

Statement of Raymond Morris Hadley

13/07/2023

This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I would be prepared, if necessary to give to the Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crimes (the **Inquiry**) as a witness. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

- My name is Raymond Morris Hadley.
- On 2 December 1980 I provided a statement to police investigating the death of Walter John Bedser on that date in Parramatta (Exhibit 28, Tab 34, SCOI.10058.00050).
- On 25 May 2023 I contacted the Inquiry by email following the public hearing held by the Inquiry into Mr Bedser's death on 24 May 2023. On 30 June 2023, I attended a telephone conference with Counsel Assisting the Inquiry to discuss my recollection of Mr Bedser's death and the police investigation at that time.

Interactions with Mr Bedser

My contact with John was purely professional. I was an Auctioneer with I.Steer and Co Auctions Pty Ltd at Parramatta and John would both buy and sell general furniture and antique items at our sale rooms. I had no social interaction with him. It was obvious to me John was gay. I was most surprised to read in the report on his murder that he was bi-sexual. He had a group of teenage boys who used to help him load or unload furniture and they used to spend a lot of time in his shop after school. I would have thought many gay men back in the 1980s would have been too scared to admit their sexuality given the less enlightened times that prevailed and of course paedophilia was most often ignored as was evidenced by the Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse.

Rumours regarding Mr Bedser and his death

The speculation and rumour mill swung into overdrive around Parramatta after his murder that he was the victim of one of the young men after some unwanted advances or a relative of one of the teenage boys who believed John was involved child sexual abuse. Having re-read the evidence I provided and having not known about others offering a similar description of the bloke in the Safari suit it would appear perhaps the rumours were unfounded.

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Police investigation

I make no judgment on the Police investigation but I think they believed his sexuality or his alleged abuse of children might have played a role in his murder, so perhaps they didn't chase as hard as they could have. It was a different world back then. I note the reference to the word "poofter" by one officer. I wouldn't pass judgement on that officer because that was the slang term used broadly at the time.

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Signature: 

Name: Raymond Morris Hadley

Date: 13/07/2023