

Copy for Rev. N. Reid for information

Members of the Synod Standing Committee Members of Knox Grammar School Council
 Uniting Church in Australia Pacific Highway, Wahroonga
 Synod of NSW & ACT
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Ladies and Gentlemen

August 2011

Why did J W Weeks and Rev. N Reid LIE to Alison and I, all the Knox Community, the Media, and the Public in their Media Statement issued on behalf of your organisations of 15th December 2009 ?

THE LIE “ Counselling has been offered, on a confidential basis, to the victims and their families”

In fact NO counselling was offered by any member of your organisations, particularly not by Weeks or Reid, to my son Guy Lamond or to his parents, my wife and I.

We have addressed our letter to each Synod Standing Committee Member and Councillor individually as both parents and as the members of the two authoritative bodies who employ Rev Reid and Mr Weekes.

We sent our three sons to Knox and it was our son Guy who, on 8th January 2009, contacted the NSW Police and reported the sexual abuse he had suffered on several occasions in 1986 from two Knox teachers which lead to the establishment of a police task force and the discovery of several other instances of sexual abuse by a number of Knox teachers.

As Guy wrote in his Victim Impact Statement “The burden of being set upon by Treloar, the graphic pornographic visuals of children my age, my first sexual experience of being with a grown man of high authority in a strict and reputable school before I was even a teenager, started a downward spiral that I was never to recover from” Councillors and Synod Members you should obtain and read each of the Victim’s Statements – you owe them that.

Twenty two years of repressing this horrific sexual abuse causing Guy to suffer what we now know was panic disorder, agoraphobia, social phobia, general anxiety disorder, low mood and depression, chronic tension headaches, internal psychological distress, codeine dependence, drug and alcohol abuse, nicotine anti-depressants and benzodiazepines dependence.

Twenty two years of his family experiencing Guy’s suffering, not knowing the cause and fearing his potential suicide – how would you like to be mother, a sister having frequent phone calls from Guy in which he said “ I just want to die” Alison and I are very proud of Guy and his courageous reporting of Treloar's and Stewart's offenses - as his parents we had despaired of his many traumas over the past 20 plus years and our inability to solve

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his problems - we all helped but could not cure his ailments - his many desperate calls to us, to his sister Sarah and her husband Brian, to Craig and to Andrew - calls which often included references to his ending it all - desperate crying out for reassurance - for love - totally despondent - lost in circles of depression.

On Guy telling our family group in 2009 that he had reported these two despicable men to the police we finally understood the cause of all his traumas and saw that he had now entered a new stage of his life, no longer repressing their heinous acts but still carrying the damage of those 20 plus years, which set him back so much and will never be rectified or forgotten.

Indeed the tragedy continues as Guy has been subpoenaed as a witness for the prosecution of Stewart that starts this month

Given Week's many statements that Knox, since February 2009, had a team of people to work with the Police and the Knox Community— WHY didn't Knox immediately they became aware in early 2009, contact Guy and my wife and I offering their support ?

We are left with the only possible conclusion that your subsequent lie in the media and failure at any time to contact us was cowardly and dishonourable conduct, which is a grave stain on the Church and the College.

As His Honour Judge Charteris opined: "These are terrible offences, and vulnerable children who are just going through the commencement perhaps of their sexual maturation. They're sent by their parents to a highly-regarded school, they're not expecting that the teachers there, or a teacher there, would consider that this gave him some type of sexual opportunity to take advantage of the children, they're expecting exactly the opposite" - " people send their children to school..... on the basis that they will, as the law requires them to be, given an education, they are not sent along as a potential sexual plaything for someone who is employed there"

Crown Prosecutor Mr. Lynch agreed and said " there are four separate victims and the offences span four calendar years, from 1984 through to 1986 (?) It wasn't a sort of spur of the moment incident that's regretted.

On the other hand the NSW Police and the DPP were very helpful in explaining to Alison and I how sexual offenders identify their targets and develop "Grooming" techniques to lead them into their web, how young victims usually seek to repress the event at their physiological cost and offering their support, counseling and assistance of their witness advisory centre

We are at total loss to understand how Knox and particularly the Headmaster at the time, Dr. Paterson, failed Guy and our family by not exercising proper due care to ensure that students were not exposed to such animals - not one but two? It was reported at the time

that Dr. Ian Paterson, headmaster of the school during the 1980s, said he would not comment on the recently aired allegations, except to express his disbelief that such a thing could have occurred. "I hadn't a clue what was going on," Dr Paterson is reported as saying.

It is inexplicable to us that, based on Treloar's evidence, as Paterson refused to make a statement re Treloar, Paterson failed to thoroughly examine Treloar in 1987, did not inspect the videos, did not sack Treloar but allowed him to continue as a teacher having sent him on leave for 6 months

Dr Paterson was highly regarded and involved himself in all levels of the schools activities - the risk of indecent assault of students was widely recognised as the principal student high risk matter - surely he took steps to properly examine the credentials of teacher recruits, supervise their work and counsel them on correct conduct with students. Obviously some of this would be delegated to other senior teachers but delegation is never abdication and the delegates must be supervised. "Grooming" is a gradual approach over time and surely must have been capable of recognition.

Whilst there have been many rumors of sexual assaults at Knox and of Dr Paterson and Knox covering them up we think it most unlikely that Knox would cover up such matters but at the same time cannot understand that so many such acts could go on unnoticed in a quality school like Knox.

In conclusion : How do you explain the LIE ? It could not have been a simple error – Guy was the first victim and likely the principal victim therefore surely the first to be offered counselling.

How do you rectify misleading Alison and I, all the Knox Community, the Media, and the Public. ?

How do you rectify the Church and Knox's failure to assist us cope with this disaster since early 2009

My wife and I await your responses.

Sincerely

Robert A Lamond

Alison M Lamond

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