

# Statement

**Name** Fay HILLERY (nee FENTON)  
**Address** Known to the Royal Commission  
**Occupation** Retired Seamstress  
**Date** [10<sup>th</sup>] February 2014

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1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I am prepared to give to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.
2. My full name is Fay HILLERY but I was christened Helen Fay FENTON. I am known as Fay. My mother passed away when I was three-years-old. My grandmother didn't like the name Helen, so she began to call me Fay. I changed my name to Fay SIMMONS when I married my first husband and changed it again to Fay HILLERY when I married my second husband. I am 72<sup>72</sup>-years-old. *KAH* *RJ*
3. I am a retired seamstress.
4. I was born in Gladesville, Sydney on 1 October, 1941. I had one sister who passed away 18 months ago. My mother and father lived in Gladesville when I was born. My mother passed away when I was three-years-old. I briefly spent some time in Dalwood Children's Homes in Sydney after my mother died because my father didn't want me. Dad had married again eight months after Mum's passing.
5. When I was approximately four-years-old, I went to live with my father's parents in Gladesville. My grandmother hated me. I now know this was due to my skin colour. I was dark skinned. I've since learnt that I am a descendant of African Americans who arrived with the First Fleet. My mother was also dark skinned. My sister was much fairer skinned than me. My sister was given to my father's sister to be raised. I can recall my grandmother being very physically and verbally abusive

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towards me. I lived with my grandparents for approximately ten years. I went to primary school in Gladesville and then Riverside High School. That's where I met my friend, Patty ROONEY.

6. My grandfather fell one day when I was 14-years-old. He broke his leg and subsequently lost his mind. He was bed-ridden for six months before he died. I nursed and cared for him during that time. I was close to my grandfather, I loved him.
7. After his death, I ran away, I couldn't live with my grandmother. I ran away to Young, New South Wales, because I got a job out there as a mother's helper. I can't recall how I actually got that job. I lasted approximately two weeks and I was dismissed from my job. I had lied about my age and my experience. They put me on a train back to Sydney and I got off at Redfern. I lived on the streets and was arrested in a park by Police. I can't remember where that was in Sydney.
8. I went before the Children's Court. My file states that it was the Albion Street Children's Court but I can't remember. I was charged with being in moral danger. My girlfriend Patty ROONEY'S parents came to the Children's Court and requested the magistrate sign me into their care. My father turned up to the court and would not allow this to occur. I was sent to Parramatta Girls' Training School ("**Parramatta Girls**") on 6 March, 1958.

**Admission to Parramatta Girls**

9. On arrival at Parramatta Girls, my hair was hacked, not cut, off me. I was 16-years-old. I was stripped naked and showered, there was no privacy at all. I remember being on the covered way (it was like a concrete strip with a roof over the top) and a man that I think his name was CRAWFORD hit me over the side of the head with a bunch of keys in his hand because I made eye contact with him. This occurred about a week of me being in Parramatta Girls Home.
10. I believe his name was CRAWFORD because that's the name that has just stayed with me all my life. When I think of Parramatta, I immediately think of CRAWFORD. CRAWFORD was the Superintendent in charge at Parramatta Girls at the time I was there. I recall he had shocking breath.

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11. CRAWFORD dragged me from the covered way and he put me into an isolation cell. They called the isolation cells 'the dungeons'. I think the isolation cells were built for just that, isolation cells. They had no other function. They had a little door on them with a little window to pass food through. We used a bucket if we wanted to go to the toilet.
12. I think it was about four hours later, CRAWFORD came into the cell, pulled out his erect penis and forced it into my mouth. I bit his penis and he gave me a dreadful bashing.
13. I think I would have been in the isolation cell for about a week, very bruised and battered. I was allowed out at the end of the week for about an hour. Eventually, I went back to the wards. CRAWFORD went out of his way to be physically cruel to me every day, until I reacted violently and was put back into isolation. When I was in isolation, I could hear other girls crying and screaming.
14. One night in the dormitory, I witnessed a gang of girls pin one of the other girls down and put a Coca Cola bottle into her vagina. The Coca Cola bottle sucked her 'insides' into the bottle. All of sudden, she screamed and all the lights came on. I don't know what happened to her. I didn't know her name. I didn't know any of the girl's names. We were not allowed to talk to each other, we had to look at the floor all the time. We weren't allowed to make eye contact with anyone, not even other girls. There was no doors on the toilets or showers, most of the time there was no hot water. I never spoke to any of the other girls about the treatment and abuse at Parramatta Girls.
15. Over the next eight months, CRAWFORD repeatedly bashed me, raped me, orally, anally and vaginally. I recall CRAWFORD putting his penis into my mouth when it had poo on it. This would occur after he had anally raped me. At no time was I ever submissive, I fought and screamed. I bit him, I kicked, I punched, I went to the toilet, anything to stop him from abusing me.
16. This would make CRAWFORD so much angrier, he wanted to dominate. I think he wanted to beat me into submissiveness. I seemed to be his favourite because he couldn't conquer me. If I was

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injured, I was sent to a very sterile white room to a horrible doctor who would treat me. I would then be either returned to the dormitory or back to isolation.

17. I was in Parramatta Girls for a total of ten months. I believe eight of those months was spent in isolation.

**Release from Parramatta Girls**

18. In late December, 1958, Dad ROONEY (Patty ROONEY'S father) came to visit me. Dad ROONEY asked me what the bruises were on the side of my face and head. I told him briefly what was happening to me. Dad ROONEY promised to help me and two days later on 23 December, 1958, I was released into the care of Matron HOWARD who owned a convalescent home in Burwood. I believe Dad ROONEY had connections in high places, he was a professional gambler.

19. On the day I was released, I never saw CRAWFORD. I went to work for Matron HOWARD as an assistant-nurse. Matron HOWARD was kind, caring, and compassionate, I think she saved my mind. I left Matron HOWARD approximately one year later. I went to work at Crown Street Women's Hospital as a nurse's aide. I was able to live-in at the Women's Hospital in the nurse's quarters. I was there for approximately six months and moved to Brisbane with a female friend.

20. I met a man on a Friday night in Brisbane. We were married on the Monday night as we forged consent papers, I was only ~~21~~<sup>20</sup> years-old at the time. I was married to this man for 27 years. We moved around a lot because he was in the Australian Army.

21. I had my son in Brisbane on 21 February, 1964. I had my daughter in Malaysia on 3 June, 1966. We lived in Tea Gardens for many years before moving to the Whitsunday's to work in the tourist industry. I left him in approximately 1987/88. I was about 47-years-old.

22. After I left my ex-husband, I started working in the restaurant at the Whitsundays Sailing Club. Then I was asked to manage the restaurant. I ran a successful restaurant there for approximately three years. I bought and sold an apartment in Airlie Beach and two houses. When I left working at

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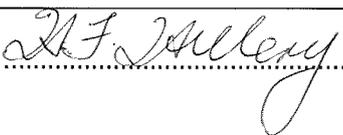
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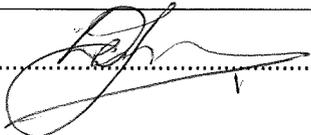
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the restaurant, I did seamstress work from home. I left the Whitsundays approximately 13 years ago. I went to Townsville to live. I bought a house there. I met my now husband, Terry. Terry and I were married approximately eight years ago. I'm extremely happy living on the Gold Coast with a happy, compassionate, non-abusive man.

**Impact of the Child Sexual Abuse**

23. I will never forget the physical, mental and sexual cruelty that I suffered in Parramatta Girls. To this day, I dread going into a toilet that isn't my own. I have had trouble with my bowels psychologically because of what was done to me in isolation. I have had problems with my sex-life because of what happened to me. I have significant issues with smelling poo and I can smell it immediately in a crowd of people. I wake during the night and have flashbacks about my time in Parramatta Girls Home. I appal violence of any kind and wish my life had been different.
24. Approximately one week ago, I woke knowing that I was forcibly given Largactil. I have no idea why this drug name came to me. I know I was given drugs whilst I was in isolation because CRAWFORD would try to subdue me when he was raping me.
25. I contemplated suicide whilst I was at Parramatta Girls and many times since. The cruelty that happened to me and other girls should never have happened and should never happen again. I feel the staff at Parramatta Girls, for example, laundry and sewing room staff must have known what was happening and did nothing about it. The sewing teacher had a soft spot for me, I can't recall whether I had talked to her about the abuse. However, I honestly believe she would have known what was happening to me. I detest that sewing teacher for not saying anything. I do not remember her name.
26. I've never engaged in counselling because I'm so worried about them dragging up something that may hurt me even more or that my brain has stored away for my protection. The sadness of my time in Parramatta Girls will never go away and I feel so sad for the other girls who didn't have contacts like Dad ROONEY to save them from Parramatta Girls. I consider myself extremely lucky

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because of the people I have met which includes my husband Terry and my best friend and confidant Valerie, who have supported me over all these traumatic years.

27. All my life I have been ashamed of what happened to me in Parramatta Girls Home. I now know that it is not me who should be ashamed.

Signed: *F. Hillery* .....

Date: 10-2-2014

Witness: *[Signature]* .....

Date: 10/2/2014.

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