

Op TAM Base  
Blenheim  
Tuesday 17 March 1998  
1.25 pm

**Donald Murray Douglas CLEVERLEY states:**

That is my full name. I am known as Murray. I am a group manager of Punga Cove Resort, Punga Cove, Endeavour Inlet, phone 579 8561. I have been operations manager there for 6 months.

I live at Punga Cove, but currently reside in Timaru, Beaconfield Road, Timaru, R D 2, phone (03) 686 4808. I will probably be returning to Timaru when I can.

I have 2 sons, Jason (18 yrs) at University Hall, Canterbury University (03) 341 1500, ext 5766, and Shaun (16 yrs) at Mt Aspiring High as a private boarder (03) 443 9301 with Chris JOHNSON. My daughter lives in Oamaru and her name is Anna (12 years) – phone (03) 434 1424 (with Cath ANDERSON).

My wife is Diane and she lives in Timaru. She works both in Timaru at (03) 688 2436 and as my personal assistant at Punga Cove.

I am speaking to Detective Constable Jennifer HOOKE about New Year's Eve 1997/98 at Punga Cove.

I run the resort as a whole. It contains 13 units ranging from back packers to luxury accommodation, two restaurants, Cabana and Top of the Hill, and two bars within these restaurants, and a shop.

We also run a water taxi service from within the bay and have moorings for visiting boats.

**further states:**

New Year is our busy period and we were fully booked. We cater for a wide range of people, including the local residents in baches, Camp Bay baches and we have a track from Kenepuru Road over into Punga Cove so we have a diversified clientele.

On New Year's Eve we had a residential band, called Tropical Storm (I had employed them from Australia for the January season).

The Cabana was to be the main party area but the rest of the resort was open as well.

Boats moored up in the Cove and travelled in. In total about 55 boats arrived for New Year and about 350 people attended the festivities.

We are in the market for a good clientele and we leave the youngsters to go to Furneaux – our age group is probably 30 plus. It's been the ongoing trend for Punga. We are the lounge bar of the inlet.

My role was supervising staff working and to be of any assistance. All of my family working on New Year's Eve at Punga but Anna was chief baby-sitter and remained indoors at our home.

Jason worked on the foreshore as security and Shaun was the water taxi driver to and from the shore. Di remained in the reception until 10.30 pm.

The boys and myself worked right through the night till about 3 am.

There was a group over on the jetty close to Camp Bay. They were a younger rowdy group. They got picked up from there.

**further states:**

Other young people used our jetty to catch water taxis for Furneaux. We saw and used Ted WALSH as a water taxi service. I can't recall if Steamy Windows was transporting on that night or not. I saw Gensis in Punga before they went to Furneaux but I don't know if they uplifted anyone. Of course Cougar was in as well. WALSH's boat is Billfisher.

There was a constant flow of young people going to Furneaux and less coming in. I had no problems with the young people leaving from Punga to Furneaux or people arriving at Punga.

Our night's celebrations went without a hitch. It was a good party atmosphere pretty family orientated and relaxed.

I had no cause to remove anybody or to talk to anybody about their behaviour.

We kicked off about 7.30 pm – 8 pm and went until 2.30 – 3 am.

We had a drum bonfire on the beach. At about 1.30 am we got that going on beach in front of Cabana.

I stayed up at the top restaurant/bar till 10 pm, then moved down to the Cabana and stayed down there.

I had about 20 staff working that night right through the whole premises.

At about 2 am a young fellow arrived from Furneaux to get into our bar but got turned away back to Camp Bay. I think Roman dealt with that. He told me what had happened. Nothing major happened.

**further states:**

Everything wound up at about 3-3.30 am. I had a drink at 3-3.15 am, by 3.30 am nobody else was around. The place had been vacated.

I went up to bed then. I certainly don't recall any problems later on.

The Lonebird and Sounds Image were on the jetty and had people aboard. We have sold Lonebird.

Ray and Helen ARNESEN (owners of Punga (03) 693 9907) and Pam and Bruce YOUNG, friends (03) 686 1716 of the ARNESENS.

Mike BAKER, owns Sounds Image, he's from a Commercial Dive Company (Waikawa based).

I recall Mike told me that their son took a young girl who was asleep on our jetty across to Furneaux. She apparently had no idea how she got there. Mike or his son could perhaps help further.

The people on the boats by the jetty never spoke about any incidents that I am aware of.

We had a hugely successful night with all of our revellers keen to come back.

I found out about the missing couple on Thursday 1 January 1998. That is we got a phone call I think on Thursday or the next day from Ben SMART's father. He asked if we could check the crib where Ben was staying. I think Ray went and did that. Then the enquiry about the missing couple developed from there.

I have seen the photos of the missing persons and I do not recall seeing anybody fitting that description at all.

**further states:**

I have been shown the photographs of a sloop. I am not a sail man, I am a launch person. I do not recall seeing this sloop at all.

I have also been shown the two identikits of a male. I do not recall seeing this person or anybody fitting this description. He looks too young for our scene and would of stood out to the extent that I would of watched him.

I never went across to Furneaux on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day. Furneaux is our local for staff but we were pretty busy over that period to go across.

Another employee, Andrew PLAYER, worked as the maintenance man. On New Year's Eve he was on security and boat work. He has since left Punga. He was a good worker. I had no problems with him.

I have provided the Police with a staff list over the New Year. Sandra ROWELL can assist with further details of those who have moved on. We provide staff quarters for all but Jude MATHEWS and Andrew PLAYER who lived at Jude's house in Kenepuru somewhere.

Our workers are mainly seasonal and are employed over the high season – mid November to the end of April.

There has been loads of talk and gossip about the disappearance of the two persons from Furneaux. I've kept an interest but rationale things out.

Last week I went to Furneaux for a drink. Ted WALSH was in the lodge intoxicated. He said that Rachel from Furneaux had lied about Guy WALLACE's whereabouts for 2 hours, inferring that nobody really knew where he was for two hours, say 12-2 am or 1-3 am. It seemed a strange thing to say. He said it in front of Brian the manager. Rachel is his stepdaughter. Ted wasn't hiding it at all.

**further states:**

I also employed Guy WALLACE about 10 February 1998 for 4 days doing maintenance. He stayed for 5-6 weeks working. He left just prior to the Press release that the ketch was not involved. He said it had got too much for him. He gave 1 hour's notice and just left.

Guy's got a violent flare that will just spring up. He has done things like throw hammers and just generally lose it over the smallest thing. This would happen when he's sober. Whilst drinking he was reasonably subdued and had better social skills when drinking.

I noticed he had an attraction to females. He was a bit creepy, touchy feely around women. He spent a lot of time with couples, married or just partners. He'd always seem to manage to have a drink with them or just be with them. He sort of had the gift of the gab. My staff were wary of him but outsiders loved him.

We had quite a few media to Punga to talk about Guy. I tried to tell him to back off a bit. I told him to ask for a fee to be spoken to. They just played with him but Guy couldn't see that.

I would describe Guy as being simple but he does like the limelight as well.

I have not seen Guy since but I spoke to him on the phone when he asked about his pay. He is talking to Phil CALDWELL at bar.

I would describe Guy as being mentally unstable. I think even before the people went missing. I did not know Guy before but there's something about him. He tries to hide his instability by using an Australian type of persona, like wearing a hat, being coarse and loud.

**further states:**

I think by now he would of folded under the pressure if he was involved in anyway or knew anything. I think he'd buckle under all of it.

*I have read the above and it is true and correct.*

(Sgd) D Cleverley

Statement taken and  
signature witnessed by:

J M M Hooke  
Detective Constable 8914  
2.35 pm