

**Witness Name:** William Wilson

**Statement No:** WITN0419001

**Exhibits:** WITN0419002 - 0419007

**Dated:** 06.07.2021

## ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO ABUSE IN CARE

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### WITNESS STATEMENT OF WILLIAM ALEXANDER MARSHALL WILSON

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I, William Alexander Marshall Wilson, will say as follows: -

#### INTRODUCTION

1. My name is William Alexander Marshall Wilson. I was born in 1978 and am 43 years old.
2. My mum is of Scottish descent and my biological dad is of Samoan descent.
3. I was physically and emotionally abused at Wesley College, the boarding school I attended from 1991 to 1992. There was a culture of violence and I suffered severe beatings and bullying from Senior Prefects and Students.
4. I have come forward to share my experience in the hopes that it will help prevent the abuse I went through from happening to anyone else.

#### FAMILY BACKGROUND AND EARLY LIFE

5. When I was young, I was told by my mum that my father was Maori and that he had died in a car crash. That's all I knew. I was proud to be Maori and hoped to one day attend St Stephens boarding school where a lot of Maori kids attended.

6. When I was 13, I found out that my father was actually Samoan and not Maori. Now, I consider myself Scottish, Samoan and Maori.
7. Mum's family did not like that mum had been with a Samoan. I also have a sister who is 3 years older than me. Her father was another Samoan man.
8. When I was 8 months old, me, my sister and my mum moved to Australia to live with family over there. We returned to New Zealand when I was 6 years old.
9. When we came back from Australia, we stayed in Whangaparāoa for a short period of time before moving to Paeroa with my grandparents until I was 7 years old. My grandad directed where we lived, depending on where he worked.
10. My grandparents eventually bought a house for Mum, me and my sister on Porritt Avenue which we called "Harlem" or "the hood". My grandparents then moved to Huntly to stay.
11. Mum was not well at the time. She was under the care of IHC and couldn't read or write properly. Things went downhill for me when my grandparents left. In hindsight, I believe that Mum needed my grandparent's support because she could not do even the simple things without them, like paying bills.

#### *Barn Incident*

12. Because we moved around with my grandparents, I attended several different primary schools throughout my childhood. While staying in Paeroa, I attended Miller Ave Primary School. When I was around 9 years old, I was raped by a boy in a barn which was in my neighbourhood. The boy was staying in a family home up the road from where I lived. The boy's name was GRO-B-1
13. After this incident happened, I ran across the paddock to the nearest house. I told my neighbours about what happened. I called them Aunty and Uncle. My Uncle saw him on the road and asked me 'is that him?' I said 'yes' and he then chased him, but he couldn't catch him.
14. I tried to talk to Mum about the rape, but she couldn't deal with it. She left everything up to the social workers. My mum had a social worker, GRO-C-1

through IHC. I also had my own social worker, through Social Welfare. I think Social Welfare was involved because of the struggles my mum was having with her mental health and looking after us kids.

15. I told another social worker named [GRO-C-2] what had happened to me. He had started to come to my Primary School. He tried to be my friend and gain my trust by letting me play on the computer. After a while I trusted him.
16. [GRO-C-2] arranged a meeting at the Social Welfare place about what happened to me in the barn. When I got to the meeting [GRO-C-2] and [GRO-C-1] were there together with [GRO-B-1] the guy that raped me. As soon I saw [GRO-B-1] I froze, and I couldn't speak or move. All I remember is [GRO-C-1] beginning to speak, then I just ran out of the room.
17. [GRO-C-2] tried to chase me and apologise but I didn't accept it. He lost my trust. I couldn't trust anyone after that. Even people who were nice to me. For a long time, I thought it was my fault that I ran away from the meeting. I know now that it wasn't. I was too young, and I was vulnerable. It was not right for them to set up a meeting between me and [GRO-B-1] I did not want to be near him.
18. Everyone in the community knew what happened to me. This included adults and children. Kids used to tease me about it. I started changing after the rape and what [GRO-C-2] did with the meeting. I was frustrated by my mum doing nothing about what happened.
19. I was upset about everything that happened, struggled with my emotions and did not know how to deal with the anger building inside me. I burned down the barn where I was raped and threw a cricket bat at another boy who deliberately hit me with the cricket ball and laughed. I did other things too, I hit my mum, and put holes in the walls. I am so ashamed about these things now, but it was because nobody was helping me deal with what I'd been through.
20. When I burned down the barn, my sister and I were split up. She was eventually sent away to a boarding school in the South Island. Our relationship was never the same after that. It's hard to explain why but after she came back, we were

both different and didn't see things the same way. We don't have the same relationship that we used to. Social Welfare should never have split us up.

### *Health Camp*

21. When I was about 10 or 11 years old, I was sent to the Princess of Wales Health Camp for a year in Rotorua. The camp was supposed to be for 6 months. I was bullied there and tried to run away. Because I tried to run away, they made me stay for another 6 months.
22. I was told that I had to go to the Health Camp because I had to lose weight. But it felt like they were just moving me around because I had been playing up after what happened to me.
23. I was bullied at the camp by the other kids and by the staff. One of the staff was named GRO-B. He was a tall skinny white guy. I remember one time, I wet my bed and he exposed it to the other boys. That was when the other kids and staff started bullying me. I got laughed at and was ridiculed for wetting the bed and being overweight.
24. I made a friend there named GRO-B who had epilepsy. He and I formed a friendship because we were both being bullied by others. One day he had been bullied by the other boys. He fell and started shaking and frothing at the mouth. I helped carry him to sick bay and didn't see him after that. He later died. The staff told me that he 'fell in a black hole and he couldn't come back'. There was no grief counselling or appropriate support, and it was very hard for me process what happened to my friend.
25. My behaviour was disruptive, and I started doing things like breaking windows and putting holes in the house. I was frustrated about everything that had happened to me, and that Mum wasn't helping me.
26. My behaviour led to the attention of the Police when I was 11 years old. A police officer dragged me to the Paeroa Police Station. The officer threw me into a shower cubicle and turned the shower on me. I jumped out because it was so cold but then he shoved me back in. The same officer then made me sit in the

middle of a room and put a phone book against the side of my face and then struck the book repeatedly. I have resented the Police ever since.

### **CIRCUMSTANCES LEADING TO WESLEY COLLEGE / SAMOAN IDENTITY**

27. My Grandad and the social worker decided to send me to boarding school. They thought I would learn a thing or two. My records show that because of the costs involved, funding through grants/scholarships would be sought.
28. I wanted to go to St Stephen's College. I thought I would have enjoyed it there because I thought my Dad was Maori and it would have been cool. I couldn't understand then why that wasn't an option.
29. I enrolled myself into Paeroa College without anyone knowing. I was attending Paeroa College for a couple of weeks before Mum and Grandad even knew. My Grandad eventually found out and withdrew me from there.
30. They initially planned to send me to Dilworth, and I went as far as visiting the school as an introduction at the end of 1990.
31. Instead, I ended up being enrolled at Wesley College. I was 12 years old at the time. My records show that there were discussions about my application to Dilworth being unsuccessful, so they looked at Wesley College as an option because scholarships were available for Polynesian students. **[WITN0419002]** During this whole time that my Grandad, Mum and Social Worker were having these discussions, I had no idea I was Samoan. I was still of the belief I was Maori.
32. On my first day at Wesley College it was me, Mum, Grandad and Grandma. I will never ever forget that moment. As we turned into the school drive way, my Grandad told my Mum to tell me the truth.
33. My mum then told me that the school was for Pacific Islanders and that I was an Islander. A Samoan. I didn't want to believe her.

34. When I jumped out of the car all I could see were these Island guys. They were giants. I was only small and short. I cried to my Grandma that I didn't want to stay here. I knew something was going to happen, I could just feel it.

### **THE ABUSE – WESLEY COLLEGE**

35. Early in my stay at Wesley College, we had a 'Night Parade'. The parades were run by the prefects and the Dorm Prefects. I later learned that this happened every year for new students.
36. The Night Parade happened about 2 weeks after the new students were settled in and took place from around 1am to 3am in the morning. The parade starts by all students in the Junior Dormitory being pulled out of bed by the prefects. Then we were made to stand on parade in the Prep' Hall. A few of those students will be picked on and made an example of by being called out to the front and to face everyone. For me they made me do 100 press ups and I got hit with a broomstick if I couldn't. This was done to keep others in check. I was the main one to be picked on.
37. They would say during the parades that if you ran away, they would get a van to look for you. They said they would come and knock on doors and find you.
38. Some students were given a nickname as part of the Night Parade. The nickname I was given was 'Willow,' which I hated. The students and even the teachers called me that for almost 2 years. **[WITN0419003]**
39. There were several types of punishments at the school by the senior students including the prefects.
- a. The 'Samoan Slap' or 'Island Slap' was where you had to make an air bubble with your mouth or cheek. Then they would slap you. Sometimes I nearly fell over from the slap. One time I got slapped so hard, I got saliva on the prefect. I received an even bigger hiding after that.
  - b. '100 Press Ups' was where you tried to do 100 press ups. You got hit with a stick if you didn't go low enough. I never finished the 100 press ups.

- c. There was also the 'Two-line Treatment' where boys would line up in 2 lines of about 25 boys and you would have to walk or run through with your shirt on or off. As you walked through, you were beaten by the boys. Sometimes they had sticks and taiahas. You just had to make your way through. One time they made me do it because they accused me of stealing bread. It wasn't me.
  - d. Nipple Twisting was another punishment I suffered every day. I was stopped every morning on the way to the shower by a Dorm Prefect. He would twist my nipple hard, and at the same time, tell me to whistle. To this day I can still remember him yelling 'whistle, Willow!' to me. I couldn't whistle because the pain was so bad.
  - e. Another punishment took place in the TV room. The room had carpeted bleachers, like stairs where we could sit. They went up high. I was made to stand on about the third row, and they would go up high up the stairs and then run down and clothesline me down to the ground.
  - f. On those same bleachers I was often made to bend over a corner part. One of the prefects would put on sharp pointy shoes, and then he would run up as fast as he could and kick me at full force in my bottom. That was agonising but the pain in my bottom wasn't as bad as the pain from the front when I was rammed into the corner of the step.
  - g. Chores were also given out daily by prefects and my name was always on the list. I had to clean their rooms, shine their shoes, make their beds. There were lots of prefects, and with so many of them telling me to do chores for them, I could never complete the work. I would sit in class knowing I had not finished the morning chores and that I would be beaten for it.
40. 'Island Respect' hidings also used to happen at Wesley College. The Island Respect hidings meant that we were physically and mentally beaten. For these, you would stand there facing a prefect who would be sitting in front of you. On either side of you were three students. The Prefect would order a student from each side to beat you until you fall. When you stood up, the Prefect would order

another pair of students to beat you until you fell again. They would also verbally abuse you while this was happening.

41. The Island Respects hidings didn't happen that often because they were dangerous, they could kill someone. But they happened to me.
42. One main teacher promoted the Island Respect hidings. I don't know if he was GRO-B-2. He ordered Island Respect hidings on me.
43. I got a bad hiding in my first year. It started because GRO-B-2 told GRO-B-3 Prefect, GRO-B-3, that he heard me say something disrespectful about him. I was outside the computer lab and there was another boy called GRO-B-4 GRO-B-4 behind me in line. For some reason we were told we couldn't go inside the lab yet GRO-B-4 said, 'But, why is he allowed inside'. He was referring to GRO-B-3 GRO-B-3 who we could see was inside talking to GRO-B-2. GRO-B-2 was in the lab telling GRO-B-3 that I had said something about him.
44. Before dinner that night, everybody kept whispering and saying "Willow, you're gonna get it".
45. During dinner, I was then told by another student that I had to go to the School House Junior Dormitory.
46. I didn't know what was going on. Everyone else knew because they didn't go back to the dormitories after dinner. They all hung around in the quad.
47. On the way there I saw another student acting as the 'look out'.
48. When I arrived, there was a parade of 6 guys waiting for me with 3 guys on each side. They weren't little guys either.
49. The main prefect there, GRO-B would call each person to beat me. Every time they beat me down, I kept standing back up. I kept trying to tell them they had the wrong person. They beat me up so bad that eventually I couldn't stand up anymore. They carried me out. They bashed me for two and a half hours.

50. The prefects carried me to the main prefect's flat after that. He cried over me and said that he hadn't seen anyone get a beating like that, ever. I told him that I will never forgive him. He had ordered people to beat me during the hiding.
51. That night they put me in my 'Number Ones' because I was a chapel monitor and had to do Night Chapel Service that night. 'Number Ones' were our formal wear for special occasions. We were hosting the All Blacks that night.
52. I couldn't walk so I was carried upstairs in the Chapel to sit amongst the prefects where only they could sit. As Chapel Monitor, at the end, I was supposed to be standing by the Minister that night to wish everyone farewell and then help clean up.
53. For some reason, All Black [GRO-C] stood by the Minister at the end of the service. Because I was meant to be helping, the Minister asked him to look out for me, so I can help the Minister clean up. The prefects tried to carry me out past them both as if nothing was happening. Once we were outside, [GRO-C] [GRO-C] spotted me and pointed me out to the Minister asking, "is that him?". Then [GRO-C] walked over to us. The prefects let go of me and took off, and I collapsed to the ground. [GRO-C] and another All Black then carried me to the sick bay.
54. While I was there, the two All Blacks took my school shirt off and helped put me in a smock. They saw all my bruising. I later discovered that I had cracked ribs as well. The All Blacks saw all my injuries. While they were there, the All Blacks signed my Number One church shirt for me.
55. The people at the sick bay told them that they had called an ambulance and it was on its way. But they hadn't called for one. They called the school doctor instead.
56. The All Blacks coach or manager eventually came in and told them that they had to leave. As soon as they left, [GRO-B-3] came to the sick bay and took the signed shirt that the All Blacks signed for me. He threatened that I would get the bash again if I told anyone.

57. I stayed hidden there in that sick bay for 2 months under the care of the school doctor. I was monitored by him about twice a week. At the time, I couldn't breathe properly, and I was coughing up blood. While I was there, I received no schooling during that time, and I had no visitors.
58. Later, the prefects found out it was actually GRO-B-4 who made the disrespectful comment and not me. When he heard he was going to get a hiding, he stole a prefect's car and tried to run away but they caught him. I saw the shadows of the prefects beating him. I can still remember the juddering sound as they beat him up. The one doing the beating was GRO-B who owned the car.
59. They had to call an ambulance and he was taken away. I heard he was in a coma, or a vegetative state and I don't know if he ever recovered. Later there was a newspaper article about it which said GRO-B-4 was just found in that state on the Number One field and no one knew anything. That was not true, the prefects beat him. I saw and heard it.
60. The Island Respect hidings used to happen when teachers and staff were gone. The staff didn't monitor what was happening, they just turned a blind eye. There was supposed to be a House Manager looking after us, but they were hardly there. The Dorm Prefects were always there, and they were in charge.
61. At night, there was a watchman on duty, but he couldn't do anything. The Senior Dormitory was away from Junior and Intermediate Dormitory. The prefects would arrange distractions in the Senior Dormitory and the Prefects would go into the Junior Dormitory and bash whoever.
62. This type of abuse happened often at Wesley College for many different reasons. One time, I wanted to play soccer, but there weren't enough people. So, I had to play rugby instead. I didn't even know how to play rugby or what position I was playing. The prefects made me captain for the 4<sup>th</sup> grade rugby team. The captain would get hidings when the team lost. We lost a lot of games.

63. The whole school was in on the abuse and that included the ex-students who were on the Board of Trustees. The tuck shop owners would have known about it because bullying happened around the tuck shop also.
64. The school staff gave the prefects the powers they had, and they encouraged this abuse. These powers meant that we had to do things for the prefects. For example, we had to clean their flats on a roster or clean their rugby boots.
65. I feel like the prefects had access to my school file or someone who had access to it told them things about me. They knew what they could do to me and that I had no back up. I was a nobody to them. I had no father or family. I always imagined that if I had a strong Islander last name like Opetai'a or Tuigamala, they wouldn't have touched me.

#### **DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE**

66. I told my Mum about what was happening to me during the school holidays, but she didn't do anything.
67. There were some people at the school that I trusted like GRO-C and the Kitchen ladies at the back. Sometimes they would hide me when the prefects were looking for me.
68. There was a teacher I tried to tell after I healed from the big Island Respect hiding. His name was Graeme Watson ("Watson"). He told me that he won't tell the prefects and was going to help me stop what was happening. I told him everything. However, he passed away while I was on school holidays. There was no one else I trusted enough to tell about the abuse. I knew I had to leave.
69. Watson died while I was on school holidays in Paeroa. That's when I ran away. I tried to travel to my sister who was in a boarding school in the South Island. The Police and Social Welfare eventually found me in Wellington and returned me to my mum.
70. Before coming to the Royal Commission, I had tried to see lawyers about my case. After I told them what happened, they would no longer want to be part of a case against Wesley College. I have been through so many different lawyers.

There was only one who agreed to look at my case, but he was based in Wellington and I couldn't afford him.

71. I remember in around 2005 or 2006 a former senior student at Wesley College emailed me to meet at Burger King in Hamilton. This was when I was trying to speak to a lawyer about what happened to me. I had sent messages on Facebook to try and find witnesses to support what had happened to me. She tried to tell me that what I was doing was wrecking the families of former students who beat me. She was trying to protect her school mates. I left Burger King as soon as she said that.

## **IMPACTS OF THE ABUSE**

### *Medical / Health*

72. My school medical records show that in the space of a year, 1991, I was frequently admitted for medical attention, including several times for blood noses and one incident of bruising. One entry states that my finger was crushed in a door. These injuries were caused by other students. The records show that I was also very dependent on Ventolin inhalers. This was because of the stress and anxiety about the beatings and bullying caused me to suffer bad asthma/panic attacks.
73. I had a minor problem with my ears and hearing growing up. But the island respect hidings, and the other beatings I received at Wesley College really made my ears so much worse. During my time at Wesley College my hearing deteriorated significantly. **[WITN0419004]**
74. My ACC records from 1991 also show the excuses I provided for my injuries from the abuse. I didn't want to tell the truth because of my fear of what would happen to me. **[WITN0419005]** and **[WITN0419006]**
75. Since leaving Wesley College I have gone through bouts of depression and this has affected the way I am today. I feel like I never had a chance to be a child and that I lost my youth and future.

76. I'm currently diagnosed with Asperger's which evolved from when I had Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Bipolar. I believe this is as a result of my abuse at Wesley College and things that happened to me before that.
77. A result of the trust that was breached by the social worker means that now I don't trust anybody. It takes ages and even then, I don't fully trust. It's impacted on how I live; I must live alone, and it has impacted on my ability to interact socially. My time at Wesley only added to that distrust.
78. I have also developed OCD for certain things. This is a way for me to ensure that I don't get hurt or exposed to harm.

### *Education*

79. My experience at Wesley College also affected my education. Waking up every morning at Wesley College, I lived in fear. I was expecting torture and abuse in the morning before a shower, at lunch time or prep time. This meant I couldn't focus on school.
80. I used to love to learn things. When I was younger, I remember wanting to be a doctor. I now have no ability to learn properly. Everything is just crushed because I struggle to hold information in my head. I redo courses because I just can't complete them. It's frustrating because if the abuse didn't happen, I would be able to do things once properly.
81. I now find it hard to control my emotions and feel that I need to have my say before I do something or lash out. One time after I had left school, I saw one of the abusers who called me "Willow." That set me off and I beat him up.
82. Because of how I felt about meeting one of my abusers on the street, I started staying home. The thought made me anxious because I didn't know how I would react, and I didn't want to be like them and repeat their cycle of abuse by beating them up.
83. It makes me jealous of others. Because of what has happened to me and how I am. I can't have things like a house and a car because impacts of the abuse

such as my anxiety, depression and trust issues. They get in the way of me living a normal life.

### *Culture*

84. After the abuse at Wesley College, I had a deep hatred for Islanders. I didn't know anything about them before Wesley College and then this happened there. I wanted to find my father and fuck him up for making me half Samoan. I wanted to go hard on him for what happened to me at Wesley College.
85. As for my culture, I now see myself as a world citizen. I realise that others have suffered like I have, but in a different way and context. When I was little, I could see the difference in races, but I couldn't understand why people were treated differently. I noticed it when I arrived from Australia and people branded me as an 'Abo' when I spoke with an Australian accent.
86. I felt like there were not many mixed-race people, but now I know there are thousands of us with mixed race just like me. For that reason, I have learned to accept who I am and find a balance in my views of Islanders.
87. To deal with the effects of what I have been through I try to shut myself off from my triggers. I have tried carving, picture colouring, puzzles and creating art pieces. It all depends on my mood at any given time.
88. Now, I want to feel free of judgement and free to make choices for myself. When I ran away from Wesley College, I had no way of making the right choices. No way of knowing what is right and who is wrong.
89. I feel that I am who I am because of all the things that has happened to me at Wesley College.

### **LATER LIFE**

90. When I was 14 years old, Social Welfare and my mum agreed for me to be in the care of GRO-B-5 and GRO-B-6 who became my foster parents. They were both Maori. I remember Mum crying when I left. I think it was more because was she wasn't going to get money from WINZ for looking after me.

91. I stayed with [GRO-B-5] up until I was 21 years old. I could have left at 18 but I was too scared. By this time, I had grown a real fear of Islanders. I felt safe staying with [GRO-B-5] and [GRO-B-6].
92. [GRO-B-5] was like a father figure to me. He was the first since my Grandad, even though I felt that my Grandad resented me because I was part Samoan.
93. [GRO-B-5] helped me to forgive my mum. I realised she did the best she could. It took me a few years to do that. I hugged and forgave her even though it hurt me, but I understood. It made me feel good. That was something that [GRO-B-5] gave me.
94. [GRO-B-5] was so good to me. He was helping me accept my Samoan side. I was so racist against Samoans when I ran away from the boarding school. They were all 'coconuts' and 'boongaloongas' to me.
95. [GRO-B-5] bought me a lavalava to try to get me to accept all of me. He was wearing it on New Year's Eve 1999. He got murdered that night for wearing my lavalava. We were camping up at Ōmāpere, Hokianga. It was part of his old stomping ground with his whānau. Some locals bashed him on the beach, saying that they were sending him back to the Islands. After all that happened to me, he gets murdered in front of me. His death was reported in the news and there is an article on it.
96. [GRO-B-5] death was very hard for me. [GRO-B-5] was the one person that I opened up to since I ran away from boarding school.
97. At the unveiling of [GRO-B-5] grave, I was verbally adopted by a Samoan man, Ralph Opetaiia, in front of his family. Ralph did this by telling everyone who was there that I was his son, and that no one can touch me or bully me.
98. Ralph believed me when I told him what happened to me at Wesley College and he started crying. He said he was at St Stephens as a prefect and [GRO-B-5]. [GRO-B-5]. He was sorry.
99. Ralph was the toughest man I have ever known, and he was well respected throughout all of Auckland. He was a Golden Gloves Champion through boxing

and he used to be with the Black Power and the Head Hunters. Seeing someone tough like him cry over what happened to me, meant something to me.

100. Being with Ralph gave me the strength to speak out until he died of cancer. Now I feel I have nothing left.
101. I then met a lady named Janine Ready and we were together for a little. This was good for me because I had trust issues. Everything was awesome with her and she encouraged me to apply for university.
102. Janine died of bowel cancer in 2006. For the first month I was so angry because I felt like I had no time to say goodbye. I was so overcome with grief I did not finish university.
103. I also tracked down my biological dad. I found him drinking at the pub where he and my mum met. He's been drinking there since 1977. He said, 'your mum was a blonde lady.' But he didn't want anything to do with me at all, he disowned me. His wife threatened to leave him and take their kids if he had anything to do with me. This was because she believed that her son is the oldest son. That's how he is, he had a high chief title from his family in Samoa, but he didn't want the responsibility and he ran to New Zealand to escape that.
104. From 2010-2014 I moved to Aussie to try and bond with my Mum's family, but this was not successful, so I gave up and came back to New Zealand.
105. I've tried to do courses including an IT course in Hamilton. I found it hard to learn and I believe this stems from the trauma suffered during my time at Wesley College.
106. I eventually came back to Auckland and I met Jack Wiremu Heke who was my dad Ralph's mate. He worked for iwi support as part of the Waipareira Trust. Ralph said that if I want help, go see Jack and he will get me on the right track. It was one of the best moves I could have done in my life. That's how I ended up with Eddie Pilisi, my Community Support person who I've been with for 6-7 years.

## **REDRESS AND POSSIBLE CHANGE**

107. What I want is for no one to suffer like this. Nobody should have to suffer like I did. I want those that made me suffer to be made responsible. This includes the school. I want the world to acknowledge that what the students and school did to me, and the way that hid it was wrong and I've had to live with it all my life.
108. Island Respect hidings shouldn't be anywhere in the world and every boarding school in this country should make sure of that and put systems in place to make sure it is not happening at their school.
109. I know these hidings are what they do in the Islands and as far as I am concerned there is no place in New Zealand or in the world for this. It's just 'gang bashing' with someone telling each person to bash the victim.
110. I need changes to happen sooner. I'm getting old, and you never know, I could end up with a disease like Alzheimer's. Now it's too late. I feel that I'm far too old now to have a good future.
111. I think the way people complain of abuse in boarding schools needs to change. It should be run in a way to help the victim and not anyone else. It should not be done with the school but with an independent organisation that has a process, so people don't know they are telling other people.
112. In my life, I tell people about things, and I get ignored. People think 'why should I believe you?' People just won't listen and don't believe me. This has happened many times throughout my life. I have tried to make complaints about the school, but I need a lawyer. It's nearly impossible without a lawyer to properly complain. I've tried many lawyers since 2002, and none have been able to help me.  
**[WITN0419007]**
113. I was only able to feel like I can complain from 2002 because of the support from Ralph.
114. These people doing wrong at Wesley College, like the Prefects, were being protected, they were empowered by the system and culture at the school. That's why I couldn't trust anyone. That power and protection needs to change.

115. The way boarding schools are run should be changed. They tried to hide anything that would make the school look bad. The old boys that sit in the office or on the Board of Trustees continue with the old ways. They need different people, maybe more females in that world. Females will make sure everything is running the way it should be. They add a factor of morality. My experiences at boarding school was that male energy caused a lot of the problems. It would be good to have stronger female presence to balance things out and keep things under control, and to add values like compassion and empathy.
116. I feel like I should own my own boarding school and abolish bullying in any way that I can. It would be good to allow someone like me to go to boarding schools for regular visits and to look at various signs from those who are abused or bullied. When I was at Wesley College, I remember that there were juniors that just didn't come back after starting there. I never had that choice.
117. When I was at Wesley College, I had a view in my mind to change it all once I became a Senior. To get rid of these Island Respect hidings.
118. As for redress or compensation, I am not sure I can put a price tag to what I went through at Wesley College. I have been on the benefit all my life and feel like I have lost the chance to live a good life.
119. After approaching MSD about the rape, I now receive compensation from ACC for counselling and payments, including taxis for travel. To me it feels like a 'shut up' payment and I do not like how my file is passed across many different people who handle my case. For all I know, my file could have gone to someone who I knew back at Wesley College.
120. I think a genuine meaningful apology from Wesley College acknowledging what happened to me while I was in their care and an apology from those who abused me would make a bit of a difference. One person did that, they messaged me on Facebook to apologise. He was one of the 6 who bashed me. I guess even the bad people can't shut it out of their mind.

121. I know and accept that everything I am today, is because of what happened to me. I accept that I can evolve and be something more and I hope this process will help me do that.

122. A copy of my written consent to use my statement is **annexed** to this statement.

**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: 6 July 2021

**Annexure A****Consent to use my statement**

I, **William Wilson**, confirm that by submitting my signed witness statement to the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care, I consent to its use in the following ways:

- reference and/or inclusion in any interim and/or final report;
- disclosure to those granted leave to appear, designated as core participants and where instructed, their legal representatives via the Inquiry's database or by any other means as directed by the Inquiry;
- presentation as evidence before the Inquiry, including at a public hearing;
- informing further investigation by the Inquiry;
- publication on the Inquiry website.

I also confirm that I have been advised of the option to seek anonymity and that if granted my identity may nevertheless be disclosed to a person or organisation, including any instructed legal representatives, who is the subject of criticism in my witness statement in order that they are afforded a fair opportunity to respond to the criticism.

Please tick one of the two following boxes:

if you are seeking anonymity

or

if you are happy for your identity to be known

Signed:

GRO-C

Date: 6 July 2021