

Parliamentary Inquiry into the handling of abuse allegations by religious and other organizations

Submission by John Groves

Date of birth: [REDACTED] 1938

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone number: [REDACTED]

Item 1/

There was one occasion that I had run away from home. I was about 10 years old. The Police spotted me and gave chase. I jumped a back fence of a house and slipped under the back veranda floor. The Police could not reach me in the small amount of space, so they had to take up the floor boards to get to me.

The Police took me back to the Brighton Police Station, where I was assaulted by a detective. He took a pistol out of what look like a meat safe, and held the gun to my head, and he seemed to get his rocks off on it. This is why I don't have much respect for Coppers.

Item 2/

When I was placed in the Salvation Army Boys' Home at Box Hill, I was about 10 years old. I had been told that I would only be there for 1 day, so by the next day I knew that I was to be there for a longer time. I was unhappy about this. So I ran away. I was chased down to Box Hill Railway Station. I ran into a Barber shop and hid behind the Barber; the Salvo's grabbed me and took me back to the home

That night while I was asleep, I was woken by the same Salvo's that grabbed me. They were 2 males. They took me into a room stripped me, and then flogged me across the backside with a belt. This went on for some time. Each took it in turns to flog me. I can't remember how I got back to my bed.

The next morning I met one of the men on the staircase, he stopped me and said that if I said anything about what had happened, I would get the same again.

I went to school on the site at Box Hill Boys' Home that morning, and I said to my teacher that I wanted to kill myself. In front of the class he offered me a pen knife, to do the job.

SEE OVER

Item 3/

At the age of 12 years, I was placed into the Salvation Army Boys Home at Bayswater.

I stayed for one day before I ran away; I was out of the Bayswater home for about 2 Months, I was apprehended at Geelong.

I was taken back to Bayswater, where Major [REDACTED] of the Salvos who was in charge of Number 2 Unit at Bayswater shaved my head. I had to wear a white football jumper for about 3 Months, and had to stand at attention on the Quadrangle in my free time.

I was physically abused and sexually assaulted by one of the other inmates who was a bigger boy than me. His name was [REDACTED].

The Army Officers also physically abuse me, for the slightest misdemeanour. It consisted of Cuts on the hand and across the back side.

Not long after I had been returned to the home, the Frankston Police took me from the home down to Rosebud. They were Detectives. They locked me up in the cell at Rosebud, the cell was left dark. After some time they returned and beat me with a long handle clothes brush. They were trying to get me to confess to a break and enter and Theft, to which I had not done, and I would not admit to the same.

Item 4/

When I was released from Bayswater, I was 14 years old. I went back to live with my mother, but it didn't work out, so I was placed at the Army Hostel at Auburn, I was only there for a short time because I started in a job at a Theatre in Melbourne as a switch boy. It required night shift work, so the Army reckoned that it would be a bad influence on the other boys as they had a 10PM curfew, so I moved in with my Aunt. I had to attend at the Manchester Unity Building in Melbourne, corner of Swanson and Collins Streets on, I think, the 3rd floor. I had to appear before a Child Welfare Officer in order to stay with my aunt.

During the Interview the Officer (a small, thin man) tried to put the acid on me because he wanted to have sex with me. I refused to participate; he then kept me there for about 2 hours before I managed to get out of the Building, by requesting to go to the toilet.

I would welcome the opportunity to speak directly to the Inquiry, particularly if the Inquiry comes to Ballarat. I want to make sure that what happened to me and others can never happen to any child again and that authorities such as the Salvation Army are brought to justice.

15 February 2013

Signed by: [REDACTED]