

Answers to Greentag emailed Fri. 13 December 2002

Re: Garth Hawkins

1. When did you meet Garth Hawkins? Where was he working at the time?

I met Garth Hawkins around 1977. He was the priest at the parish of East Devonport at the time.

2. Were you a CEB member or leader at the time?

I became a CEBS leader at about that time, when I was aged about 18. . CEBS leaders were volunteers who met on a weekly basis with a group of boys based at a local parish church. Regular programmes included spiritual, social, recreational and sporting activities. From time to time gatherings on a wider basis took place for camps or inter-branch competitions. The organisation was comparable in many ways to Scouts.

3. If so where?

I was a CEBS leader in the parish of St Alban's Claremont in Hobart.

4. When did you learn of allegations of abuse by Hawkins?

I first learned of allegations of abuse by Garth Hawkins in February 2002.

5. It has been alleged that you were at a CEBS camp in at the rectory where Garth Hawkins lived and that he asked if any of the boys wanted to sleep with him and that you suggested that a boy go, which he did.

Around 1982, when I was about 22 or 23, a small group of adult friends (4-6) of around that age visited Hawkins' rectory to go sailing on his boat and stayed overnight. I am aware that one person, who was about 19 years of age at the time, alleges that Hawkins indicated that as there was insufficient room for all to sleep on the living room floor one should share his bed. This person alleges that I suggested he should do that.

I did not and would not make such a suggestion.

The first I knew of this allegation was February 2002 after becoming archbishop when this person contacted me. At this time he also made allegations of abuse by Hawkins.

Despite telling this person that his recollection was completely at odds with mine, I urged him to do what was right, including reporting the matter to the police and the Church authorities. I understand he did so following my encouragement. I also contacted the Bishop of Tasmania and reported the alleged abuse.

I indicated to this person on a number of occasions that if he wished to make a complaint against me he should do so, saying we were both bound to tell the truth. I also indicated to the church authorities in Tasmania that I had said this. The church authorities in Tasmania explicitly asked this person whether he wished to make a complaint against me. The person has repeatedly declined to do so.

I cooperated fully with the investigation into these allegations conducted by the church authorities in Tasmania.

I empathise with this person's hurt and have taken the above actions and offered whatever support I can.

However, as I have told him, I did not make that suggestion to him when he was 19.

Did you know or suspect at the time what Hawkins was likely to do to the boy?

This question is extremely offensive. It is based on the erroneous presumption that what is falsely asserted in 5.) is true.

(Hawkins was convicted of two counts of sodomy of the boy and 8 of indecent assault of Steven Fisher at a Tribunal hearing in May this year and was defrocked.)

Re: Lou Daniels

1. When did you meet Lou Daniels? Where was he working at the time?

I first met Lou Daniels when I joined CEBS at about 8 years of age.

2. Were you a CEB member or leader at the time?

See above.

3. If so where?

I believe the first occasion I met him was when I attended a CEBS camp at age 8 years.

4. Were you aware of the allegations about Daniels when you were rector of Devonport?

I have never been Rector of Devonport.

5. When did you learn of allegations of abuse by Daniels?

I first learnt of an allegation against Daniels around the time I was a theological student, in Melbourne, (1985-1988) or shortly after my ordination. I was in my 20s. A young woman visited me and told me she'd seen Daniels behave in a sexually inappropriate manner. She said that she'd already reported the matter to the Bishop of Tasmania.

The allegation was inconsistent with my experience of Daniels whom I'd known since childhood and who had prepared me for Confirmation aged 10.

Given the matter had been reported to the proper authorities, however, I had every right to expect – and no reason not to think – that the matters would be dealt with properly.

Chris Griffiths reported earlier this year that Daniels so effectively concealed his offences that even the police dropped their investigations in 1994 and that such didn't resume until after the Tasmanian Church's own inquiry.

In the mid 1990s, Daniels resigned without notice. Daniels told me on the telephone that he had resigned but did not answer my questions as to the reason for his resignation. Several years later he was charged with sexual offences. I was not informed of that by Daniels or the police but became aware of it through media reports.

6. Why did you write a character reference for Lou Daniels?

After Daniels had admitted his guilt, his solicitors asked if I would provide a reference for use in the Court in a sentencing hearing.

I was prepared to indicate to the court what I had experienced personally of Daniels' ministry. The reference was written purely for a judge, who was privy to the full matters of the case. I indicated in the reference that I was aware of the nature of the charges against Daniels and that he had pleaded guilty to them. I understood providing such a reference to be a normal part of the court process.

This has been on the public record since 1999 and was reported by The Courier Mail in March 2002. At the time, three of Queensland's leading ethicists were quoted as saying such did not "cast a cloud" over my administration. The article also pointed out that "such a practice is common".

Please note the following excerpt from the Tasmanian Supreme Court judgment:

In 1994, the complainant made a series of allegations to police and the matter was investigated. Mr Daniels was interviewed in September 1994 and denied the allegations. No proceedings were commenced.

Following the investigation and the involvement of church authorities, Mr Daniels resigned his parish position and left the priesthood.

R v Daniels, Louis Victor [1999] TASSC 62 (28 May 1999)

7. Did Daniels resign at the behest of "church authorities"?

That is a question that needs to be directed to the Church authorities in Tasmania. I had no knowledge of the matter at the time other than of the fact of his resignation.

8. As a senior cleric in Tasmania, what investigative action was taken by the Diocese after Daniels left his parish in 1994?

I was not a senior cleric in 1994. I was neither privy nor party to the diocese's actions at that time.

9. Did you advocate any action be taken and if so what? Is there documentary proof of this?

In 1997, the same year Daniels was charged by police, I was appointed an Archdeacon. I can recall encouraging the Bishop of the time to be as open and forthright as possible with Daniels' previous parish. It was, and remains, my view that pastoral problems are compounded if the facts of the matter are not openly addressed.

In 2002 I was informed of two further complaints against Daniels. In both instances I encouraged the complainants to report the matter to the police and to the Tasmanian Church authorities. I am aware that in one case, following my suggestion, the matter was reported and that in the other I reported the matter to the police myself. There is documentation demonstrating this.

10. Were you aware of a character reference written by Bishop Phillip Newell (after Daniel's conviction) in support of Daniels getting a job as a teacher in an Anglican school?

No.

11. Did you give Daniels a work reference?

No.

Re: Bob Brandenburg

1. When did you meet Bob Brandenburg? Where was he working at the time?

I first met Bob Brandenburg around 1981 either at a national CEBS camp or at a national CEBS meeting.

2. Were you a CEB member or leader at the time?

I was a CEBS leader at the time

3. Where?

In the parish of St Alban's Claremont, Hobart.

4. When did you learn of allegations of abuse by Brandenburg?

As I recall it, I became aware that there were allegations against Brandenburg around the time he was charged and was to appear in court.

5. When you were a member of the Adelaide committee investigating pedophiles in the church why did you not disclose your connections with them?

I was never a member of a committee responsible for investigating pedophiles in the church in Adelaide.

Adelaide had a committee called the 'Diocesan Response Group' responsible to investigate complaints of sexual abuse. I was never a member of that committee though my responsibilities as Assistant Bishop involved me liaising with and assisting that group in various ways.

To my knowledge the Diocesan Response Group never received any complaint of sexual abuse by Brandenburg. I believe diocesan authorities became aware of allegations around the time Brandenburg was charged and was to appear in court.

I was quite open about my involvement in CEBS as a member and as leader over a long period and about my friendship with Daniels and Brandenburg. This was well known to the Archbishop and his advisers. I recall expressing surprise, on a number of occasions, that I had never seen any inappropriate behaviour over all those years. I have never attempted to hide those connections.

6. Were you aware that the abuse perpetrated by Brandenburg had not been communicated to the Diocesan Council in Adelaide? If so what was your position on this?

Following Brandenburg's being charged, failure to appear in court and death, a number of meetings were convened by the Archbishop of Adelaide involving myself as Assistant Bishop and senior pastoral, legal and insurance advisers. This group considered and planned appropriate responses to the matter.

Re: John Litton Elliot

1. When did you meet John Elliot? Where was he working at the time?

I don't believe I have ever met John Elliot.

2. Were you a CEB member or leader at the time?

3. Where?

4. When did you learn of John Litton Elliot's criminal behaviour or allegations of abuse by him?

Not until following my election as Archbishop of Brisbane in November 2001. It may not have been until after my arrival in Brisbane in early 2002.

5. When Elliot was found guilty of child sex abuse charges this year, did you inform the Tasmanian Diocese?

I issued a press release immediately following Elliot's conviction.

I took steps to have Elliot removed from the priesthood (deposed from Holy Orders) – such had never been done in Brisbane diocese before. Once this process was completed I wrote to all of Australia's diocesan bishops and the General Secretary of the General Synod advising that Elliot had been removed from the priesthood and the reasons for this.

6. Did you make any attempt to inform CEBS or the Diocese in Tasmania that there may have been other victims of Elliot in Tasmania? And if so, when?

I advised the Bishop of Tasmania as indicated above.

Re: Steve Randell

1. When did you meet Steve Randell (who married Angela Potter)? Where was he living at the time?

Angela Potter was a family friend. I met Steve Randell at or around the time he became engaged to Angela Potter. I believe at the time they were both living and teaching on the West Coast of Tasmania, possibly in Queenstown.

2. Were you a CEB member or leader at the time?

I can't recall when that happened. I was a CEBS leader until the early 80s, around the time I left Tasmania for theological study in Melbourne in 1985.

3. Where?

It would have been at a social function at which Randell and Potter were present.

4. Were you aware when you were rector of St Mark's Bellerive in the archdeaconry of Clarence that Randell was a child sex offender?

I have never been Rector of St Mark's Bellerive.

I don't recall having any knowledge whatsoever of allegations against Randell prior to media coverage of the matter.

5. It has been alleged that you and Lou Daniels and Steve Randell were mutual friends – is this the case?

I have known Daniels since childhood. He was a leader at camps I attended as a child. He prepared me for confirmation at age 10 years. I served as a CEBS leader in Tasmania as did he. He was a colleague in the ordained ministry in Tasmania.

Randell I had much less to do with. I met him at most on a handful of occasions over a number of years.

6. When did you learn of allegations of abuse by Randell?

As in (4.)

Other:

1. Could you please comment on the 1997 report "Not the Way of Christ" following the charging of one of the authors, Dr Michael Crowley with maintaining a sexual relationship with a girl? Do you consider the findings of the inquiry now tainted because of Crowley being charged?

It came as a great surprise to me when Crowley was charged recently with this offence.

I am aware of statements by the Barrister involved in the inquiry, Tonia Kohl, that she believes the findings and recommendations of the inquiry have not been undermined. I trust and agree with that judgment.

2. As former Archdeacon of Clarence, can you say why the church's lawyers were asked to prosecute the Hawkins case in the Tribunal, given the obvious conflict of interest?

I have no knowledge of the reason the Diocese of Tasmania chose who they did to conduct the tribunal hearing, nor was I consulted about it. That question needs to be addressed to the authorities in Tasmania.

3. You have advocated the need for a Royal Commission into child sex abuse in Australia. What are your present thoughts on this?

I indicated earlier this year that the problems of child sexual abuse are widespread throughout society and that if we as a community are committed to tackling the issue in a thorough and comprehensive way a Royal Commission could do a much more far-reaching job than a church-sponsored inquiry. I put that position to both the Premier of Queensland and the Prime Minister to no avail. I stand by that view. I have been realistic about the limitations of a church-initiated inquiry and clearly they remain.
