

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER HENDERSON

DATED THIS

DAY OF

2008

I, CHRISTOPHER HENDERSON, declare that this statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that if it is tendered in evidence at the Inquiry I will be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

1. The Inquiry has disclosed a number of documents to me. Where I make specific reference to a document in my statement I have given the number of the relevant page.
2. I was interviewed by DC Williamson in relation to the attack on Robert Hamill on 12 May 1997 and I made a statement that day (page **9602**). The content of this statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I did not discuss it with anyone prior to making it. A handwritten police document at pages **2274 – 2275** suggests that I might also have been re-interviewed by DC Williamson on 13 May 1997, although 11 years later I cannot remember this taking place.
3. I have also been shown two questionnaires, which I understand are taken from the police HOLMES system: QPG1 at pages **70945 – 70948**, which I am told has been dated at 5 January 2001, and QPF16 (dated 7 July 1997) at pages **8129 – 8130**. It has been suggested to me these are the typed-up records of two further interviews I gave to the police. I remember police coming to my house to interview me, but I do not remember the specific dates that these took place. I do not dispute the contents of these questionnaires but today I have very little recollection of what actually happened on the night.
4. In my statement dated 12 May 1997, I said that after a disco at the Coach Inn Christine Bigg gave me a lift back to Portadown and dropped me outside

Herron's Chicken Bar. Herron's is at the bottom of town on the corner of Castle Street where it meets the junction of Bridge Street and becomes High Street.

5. In questionnaire QPG1, it states that I was dropped off at Z-Cabs (page 70945). This is located on Bridge Street, just around the corner from Herron's. Again, I have marked the approximate location of Z-Cabs on the Interview Plan. It also says that I "*walked up town*", but it was so long ago I cannot remember whether or not I went through the town centre. However, I go on to say that I "*walked to Wellworths*". Wellworths was situated on the High Street not far up from the barrier. Although I cannot now remember being at Wellworths or for how long, if QPG1 is correct I agree that it suggests I was walking into the town centre at this stage.
6. I have been referred back to my statement of 12 May 1997 and also to the statements of my friends Jonathan Nelson (page 9169) and Conor Black (page 9167 – 9168). All three statements mention that we either saw or heard ambulances in the town centre. I cannot exactly recall where the ambulances were located: it was a long time ago and I was also quite intoxicated. However, if I was at the bottom of town outside Herron's, I assume that I would have looked up town, so the ambulance(s) could have been anywhere from the barriers, along High Street, right up to Market Street. I do not recall seeing any casualties at the time.
7. Questionnaire QPG1 states that I saw "*police stopping crowds from going up*" (page 70945). I assume that the crowds were trying to come up town, but I cannot remember. I cannot recall how many police officers I saw or in what way the police were stopping the crowds. I have also been asked whether I saw any police Land Rovers or patrol cars in Portadown town centre that night. The problem is that I have re-read the documents disclosed to me by the Inquiry, but I no longer have a mental picture of what happened: I cannot picture ambulances or policemen in the town.

DRAFT

8. Questionnaire QPF16 says that when I left Herron's Chicken Bar, I realised that there was a fight going on up the town and stood at the barrier (page 8129). The barrier is positioned at the bottom of the High Street towards Castle Street and Bridge Street, where there appears to be a traffic island in the middle. I cannot recall how long I remained at the barriers or what I could see, but it is probable that I could see most of High Street, part of Market Street and down town. I am not sure how I realised that there was a fight taking place, but I assume it was from hearing a commotion and because I could see ambulances; I do not recall actually seeing any fighting myself.
9. I have been asked why my statement dated 12 May 1997 does not mention my standing at the barriers and seeing the police, which is referred to in the later questionnaires. There is no particular reason why those matters are not specified in my statement, which was made a couple of weeks after the incident. Perhaps I did not think it was relevant at the time. In any event, I think the documents do match up enough because my statement says, "*I saw ambulances up in the centre of town but didn't go up then. We stood about and we talked for some time*". To my recollection, I did not specifically discuss the information I had given the police with anyone else, although the incident was in the media at the time so I am sure that people were discussing it generally.
10. My attention has been drawn to the witness statement of Jason McClure dated 23 January 2001 (page 17308 – 17309). He describes walking into the town centre, seeing the police breaking up a fight and says, "*I think I was along with Christopher Henderson*". I do not remember being with Jason at that particular time: he says that he was very drunk that night and, as I have said, I was drunk too.
11. I have also been asked about the note of an answer I gave to a question in QPG1, which states:

2b. Do you know Reserve Constable Atkinson?

No

2c. Did you speak to him at the scene?

80431

Said something to a police man continue walking down the town with Hanvey, McClure but does not recall what was said or who the police man was.

I have a vague recollection of maybe seeing a policeman that night some time, but I could not say for definite and I can no longer recall speaking to a policeman that night.

12. The record of my apparent re-interview on 13 May 1997 deals with my movements after 2.00am on 27 April 1997 and states that I went round to Tracey McAlpine's house (page 2274). I cannot specifically remember this happening, although I knew Tracey quite well because we went out together briefly and remained friends afterwards. It is very likely that I walked to Tracey's house, but I am unable to recall. My statement says that, "*Sometime after 3.00am I walked up the town myself, but there was nothing happening there then*"; QPF15 also states that I walked up the town on 3.00am on my own and all was quiet. I cannot fully remember now, but I do not recall seeing anything going on at that time.
13. Page 2274 - 2275 then states, "*There were about 5 people in the living room. Some more were asleep upstairs. Doesn't know who. But Tracey McAlpine was apparently in bed asleep (sick). In living room was Alister Hanvey, P46 [REDACTED] possibly Dean Forbes (unsure) and a girl Kelly Lavery*".
14. The only person I can really recall being there is Kelly because she was the reason we had to leave. I would not say that I knew Kelly that well: I think she went to the same junior high as me, but she was not a close friend, so I just knew her to say hello to. As for the others, I went to the same junior high as Jason McClure so had known of him for 6 – 7 years; I would say hello if I saw him out at the same pub, but we did not have each other's numbers and did not meet up. I knew P46 [REDACTED] really well; at that time, we had been friends from a young age, probably for about 10 – 12 years. We ended up going to different schools so in 1997 we did not hang out together as much as before. I did not know Dean Forbes very well and cannot remember how or when I met

him. At that point, I had known Allister Hanvey for about 7 years, having attended the same junior high. But we then went off to different schools and had different interests. We would say hello if we saw each other out and about, but we would not phone each other up to go for a drink.

15. I assume that I talked to people at Tracey McAlpine's – I would not have just stood in the corner not saying a word – but I do not remember having a specific conversation with anyone. I cannot recall whether or not the fight in town was discussed.
16. I have been asked why I did not mention going to Tracey's house in my statement that I made to the police on 12 May 1997. I think that I was being interviewed about the actual incident and was not asked about what happened afterwards. What I did later was not something I considered. My understanding was that I was being asked about whether I witnessed anything that could help the police investigation in terms of identifying people or saying what actually happened. I gave a statement to the best of my abilities at the time and answered any questions that were put to me. Nobody asked me to avoid telling the police that I was at Tracey's party.
17. After I left Tracey's party, I probably walked into town to get a taxi. From memory I am not sure who was with me, but based on my statement it seems to have been Allister Hanvey and Jason McClure. In QPG1, it states that we walked "*past police cordon to Z Cabs*" (page 70948). As I have said, I have a vague memory of perhaps seeing a policeman at some point that night, but I cannot recall any more than that. Nor do I recall whether Allister or I went to a cash machine that morning.
18. I have been asked about whether I know some other people from Portadown. I had known of Stacey Bridgett from Portadown College for about 4 – 5 years, but we would not phone each other up to go for a pint. To my recollection, I did not see him on the morning of 27 April 1997. I had also known Marc Hobson and Rory Robinson for less than a year to say hello to; they were probably friends of friends. I had known Andrew Allen by the name of Fonz or Fonzie:

DRAFT

we did a business course together at Portadown Tech so I had probably known him for about 3 years at that point. I did not know Wayne Lunt.

19. I do not recall having any contact with Allister Hanvey in the 6 months after the incident, or discussing it with him. Nor did I discuss the Robert Hamill incident with any of the other people referred to above. I probably would have said to my friends that the police had been round to see me, but I do not recall having any specific conversations about the Robert Hamill investigation.

SIGNED:
CHRISTOPHER HENDERSON

DATED: