

# ROYAL COMMISSION INTO SEXUAL ABUSE IN SCHOOLS

## WITNESS STATEMENT FROM BRIAN BUGGY

I am Brian Buggy, of **REDACTED** in the State of New South Wales

### **BACKGROUND**

1. From my appointment to the Staff at Knox Grammar School, commencing 1975, until Dr Ian Paterson's retirement in 1998, I worked very closely as musical director with Ian Paterson as producer, on the School's annual musicals.
2. My full-time staff position was, Director of Music, involving classroom teaching across Years 7 to 12 and directing several of the bands, orchestras and music performance ensembles within the School. I retired in 2008.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

3. The Musicals were productions of considerable proportions involving large Casts, upwards of 80 girls and boys on stage.
4. In addition were lighting, stage and sound crews of another 30 or so, final numbers depending on the particular Musical.
5. There was also an orchestra of boys and girls, generally about 40 strong.
6. A dedicated volunteer parent cohort and staff members supervised costumes, props and other technical areas of expertise and interest. These adults and occasional siblings were most heavily involved in the weeks leading up to and including dress rehearsals and performances.

**STAFF**

7. My duties as musical director also involved co-ordinating additional colleagues on the music staff, who assisted as chorus directors, rehearsal pianists, pit musicians and stage managers.

**CASTING**

8. For the 23 musicals I worked on with Dr Paterson, a major challenge was in selecting, from the hundreds of girls from all schools in the area (as well as some from across the City), only the 50 or so, able to be placed in each show.

9. Of course, the boys were all from Knox and they too were auditioned, mostly from years 9, 10 and 11, a pool of about 400 boys in those days. Total numbers of boys and girls in the cast, varied from show to show, generally in excess of 100.

10. Word-of-mouth announced audition dates and the reputation of this well-managed co-ed activity, insured massive participation, year after year during Dr Paterson's production time and in the years following. It was a goal, a "must do" activity for many students in their secondary years.

**PRODUCTION**

11. Dr Paterson directed these proceedings with great energy, vision, dedication and a particular focus on the well-being of the students involved.

12. He cared about the safety of students, while requesting that as many as possible be given the opportunity to be in the production – somewhere.

13. Musicals presented were chosen from the standard Broadway genre. Annual selection was based on their suitability for the age group involved, consideration of subject matter, language and opportunities for as many performers as possible.

The involvement of a full theatre orchestra was also a major factor, adding to the educational value of the activity. With these criteria in mind, some shows were presented several times over the 33 years of my involvement; "Guys and Dolls" was one such. I am reminded by a critique in the school magazine "The Knox Grammarian" 1989, that the orchestra for this production was located, upstage, rather than more traditionally in the pit, in front of the stage.

14. Professionals were engaged as required for choreography, lighting and sound.

### **REHEARSALS**

15. Cast and Orchestra rehearsed separately as detailed, for up to 10 weeks, coming together the week before Opening Night and the Dress Rehearsals.

16. The early 10 weeks for the Cast, involved Mondays and Wednesdays from 4.00pm till 5.30 and Sundays, from 1.00pm till 4.00pm

17. Orchestra calls were Monday evenings, (after the Cast) from 7.00 till 8.30pm and Thursdays (after Symphony Orchestra-KAYO) from 5.30pm till 7.00pm.

18. Music staff and I were present at all of these calls as required. Dr Paterson, while occasionally attending to observe and encourage the orchestra's progress, was not involved in the Orchestra-only calls, concentrating on dramatic scenes and the large-scale production numbers.

19. Dress rehearsals involved the whole cast, in costumes and make-up, requiring parents and staff managing these aspects, to be in attendance. Each Act of the show took a full 3-hour call.

20. Full Dress rehearsals added the Orchestra, Sound and Lighting crews to the previous list, occupying all of the Sunday, plus the Monday and Tuesday evenings before Opening Night.

21. Full Dress Rehearsals were the only opportunities for the Orchestra to sneak a look at what was happening on stage and for the Cast to watch items in which they were not involved at the time.

### **PERFORMANCES**

22. There were generally 6 performances over two weeks. Consideration of appropriate energy levels, academic demands and public interest, determined the staging of any extra performances.

### **REVIEW**

23. I have recently become aware of an allegation by a female cast member, that Dr Paterson touched her inappropriately and in a sexual manner, during a Full Dress Rehearsal for the 1989 Musical, "Guys and Dolls". This musical was produced at least twice over my time as musical director.

24. This alleged incident is said to have taken place in front of the entire Cast of boys and girls.

25. To the best of my knowledge, I would have been present at the Dress Rehearsal, out front conducting from the piano and directing singers on stage.

26. For Full Dress rehearsals I would have been upstage with the orchestra for this production. While my attention may not have been on the stage action at all times, (as details within the orchestra were also addressed during such rehearsals), any incident or interruption to proceedings, would have gained my attention.

27. I have never missed any rehearsals of any Musical in which I have been involved.

28. I have no recollection of a student being touched inappropriately, or in a sexual manner by Ian Paterson, at any rehearsal. Nor did any person tell me that Dr Paterson had touched a cast member inappropriately at a rehearsal of the 1989 musical, or at any musical he produced.

29. Never at any stage of any of these detailed and demanding rehearsals, did I witness anything but the most professional behaviour from Dr Paterson, as an enlightened educator and a caring adult.

30. I am also certain, that I would have been advised of such an incident, by any number of the many students and adults present, as such behaviour would have been totally out of character for Dr Paterson.

31. Had I become aware of rumours or allegations of that nature, I am certain I would remember them.

32. Had Dr Paterson ever behaved in such a way, it would have become well known among the students, staff and parents. The reputation of the Musical as an activity would have been irrevocably damaged. However, they have maintained their great popularity.

33. To the best of my knowledge, Dr Paterson's leadership and presence in this activity, which was in addition to his demanding position as Headmaster, gained the admiration of all participants. All students were conscious of his dedication and unequivocal commitment.

It has been my privilege to work with Dr Ian Paterson on these musicals.

Signed,  Brian Buggy  
3/3/15