

Commonwealth of Australia
STATUTORY DECLARATION
Statutory Declarations Act 1959

I, Grace Felicia Richardson of 1 The Glade, Kirkham NSW, grazier, make the following declaration under the Statutory Declarations Act, 1959:

1. My name is Grace Felicia Richardson. I was born on 18 March 1931 at Perth, Western Australia. I am 77 years of age.
2. I am the youngest of four siblings. My sister Beulah is next eldest, followed by my other sister Grecian and then my brother, Laurence Cecil Snook who is the eldest.
3. Laurence was born on 13 August 1909 at Meckering in Western Australia. He passed in 1998.
4. Laurence attended the University of Western Australia where he completed a Bachelors Degree and Honours Degree in Agricultural Science. In about 1935-6 he went to Scotland on a Hackett Scholarship from the University of Western Australia where he studied in Aberdeen, completing a Doctorate of Science.
5. Prior to Laurence leaving for Scotland he told us about him conducting an autopsy on a hippopotamus at the Perth Zoo. This was well known in our family.
6. In late 1939 or early 1940 Laurence returned to Western Australia, where he joined the Cameron Highlander Regiment, but he was not permitted to serve overseas because of his qualifications. As result of this, he moved to Sydney and took employment based at Sydney University, and almost immediately joined the AIF.
7. In 1940, my family and I sailed in the MV Duntroon from Fremantle to Sydney. We lived in Bexley from 1940 until about 1946, when some of my family



returned to Perth. I returned to Perth in early 1947, again sailing in the MV Duntroon. My sister, Grecian, joined the Army and stayed in Canberra after the rest of my family returned to Perth.

8. Laurence left Australia on 19 October 1940 for the Middle East. He returned to Australia on 23 May 1942.
9. Prior to Laurence leaving Australia again for Army service in New Guinea in September 1943, he visited us in Bexley, where he stayed before leaving. I was about 11 years of age and my sister Bealuh was about 13 years of age.
10. Towards the end of his stay with us, I remember having a conversation with Laurence about an autopsy that he had conducted. Laurence, Beulah and I, and probably my mother, were in a room in our home we called the "vestibule". I think that Laurence was telling us some stories about his work, and he told us about an autopsy he had conducted on a body he said was wearing a SYDNEY life belt. Laurence did not say where or when he conducted this autopsy, but he did say that he asked his assistant (he referred to him as his "offsider") to leave the room as the assistant was making it more difficult for him to do his work. I recall Laurence saying that the body was badly decomposed, or in a "poor state", and that it was found "in an area that they did not expect it to be found".
11. After Laurence passed away in 1998 I read some of his personal diaries. I did not read anything about the autopsy on the body in those diaries.
12. After Laurence told us about the autopsy, I did not mention it to anyone until about 2005, when I spoke to my son Matthew about it.
13. I have three children. Matthew is my son, and is the owner of Halstead Press Publishers, the publishers of Somewhere Below, written by John Samuels. At some time prior to the publication of Somewhere Below, my husband and I were visiting my son at Warrimoo in the Blue Mountains. At some point, Matthew and my husband were discussing the book, Somewhere Below, when I heard Matthew say words to the effect that no bodies had been recovered from

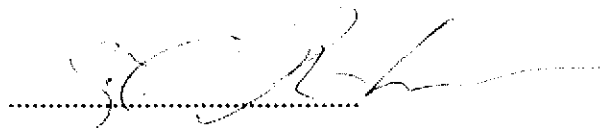


HMAS SYDNEY. It was at this time that I said that I knew of at least one body, as my brother Laurence had told me many years before that he had conducted an autopsy on a body he said was wearing a SYDNEY life belt. At the time of this conversation with my brother Laurence, I believe that my mother was present and that my sister Beulah was also present.

- 14. John Samuels later contacted me and asked me questions about Laurence and the autopsy. He told me that he did not know about the autopsy Laurence had conducted until my son Matthew had told him. The details that I gave to John Samuels appear in his book commencing at page 110.
- 15. I have also recorded videoed interviews with both David Kennedy and Bruce Horsfield.

I understand that a person who intentionally makes a false statement in a statutory declaration is guilty of an offence under section 11 of the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959* and I believe that the statements in this declaration are true in every particular.

Declared at Camden on 21 January 2009.



Grace Richardson

Before me



PAUL WILLIAM KERR
BARRISTER - LEGAL
PRACTITIONER