

## **Edward Bowen Statement for Press Conference**

My name is Edward Bowen. I was sexually abused by Johannes Somary, a teacher of mine at the Horace Mann School, when I was 16 years old. Part of my story was told in last year's New York Times story, where I was identified as EB. I want to make sure that everyone knows that the statute of limitations on childhood sexual abuse is a device that protects criminals. It is not some obscure legal jargon that does not really matter. I am fully in support of the Markey bill and firmly believe that the statute of limitations should be eliminated altogether. Why is New York protecting criminals?

## Joseph Cumming Statement for Press Conference

My name is Joseph Cumming, and I was sexually abused on many occasions by my teacher and mentor Johannes Somary, beginning when I was 15 years old and continuing until just before my 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. For 33 years I thought I was alone. I thought I was the only person who had suffered these things at Horace Mann. I thought I was alone in carrying the shame and pain I felt.

In 2011 I discovered for the first time that I was not alone. After talking with another Horace Mann graduate who had been abused, I began to reach out to others. I have since learned that I was one of many who were abused as children by many teachers at Horace Mann over a period of decades.

I have also learned from others that the Horace Mann administration was informed about Somary's abuse of at least one other student

several years before he began targeting me. In other words, if the school had taken decisive action many years ago, many of us would never have suffered the abuse we did.

I want to say something to anyone who has been abused as we were: YOU ARE NOT ALONE. We are familiar with the shame, the depression, the struggles with alcohol and substance abuse, the temptations to suicide, the broken relationships: the list goes on. You can find support at [HoraceMannSurvivor.org](http://HoraceMannSurvivor.org).

I want to say something to the Horace Mann Board of Trustees. In June 2012 we presented you with a letter from the Survivors' Group in which we set forth what steps we believed were necessary to restore the reputation of our beloved alma mater and to ensure that such things could never again happen at Horace Mann. Chief among these was an independent investigation. An investigation would not only ascertain the extent and level of sexual abuse, but would also communicate to

present and future students that if (G-d forbid) they should ever suffer abuse, they can report that abuse with confidence that the school will take them seriously, will investigate their report, and will not bury their story or pressure them into silence.

An Independent investigation is the path to a healed Horace Mann – for those who suffered the abuse, for the wider community of alumni, and for the students and parents at Horace Mann today who also deserve to know the truth.

## **Ron Klepper Statement for Press Conference**

My name is Ron Klepper and I was sexually abused repeatedly as a 13 year old student at Horace Mann.

The effects of that abuse on my life have been profound. For many years, I refused to go to school, because I became frightened. School was no longer a safe place to learn, but turned into a frightening place where a predator lurked.

Figuring out the words to express what happened to me took many many years, and I am still unraveling how it altered the course of my life. Precisely because it took me many decades to even begin to understand the abuse and its impact, New York should do the right thing and pass the Markey bill, which would allow victims of childhood sexual abuse to bring claims and would permit prosecutions to proceed even though the abuse may have occurred long ago.

## **Jon Seiger Statement for Press Conference**

I attended Horace Mann from the age of 11 to the age of 17, from seventh to twelfth grade. I graduated from Horace Mann in 1979. The only year I did not attend Horace Mann was in 8<sup>th</sup> grade when my family lived in England for a year.

During all the years I attended Horace Mann, I suffered sexual abuse.

Eight different Horace Mann faculty abused me, including the headmaster of the school, Inky Clark, as well as Stanley Kops, Mark Wright and Johannes Somary.

Instead of a safe and nurturing place that would educate me, Horace Mann ended up providing a perfect storm of childhood sexual abuse.

Inky Clark, Horace Mann's headmaster, began his abuse of me in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. One day, after a Glee Club concert in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, Clark approached me and invited me to his house on a Friday afternoon. I was 14. I was over the

moon: the Headmaster was inviting me and recognizing I was special. I arrived at Clark's house after school at about 4PM. Clark and another teacher, Stanley Kops, were both there, waiting. Clark offered me a drink. I expected a Coca-Cola, but instead I was given alcohol, and plied repeatedly with more of the same. Within a short time, I had drunk two or three strong alcoholic drinks; my 14-year old body felt strange and overwhelmed.

Clark and Kops then suggested we all drive downtown for some dinner. Instead, they drove down to a nightclub on East 59<sup>th</sup> Street. I remember being in the club and noticing it was filled with only two types of men: men over 50, or much younger adolescents and men under 20 years old. Eventually Clark and Kops picked up two young men and directed us all back to Clark's car. I remember asking to be dropped off at home, but Clark insisted on driving me back to his home.

Once back at Clark's house, Clark and Kops had the two young men – whom I eventually understood were prostitutes – engage in sexual acts. They forced me to join them. Ultimately, I was required at age 14, to engage in oral sex with each of them and be anally penetrated by each of them in front of Clark

and Kops for the Headmaster's and History teacher's enjoyment. Later, Clark and Kops sent the two male prostitutes away, and continued to engage in sexual abuse of me, including requiring that I engage in oral sex with each of them.

After that night, both Clark and Kops repeatedly treated me as their sex object and personal plaything.

On approximately five more occasions over the next several years, Inky Clark directed me to come to his house on campus so that he could anally penetrate me or give or receive oral sex. On one additional occasion, Stanley Kops and a friend directed me to come to one of their apartments where they forced me to masturbate and Kops took pictures of me. I believe that Kops may have shared those pictures with other teachers at Horace Mann, which may be why I became a target for so many teachers.

## **SOMARY**

I was active in Glee Club, Orchestra and Jazz throughout his years at Horace Mann. I had always found solace in music. Because I played many intramural concerts, I often travelled to New Jersey and Connecticut with other music students and Johannes Somary. Somary had always been “touchy” – leaving his hand on my shoulder for too long, or brushing my hair away from my face. I remember that on one trip in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, Somary came into my hotel room and began kissing me, opening his mouth and using his tongue, and that Somary also started to fondle me. I was 14 at the time.

That summer, between ninth and tenth grades, I went to Poland for three weeks with Somary and others. On at least three occasions, Somary would get me quite drunk and insist that on performing oral sex on me. Over the course of the next several years, Somary routinely grabbed me and held him in long embraces, pressing up against me, kissing and groping me. That happened over 30 times, usually at the school in a classroom or Somary’s office. On at least 10 occasions, Somary figured out ways of getting me alone in a room and engaging in oral or anal sex, with Somary anally penetrating me.

*Tenth Grade – Mark Wright.*

In tenth grade, I pulled a muscle in my leg. At the end of gym period, my teacher, Mark Wright, instructed me to come to an office to be physically examined. I followed Wright downstairs to a windowless room, where Wright locked the door and instructed me to take off all my clothes. Wright began by checking my legs. He said something about needing to check that my leg muscles connected properly and began touching my penis. Wright then masturbated me. I was 15.

**SUMMARY**

These are only some of the abuses I suffered at Horace Mann. My childhood was taken from me – there was no safe place anywhere at Horace Mann, because everywhere I turned, another predator lurked.

As a direct result of the sexual abuse by Inky Clark and Stanley Kops, I was introduced to the world of male prostitution and gay porn in New York City in the 1970s and 1980s. When I finally stopped my self-destructive behavior, my internal feelings of worthlessness overcame me, and I began the struggle to live without drugs and find peace.

To say that Horace Mann knew about the sexual abuse of its students seems to me to be an understatement. The institution, under Inky Clark, fostered, promoted and carefully grew and developed the abuse. These predators appear to have spoken to one another, identifying and passing the most vulnerable students around. My experience makes that clear.

The school must conduct a full, independent investigation, so the extent and depth of the abuse is finally brought to light and so that nothing like this can ever happen again.

And New York should pass the Markey bill so that the victims of sexual abuse are permitted to seek justice in the courts and the perpetrators who are still alive are finally punished.

## **Daniel Shapiro Statement for Press Conference**

I am a survivor of childhood sexual abuse. I was 15 years old when it began, and a student at Horace Mann. I have carried this secret all my life. It took me nearly over 35 years to begin to confront that it had happened and to find the courage to tell others.

When the story broke last summer in the New York Times, I eventually came to learn that more than thirty students were abused by many teachers, including Horace Mann's headmaster, over the course of decades. I also learned that over the years several students had reported to the school that teachers had abused them, including complaints about the teacher who had abused me, made before I was targeted.

Sexual abuse of children is a cancer buried deeply in a child. It remains hidden, doing damage often for decades until the words and ability to

process the feelings surface. It takes an amazing amount of support and courage for survivors to find their voices. Talking today is very difficult me. I can do it because I am supported by my fellow survivors and by many Horace Mann alumni.

I want to take this opportunity to be an example for others who were abused and suffer in silence. You are not alone. You can find your voice. More must be done to remove the shame and stigma of childhood sexual abuse.

To start, I believe Horace Man should issue a formal apology and insure that an independent investigation is conducted to explain why and how this happened.

I also strongly support the Markey Bill which is essential to encourage institutions to root out, not cover up abuse.