

Maths tutor on 17 sex charges

Aneeka Simonis
Miles Proust

The director of a Melbourne tutoring academy stands accused of rape and sexually touching multiple children under his supervision over several years.

AIMS High Academy director Madira Ginnige, 56, is charged with 17 sexual offences alleged to have taken place in Mount Waverley, Narre Warren and Berwick between 2015 and July this year.

Among them is a charge of rape involving a female in Narre Warren on July 31, 2017.

Charge sheets obtained by the Herald Sun allege the rape occurred in circumstances in which Mr Ginnige "did not reasonably believe (the alleged victim) consented to the penetration". The same day, in Berwick, the maths tutor is also alleged to have intentionally sexually touched a female without her consent.

Mr Ginnige was initially charged in July with two counts of sexual assault of a child under the age of 16 who he was teaching at his academy's Mt Waverley education centre. The investigation by the Box Hill sexual offences and child abuse team was subsequently expanded, with a further 15 offences laid against him.

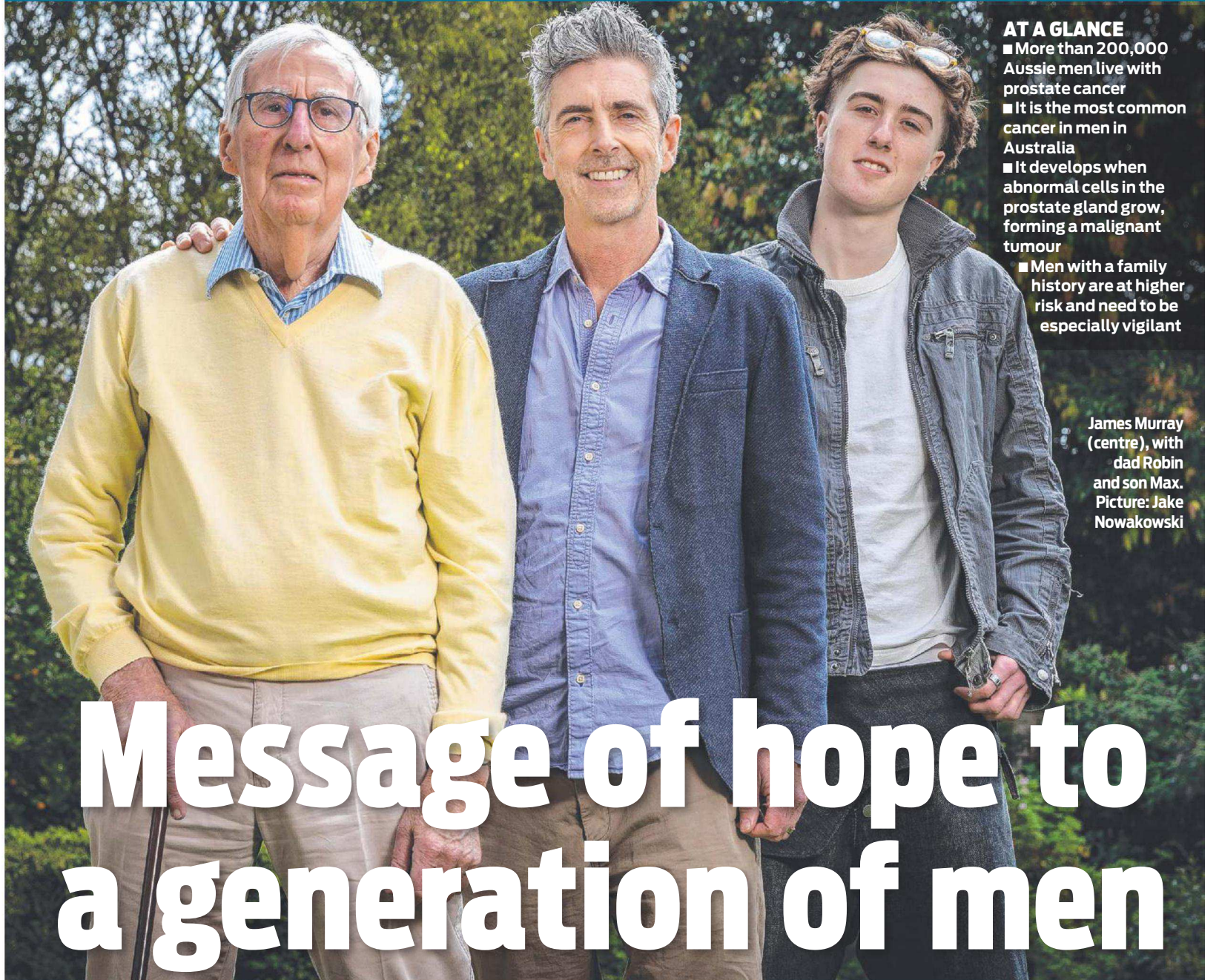
AIMS High Academy had education centres based in both Mount Waverley and Narre Warren.

Mr Ginnige is charged with eight offences alleged to have taken place in Mount Waverley, including intentionally sexually touching children and committing indecent acts with children under his supervision.

He faces a further eight sexual charges linked to Narre Warren, including multiple counts of intentionally sexually touching children in his care. Charge sheets allege the tutor also attempted to commission a sexual act with a child under the age of 16 between July and October 2017.

Mr Ginnige appeared in Melbourne Magistrates' Court last week. A lawyer for Mr Ginnige previously told a court he "denies the offending" related to the original alleged victim. His bail was extended until his next court appearance on December 6.

Notes from an ailing ancestor become lasting legacy



AT A GLANCE

- More than 200,000 Aussie men live with prostate cancer
- It is the most common cancer in men in Australia
- It develops when abnormal cells in the prostate gland grow, forming a malignant tumour
- Men with a family history are at higher risk and need to be especially vigilant

James Murray (centre), with dad Robin and son Max. Picture: Jake Nowakowski

Message of hope to a generation of men

Robyn Riley

Colourful character Robert William Felton Lathrop Murray left his family the gift of a lifetime.

The landowner, soldier, convict and founder of the Hobart Town Gazette uniquely chronicled his health woes with what is today known as prostate cancer.

He was a man ahead of his time. It would be another six years before a surgeon at The London Hospital described the first case of "a very rare disease" of the prostate.

More than 170 years and five generations later that insight has been a lifesaver for his great-great-grandson, Melbourne architect James Murray, 55.

Mr Murray was also diagnosed with prostate cancer, but says it was successfully treated with surgery because it was caught early.

And that can be traced to a

letter dated 1847 by Robert Murray detailing his prostate problems, which may have also influenced the career choice of his great-great-grandson, James Murray's father Robin.

Robin Murray also lost his father Hugh to prostate cancer. He became an endocrinologist, the branch of medicine that studies diseases influenced by hormones. Prostate cancer grows by feeding on the male hormone testosterone.

These twists and uncanny turns led to what James Murray's surgeon calls a spectacular family history.

"That's not the word you want to hear if you're talking about cancer," Mr Murray said. But spectacular it is.

From his great-great-grandfather, who died at 73 in 1850, prostate cancer wove its wicked way through the family tree.

Not one generation of Murray men has been exempt since, and several have lost

their lives to the disease that is today the most common cancer in men in Australia.

Some 26,368 will be diagnosed with it in Australia this year alone, and while it is treatable if found early, experts say many men put their lives at risk because of common but dangerous misconceptions.

Professor Weranja Ranasinghe, of the Urological Society of Australia and New Zealand, said many men mistakenly believed they must have symptoms before getting tested. Others, he said, feared they needed a rectal examination for a diagnosis.

Both were incorrect, Professor Ranasinghe said.

"The reality is that most prostate cancers develop without any symptoms so it is important to get checked," he said. "In the GP setting a rectal exam is currently not required for detecting prostate cancer."

Screening is via a prostate specific antigen (PSA) blood

test that may indicate the presence of prostate cancer.

Mr Murray said he and his father's PSA levels were in the normal range but increasing, "which illustrates the importance of frequent and consistent screening".

Professor Ranasinghe said a PSA blood test, plus advanced imaging such as MRI, was now the standard approach.

"The general recommendation is for men to start having the blood test every two years from around the age of 50, but if you have a strong family history then start at 40," he said.

"That can be family history meaning not only prostate cancer but also breast and ovarian cancer, which are also linked with prostate cancer."

Mr Murray said the PSA test was not intrusive and he had it every six months.

"Because of my family history, my father was fastidious about getting PSA tests from a

young age," Mr Murray said. "It was something we spoke about openly from when I was a teenager and what I do with my son, Max."

Mr Murray had surgery to remove his prostate gland then investigated what he could do to improve his life expectancy.

"And here's the thing," he said. "We all seem to be jumping through hoops, taking ice baths and doing saunas, and fasting, when you can go and get a blood test. It's probably the best thing you can do to protect yourself."

He hopes that technology advances so that prostate cancer is not an issue when Max, 19, is older.

"My message now is that there are a lot of people my age who don't even want to know about screening for prostate cancer and they just bury their head in the sand," Mr Murray said. "If you have a family history, then you'd be pretty silly not to be tested."

Iran steps up 'fake news' attacks on Trump

WASHINGTON: Iran is ramping up efforts to interfere with the US election with fake "news" websites and hackers targeting Donald Trump, American officials and researchers say, as the Republican nominee reported threats on his life from the Islamic republic.

Iran, known for orchestrating clandestine influence operations against its adversaries, has emerged as a top disinformation threat facing the No-

vember 5 presidential vote. The US unveiled charges on Saturday against three Iranians over a "wide-ranging hacking campaign", with Attorney General Merrick Garland saying they were attempting to undermine Trump's election effort.

A slew of fake sites masquerading as news outlets are meanwhile fabricating reports critical of Trump, disinformation researchers said, with much of the content apparently

created using cheap and widely available generative AI tools.

Trump meanwhile accused Google of showing only "bad stories" about him, vowing to have the tech giant prosecuted if he gets back in the White House. In a post on his Truth Social platform, he added that the search engine displays only positive articles about his Democratic rival Vice President Kamala Harris.

"This is an ILLEGAL AC-

TIVITY, and hopefully the Justice Department will criminally prosecute them for this blatant Interference of Elections," he said. "If not, and subject to the Laws of our Country, I will request their prosecution, at the maximum levels, when I win the election."

In response, Google said: "Both campaign websites consistently appear at the top of Search for relevant and common search queries."

Apology for slavery

LOS ANGELES: The US state of California has offered an official apology for its role in slavery and past discriminatory policies towards black people, but is not planning to offer reparations to descendants of enslaved people.

Governor Gavin Newsom, a Democrat, signed into law this week a formal declaration to be preserved in the western state's archives.

The text states that California "accepts responsibility for the role we played in promoting, facilitating and permitting the institution of slavery, as well as its enduring legacy of racial discrimination. California is now taking another important step forward in recognising the grave injustices of the past – and making amends for the harms caused."