



QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE
STATEMENT OF WITNESS



Statement No.:	One	Date:	22/10/2003
----------------	-----	-------	------------

Statement of:

Name of witness:	Kenneth Keith SNYDER	Date of birth:	29/07/1951	Age:	52
Occupation:	Vice President				

Police officer taking statement:

Name of police officer:	Tracey HARTLEY	Rank:	PCC	Reg. No.:	14783
Region/ Command/ Division:	Northern	Station:	Townsville CIB		

Kenneth Keith SNYDER states:

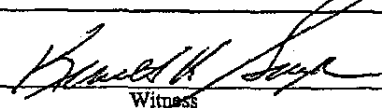
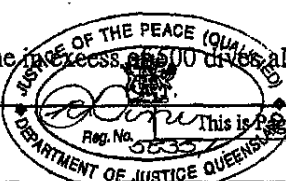
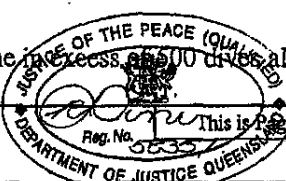
I am a 52 year old married person. I have three children. I am employed as a Vice President for TransAmerica. I reside at 22590 Fountain Lakes Boulevard, Estero, Florida, USA, 33928 with my wife and one child. My home telephone number is 2399479507. My email address is Kenneth.Snyder@TransAmerica.com.

I flew into Sydney on Tuesday 21st October 2003. My wife and I flew straight from Sydney to Townsville. We arrived in Townsville yesterday morning. We expect to fly home on the Sunday the 2nd November 2003. We came to Townsville with another couple.

I know that the deceased's name is Tina. My wife and I met her last night at the Quarterdeck prior to going onto to Spoilsport. We were talking and I found out that she was from Bermingham, Alambama, being a neighbouring state. She told me that they were on their honey moon and they got married 11 days ago. She also said that she had been diving about 11 times before. She just got certified in our Spring.

We intended to go on a dive trip with Mike Ball Dive Expeditions. We were travelling aboard Spoilsport. It is a 7 day trip. We set sail yesterday at approximately 9.00pm. I am aware that it is about a four hour ride. We arrived at the Yongala Wreck whilst I was sleeping. I think it may have been after midnight some time.

I am a Dive Master. I have done in excess of 500 dives all over the world.

		This is Page 1 of a Statement comprising 4 Page(s).	
		Witness	Police Officer
		Justice of the Peace (Qual) / Commissioner of Declarations	

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: Kenneth Keith SNYDER

Whilst on the boat we signed various forms including waivers and verifying certification. By this I mean that I had to show my certification card identifying that I am a Dive Master.

Our first dive was this morning. I entered the water at approximately 9.30am. We were among the first to dive. My wife, Paula Jean SNYDER, is my diving buddy.

Before we dived we were given two briefings. One was a safety briefing. This included what the procedures were and how to recall back to the boat if an emergency occurred. The second was a dive site briefing. This included current, water conditions, location and wildlife.

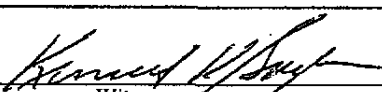
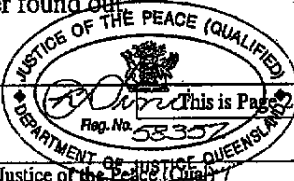
I recall seeing Tina at the briefing. My gear was set up on the port side and she was on the starboard side.

I would describe the weather as being pleasant. The water was about 77 degrees Fahrenheit, with a moderate current from bow to stern. The visibility was 50-75 feet. It was moderate conditions for diving.

We got onto the inflatables and they staff transported us to the dive site, being the bow of the Yongala. We did a back roll into the water. Tina was not part of our group. There was about 6 of us in a group. We then descended to the bow of the wreck at about 87 feet. We levelled off, went to the stern of the boat and ascended to 45 feet and went back along the parallel side of the boat, went about half way down, then made our way back to the stern where the rope was located. We then began to ascend to 30 feet for 2 minutes and then to 15 feet for 3-5 minutes.

I never saw Tina or Gabe, her husband, whilst diving the wreck.

We ascended to the surface and followed the rope to Spoilspout. I checked in, stripped off our equipment and went to the sun deck. I heard some commotion at the next boat beyond us. I heard that there was a diver in distress. I saw Wade, the Trip Direction, putting a body on the stern of the other boat. It was anchored approximately 50 metres from our boat. There was also another boat anchored adjacent to ours. It was approximately 40 metres away. At the time I didn't know it was Tina but I later found out

 Witness	 This is Page 2 of a Statement comprising 4 Page(s). Reg. No. 58357
	Justice of the Peace (Qualified) Commissioner of Declarations Police Officer

State v. Watson
003597

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: Kenneth Keith SNYDER

I heard a hand held radio communication from the other boat to one of the crew members on our boat that there was a diver in distress. I told the Spoilsport crew member that there was an ER physician, John, on our boat. The crew member asked me to go and get John which I did. I observed John get onto the inflatable and go directly over to the other boat. .

I then observed that Gabe was standing on the back of our boat. He seemed to be puzzled.

I said, "What happened?"

He said words to the effect, "We got into the water and she panicked and reached for my mask and regulator. She descended and she was heavy and I couldn't pull her up. I lost her."

I later heard from someone else that they had descended and then ascended and then she went down.

Paula comforted Gabe. I went back up to the sun deck and watched the other boat. I watched them do CPR on Tina. I could see from where I was standing that Dr John was giving her CPR and stringing an IV.

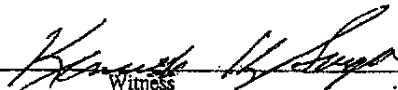
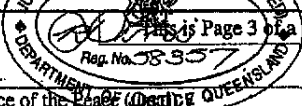
I observed staff members transport a big first aid kit from our boat to their boat.

I could still see people in the water. These people were from the other boat.

At a later time these people climbed into the inflatables and were transported to Spoilsport. All of these persons waited on the sun deck. They were on our boat for about 45 minutes. They were transported back to their boat via the inflatables.

I know that Tina's body was transported by the inflatables to our boat.

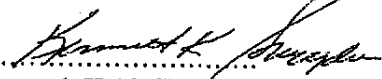
I am aware that Wade was with the group of people that Tina was with. He was their Dive Master. I am aware that he dived down and found her on the floor laying on her back. Wade also told me that she had her regulator in her mouth with no exhaust bubbles. He said he rushed to her and brought her up. I saw Wade bring Tina to the surface and put her on the back of the

 Witness		Page 3 of a Statement comprising 4 Page(s).
	Justice of the Peace (Qualified) Commissioner of Declarations	Police Officer

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: Kenneth Keith SNYDER

other boat. I observed that she was on her back, facing the surface. She didn't have her regulator in her mouth on the surface. From this point on is the first time that I saw her.

We then travelled back to Townsville aboard Spoilsport. I attended the Townsville Police Station and provided this statement to Plain Clothes Constable Tracey HARTLEY.

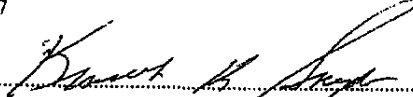

.....
Kenneth Keith SNYDER

OATHS ACT 1867 (DECLARATION)

I Kenneth Keith SNYDER do solemnly and sincerely, declare that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 22nd October 2003 and contained in pages numbered 1 to 4 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and
- (2) I make this statement knowing that if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything I know to be false.

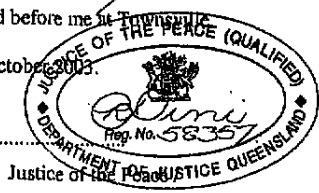
and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and virtue of the provisions of the Oaths Act 1867


..... Signature

Taken and declared before me at Townsville

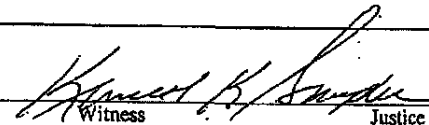
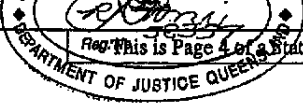
This 22nd day of October 2003.

Witness



Justice of the Peace
Commissioner of Declarations

Other (Please State)

 Witness	 This is Page 4 of a Statement comprising 4 Page(s).	Police Officer
	Justice of the Peace (Qual) / Commissioner of Declarations	

Statement

Date of Statement: June 20, 2006

Name of Person Making Statement: Kenneth Snyder

Location of Statement: 7260 Briarcliff, Fort Myers, Florida 33912

Nature of Statement: Queensland, Australia Coroner's Inquest into the Death of Christina Thomas Watson

Law Enforcement Officers Present: Detective Sergeant Brad Flynn, Helena, Alabama Police Department on behalf of the Queensland, Australia Police Service

Mr. SNYDER has been a certified SCUBA diver for over 20 years. SNYDER possesses an advanced open water dive certification with NASDS, Cave and Cavern course certification with NASDS, Rescue Diver certification with PADI, Dive Master with PADI. He also has completed over 500 successful dives.

SNYDER was a passenger and diver on board the Spoilsport on October 22, 2006.

After Gabe WATSON surfaced without Christina, he was taken to the deck of the Spoilsport. While on the deck of the Spoilsport, both SNYDER and Doug MILSAPS asked WATSON what had happened. According to SNYDER, WATSON said that "Tina had panicked and knocked his mask off. By the time he replaced and cleared his mask, Tina was floating below him with her arms up, sinking, all the while looking at him." SNYDER stated that WATSON "was specific about this." He said that WATSON then said he had to make a split second decision on whether to go down after her or surface and he chose to surface." SNYDER then told WATSON "that's bullshit. Something happened, but not that". Someone then pulled SNYDER and MILSAP away from WATSON and told them that "this was not the time for this discussion" and they did not have any additional conversation with WATSON for the remainder of the trip

When asked why he felt that way, SNYDER replied "it made no sense to a diver. There was no logic into what he was saying to us. A diver that is alive and panicking doesn't just sink, they crawl to get out of the water. It makes no sense that someone would elect to go to the surface and leave a live and breathing diver alone. The ocean floor was only 100 feet. If she was only 10 feet below him, with his height... it was only one, maybe two kicks and he would be on top of her. So he could certainly have rescued her, but he gave absolutely no assistance to her at that point and time. Even someone with a basic open water certification would have needed no assistance to rescue her. That made absolutely no sense to Doug (MILSAPS) or myself. He could have gone down, kicked twice and grabbed ahold of her and brought her to the surface. When she was in a full panic state, she was still a female. All he had to do was grab ahold of her, inflate her BC and send her to the surface. Or he could have just grabbed her and then swam to the surface. There are about 10 things he could have done prior to deserting her. Deserting her was not an option. The last option he could have done, which would have made at least some sense to us was to follow her to the ocean floor, which was only 100 feet and attempted to bring her back to the surface at that point. None of the story made sense.

You would not have to be a dive master... you could have made that statement to someone who had made 15 dives and they would have known it didn't make sense".

SNYDER stated he did meet Tina the night before the cruise with the MILSAPS. They had general conversation. Their demeanor was normal., Tina was very gregarious and happy.

SNYDER observed them putting on their wetsuits and equipment, but did not observe if they helped each other put the equipment on.

SNYDER stated the current was flowing along the wreck as they had been briefed and was moderate to brisk, but was less than they had anticipated. The visibility varied at different depths and the visibility at the wreck was 40-50 ft. The visibility was greater at the bottom. The current was a 4 and the visibility was a 4-5.

SNYDER stated that all previous emails and correspondence with Detective Sergeant Campbell was correct.

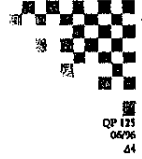
When asked about WATSON'S demeanor during the resuscitation attempts on his wife Tina, SNYDER said it was "completely unacceptable." SNYDER then stated "I thought he didn't behave as a husband should behave. At no time did he ask to go over to the other boat (where they were attempting to revive Mrs. WATSON) and I thought that was bizarre. If it were my wife and they were doing CPR on another boat and there was traffic on those boats going back and forth bringing the first aid kits and the Dr. back and forth, I would have been on one of those dinghies to see what was going on with my wife. No one could have stopped me. If someone would have tried to have stopped me, I would have jumped overboard and swam over. I've been around people that have been in a crisis, and they certainly don't behave that way. I would have expected him to be much more frantic and want to get on the dive boat and go over and see what happened. He didn't even climb the steps to the upper deck to see what was going on. I just thought he didn't appear excited over it or distraught. He was somewhat calm in his discussion with Doug (MILSAPS) and I over what happened."

SNYDER stated he has had no contact with Watson since the death. SNYDER stated that he and his wife received a Christmas card from WATSON a few weeks later. He stated that the card had a wedding photo of Gabe and Tina WATSON on the front.

SNYDER said he could not recall when he remembered this, but stated that "they entered the water differently than everybody else". SNYDER's dive group elected to descend along the hand line while he thought that "Gabe and Tina had done a back roll into the water and elected not to go down the hand line, which I thought was strange".



QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE
STATEMENT OF WITNESS



Statement No.:	One	Date:	22/10/2003
----------------	-----	-------	------------

Statement of:

Name of witness:	Kenneth Keith SNYDER	Date of birth:	29/07/1951	Age:	52
Occupation:	Vice President				

Police officer taking statement:

Name of police officer:	Scott Knowles	Rank:	Det Sen Sgt	Reg. No.:	6932
Region/ Command/ Division:	State Crime Operations Command	Station:	Homicide Investigation Unit		

ADDENDUM

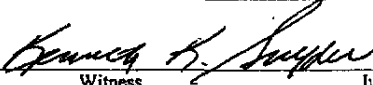
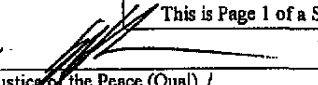
Kenneth Keith SNYDER states:

I have previously provided a statement to the police in relation to the death of Christina Watson. In addition to that statement I would also like to provide the following:

Since the day of the death, my wife and I have moved address. We now reside at 20330 Ardore Lane, Estero, Florida, USA 33928. My home telephone number is still the same being 2399479507 as is my email is still Kenneth.Snyder@TransAmerica.com.

From the time we boarded the vessel to travel out to the first dive site I would say that I saw Tina and Gabe often as it is a small vessel. From the occasions that I saw them I can say that their relationship seemed normal. By that I mean I did not see any arguing or fighting between them. Tina appeared happy to be there in that she was smiling and bubbly. Gabe was more reserved but I did not see anything of note occurring between them on the times I saw them.

On the occasion that my wife and I dove on the wreck I found that the current on the dive to be moderate and it was flowing along the wreck from the bow to the stern. When I say moderate I would say that it was about a knot in speed. I dove the wreck again later in the week on the return voyage and the current on that dive was stiff, at about two to three knots and it was a difficult dive then. One of the members of my group was flung about on the wreck on that dive by the current.

This is Page 1 of a Statement comprising 4 Page(s).		
 Witness	 Justice of the Peace (Qual) / Commissioner of Declarations	Police Officer

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: Kenneth Keith SNYDER

My wife and I dove with Doug and Ginger Milsap. We formed a group ourselves and decided that we would take the tender to the bow drop line, go down to the wreck where we would regroup. We checked that everyone was OK and then did a drift dive with the current along the wreck. Once we ascended we swum the line back to the Spoilsport.

Once we were back onboard the Spoilsport we were on the back deck removing our equipment. I remember Gabe being brought back to the vessel in a tender. At that time Tina wasn't with him. I don't recall exactly who said what but I found out that Tina was missing.

At this time Gabe was at the rear of the boat and I went back and spoke with him. My initial intention was to get dressed again and go and assist looking for Tina. Gabe was reflecting on what happened at this time. Gabe said something like "We were into our dive and at around thirty feet, Tina started to panic because she was over weighted. During the panic I couldn't control her and she started flailing. She knocked my mask and regulator off. By the time I got my self organised she had descended ten feet below me and was sinking. I had to make a split second decision to help her or go and get help."

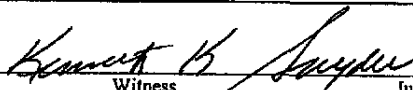
I said something like "Bullshit, that didn't happen"

Gabe repeated what he said and I said something like "That didn't happen."

I was angry about what he was saying. Doug came over and became involved in the conversation. Gabe repeated to Doug what he had said to me but added "I have grabbed Tina" and a couple of other small things. It essentially didn't change the story though.

Once Doug had heard the story he said similar to be "That's bullshit Gabe"

When I originally said bullshit to Gabe my meaning at that time was not that the story he was telling us was bullshit but that he had deserted his wife when he was only a couple of kicks away from saving her. The more I heard the story and thought about the situation the more I believed that the story he was telling was bullshit.

This is Page 2 of a Statement comprising 4 Page(s).		
		
Witness	Justice of the Peace (Qual) / Commissioner of Declarations	Police Officer

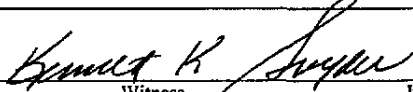
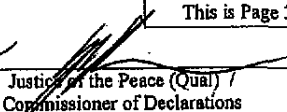
CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: Kenneth Keith SNYDER

The reason I am saying that I don't believe the story that Gabe told was because I have over 1000 dives experience, I am a qualified Dive Master and to reach this qualification I also have completed a Rescue Diver qualification. It seemed odd that Tina would start to panic seven minutes into a dive and not when they initially entered the water, his depth didn't seem to match the amount of time that they had been into the water. He also never mentioned that he had reached out and held Tina at arms length to control her. Gabe would have been over six foot in height and Tina was only about five foot four inches in height and Gabe would have easily been able to control her. He then mentioned that while he was getting his regulator and mask back in place he found that Tina had sunk below him. That is not indicative of a panicked diver. A panicked diver will crawl over the top of others to get to the surface. Also it would only have taken a few seconds for Gabe to replace his mask and regulator and he was suggesting that in that time Tina had gone from a struggling, panicked diver to ceasing any action and be falling away from him. The final thing that I was concerned about was that he had recovered himself, got his mask and regulator in place and that he said he had a split second decision to either rescue her or get help. He was faced with a diver who was still in sight, no longer struggling and he needed help to recover her which didn't seem plausible.

I said something like "Bullshit Gabe. That didn't happen. Something happened but that didn't happen." Gabe looked at me and I said "You may want to think that through. You left her and what you said didn't happen"

I was a bit heated in my comments and Doug came over to see what was happening. Gabe relayed the story again to Doug and what confirmed my suspicions was that Doug, who had not heard the discussion between Gabe and myself, then said in reply to Gabe's story, "That's bullshit Gabe."

It was about this time that either Doug or someone came to me and said "Now is not the time" meaning that it was not an appropriate time for me to be confronting Gabe about his story. Doug and I went to the sun deck to see what was going on. From there I could see that Tina had been located and brought up onto the other boat. What was also not making sense to me was that in the whole time I was there Gabe never yelled or asked anyone to get back into the water to find his wife, he also never came to the sun deck to see what was happening with his wife on the other boat and he also never tried to get off the Spoilsport to the other boat to be with his wife.

This is Page 3 of a Statement comprising 4 Page(s).		
 Witness	 Justice of the Peace (Qual) / Commissioner of Declarations	Police Officer

State v. Watson
003602

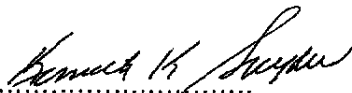
CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: Kenneth Keith SNYDER

These things just didn't make any sense to me coupled with the unlikely version of events that he gave to me.

My experiences are that I have been confronted with panicked divers in the past on about eight to ten occasions. My experiences are that they simply want to just get to the surface. They will strip everything off to just get to the surface and this will include their regulators.

It is enforced in training as a rescue diver and as a diver in general that if someone is in a panic and you need to get them to the surface quickly it is appropriate that the person is grabbed, the weight belt from that person is dropped and then you guide them to the surface. Once the weight belt is released, a diver will normally always ascend as they are now very positively buoyant. If the diver is unconscious or no longer flailing then it is normally appropriate to grab the diver from behind, hold the regulator into their mouth and ascend to the surface. Sometimes you may add air to the BC or drop the weight belt to assist in ascending.

I'm not too sure when I heard that Gabe was qualified as a rescue diver but I think that this was sometime after the death. If I had known that at the time we were talking on the back deck I think I would have mentioned something like that in our discussion.



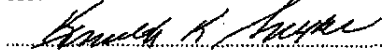
Kenneth Keith SNYDER

OATHS ACT 1867 (DECLARATION)

I Kenneth Keith SNYDER do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 22nd October 2003 and contained in pages numbered 1 to 4 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and
- (2) I make this statement knowing that if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything I know to be false.

and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and virtue of the provisions of the Oaths Act 1867

 Signature

Taken and declared before me at Townsville
This 22nd day of October 2003.

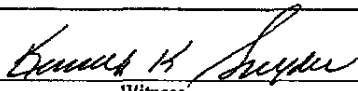
Witness 

~~Justice of the Peace~~

Commissioner of Declarations

Other (Please State) 

This is Page 4 of a Statement comprising 4 Page(s).

	
Witness	Justice of the Peace (Qual) / Commissioner of Declarations
	Police Officer