



## Special Commission of Inquiry into LGBTIQ hate crimes

### Statement of Harry John Berwick

28 June 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. This statement has been prepared from my own knowledge and also from perusing the records of the Inquiry. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

1. My name is Harry John Berwick.
2. I am 69 years old. My address is known to the Special Commission of Inquiry.
3. I made a witness statement to police on 11 January 1989 in relation to my interactions with William Allen on the night of 28 December 1988. I made this statement at Redfern Police Station. The contents of that statement are true and correct.
4. As at December 1988, I was living at [REDACTED] Mitchell Road, Alexandria. I owned the house with my then-partner, John. I had lived at this address for approximately 18 months. Before this, I was living in Petersham.
5. I was a primary school teacher in the local area and also ran a French restaurant with a former boyfriend named Robert. The restaurant was in Petersham and the main clientele of the restaurant was from the gay community. We also held annual fundraisers for the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation. The restaurant opened in around 1978 and we sold it in around 1987. I continued to work at the restaurant on weekends after it was sold and also opened a guest house.

#### Death of William Allen

6. I have been asked by the Inquiry whether I recall any other information about my interactions with Mr Allen on the night of 28 December 1988. I had never met Mr Allen before this night, and he did not tell me his name. I think I found out Mr Allen's name from the police.
7. To add to the information on page 1 of my statement, when I spoke with Mr Allen, he told me that he was attacked by "[REDACTED]". I cannot explain why, however, my distinct impression was that it was three boys, although I cannot be sure whether Mr Allen specified the number three. I just have in my mind that it was three.
8. Mr Allen also told me that he had written his phone number on the toilet block wall. He said this as part of the conversation where he said, "that's what you get when you do the beat". Writing your phone number on the wall of the toilet block was a common practice by men living alone and wanting to meet men at the beat. My impression was that Mr Allen was at the beat by arrangement, rather than by chance.

*[Handwritten signature]*  
28/6/2023

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9. I did not see any other people or take notice of any vehicles around Alexandria Park at the time I saw Mr Allen. I was startled to see him and focused on his injuries.
10. I did not know that Mr Allen died until I was contacted by police. I do not know how the police came to know I had driven Mr Allen home as I did not report the incident.
11. I may have told my partner what happened to Mr Allen. It was the school holidays, so it is unlikely I told any of my colleagues. I may have told people at the restaurant as it was quite shocking. I cannot be certain.
12. I have been shown a map of the area around Alexandria Park and marked the route I was driving, where I lived, and where I saw Mr Allen. This map is Annexure A to my statement. As I have stated in my 1989 statement, I was on my way home from a friend's house in Randwick when I came across Mr Allen on Park Rd.
13. In 1991, I was approached by police officers in relation to Mr Allen's death. We had a brief discussion about my original statement, but I was not asked to provide anything further in writing.

#### Alexandria Park

14. My house in Mitchell Road was around 200 – 300 metres from Alexandria Park.
15. I knew the toilet block at Alexandria Park was a beat. This was well known by people living in the area.
16. The beat at Alexandria Park was very open. There were no paths to walk along like some other beats, or areas that were more private. I was aware that if men wanted to have sex, they often sat in their car on Park Road and watched who arrived. If the person went into the toilet block and was there for a while, it suggested they were there to use the beat. If a man was attracted to the person who had entered the toilet block, they followed the person into the toilet block for sexual activity.
17. The lighting around the toilet block and the park was poor. This was part of the reason why the beat was not busy at night.
18. My impression was that the beat was used by local men, unlike the beats around the beaches which people travelled to visit. Alexandria Park was a quiet beat because it was so open.
19. [REDACTED]
20. At this time, bashings were happening all the time at different beats. The bashings were often not reported as gay men did not trust the police. The police believed that men who used the beat 'deserved what they got'.
21. I do not have any information about persons or groups who may have been assaulting gay men in Alexandria Park.

Signature:



Name: Harry John Berwick

Date: 28 June 2023



Mitchell Rd  
(Home)

Toilet  
Mr Allan near here

Alexandria Park

Mitchell Road

26/6/23

Google My Maps