older”*.
72. On 6 November 1974 Major Mehrtens wrote to The Salvation Army that I had written a rather disturbing note to her and had made some serious allegations against my mother.
73. I find one of the comments that were written about me offensive and I believe that the Matrons should have made more of an effort to inquire about my wellbeing. I feel that if there had been better record keeping of my behaviour I could have been better understood by the Matrons and help could have been sought to assist me.
74. I was a troubled child and not the best behaved. Sometimes I would go through periods of not eating and crying all the way through dinner. I would cry through classes at school and often skip classes and cry in the toilets.
75. At High School during my third form end of year examinations I wrote my name on the head of each exam paper and drew a diagonal line through the worksheet. I didn't answer any of the examination questions.
76. I believe the Matrons and teachers would have observed this behaviour but still there is nothing mentioned in my records.

Failure to Provide Medical Treatment and Counselling

77. In 2009 I contacted CYFS and requested my childhood records. They were sent to me on 3 December 2009. I received the following information which I will refer to as **WITN0068004**. I made a further request in 2019 and the file was sent to me again on 5 June 2019. My third request for my childhood records was for the HARRIS family file when I discovered this file existed and was a separate file to the file in my name. This was sent to me by Oranga Tamariki on 8 June 2020.
78. In 1974, when I was 14 years old and a student at Penrose High school, I exhibited signs of severe depression. My records show that Major Mehrtens, contacted my High School Counsellor, Mr **GRO-B**, to advise him that *"I appeared to be particularly anxious and clinging to the Major in a particular way that is typical of a much younger child"*.
79. On 13 November 1974 I was referred by Psychologist Mrs **GRO-B** to the Auckland Hospital for a psychiatric assessment to ascertain whether or not some form of medication was warranted and she also recommended that I receive on-going support and therapy.
80. It clearly shows that I told Mrs **GRO-B** of the outing that I had with my mother to Flora Makenzie's Brothel and the impact the experience had on me. This letter was copied to Major Mehrtens, Miss **GRO-B** from the Department of Social Welfare and my High School Guidance Counsellor. My School Guidance Counsellor was a male.
81. On 28 November 1974 Miss **GRO-B** wrote to the Department of Social Welfare in Hamilton and requested that my father be interviewed about my mother's prostitution. The record also states that I had written a letter to Major Mehrtens about my outing at the Brothel. I have obtained a copy of this letter and refer to it as **WITN0068005**.
82. On 10 December 1974, Social Worker Mrs **GRO-B** wrote a letter stating that she had advised my father of the contents of the conversation I had with Mrs **GRO-B** and he

travelled to The Grange immediately. The letter records that no further action would be taken by the Department of Social Welfare in Hamilton. Today, I have questions. Why wasn't my mother interviewed? Why were the Police not contacted about the incident at the Brothel?

83. On 18 December 1974 my father took me to see Dr [GRO-B], Child Psychiatrist at Auckland Hospital. He stood outside the room when I spoke with the Psychiatrist and I didn't feel like I could disclose to her what was happening with my father because he was right there, and I was told I would go in first and then my father would go in on his own. The other reason I couldn't disclose to her was her surname was [GRO-B] and my father's sister's married name was [GRO-B], and so it was just all connected and made it difficult.
84. The letter written by Dr [GRO-B] recorded that she had made an appointment for me to see her again on 28 January 1975 which did not happen, and I have no record as to why this did not eventuate.
85. The letter also states that I was severely depressed and prescribed 25mg of 'Amitriptyline' which is an anti-depressant that I should have been taking daily.
86. Neither the Doctor nor the Matron discussed with me the importance of taking the medication or what it would do for me. I believe that as a vulnerable child I should have been supervised with taking this medication. As a result, I didn't end up taking the medication.
87. The tablets also had a negative connotation for me because of my mother giving me contraceptive pills.
88. I strongly believe that I was failed by both The Salvation Army and the State as they did not get adequate support for me. The records that they have were just so

inadequate. If the Grange and school had made true records of my behaviour and my movements they would have seen a pattern of what was happening.

89. There were clear signs that I was distressed. I would be crying through entire classes at school. I was “on report” a lot at school, where each teacher had to write comments on my report sheet at the end of each class, which I had to present to the office each day after school.
90. Why wasn't my mother interviewed? My mother had 3 of my sisters living in her care in 1974. I believe that her not being interviewed was a failure by the State.
91. If the Matrons had got the support for me when I was 14, if I had received the help I needed from Auckland Hospital to see the psychiatrist and the psychologist, if all of that had taken place properly then what happened to **GRO-B** was entirely preventable. At the time I was 14 years old **GRO-B**

GRO-B

92. I strongly believe that if the counselling, therapy and anti-depressant medication had been given to me as recommended by the Auckland Hospital psychiatrist then my life subsequent to that and maybe until today would have been different.

Intergenerational Abuse

93. Over the years I have spent a lot of time trying to research my family history, trying to find answers to a lot of questions in my head and how it relates to who I am today. This research has helped me to understand the generational cycle resulting in me being placed “In care’ with The Salvation Army.
94. Whilst conducting my research approximately 20 years ago at the National Archives in Dunedin, I discovered that my Great Grandfather **GRO-B** had been convicted and sentenced in 1910 to 2 years imprisonment for attempted incest.

95. I was shown copies of his prison photographs and obtained the court transcripts which detailed how he attempted to sexually abuse his daughters.
96. As a result of my great grandfather going to prison, his youngest children including my grandfather, [GRO-B] and his brother Great Uncle [GRO-B] (known to me as 'Uncle [GRO-B]') were placed into the care of Reverend Edward Andrew Axelsen who was the Superintendent of the Dunedin Presbyterian Social Service Association.
97. Reverend Axelsen was convicted of indecent assault on boys and received six months imprisonment for each charge. I have no evidence that my grandfather and great uncle were abused but I found it interesting because it's kind of a pattern that has come through to my father's generation.
98. I have received information from extended family members over the years about my mother's family history. My mother and her siblings were brought up in The Salvation Army Children's homes for a number of years. My maternal grandfather received a brain injury at some point in his life but continued to work in the King Country. My maternal grandmother went through periods where she could not cope.
99. My mother and some of her sisters were placed in The Grange, Herne Bay which actually closed down in 1959 when The Grange orphanage opened in Remuera. My mother's other siblings, Aunty [GRO-B] and Uncle [GRO-B] were placed in 'The Nest' in the Waikato.
100. I have been told that my mother ran away a lot from The Grange in Herne Bay. I have received my mother's childhood records from The Salvation Army.

IMPACT OF THE ABUSE ON ME AND OTHERS

101. I have two children: a daughter and a son. There is an 11-year gap between my two children. Both have the same father. I was married for over 30 years. I love my husband; I still do but we are now divorced. Over time my husband started to remind me of my father. At times my husband and my father would blur into one and the same person. I blame the trauma of my childhood for my separation and divorce.
102. I have grandchildren that I love dearly but unfortunately without any warning I can be playing with my grandchildren and I'll experience triggers that just take me back into the past. That's really difficult because that's something so beautiful and is happening in front of me but I don't get to enjoy it because it's clouded with the past.
103. Contact with my siblings is something that although is intermittent, makes me feel close and connected and I love being part of their lives. However, interaction with them is also a big trigger for me because of all the unhappy memories.
104. I have been getting intensive counselling and community assistance for years now. I'm on daily medication which is delivered to my home each morning and night. I have counselling therapy as well as respite care to keep me well. I've been hospitalised in the past with depression and still suffer from it. I have needed more assistance the older I get because I struggle with my mental health, self-worth, anxiety, depression, complex PTSD and chronic Dysthymic Disorder due to my childhood abuse.
105. I have no idea why the older I get, the harder it is to stop the bad memories. I've always had these memories but the older I get the harder it is to manage, compartmentalise and block them. I have previously been able to work and do volunteer work at the church opportunity shop and primary school. However, in the last 4 years after returning to live in the South Island I haven't been able to consider voluntary work. I accept the challenges I face now and I try to live a simple life.

106. Going to the Dentist is a challenge for me for fear of gagging which reminds me of the oral sex I was forced to give as a child. I force myself to go to the Dentist once a year, but I need to take a support person with me and I have had to be frank and honest with the Dentist about my anxiety.
107. I had a breakdown in December 2000 due to the PTSD from the past childhood abuse, including being taken to the brothel. At the time of my breakdown it was my daughter's school ball. I was un-well and my family life was hard and I was overworked and not getting enough sleep. I was only sleeping about two hours a night. My daughter's ball dress triggered me, it was the slinky fabric that just took me straight back to the brothel and the negligee that I was made to wear. It is hard for me now to see how Flora MacKenzie and her brothel are given so much notoriety. Her operation will always be remembered by me as the procuring of an underage girl to be given to a well known Auckland businessman. I am horrified that the Ponsonby Community Centre has a room for hire that is named after Flora MacKenzie and is hired out to the Presbyterian Church for use as a creche.
108. In September 2017 I struggled when I was going through tests at the hospital for uterine cancer. I had symptoms of post-menopausal bleeding and clear vaginal discharge which were with me every waking minute of every day and reminded me of the sexual abuse I had suffered. It got to the point where I couldn't take it anymore and became really unwell and planned suicide.

REDRESS

109. A few years ago, I was struggling to cope on an everyday basis and so, in addition to my ACC sensitive claims counselling on Saturdays, I sought help from a Reverend at the Anglican Church. She would say a prayer for me which helped in the short term.
110. Then when I was no longer driving I would seek help closer to home at The Salvation Army. One of the people who helped me was a Salvation Army Officer named

Emma and I told her of my experiences and she would say prayers with me. Eventually in December 2018, when I explained to her that the prayers were only short-term measures for me to cope with memories, she gave me the phone number for Murray Houston, Referral Officer and Commercial Manger based at the Salvation Army Headquarters in Wellington. I rang Murray Houston and left a message for him to call me, telling him that I needed help.

111. When Murray Houston first rang me, he said that he wanted to meet with me in person which I appreciated. With regard to where we met, Murray Houston informed me that because The Salvation Army bank with the BNZ, that they have an arrangement that they could use an office at the BNZ if I wanted to meet there. I told Murray that I felt The Salvation Army was a comfort zone for me because that's where I attend an activity regularly. I wanted the meeting to be near The Salvation Army premises because I feel comfortable there. I knew the setting and where the toilets were and all of that sort of thing.
112. Murray set up the meeting for 18 December 2018. He flew from Wellington to the South Island to meet and arranged for myself and my adult daughter to go to a house that was near The Salvation Army. The house was empty and unmarked and so nobody knew why we were there and I appreciated that privacy.
113. Murray brought a woman named Vivienne Hill to our meeting, which I thought was quite good, especially to have a female presence, and I had been advised in advance that she was coming. Murray had informed me already that he was going to record the meeting and that he would provide me with an audio copy on USB stick of what was said during my interview.
114. At this meeting, Murray told me that I was not the first person to come forward with a complaint about The Grange. I told Murray that I wanted to obtain my records from The Grange to assist me with understanding my childhood better. Murray Houston

and Vivienne Hill also told me they believed me and appreciated the effort and way I told my experiences.

115. On 21 December 2018 I received a letter from Murray Houston which included a USB stick with the audio recording of our conversation on 18 December along with a copy of the files that The Salvation Army held on me.
116. On 16 January 2019 I wrote a letter to Murray Houston thanking him for providing my Salvation Army records and the audio recording of my interview. I provided further information to Murray in this letter. The additional information included memories that had surfaced after we had met on 18 December, and the affects that the abuse and my time at The Grange has had on me throughout my life.
117. At the end of the first meeting, on 18 December 2018, Murray Houston asked me what The Salvation Army could do for me. I said I didn't know, that I wanted to tell my story of what I experienced, and I had just done that. I didn't think beyond that moment. My daughter asked Murray Houston to explain to me what he meant with that question. Murray explained that he would go away and give it some thought about what The Salvation Army could do for me and Murray said that sometimes a monetary settlement and/or a written apology was a solution for some people. He also said that some people could be offended by mention of a monetary settlement.
118. At that time, I didn't really know what I wanted from the process. I was going through counselling with ACC Sensitive Claims and I told Murray that I didn't want The Salvation Army to offer me counselling with another counsellor.
119. I felt what I needed was an apology from the three Matrons that were responsible for the suffering I had experienced, but I discovered all three had died. I then changed my mind and told Murray Houston that an apology would be appropriate if

I received it in writing and could hold it in my hands. That would make a difference to me.

120. Murray visited me for a second time on 14 March 2019, this time without Vivienne Hill. My daughter was also present with me at this second meeting.
121. I was shocked when Murray produced the letter of acknowledgement and a monetary settlement offer. This letter is at **WITN0068006**. Murray advised me that there were no conditions to accepting the offer and so if I wanted to tell the newspapers or reporters about my experience then I could do that.
122. Murray also offered for me to get an independent lawyer of my choice to review the offer and that The Salvation Army would pay for the legal fees. I didn't want to sign the letter at that point as I wanted to seek legal advice.
123. My daughter, organised a lawyer to visit us at my home and he visited us a couple of times. The lawyer's name was Craig O'Connor. On the lawyer's second visit to my house he said that he had contacted Murray Houston and he asked Murray how he arrived at the figure. Murray, without breaking confidentiality or names or anything, told him of other incidents where The Salvation Army had made offers and where my situation sat in respect to those offers.
124. I told my lawyer that I didn't want any negotiation over the figure, just that I wanted a sense that it was fair.
125. When I accepted the settlement, I received a written apology which was dated 19 March 2019. I refer to this letter at **WITN0068007**. It meant so much to me, but I did ask Murray to reword it as the initial letter only stipulated that I was in the care of The Grange in the 1970s and I was actually at the Grange in the 1960s as well as the 1970s so I wanted that reflected in the apology. The initial letter of apology also

had the monetary settlement figure disclosed which I asked Murray to remove because I wanted to be able to show people closest to me that I had received the apology and that I was believed. But I didn't want anyone to know how much money The Salvation Army had given me in settlement.

126. I thought the process went very well and I felt supported and listened to by Murray Houston. It took 3 months from when I started the process to when I received my apology and settlement.
127. I feel that The Salvation Army did everything extremely well. When I started the redress process with The Salvation Army, the one thing I was afraid of was being abandoned again and Murray seemed to fully understand that. So even though that process is over for me I feel like Murray Houston has made an effort to occasionally stay in touch.
128. Murray is aware that I'm engaging with The Royal Commission of Inquiry and he phoned me the week before my private session with the Commissioner on 18 September 2019 to wish me well. I feel like he has cared.

Auckland Hospital

129. I felt like there should be more records about the time I was taken to see the Psychiatrist at Auckland Hospital so on 9 January 2019 I made a Privacy Act request to Auckland Hospital to obtain a complete copy of my clinical records from the Child Psychiatric Unit between the dates of 1 November 1974 to 28 February 1975.
130. In January and February 2019, I liaised with Alison Murray who eventually told me that Auckland Hospital had lost my file.

Ministry of Social Development - Historic Abuse Claim

131. I was made aware by Murray Houston in 2018 that The Salvation Army were contracted to the Government with their operation of the Children's homes and in my case 'The Nest' in Hamilton and 'The Grange' in Auckland. I am astonished and appalled that the Government did not pick up on the lack of record keeping or discover that the systems that were in place to operate were insufficient. The Grange in particular was inadequate.
132. I have engaged with Cooper Legal in Wellington to discuss taking a historic claim against the State because I feel that there has been a lack of information and a lack of care and follow up on my welfare. I feel like an apology from the State would be appropriate.
133. I understand that taking a claim to the Ministry of Social Development, Historic Claims, could be anything up to a year for the first involvement in it and anything up to four years for an outcome or decision. In my opinion this is not good enough.
134. I wish for the government to be held to account for trauma that I suffered as a child. I also want accountability for the lack of supervision, poor record keeping and the loss of my childhood records. I support the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse of children in state and faith-based care.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

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

Signed: _____ **GRO-C** _____

Dated: _____ 25/9/20 _____