

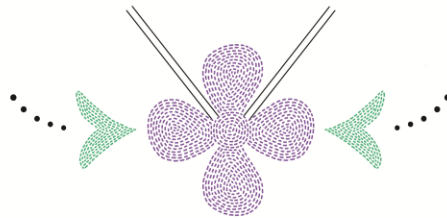
National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



Enquête nationale
sur les femmes et les filles
autochtones disparues et assassinées

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part I Statement Gathering
Sheraton Airport Hotel**

Metro Vancouver (Richmond), BC



PUBLIC

Sunday April 8, 2018

Statement - Volume 398:

Wendy Redknap, In relation to Eunice Ester Bird

Statement gathered by Daria Boyarchuk

Cordia Wong/ Charest Reporting Inc.
16th Floor – 885 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC V6C 3E8
Phone: 604-669-6449 Fax: 604-629-2377

II
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Statement Volume 398
April 8, 2018
Witness: Wendy Redknap

PAGE

Statement by Wendy Redknap	1
Reporter's certification	12
Statement Gatherer: Daria Boyarchuk	

Documents submitted with testimony: None.

III
NOTE

Redactions to this public transcript have been made pursuant to Rule 55 of the Commission's Legal Path: Rules of Respectful Practice, which provides for "the discretion to redact private information of a sensitive nature where it is not material to the evidence to be given before distributing the information to the Parties. The National Inquiry will consider the public interest in releasing this type of information against the potential harmful impact on the individual whose personal information is at issue."

1 April 8 2018

2 Richmond BC

3

4 (PROCEEDINGS COMMENCED AT 3:16 P.M.)

5

6 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Hi, my name is Daria Boyarchuk, and
7 I am the statement gatherer for the National
8 Inquiry for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous
9 Women and Girls. It is April 8th, 2018, and
10 we're here in Vancouver. It is 3:16 in the
11 afternoon, and I'm here with Wendy Bird, who has
12 come here --

13 WENDY REDKNAP: Wendy Redknap.

14 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Wendy ...?

15 WENDY REDKNAP: Redknap.

16 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay. I apologize for that.

17 Wendy Redknap has come here to share her story
18 with us today, and Wendy had -- had chosen not to
19 give her consent at this stage because she's
20 still not sure, as I understand, whether she
21 wants to allow her story to remain confidential,
22 whether she wants to have her story to be private
23 or whether she wants to -- to disclose. So she
24 may be able to make that decision at the end of
25 her statement, but we will leave it up to her.

26 And I will allow our health provider to
27 introduce herself at this point.

28 REBECCA BERMAN: My name's Rebecca Berman.

29 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Thank you. And we have Wendy here.

30 Wendy, this is your time to share your story.

31 And like I said, there is no right or wrong. If
32 there's something that you want to tell us about
33 yourself, about why you're here, I would love to
34 hear about it.

35 WENDY REDKNAP: My name is Wendy Redknap. That's my
36 married name.

37 DARIA BOYARCHUK: M'mm-hmm.

38 WENDY REDKNAP: My sister Eunice, Eunince Ester Bird,
39 she -- she went missing when she was 16. When
40 she was 16, I was 8. That was in the year of
41 1964 at the end of the summer. Her nickname that
42 the family called her was "Snooksie," [phonetic]
43 and her birth date is [birthdate] so she
44 would be 71 right now.

45 DARIA BOYARCHUK: 1967, you said? Okay.

46 WENDY REDKNAP: 9- -- she was born -- or, sorry, she
47 went missing 1964.

1 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay. And born in 1957?
2 WENDY REDKNAP: 1947.
3 DARIA BOYARCHUK: '47, I apologize.
4 WENDY REDKNAP: Yep.
5 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay.
6 WENDY REDKNAP: So --
7 DARIA BOYARCHUK: And her full name is
8 Eunice Ester ...?
9 WENDY REDKNAP: Bird, B-i-r-d.
10 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Bird, thank you. When did she --
11 what happened to her? How did you find out she
12 went missing?
13 WENDY REDKNAP: Well, my family -- she just never came
14 home, and me as a child, I just always remembered
15 the last time I seen her was -- we were staying
16 at the Cannery, at Cassiar Cannery, and I slept
17 in this room with my grandparents. It was like a
18 huge room, and it -- there's like a double bed
19 where the four of us kids slept together.
20 DARIA BOYARCHUK: M'mm-hmm.
21 WENDY REDKNAP: There was me, my sister
22 Pat [phonetic], my brother Alex [phonetic] --
23 they're my two youngest brothers, Alex and
24 [D.] [phonetic]. And then in the same room was
25 my grandparents, Ester and Robert Reece [phonetic].
26 And then during the night, it was dark, and
27 Snooksie came into the room -- like, I woke up,
28 and I seen her talking with our grandmother, and
29 our grandmother was speaking the language and
30 said to get her train case. So Snooksie got the
31 train case and gave it to her because she wanted
32 her last paycheque from the Cannery, and then
33 that's all I remember, and I think I fell asleep.
34 But that was my last memory of my sister, was
35 I -- she came into the room to ask for her last
36 cheque.
37 And then digging information about -- about
38 her last time anybody seen her, just asking her
39 friends over the years, she was at a birthday
40 party. Other -- some friends said they -- the
41 last time they seen her was out at the highway.
42 She was hitchhiking. She was probably on her way
43 to Quesnel to see her boyfriend again. Nobody
44 ever said the name of the boyfriend.
45 My parents put in a -- they phoned the RCMP
46 to -- for that -- for my sister, and they said
47 there's nothing they can do. She's 16. She's

1 probably a runaway, and there's nothing that we
2 can do, so there was nothing ever done that way
3 for my sister.

4 And I feel that's horrible because nowadays,
5 if, like, you think of a 16-year-old, and you
6 think, "Okay. They're gone. Help me. Help me."

7 But they say, "No. There's nothing we can
8 do. They ran away."

9 So, like, I feel like if the RCMP took the
10 call seriously and did -- went looking for my
11 sister, maybe they might have prevented her from
12 leaving town. Maybe they might have prevented
13 her from being killed or whatever could have
14 happened to her. You know, our minds are just
15 all kinds of stories. We don't know. We don't
16 know if she's dead. We don't know if she's
17 somewhere living with her nice, big, new family,
18 you know, which would be wonderful.

19 But -- and then my father would go on trips.
20 Like, he was -- he was a commercial fisherman.
21 He was a journeyman carpenter, and he'd have to
22 go to Vancouver for different meetings, like
23 union meetings. And then when he was in
24 Vancouver, he'd walk and see if he could see her
25 anywhere.

26 And then when he was older, he -- like, I
27 taught him how to drive, and then he -- they went
28 on road trips, and they'd go to all parts of BC,
29 and they'd be looking. My mom and dad would be
30 looking for my sister. But the sad thing was
31 family and friends over the years, you know, I
32 think they think they were helping. But they
33 were probably just handing along gossip.

34 You know, "Oh, I seen her here on Galiano
35 Island. She's working for BC Hydro. She's the
36 one with the big pole that changes the
37 lightbulbs, you know."

38 "Oh, I seen her getting on a bus in
39 Vancouver, and she had a little boy, and we ran
40 to try and catch up, but we couldn't catch up
41 with her."

42 So they were -- to me, they were toying with
43 my parents' feelings. Maybe they thought they
44 were helping, you know, but that's -- we don't
45 know.

46 DARIA BOYARCHUK: So when the police called, they said
47 that she was a runaway. Did your family try --

1 did you guys open the case, or what -- what
2 happened? Did the case -- actually was opened?
3 WENDY REDKNAP: No, nothing.
4 DARIA BOYARCHUK: No? Okay.
5 WENDY REDKNAP: Nothing was done. They said
6 apparently she was -- like, had run away from
7 home before.
8 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay.
9 WENDY REDKNAP: And even though they probably -- say,
10 for instance, this is hearsay. I don't know how
11 true it is -- or just things that were passed
12 down through the years. Say perhaps she had run
13 away, and the RCMP did bring her home once
14 before, and then, okay, the parents phone and
15 say, "Okay. She's gone."
16 And then they say, "Okay. We can't do
17 anything. Your daughter's a runaway. She's 16.
18 She doesn't want to be home anymore. We're not
19 going to go looking for her anymore, you know."
20 So then they didn't do any paperwork, no
21 report, you know. But say perhaps they did do
22 something. Maybe --
23 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Right.
24 WENDY REDKNAP: -- maybe she would be with us still.
25 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Right, right. What about your
26 parents? Did they talk about your -- did they
27 talk about your sister? Like, how -- how did
28 they take it?
29 WENDY REDKNAP: They were hurt. My mother was a
30 Christian, and she'd pray her long prayers, and
31 while she was praying, she'd be crying, you
32 know --
33 DARIA BOYARCHUK: M'mm-hmm.
34 WENDY REDKNAP: -- praying for the safety of the whole
35 family and her.
36 DARIA BOYARCHUK: What was she like, your sister?
37 WENDY REDKNAP: The memories I have of her, as a
38 little one was I felt like -- I felt like I was
39 her favourite, and then my -- my brother was a
40 teenager, and I felt he favoured my other sister,
41 and then when -- I remember a fight that, okay,
42 they have to do the dishes, and she'd stick up
43 for me and say, "Oh, she doesn't have to do the
44 dishes." You know, that type of thing.
45 DARIA BOYARCHUK: M'mm-hmm.
46 WENDY REDKNAP: Silly little memories like that of
47 her. I questioned people over the years what

1 kind of person she was, and her friends would
2 say, "She was so happy. She was so friendly.
3 She was kind. If -- if you needed anything, she
4 would take the shirt off her back and give it to
5 you, you know."
6 Recently, I asked some elders in my family
7 what their memories of her were, and they kind of
8 went, like, like, struggling for words. Like
9 they -- it's like a part of their memory that
10 they let go of, you know. They -- they didn't
11 know what to say to me about my sister.
12 DARIA BOYARCHUK: M'mm-hmm.
13 WENDY REDKNAP: But, you know, with Facebook, I can
14 connect with other people that knew her, and
15 they -- there's a Cassiar Cannery group on
16 Facebook, and somebody piped up on there, "Does
17 anybody know where my good friend Snooksie is?"
18 You know, and then my sister got on and tried to
19 connect with her, tried to private message her.
20 But we're thinking the woman's in her 70s and not
21 really that computer literate.
22 DARIA BOYARCHUK: M'mm-hmm.
23 WENDY REDKNAP: So there wasn't a real connection
24 there, but it's good to know people remember her.
25 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Right. And does she -- did you have
26 a chance to -- to put -- to get your sister's
27 name on CBC's list of missing women, the like the
28 list of women who went missing?
29 WENDY REDKNAP: On the Highway of Tears?
30 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Yes.
31 WENDY REDKNAP: Yeah. My sister --
32 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Is she on that list?
33 WENDY REDKNAP: -- Crystal [phonetic] --
34 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Yeah.
35 WENDY REDKNAP: -- she's really connected with that,
36 and she's the reason that we're here right now --
37 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay.
38 WENDY REDKNAP: -- so she looks for groups like this
39 to make sure that they know about our sister,
40 so --
41 DARIA BOYARCHUK: M'mm-hmm. And your sister -- your
42 sister's name, the one who's giving a statement
43 at the moment?
44 WENDY REDKNAP: Crystal, her name is Crystal Bird.
45 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Crystal Bird, okay. Thank you.
46 WENDY REDKNAP: She wasn't even born when my sister
47 Eunice went missing.

1 DARIA BOYARCHUK: So she doesn't really know her,
2 other than the stories --
3 WENDY REDKNAP: Yeah.
4 DARIA BOYARCHUK: -- that you share? Okay. Do you
5 guys talk still today about the -- about Eunice
6 and --
7 WENDY REDKNAP: Crystal and I talk quite a bit. We
8 stir up whatever memories that are there --
9 DARIA BOYARCHUK: M'mm-hmm.
10 WENDY REDKNAP: You know, any facts about her, we
11 share that. Any names that come up that might --
12 you know, this person -- we really want to know
13 what that boyfriend's name in Quesnel is. You
14 know, we asked the different friends that we
15 know. The -- the birthday that Snooksie was
16 going to, her name was A. Stewart [phonetic], and
17 I connected with her on Facebook, and she --
18 she's the only one, I think, that said she -- she
19 thinks she went hitchhiking to Quesnel to see her
20 boyfriend, but she doesn't have a name for us,
21 so ...
22 DARIA BOYARCHUK: So your family doesn't have any idea
23 or, like, her friends have no idea the -- the --
24 who her boyfriend was, or they've never met him,
25 or could never give you his name, so you couldn't
26 really connect --
27 WENDY REDKNAP: No.
28 DARIA BOYARCHUK: -- and speak to him? Yeah. Okay.
29 WENDY REDKNAP: I think it would be awesome if the
30 RCMP would look through their archives and see if
31 they have any kind of record on Eunice Ester
32 Bird --
33 DARIA BOYARCHUK: M'mm-hmm.
34 WENDY REDKNAP: -- and see what was done back then, to
35 see if she was a runaway and how many times did
36 they bring her home, and was there -- was there
37 anything that they put on record about when my
38 mom and dad seen them last in '64 -- and if they
39 have her fingerprints, if they're able to -- to
40 check those fingerprints with other -- other
41 things that come up. I don't know. It's sad to
42 think this way, but say a Jane Doe was found --
43 DARIA BOYARCHUK: M'mm-hmm.
44 WENDY REDKNAP: -- can they check those fingerprints
45 just, you know, so we would know. There's one
46 thing that -- it's not -- it's not a fact. I
47 don't know if you want to call it a fairytale,

1 but years ago, before I gave my life to the Lord,
2 I went to a psychic, downtown, Prince George.
3 And I had a picture of my father, and he was
4 holding my sister Eunice, and she was like -- she
5 looked like maybe she was three years old. So
6 they were in one of those photo booths, and I
7 brought this picture. And then when I sat with
8 the psychic, the psychic said, "So is this
9 gentleman still with us?"
10 And I said, "That's my father, and, yeah,
11 he's still alive."
12 And he -- she said, "Because one person in
13 this picture is no longer with us."
14 And so then we kind of figured, okay, that's
15 my sister. And then she said that she seen my
16 sister in a car. She was hitchhiking and got
17 picked up by two men, and they were feeding --
18 well, she said, "Your sister died not knowing."
19 And I said, "What do you mean?"
20 And she said, "'Not knowing' means that she
21 was drinking alcohol."
22 So she wasn't aware that she was dead.
23 They -- they picked her up, and they were
24 drinking alcohol, and then they -- they buried
25 her in a shallow grave. But where they buried
26 her, they were coming out of Rupert, and they
27 didn't cross traffic, and they went into a
28 community that starts with a K.
29 So I thought, okay, coming out of Rupert, if
30 you're going to cross traffic into Kitwanga or
31 Kitwancool, you know, it couldn't have been
32 those. And then recently, I thought, okay, the
33 community could have been Kitimat because they
34 wouldn't have crossed traffic.
35 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Yeah.
36 WENDY REDKNAP: And they said, "Okay. If you go
37 there, not far off the turn off, you'll see in an
38 old cattle crossing -- you'll see a cluster of
39 Aspen." And she said, "You'll see a shallow
40 grave, and that's where you're going to find your
41 sister."
42 And then she said that one of the guy's
43 names was [V.] or [B.] because she can hear
44 the name [V.] or [B.] being called. And so
45 when you think about it, it's like a fairytale.
46 But then you don't know. You kind of want to
47 have peace. You want to go look there and see,

1 you know, if it's -- how real it is. Are we
2 going to find my sister there?
3 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Have you ever tried going there?
4 WENDY REDKNAP: No.
5 DARIA BOYARCHUK: No.
6 WENDY REDKNAP: No. You -- you don't go to the police
7 like that, right --
8 DARIA BOYARCHUK: No.
9 WENDY REDKNAP: -- and say, "Okay. I talked to a
10 psychic, and we should go here."
11 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Yeah. No. I understand, of course.
12 WENDY REDKNAP: But that's -- when you have somebody
13 missing, and you're always hoping, you know --
14 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Yeah.
15 WENDY REDKNAP: -- when you travel, and you see
16 people's faces, and you look at them, and you
17 think, "Oh, that looks like one of my sisters.
18 That looks like my brother. That looks --" you
19 know, and you see -- and then you sit with them
20 and talk and ask, "You know, are you -- you know,
21 where are you from? Are you from Rupert?"
22 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Yeah.
23 WENDY REDKNAP: But you're just always searching;
24 right?
25 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Is there anything else that you
26 would like to share with us? And that is -- on
27 your lanyard, you have a picture. Whose picture
28 is it?
29 WENDY REDKNAP: Yeah. This is -- that's Eunice.
30 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Eunice, okay.
31 WENDY REDKNAP: I'm thinking she was about close to 16
32 there. I can't tell you what age she was in this
33 picture.
34 DARIA BOYARCHUK: M'mm-hmm. Thank you.
35 WENDY REDKNAP: There's -- there's a lot of ways to
36 identify here. Like, back then, the thing was --
37 I don't even know -- I don't think her teeth were
38 bad. But back then, the Aborigines had this
39 thing that they look cool with. They took all
40 their teeth out here, and so she had all the
41 front teeth out, and she had just a gap, right.
42 And there was a lot of them then, so she
43 doesn't -- she's got all her front teeth missing.
44 Like -- but it would sure be nice to hear what
45 the RCMP would have to say about any records of
46 her.
47 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay. So what I can do after is --

1 after this testimony, I can take it to our file
2 office here. There are representatives who will
3 be able to help you to fill out paperwork and
4 look for these RCMP records. Okay?

5 WENDY REDKNAP: Yeah. That would be good.

6 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Because they're working together
7 with the inquiry, and they're able to us and help
8 you, help families locate, like, autopsy reports
9 or death certificates or RCMP reports or anything
10 that families request. So --

11 WENDY REDKNAP: Yeah.

12 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Do you have any other -- anything
13 else that's going through your mind or how --
14 anything you would like to share with us today?

15 WENDY REDKNAP: No. Just similar things that --

16 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Yeah.

17 WENDY REDKNAP: Like, I was in a carpentry class, and
18 this young boy said that his -- his -- he knows
19 that his family comes out of Hartley Bay and his
20 last name was Bird. And I was like -- you know,
21 right a way, I thought, "Could this be my
22 sister's son?" And, you know -- but turned out
23 he was -- I was able to connect the dots on who
24 his family was, but, you know, there's always
25 that hope.

26 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Of course.

27 WENDY REDKNAP: I don't know if you guys know that
28 feeling of a missing piece. You know, you -- you
29 want closure. You want to know. You want to be
30 able to hug somebody. Like ...

31 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Yeah.

32 WENDY REDKNAP: That would be wonderful if she were
33 alive or her kids could come and say "hey," you
34 know, if she's not dead on that road.
35 That's going to be good to know that. I can
36 go to that place that you said.

37 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Yes. I'll take you there after
38 this. So if there's something else that you
39 would like to add, I encourage you to share with
40 us. Otherwise, I can -- I can accompany
41 downstairs, saying -- you can speak to filing
42 representatives. Okay?

43 WENDY REDKNAP: Yeah. I think I'm done.

44 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay. Thank you.

45 WENDY REDKNAP: But I think maybe I would like this to
46 be made public --

47 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay. Yep.

1 WENDY REDKNAP: -- and that if she does have family
2 out there that can connect -- like, she was 16 in
3 1964. She was born in 1947. She does have a
4 huge family in the Rupert area. Like, in my
5 family, there was -- I had, like -- a lot of us
6 have passed on by now, but there was my older
7 sister Delores [phonetic], then Irene [phonetic],
8 and then [A.] [phonetic] and then my brother
9 [J.], and after [J.] would have been Snooksie.
10 And then after Snooksie was Pat, my sister Pat
11 and then me and then Alex and [D.], and Crystal
12 is the baby.

13 And out of that, now Delores has passed on.
14 Irene has passed on. [A.] has suffered an
15 aneurysm. She's not the same anymore. My
16 brother [J.] is still healthy and strong. And
17 then Pat -- my sister Pat has passed on. My
18 younger brother Alex has passed on.

19 Like, our -- our history is my mother came
20 from the Reece family in Hartley Bay. Her
21 parents were Ester and Robert Reece. My father
22 comes from Prince George, from the
23 [indiscernible] Nation. His -- his father was
24 Charlie Bird and his mother was Virginia Kwaa
25 [phonetic]. And this is the line that Eunice
26 belongs to.

27 DARIA BOYARCHUK: Okay. Then I will give you the
28 consent form. There are two copies, one for you,
29 and the other one will stay with the inquiry, and
30 one of -- this is the consent form that will
31 allow you to put the initials next to the box you
32 think is the most appropriate for you that allows
33 you to disclose the information that will make
34 your statement public.

35 So like you mentioned earlier that in the
36 event that your sister will hear or know your
37 story and that your family is still looking for
38 her, then perhaps some -- someone will hear the
39 story, not necessarily your sister, but someone
40 will know and be able to give you some -- some
41 missing pieces of this puzzle.

42 So the first option that you
43 [indiscernible] -- I found -- I'll just take one
44 copy and read it for you.

45 The first one says that:

46

47 I hereby consent to allow the National

1 Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous
2 Women and Girls to record or take my written
3 statement for use by the [national inquiry].
4 The [national inquiry] may disclose my name,
5 face, voice, and other identifying
6 information about me, or my family, in my
7 statement, my photographs, audio/visual and
8 other documents ... I further understand
9 that if any identifying information is
10 publicly televised or available social media
11 I cannot later withdraw my consent.
12

13 And the second one says that:
14

15 The [national inquiry] may not disclose my
16 name, face, voice, and other identifying
17 information about me in my statement, my
18 photographs, audio video [or any] other
19 documents except in accordance with
20 applicable freedom of information and
21 privacy laws.
22

23 So, again, this is your choice that I invite you
24 to make at this point. I know you have mentioned
25 it earlier, but you can put your initial next to
26 the space that you feel most comfortable with and
27 then sign at the bottom. And I will ask Rebecca
28 to be a witness to this.

29 REBECCA BERMAN: Thank you.

30 DARIA BOYARCHUK: And the second one as well. I will
31 give you a pen. And if you print your name at
32 the bottom now, it'll be great. Thank you.
33 Thank you very much.

34 WENDY REDKNAP: Thank you.

35 DARIA BOYARCHUK: It is 3:45 in the afternoon, and
36 we're about to complete this statement. Thank
37 you.
38

39 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED AT 3:45 P.M.)
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47

Reporter's Certification:

I, Cordia Wong, Official Reporter
in the Province of British Columbia,
Canada, do hereby certify:

That the proceedings were transcribed by me
from audio files provided of recorded
proceedings, and the same is a true and
correct and complete transcript of said
recording to the best of my skill and
ability.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto
subscribed my name this 15th day of
May, 2018.

Cordia Wong
Official Reporter