

Royal Commission

Statement of Michael Jenkinson

On 2 February 2015 I, Michael John Truman Jenkinson, of **REDACTED**
REDACTED New South Wales, retired, state as follows:

1. I was born in 1939. I trained as a teacher between 1958 and 1960. I first worked as a qualified teacher and resident master in 1960 at The Scots College Preparatory School, Bellevue Hill, New South Wales. My teaching was in the field of children aged 8 to 12 years. I remained as a teacher of primary school aged children from 1958 until my retirement in 1990.

Note: My teacher training was taken at the Teachers' Guild of NSW, an institution that I believe no longer exists.

2. I was employed as a teacher at Knox Preparatory School in 1970. Initially I taught children in 5th class who were aged between 10 and 11.
3. In 1973 I was appointed to the position of Master in Charge at the Knox Prep School. That was the title given to the most senior position in the Prep School.
4. As Master in Charge I was immediately responsible to the Headmaster of Knox College, Dr Ian Paterson and, through him, to the School Council. The Chairman of the School Council in those days was Forbes Officer QC.
5. As Master in Charge I was responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Prep school. There were some decisions which were beyond my authority and which could only be taken by Dr Paterson. For example, it was not my responsibility to make decisions on the particular staff to be hired, or in respect of dismissing staff. While Dr Paterson appointed staff, he arranged for me to interview each applicant. Overall, the best way to describe my position was that it was one which was to ensure the smooth, daily running of the Prep School.
6. In or about 1984 my title changed to the Head of the Preparatory School. There were minor changes to my duties. I was given responsibility for the selection and hiring of teaching staff, but the role of dismissing teaching staff remained with Dr Paterson, with whom I consulted. The position retained its place in the hierarchy, that is, I was immediately responsible to the Headmaster and remained subject to his direction.

7. I remained in that position until I retired in 1990 and I made a conscious decision that I would make a complete separation from Knox Prep. It had been a large and very rewarding part of my life but it was time to move on. I also did not wish to be seen to be interfering with or second guessing the activities of my successor. My wife and I purchased a farm in the Bathurst area and from 1990 I had relatively little contact with the School or with the teachers with whom I had previously worked.
8. During my time at Knox Prep, and while I was the head of that School, my recollection is that it was a very happy place. In my opinion the teachers provided an exciting and stimulating environment. In my opinion the student body was a happy group and the teachers were generally liked and respected for their professionalism. I was proud to be associated with them and with a fine school. However, the awful revelations of sexual abuse by two well known, trusted and long serving members of my staff have largely destroyed any sense of achievement that I once held. In its place is shame and the on-going realisation that the lives of these boys, now men, have been massively damaged. For this, I sincerely apologise to them and their families, knowing full well how inadequate these words are.
9. My main Staff aim was to attract and hold gifted and talented teachers; men and women who were genuinely willing to be involved and react creatively to build a school that offered academic, sporting and cultural challenges. Such people create stimulating classrooms. I believed, then, that teachers with different strengths and interests over and above their general qualifications, would provide the foundation of a stimulating school.
10. During my time as the head of Knox Prep I was satisfied that the students were well protected from any misconduct from teachers. I was unaware of any particular problem, and although, in those days, the School administration was not as astute as to these problems as it would be now, I was aware that students had to be protected from bullying or predatory teachers. The way I saw it was that there were multiple layers of protection preventing a student from becoming the victim of untoward conduct.
11. The first layer of protection came from my own observations: I kept a careful eye on the conduct of the staff and students. Another layer of protection lay in the selection of the teaching staff itself. Knox Prep was able to attract experienced and skilled teachers. As I understood it, Knox would never accept a teacher over whom there was any kind of disciplinary cloud. The others layers of protection came through the various parent groups, Parent-Teacher meetings and meetings of the Preparatory School's Mothers' Group whose Committee had ready access to me and to other members of staff. Further to this, regular Staff Meetings frequently revised the usual caveats about

teachers not being in a classroom alone with a student, and similar. Additionally, at each annual address to the parents of new boys, I would point out that as I was at school at 7.30 am or thereabouts, should there be an urgent matter, I was available.

12. By these means I felt that there was protection in place for the students against any kind of predatory conduct within the school. Certainly nothing specific of this kind involving the school was drawn to my attention and I did not observe it, despite maintaining a watchful eye.

Barrie Stewart:

13. That Barrie Stewart was already a teacher at Knox Prep when I arrived in 1970 is my recollection Mr Stewart then taught 3rd or 4th grade. I got to know Mr Stewart over many years.
14. I observed Mr Stewart's work, first as a colleague and later as Master in Charge. In my opinion Mr Stewart was a gifted teacher. I understand that before he had come to Knox Prep he had a background teaching disadvantaged students. This is demanding work requiring high levels of sympathetic preparation, excellent classroom delivery and dedication. Mr Stewart demonstrated that background while at Knox Prep.
15. Mr Stewart was also a gifted musician. This fact made him even more desirable at Knox at that time because the Headmaster and I had been encouraging the development of a stronger musical department at Knox Grammar School. Mr Stewart became an important component of the general and music teaching staff.
16. I observed the boys interact with Mr Stewart. The boys at Knox Prep really enjoyed Mr Stewart. There was a keenness to be in his class. He was an entertainer - learning in his classroom often took place amid music and laughter. And the parents appreciated Mr Stewart as well – and were often as keen as their sons that he be their son's teacher. He was also popular in the staff common room.
17. During the time that I knew Barrie Stewart I formed a good opinion of him as a colleague. He was a guest at my home on many occasions. He was never married, and from time to time I would hear a whisper about him that he may be homosexual. I never observed anything which indicated that he was or was not homosexual. On occasions that he came to my home he would often be accompanied by a female friend.
18. I was never aware of any inappropriate conduct on the part of Mr Stewart with any of the students at Knox Prep, and I was not given warnings or indications by other members of

staff, the students or parents that there was even a chance of this occurring. It is said now that there were "signs" that Mr Stewart was inappropriate with the students. I have been told that there is reference to the fact that Mr Stewart was a "tickler" and that he would tickle some of the students. Whether it was right or wrong, there was no real embargo of physical contact between the teachers and the students at Knox Prep in those days. Knox Prep was no different to the other schools at which I had taught. Some of the students came to Knox Prep when they were very young – five or six years old, and they frequently needed assistance. If a student had trouble doing up his shoes, tucking his shirt in, or picking himself up after falling over, the teaching staff would not hesitate to help. Occasionally, some of the younger men would, on playground duty, join in the boys' games of football, soccer and the like which sometimes ended in a pile of bodies.

19. There was one area in which I had a concern in respect of Mr Stewart who owned a house on the Northern Beaches – at Whale Beach. Mr Stewart had, after he had gained permission from parents, taken some boys to his house at Whale Beach. I recall thinking that this was wrong conduct – it was the sort of thing which could lead to trouble, and a teacher only makes themselves vulnerable to a complaint in such circumstances. I did not at all suspect that Mr Stewart was engaging in untoward conduct, but I still spoke to him and advised him that this contact should cease. As far as I know, it did cease. I do recall speaking to the headmaster about this issue, and I remember that Dr Paterson agreed with me.
20. Although I knew Mr Stewart well as a colleague, I was not a personal friend of his. After I retired from school I recall seeing him on one occasion. My wife and I were "house-minding" on the Northern Beaches, and Mr Stewart lived nearby. My wife and I had morning tea with Mr Stewart and another member of staff, Miss Patricia Thompson. Later that same day, Mr Stewart with my wife and me, had an evening meal. I have an unclear recollection of Mr Stewart visiting our farm in the 1990's accompanied by mutual friends. During these early years on the farm, Dr Paterson rang to ask me if I had had any knowledge at any time of inappropriate behaviour by Mr Stewart on two Preparatory school boys. I replied that I was not aware of any difficulty such as he described, nor had there been any contact from the boys' parents to me.

Craig Treloar

21. I first met Craig Treloar when he was a student at Knox Prep. I had taught him in Fifth Grade.

22. I recall that in about 1984 Mr Treloar applied to take up a teaching position at Knox Prep. Mr Treloar's qualifications and experience for the job were more than adequate for his appointment. Additionally, he had attended Knox. Mr Treloar was appointed to teach Grade 4, I think, but I am not sure. I understood that he eventually took a position as a resident master, living in one of the boarding houses which were located at the Senior school not at the Preparatory school. My recollection is that I interviewed Mr Treloar and approved his appointment to the teaching staff. I do not recall if Dr Paterson's approval was necessary, but he would have been informed.
23. Mr Treloar was a cooperative, keen young teacher whose entry into the school was smooth. He was popular with the boys as he had keen interest in most sports and he became an excellent sports coach. He did as he was asked, was thorough in his classwork and preparation. During term he gave of his time willingly in extra-curricular activities. He mixed well with those who were particularly interested in sport and was cooperative with those who were not.
24. In 1988 Mr Treloar became the subject of a complaint – which I discuss below. Before that complaint arose I was unaware of any suggestion whatsoever of any inappropriate conduct on the part of Mr Treloar. I saw him in the playground interacting with the students, and I saw nothing of concern.
25. Sometime in the latter part of 1988 I was contacted by the headmaster, Dr Paterson, and he told me of an incident which involved Mr Treloar. I cannot now recall anything like the exact words which were passed between us, but I do recall that Dr Paterson made it clear to me that the General Duties Master, Mr Stuart Pearson, had investigated a complaint by a student which had uncovered inappropriate conduct on the part of Mr Treloar. (Mr Pearson had seen me earlier that day to raise this concern and to indicate that he was on his way to Dr Paterson's office.) As it was described to me, Mr Treloar had shown a pornographic movie to the student (or there may have been other students present at the same time, I cannot now recall). There was no suggestion made to me that Mr Treloar had touched the student(s) or that alcohol was involved. I remember that when he discussed the incident with me, Dr Paterson suggested that while the conduct was completely inappropriate, he did not regard it as serious or being of the worst degree – he used words to that effect. I recall, but not strongly, that Dr Paterson had seen some, if not all, of the video.
26. As the incident was explained to me I also thought that Mr Treloar's misconduct was not of the worst kind. It seemed to me that it was more explicable on the basis that Mr Treloar was a young man with little experience of the world and he had made a grave

- error of judgment in trying to impress young boys. I did not think that it was a sufficiently serious event to terminate a promising young teacher's career. Mr Treloar's physical sexual abuse of these boys was unknown by me until his trial sentencing.
27. Dr Paterson told me that he had discussed the problem with a member of the school's Council and that a decision would follow promptly. I was satisfied with this information.
 28. Within a short period of time – maybe only a couple of days – I became aware that Dr Paterson had made a decision that Mr Treloar's employment should not be terminated, but that he should be given a six month separation from the Prep School and the boarding house. I do recall being told that my Deputy Head at the Prep School, Bob Thomas, and another teacher from the senior school, Mr Damien Vance, had gone to Dr Paterson and made a representation on behalf of Mr Treloar on the basis that Mr Treloar was only young, and the offence was a matter of foolish misjudgment which should not bring his career to an end. It is my recollection that later, Dr Paterson asked me if I agreed that as a solution the six month separation would be appropriate. I did agree. In hindsight I would accept that my position on this was inappropriate. I had no doubt that the lesson which Mr Treloar had learnt from this would have been a real shock to him, and that he would come back from it as a better teacher.
 29. Mr Treloar did come back to Knox Prep as a teacher, recommencing not long before I retired. I also recall that Mr Treloar went back to live in one of the boarding houses as a boarding master. I recall this because when I heard it I went to Mr Treloar and advised him not to do so. I told Mr Treloar that it was time for him to let go of the boarding environment and to grow up. In my opinion he had to move out of the boarding house so that he could mature as a person. I was not at all motivated by any fear that he may act in an untoward way to any of the students.
 30. When Mr Treloar returned to Knox Prep, and during my remaining time at the School, he performed his duties as before. I never heard any suggestion or rumour that he was behaving inappropriately towards any of the students at the School.
 31. There has been no contact between Mr Treloar and me since I left the school in 1990.

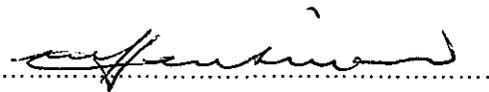
Bruce Barrett

32. Bruce Barrett was another teacher who, I think, had commenced at the Prep School around 1976-77. During the time that I worked at the Prep School I got to know Mr Barrett very well – he became a personal friend of mine and of my family. There were numerous occasions when Mr Barrett babysat my young children when my wife

and I had evening school functions to attend. I had complete confidence in him handling my children as did my wife. Our sons, in turn, regarded him warmly and remember him so to this day.

33. Mr Barrett taught Visual Arts. He was extremely popular with the students. He was also popular with the parents. In time, I appointed him as a day-boy Housemaster.
34. Between about 1981 and 1984 Mr Barrett was my deputy at Knox Prep. I never had any cause to be concerned that he had engaged in any form of inappropriate conduct with any of the students.
35. I do recall that shortly before he died, Mr Barrett came to see me. He told me that, prior to his employment at Knox, he had been involved with a community organisation (it was either a visual arts centre or something to do with puppetry), and there had been an allegation made against him of "pederasty". He was upset and clearly shaken by the complaint. I spoke to Mr Barrett about it, and I asked him directly whether the allegation was true. Mr Barrett looked me right in the eye and he denied that it was true. I had known him for many years. I thought he was an honourable person. I believed his denial. In any event, this was only shortly before Mr Barrett became ill, and he died very quickly after becoming ill. I am unaware as to whether the allegation of pederasty was investigated.

Dated: 2 February 2015



Michael Jenkinson