



Statement

Name BQM

Address Known to the Royal Commission

Date 15 October 2015

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 BQM. I was born on BQM 1966 and I am 48 years old.
3. I grew up in Brisbane but moved to Sydney with my family in 1974, when I was almost 8 years old. I did most of my schooling in Sydney and completed Grades 7 to 10 at Knox Grammar School.
4. My family and I returned to Brisbane over the Christmas period between 1981 and 1982 and I was enrolled at Brisbane Boys Grammar School (**Brisbane Grammar**).

Brisbane Boys Grammar School

5. I was 15 years old when I commenced Grade 11 at Brisbane Grammar in 1982. I remained at the school until I graduated after completing Grade 12 in 1983.
6. The headmaster of the school was Max HOWELL. HOWELL was a big man. This made him physically intimidating. But he was also a bully and physically abused students. He did things like hit young boys on the side of the head if they were in his way as he was walking through the school. I also believe HOWELL was an alcoholic. This was my impression from his behaviour along with comments made by other boys at the school at the time, coupled with the sight of the wine delivery van regularly at his residence on school grounds, and subsequent media about him.

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7. I found it very difficult starting a new school so late in my high schooling. However, there were about 4 other boys who had started at the school at the same time. We formed a bond because of this and became friends.
8. The culture of the school was one of authoritarian conformity, where non-conformity was frowned upon and discouraged. The teachers as I recall were generally good and supportive, some encouraged us to think, analyse, and question. However, it seemed that if you wanted to be anything other than a doctor or lawyer it was irrelevant and unimportant. It was certainly an unwelcoming culture towards new students entering into the system at the start of Grade 11.

Abuse by Kevin LYNCH

9. At some stage during my first 6 months at Brisbane Grammar, I started seeing the school counsellor, Kevin LYNCH. LYNCH's nickname amongst the students at the school was 'Skippy' because he walked with a strange gait. I think there was something wrong with his leg.
10. LYNCH had an office that was located centrally within the school grounds. Entry to his office was controlled by a traffic light system to ensure privacy. If the light outside his door was red, no one was allowed to enter. His room had an antiseptic hospital smell and it was always stocked with clean blue and white towels.
11. I can't recall now how it was that I started seeing LYNCH. However, I saw him regularly over the course of about one year. I can recall LYNCH saying that he wanted to see me regularly because I was new to the school and wanted to see how I was fitting in. During my sessions with LYNCH we also discussed career options and he made me do IQ tests.
12. I was repeatedly sexually abused by LYNCH during my sessions with him. The abuse consisted of LYNCH coercing me to masturbate to completion in front of him, allegedly for the purpose of my 'relaxation'. While this was occurring, I sat in a chair facing away from LYNCH so I couldn't see what he was doing. However, on occasion, I heard a noise, turned to see what was happening and I saw LYNCH masturbating beside me.
13. I can recall feeling awkward having to masturbate during these sessions but LYNCH repeatedly told me that it was a common relaxation technique, that many students at the

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school were doing the same thing, and that it was something normal for teenage boys to do.

14. It was difficult for me to rationalise what was happening as abuse, even though it didn't seem right. At that time, the publicity about child sexual abuse seemed to be focused on that being perpetrated by scout leaders and catholic priests.

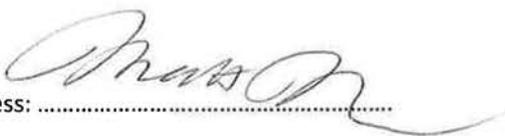
Reporting of the Abuse

15. I never told anyone at the time about what LYNCH was doing to me. I didn't have any close relationships with other students or teachers at the school and there was no way I was going to discuss an embarrassing topic like masturbation with a physically intimidating and abusive adult like HOWELL.
16. While the students at the school did not discuss their sessions with LYNCH, sessions were openly referred to as 'wanking classes with Skippy'. For example, this was a common response from other students if you said you had an appointment with LYNCH instead of your next class. I can't see how teachers could not have heard students using this phrase because they were always floating around.
17. In hindsight, I think I was trying to make my mother aware of what was going on. I can recall many occasions when I sang along in the car to the song 'Kinko the Kid Loving Clown' when it was being played on the radio.
18. I never reported the abuse to the police. I believe that having to relive the abuse in that way would have a traumatic effect on my mental health and it seems of little purpose now that LYNCH is dead.

Contact with Brisbane Grammar

19. In around 2001, I became aware from media reports that a class action was being pursued against the school for the abuse by LYNCH. I initially registered my interest in being a part of those proceedings but ultimately did not proceed with it because I told myself that I was doing ok. In hindsight, I can now see that I didn't proceed further because I was scared of the process, of having to dig up the past and relive the abuse.

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20. The only contact I have had with the school since graduation has been through my mother. In 2012, I asked her to call the school to find out whether there was some form of support structure that had been set up for LYNCH's victims. My mother told me that she had spoken to the headmaster who had asked me to attend the school. She also said that the headmaster mentioned me seeing a psychiatrist. To this day, I have not made any contact with the school because I don't see what that could achieve.
21. Attending the school to meet the headmaster, in my mind, represented re-visiting the scene of the abuse, the scene of the crime, to meet a successor to those who permitted the abuse and committed the abuse. To me and due to the vested interests of the people and the school, as the authority representing the institution under whose care I was abused, the headmaster would not be impartial or supportive of my situation, but would be only suspicious, protective of the school and self-interested. Meeting with the headmaster or any representative of the school would have only served to help them protect themselves, not help me recover or deal with the abuse and its ongoing consequences. The power dynamic of the school to myself feels like I would be overwhelmed by their resources if I tried to challenge them or seek any compassion or compensation. From comments made by my estranged wife's sister (who had children at the school at the time) I am also well aware of resentment from at least some of the more recent school community to those of us who were abused and took part in the legal action.

Personal impact of the abuse

22. As a result of the abuse I suffered at the hands of LYNCH, I started smoking marijuana and drinking alcohol. I can recall times when I stole bottles of scotch and binged on them. It was a form of escape.
23. I also started wagging school, spending the day loitering in parks, and I lost interest in activities that I had previously enjoyed, like art and rugby. I can recall not taking up an opportunity to train with the school's First XV rugby team because I didn't want to be noticed. I became very withdrawn.
24. I believe that my academic performance also suffered as a result of the abuse. I left school with a high TE score, but I believe that the score was nowhere near what I could have achieved if I had applied myself. I didn't get into the university I wanted, however

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fortunately I was able to get into another university and I have ultimately pursued the career I always wanted.

25. Thirty years on and I am still piecing together what happened and how it has affected me in order to make sense of it all and move on with my life.
26. I have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety. I take medication and now regularly see a psychologist and a psychiatrist. However it was only recently that that I was able to seek out this kind of help.
27. I lack concentration, motivation and confidence.
28. I have daily suicidal thoughts and I have previously had to rely every day on medication to help me sleep. I continue on several medications daily to help me cope with my ongoing mental health issues that stem directly from the abuse. It has taken a lot of experimentation over a considerable period to find a suitable balance of medications with limited side effects. If I fail to take these medications that brings on another different set of side effects.
29. I have difficulty with all personal relationships, whether they be family, friendships or professional relationships, and I find it hard to trust people, especially those in positions of authority.
30. I also suffer from memory loss. I can barely function at times, often forgetting what I am doing and how to do things. There have been days where I have forgotten how to put a belt on, or forgotten where I am going when I am driving.
31. I feel like I have a very limited capacity to function on both a personal and a professional level. I continue to be withdrawn. Cure or recovery is an optimistic hope and I continue to be optimistic. Managing to live daily with the events and the effects is a daily struggle, sometimes I succeed.
32. I have an estranged wife and 3 children but things have been strained domestically and we separated in October 2014. Apparently, I am not an easy person to live with. As a result of the abuse I suffered, it is hard to give love and accept love or even accept that you can be

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Recommendations for the Royal Commission

33. I believe that there needs to be proper vetting of all persons employed in occupations that have contact with children. I understand that the blue card system is not currently mandatory for all professions.
34. I believe that the channels for reporting by students within schools need to be made clear publically and regularly. Students need to know who they can talk to and how they can do it.
35. I believe that consideration should also be given to all one-on-one counselling sessions between professionals and children in schools being audio and video recorded.
36. I believe that a system of compensation for victims of these sorts of abusive events and actions by people and institutions to whom we entrust our children needs to be established.

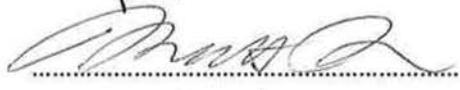
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Signed:

Date:

21/10/15

Witness:

 (Dr. Matt McDermott)

Date:

21/10/15