

**Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

**Donald MACLEOD**

Support person present: No

1. My name is Donald Angus MacLeod. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1947. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

**Life before going to Fort Augustus**

2. My father's name was [REDACTED]. He came from the Isle of Skye. He came from a Presbyterian family. My mother was called [REDACTED]. She came from County Cork in Ireland. She was very Catholic and went to mass whenever she could. I have one sister called [REDACTED]. She is ten years younger than me.
3. My father was in the 6<sup>th</sup> Airborne Division. They operated the gliders going in during D Day. My mother was a nurse around about that time in Croyden. My father was sent to where she worked and that is how they met. They got married after the war. Because my father's family was Presbyterian, a lot of his family wouldn't speak to my mother and her family.
4. My father obtained a first class honours degree from Glasgow University before his involvement in the war. Shell offered him a job in their oilfields. My father went out to Egypt in 1946 followed by my mum. I was born in Cairo in 1947. We all lived in a place called Ra's Gharib which is a place near the Red Sea. We lived in Egypt until I was about six. Around that time it was the Suez crisis. My mother and I ended up being put on a ship in the middle of the Suez Canal. They got us out before the

soldiers came in. My father stayed on to hand over the oil fields to the Egyptian national company.

5. The time we left Egypt coincided with about the time I was due to start school. I was sent to a Benedictine boarding school in Ramsgate. My father was then posted to Qatar. My mother went to join him there. I was in Ramsgate for a couple of years before being sent up to another part of the school that was located in Huntington in Cambridgeshire. That other part of the Benedictine school had been set up during the war when they had evacuated the children out of Ramsgate.
6. My father was then posted to Bombay in India. That is where my sister was born. In about 1957 or 1958 my father was posted to Sydney in Australia. I joined my mother, father and sister there. I went to a Christian Brothers day school in Sydney. In 1961 my parents decided that I needed to get back into the British education system. I think my parents compromised on a Scottish catholic school because my father was Scottish and my mother was catholic. I ultimately went to Fort Augustus in September 1961 when I was fourteen years old.

#### **Fort Augustus Abbey, Fort Augustus, Scottish Highlands**

7. Fort Augustus was a Benedictine boarding school. It was located near Inverness on the shores of Loch Ness. It was all boys. The number of children at the school varied. There would have been between 100 and 150 boys there at any one time. The entrance requirements were paying the fees and being a catholic. There was no entrance exam.
8. The school followed the English school years. It was six academic years between the ages between the ages of twelve and eighteen. The first years were aged between twelve and thirteen. I came in straight at second year because I was slightly older. I was also placed in that year because they felt it was a better fit for me considering my previous education in Australia. At that age I didn't think about not going into the first year too much. I just did what I was told.

*The layout and facilities at Fort Augustus*

9. Fort Augustus was an old fort that, I think, was built by General Wade. On one side of the grounds was the Caledonian Canal and on the other was the river Ness. To the other side was Loch Ness. I enjoyed my fishing so to me, although I didn't want to go there, I felt that the setting was pretty good. There was a big sweeping drive into the school. There was an old gatehouse by the entrance that was used as an isolation ward for children who got ill. There was a swimming pool, rugby pitches and a cricket pitch.
  
10. The school itself was a rambling sort of place. It's rather difficult, because of that, to describe. It was the sort of place you could get lost in. There was one main old building and two modern blocks. The old building itself was gorgeous. The old main building contained most of the school. One of the modern blocks contained a new church. The other modern block was another part of the school. That block held the hall, science block, music rooms, headmaster's office and quarters for one of the housemasters.
  
11. The entrance we tended to use was at the bottom of the clock tower which was attached to the main old building. There were two staircases that went up and down. The downstairs staircase went down to the changing rooms, showers, baths and wash basins. They also stored your things like your trunks there. Upstairs on the right hand side it split off into one of the new blocks. On the other side in the main old building were the dormitories, snooker hall and refectory. The other housemaster was based in the old building. Further upstairs there were a few rooms which prefects in the upper sixth form got given. There was also a library. There was a staff room. I never got to go in there.

*Houses*

12. There were two houses. They weren't physical "houses." The houses were set up so that two sections of the school could compete in sports, academic results and that sort of thing. One house was called Lovat and the other was called Vaughan. I was

in Lovat. The only real difference between the two houses was that they had different housemasters who stayed in different areas of the school. The Vaughan housemaster stayed in the new block and the Lovat housemaster stayed in the main old building. Each housemaster had about four rooms where they stayed. The boys from each house wore different ties. One had the stripes going one way and the other had the stripes going another way. One was white on black and the other was black on white.

*Staff – staff structure*

13. The operation and running of the school was something that went on above my head. I don't think that we ever really thought about it.
14. There was an abbot who was in charge of the monastery. He was in charge of the monks. All the monks would report to him on religious grounds. There was a headmaster who was in charge over the school. The teaching monks would report to him on temporal grounds. "Temporal grounds" is Catholic speak for anything that isn't religious. Things like discipline and the day to day running of the school. I am not sure who reported to whom in terms of the abbot and the headmaster. However, they were both responsible to the Benedictine congregation in Downside in Gloucestershire. That was where the headquarters of the Benedictines was.
15. The two housemasters combined had the most control and power over the decision making. However, the headmaster was the most powerful individual. The only time you came across the headmaster was where there were severe discipline problems or religious problems. He was totally in charge of the lay teachers and any staff that came in from the outside. He was in charge of anything that the teaching monks had to do with regards to teaching. He had the monks and teachers in regularly. I guess he must have given them direction. The headmaster, however, didn't have a responsibility with regards to religious matters and the monks. That responsibility lay with the abbot. That distinction was fairly well defined.

*Staff – SNR and housemasters*

16. There was SNR called Father MFF when I first went to Fort Augustus. He wasn't there all that long whilst I was there. I remember him not being very well. He was replaced by Father MKT. I think Father MKT had been nominally SNR when I arrived. Father MKT replacing Father MFF happened quite soon after I arrived.
17. There were two housemasters. They stayed in the school. Your housemaster was the main person you interacted with. They handled things like discipline, pocket money and things like that. My housemaster was Father MFE. He was in charge of Lovat. The other housemaster was Father MFG. He was in charge of Vaughan.

*Staff – teaching monks and priests*

18. The teaching monks used to regularly come into the school. We'd sometimes have a young monk who would come up from Downside to teach for a year then go back. However, in general, the staff who were monks remained a fairly stable group. They didn't change.
19. Father Aiden Duggan taught history. That was the only lesson he taught me. I remember that the only things he knew about history was the agricultural and industrial revolutions. I think he also taught art. I never did art. Father MEW taught [REDACTED]. His nickname was "MEW" because of his surname. He was a [REDACTED] monk. He was also in charge of the cinema. Father MIG? taught me [REDACTED]. I have seen his name in my termly reports but I do not remember him. Father MRQ taught me [REDACTED]. I am aware that his name crops up when abuse is discussed by others but I don't remember him.

*Staff – lay teachers*

20. There were teachers who were not monks. The few outside lay teachers we had used to come in, do the teaching and leave. You didn't really see them around much. There were lots of different lay teachers. I don't really know why that was. I think anybody who was teaching in Fort Augustus would have to have a particular reason why they wanted to teach in the back waters of the highlands of Scotland. We very rarely had a young lay teacher.
21. [REDACTED] MIH [REDACTED] was the [REDACTED] teacher. He also took rugby. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] He stayed there. Mr Anderson taught English. He was nicknamed "Hancock" because he looked like Tony Hancock. He was a good teacher. He was there for two or three years. He was the only teacher I really got to talk to. I think he had lodgings in the village. He was always walking around with a hip flask. He was useless in the afternoon. He obviously couldn't get a job elsewhere. He would sometimes get maudlin and tell us how awful his divorce was. Despite his problems with drink he survived quite a long time. I think that the monks rostered him for the morning lessons because of his drinking. He probably wouldn't have held down a job if he was in one of the main schools.

*Staff – the non-teaching monks*

22. There was a monastery in the grounds. The interaction between the school and the monastery was fairly limited. There were Brothers who stayed in the abbey. Brothers are un-consecrated monks. They walked and talked differently to teaching staff. They weren't as self-assured as the teaching monks. It's a bit of a generalisation but that was my impression. They were essentially servants to both the abbey and the school. They came into the school and did things like the cleaning, the cooking and running the refectory. They were generally very kindly sort of people.
23. I remember seeing the monks who weren't involved in the school in the vegetable garden wandering around praying. However, generally speaking, we didn't see

much of the monks who weren't teaching monks. The only time we saw them was in church.

24. The monks from the abbey didn't talk to us. You weren't allowed to talk to them. I think the school deliberately wanted the abbey to be kept separate from school. Occasionally I talked to one of them. One of the monks that came in from the abbey was Syrian. I spoke Arabic from my time in Egypt. He was one of the few monks that I used to speak to.
25. You actually didn't really open a conversation with any of the monks, whether they were teaching monks or otherwise. You would only speak to them if you had something specific in mind. It would be something like a question concerning the topic they taught. I wouldn't have dreamt of going up to a monk and saying "how are you today?" You just wouldn't do that and they didn't do that to us.

*Staff – non-teaching civilian staff*

26. The school had a problem because it was located in a very Presbyterian area. One of the things that they did do was try and give employment to people who came from the local area. Some of the locals took them up on that. A lot of the grounds-work, that the monks could easily have done, was farmed out to the villagers. There were also cleaners from the village coming in and out. That said, I would say most of the cleaning was either done by monks or the boys.
27. The only female member of staff was the nurse. Her surname was [REDACTED]. Her nickname was Kitty. She stayed in the infirmary which was in the gatehouse. She was permanent. She was there right through my time at the school. She was one of the few members of staff who didn't change.

*Prefects*

28. They had prefects at Fort Augustus. Prefects were normally in the upper sixth form. They were chosen probably jointly by the housemasters and the headmaster.

Prefects had certain privileges. Normally it was the most academic boys and the boys who were captains of the rugby team who were the prefects. I think there were about five prefects in total. I suppose it could have varied from year to year.

29.

The prefects main duty was supervising prep time. They used to assume duties like discipline and that sort of thing. They were kind of like mini administrators though I'm not sure if that captures their role. They could catch you doing things and refer you to the housemasters or the headmaster for things that they saw you doing that they felt was wrong. They didn't actually have a major role in the school. They mostly were too busy doing their own studies.

*The children at Fort Augustus*

30. About half the children at Fort Augustus came from Carlekemp. Carlekemp was another Benedictine boarding school located near Edinburgh. The boys from Carlekemp joined the school en-bloc in first year. There were also a lot of children who came in from the Western Isles. Places like Harris and Lewis where secondary education wasn't available.
31. There were boys who came from all over the world. We had boys from Iceland, China, South America and Africa. Quite often children were sent to Fort Augustus by parents who found themselves in places where the education system wasn't very good. The school was used quite a lot by the diplomatic core. Quite a lot of the children were sons of ambassadors and secretaries to ambassadors. There were a few boys who had parents who were in the army. Quite often those boys dropped out or started later on because their parents were getting moved around. They would be there on average for about a couple of years.
32. The majority of the children at Fort Augustus started at the beginning and were there right through until they were eighteen. Some of the children came in later though. I remember that some local boys came in the fifth form by way of a scholarship.



33. Sometimes boys did kick off with their parents and they were taken out. I assume that they complained to their parents about various things. Parents did take their boys out of Fort Augustus if they thought that it wasn't suited. The more common scenario was that a boy would go home for the holidays, not come back afterwards and all of a sudden the monks would be packing up the boy's stuff. There could be a whole myriad of reasons why the boys left. It was all done very quietly. Something must have happened during those holidays. The problem with boys is that they are brilliant at rumours. It is therefore hard to say why the boys who left left so suddenly.

### **Routine at Fort Augustus**

#### *First day*

34. I don't remember my first day. I've tried to remember it but it's all a blur. I was obviously lonely because I had just come from Australia and was pondering why my parents had sent me so far away. At the beginning of the first term of any boarding school nobody's happy. There are always tears and grey faces wherever you were.

#### *Daily routine*

35. You got up about 6:30am. No one got you up. You got up yourself out of the fear of god. If they had found you still in bed then you would get into trouble. You then got washed and dressed. You then went to mass. You went to mass every day except a Thursday. On that day you were allowed a lie in. After mass you came back for fifteen minutes or so to use the loo or something. You then had breakfast. I think assembly was at 8:30am. School started at 9:00am. School usually finished about 16:30pm. We ate dinner at 17:00pm.
36. In the evenings it varied what you did. You were more or less free to do what you liked as long as you didn't leave the school grounds. At bedtime you got changed into your pyjamas, dressing gown and slippers. You then had half an hour before bed. What you did in that half hour varied depending on your age. Generally

speaking you went to one of the designated areas or the assembly hall to read. Actual bed times were done by dormitories. Dormitories were age related. The older boys got to go to bed later on.

37. Saturday was prep rather than school. Prep is essentially homework. It's not quite the same because you obviously didn't have a home to go to. Saturday mornings were also a time for writing letters home. If you had a detention it would be held on Saturday afternoons in the sports hall. It was otherwise sports, hobbies and past times in the afternoon. It was all non-academic activities.
38. You didn't have school on Sundays. You got up a little bit earlier on Sundays because there were two masses at the start of the day. The first mass followed breakfast. Later on you had midday mass. That was the mass when the Catholics from around the local villages came into our church. They sat behind all of the monks from the abbey. There would be a full singing mass. Sunday afternoons were "free." The school had a terrible problem with some of the locals surrounding Sundays. The local community was mostly Presbyterian. Some of the locals would see us fishing or doing rugby practice on the Sabbath and be disgusted with these "heathen monks" letting us do that.

*Mealtimes / food*

39. The food was ok. You kind of got used to the food. It was all made on site. Some of the Brothers came from the abbey and worked in the kitchens. We all ate together in the refectory. It was a huge big room. There were maybe a dozen longish tables. There was a table at the top where the monk in charge sat with a couple of the priests. I think the other monks used to eat in the abbey. They had another big refectory where they ate. I don't know where the lay teachers ate.
40. You were told what table you would be sitting at. You had to jostle for position at your respective table. You weren't allowed to talk to begin with. You then said prayers. When the monk in charge said you could sit down you could talk. The food used to be brought to the top of each table. Because you had had to jostle to get

where you wanted to sit at the table it was inevitable that the bigger boys sat at the end of the table where the food was served. When I started I was at the bottom of the table. By the end I was at the top of the table. I remember on the days that chips were served the boys at the top of the table got lots and the boys at the bottom didn't get much. That was just the way it was.

41. I think all the boys ate the food. You would get punished for not eating. You would get the cane if you didn't eat something. That wasn't always the case. If that did happen it was generally the housemaster who you would be referred to for that. I saw that happening with other boys. It was mostly the younger boys who had just joined who experienced that. I think all the boys just learnt to eat things they didn't like. You didn't all have to leave the table at the same time. You could just leave when you wanted to. The only rule was that you had to do it quietly.

*Sleeping arrangements*

42. The sleeping accommodation was very much part of the school. You slept in dorms. Dorms were age related. Because the dorms were in the old building they had to fit the boys to the rooms that they had. The smaller dorms would have about half a dozen beds and the larger dorms had about twenty beds. Inside the dorms it was very similar to a hospital. You had a single bed with a locker. There was a separate room with wardrobes and things like that where you kept your clothes.
43. The dorms changed depending on what the particular intake was on a particular year. If there were twenty boys in a particular year then you might go into one dorm together. If there were sixteen boys then you might go into dorms of six and ten beds.
44. You were told where you slept. You weren't always in the same dorm with the same people. The sleeping arrangements were all decided jointly between the two housemasters. They tried to keep boys from one particular house in the same dorm together. However, it wasn't fixed. It was never something like nineteen Lovats and one Vaughan in one dorm though. They didn't do that.

*Washing / bathing / heating*

45. Downstairs there was a huge room that contained showers and about a dozen baths. There were also two rows of basins with taps. There were enough basins for everyone. I think each basin was shared by three boys in the mornings. The routine ran quite smoothly in the mornings because it was always the same. The routine of all these things became instinctive after a while. It is hard to explain. The showers were mostly used after sports. There were no restrictions on the showers. There was a rota for the baths. I think you got to use them once or twice a week.
46. It wasn't like "Tom Brown's School Days." I think that all pre-dates when I was there. The water was warm. I remember that you could actually get steam out of the hot taps if you turned them up enough. In January and February the snow would sometimes be that deep that you couldn't get out on the downstairs floor. Because of that the place had to be really heated.

*Clothing / uniform*

47. Your parents paid for your clothes. I remember going to Forsyth's in Edinburgh to buy them. The uniform comprised of grey trousers, a white shirt, a red blazer or a tweed jacket and a black and white striped tie. You wore your uniform all of the time whilst you were in the school. You only wore the blazer when you went outside of the school. You wore a tweed blazer when you were inside. We had sports clothes. We had a set of leisure clothes. They were used when we went out on trips called "three weeklys." I had one waterproof outfit for my fishing.

*Possessions / pocket money*

48. You could have personal possessions. You could have your own transistor radio if you wanted one. You weren't allowed your radio in the dormitory but you were allowed it elsewhere as long as it wasn't too loud. You weren't allowed to play that at night. You could have a snooker cue of your own if you wanted one. You could

have the usual things like a watch and books. The books were kept in one of the housemaster's rooms. You were allowed one photograph of your family to place beside your bed. There was a record player in the room where the housemaster kept your books. You could play any records you brought in on that if you wanted to. I don't think anything other than what you would expect, like knives and guns, was banned. I do remember I had a knife for my fishing though. I had to get a permit for that.

49. When my parents lived in Singapore I was very often asked to bring things back. I would bring back radios and duty free stuff. There was one monk who always asked me to bring back a bottle of Courvoisier. That was a bit odd for a boy of my age but I did do that. It's amazing how customs at Heathrow let me get through with that.
50. All the boys got pocket money. When you left at the end of term you were given a letter to hand to your parents. In that letter it would say something along the lines of "please give Donald £4 6d for pocket money." You would get given that amount by your parents. You would have to give that to your housemaster when you returned for the next term. Your housemaster had a book that he logged your pocket money into. There was a tuck shop where you could spend your pocket money. When you got older you could go into the village and spend your pocket money in the village shop.

*Letter writing*

51. There was a time on Saturday mornings to write letters home. I think everybody wrote letters home. The letters were censored. You couldn't seal the envelope. I don't think the monks read all the letters but I don't doubt that they did read some of them.

*School*

52. The quality of the education at Fort Augustus is well known for being not be as good as some of the other Benedictine schools. I remember there was a league that

included all of the Benedictine schools. Fort Augustus was usually lower down the list. I remember that Ampleforth and Downside were always the top schools in that league table.

53. I do know that, in terms of Scottish schools as a whole, Fort Augustus didn't rate as highly as places like Gordonstoun. I would say that, for a private public school, Fort Augustus fell into the lower half overall. It had good results and bad failures.
54. There was only a certain quality of staff they could pull in purely because of its location. The teaching monks that were sent up to Fort Augustus were not the cream of the crop. The lay teachers they tended to get in were either trying to get out of the way or had their own problems.
55. I really don't know whether any of the lay teachers had any teaching qualifications. I suspect some of them did and some of them didn't because some of them were good and some of them were bad. I think that some of the monks that had come up from Downside might have had some qualifications. I think, as long as the teaching staff taught the syllabus and got the pupils through their O Levels, A Levels and Highers that was all that mattered. In boarding schools the quality of the lessons isn't as important. You spend so much time in lessons that it more than makes things up for any poor teaching.
56. They taught all the usual subjects. They taught English, Maths, History, Geography, Chemistry, Religious Knowledge and Physics. We did O Levels, A Levels and Highers. I took a mixture of those. There were no lessons or anything in terms of preparing you for the outside world. There were no cookery classes. I do remember a few boys who liked to help out with cooking in the kitchen but that wasn't everyone. Sex education was non-existent.
57. The education was fairly exam and results orientated. Some of the boys who were academic were pushed hard to get results. I still have some of my termly reports. One of the reports say I was "very average." I don't know whether I was deliberately trying to be that way or I was indeed "very average." Generally speaking, rugby

excluded, if you became good at a particular subject then your head became "above the parapet." Likewise if you were bad at a particular subject you would be noticed. The art of survival was to be in the that "middle bit." That's where I tended to be.

*Religious instruction*

58. Religion was pretty continuous. Some people have a faith and some don't. I'd say that the vast majority of boys didn't concentrate on god. They just did the religious things because they had to. Religious knowledge was viewed as being really important. Religion was taught both in lessons devoted to it and during other lessons. You were taught the catechism, the teachings of the church and the teachings of St Benedict. You were examined on those things. There were morning and evening prayers. You said grace before meals. Confession was held on Saturdays.
59. We all had duties as altar boys. Some boys volunteered to be an altar boy. The monks had to go to four or five masses a day. There were masses for the monks who didn't come into the school. The altar boys helped out in those masses as well. You got extra privileges if you did altar boy duties. You got to have an afternoon tea. You would get scones and tea and things like that. You were also excused from some lessons.
60. The school liked to get a certain number of boys to become priests. I think there might have been a quota but I'm not sure. There were a few boys who were quite religious and holy. Those boys got given extra religious lessons. It was very often the "non-sporting" boys who were the altar boys and took extra religious lessons. They got given extra privileges. They were excused from sports. They would have to do a bit of training and running about the pitch but that was about it.
61. During my time I think there were only two boys who left the sixth form and stayed on at Fort Augustus. They progressed on to the novice school there for trainee priests. I remember one boy who was very clever who went to university and came back to the Order.

62. We had mass every day except Thursdays. You would get the holy Eucharist and you would get your blessings. There were two masses on a Sunday. You were always being watched by the monks and the priests during mass. You would get called in for the cane if you were doing something in mass other than what you were supposed to be doing. That would normally be one of the housemasters. I remember that I once got the cane for combing my hair during mass. It was my housemaster who did that. I was referred by one of the monks in the mass for what I had done. I don't know why I did that. I guess it was just one of those things. I suppose I didn't need to be told that you shouldn't comb you hair during mass. I just didn't think about it.

*Chores*

63. We had certain responsibilities concerning cleaning. We had responsibilities to clean the changing rooms. You can imagine what it was like after sixty odd boys who had been playing rugby on a muddy old field had been in there. We mopped the floor and cleaned the tiles. I can't remember how often we did that. We didn't clean the showers and toilets. In terms of that, and the corridors, they were all cleaned by the monks from the abbey.

*Sport / leisure time*

64. We played rugby, hockey and cricket. There was no football. Football was looked down upon. It was something to be in the rugby team. I was picked a few times to play in it. You got to go out in the coach to play Gordonstoun, Aberdeen Academy or Rannoch Moor. I remember everybody hid if you were going to play Rannoch Moor. I don't think they had boys there, they had highland cattle. They were a tough lot. A lot of the matches were good matches.
65. During the week you got about half an hour at lunchtime for leisure time. The length of time depended on how long it had taken you to have your lunch. You could leave



the building but not the grounds. You just did what boys did. It wasn't regimented in these periods. You knew when the free periods were and you knew the boundaries.

66. In the evenings it varied what you did. Quite often the teaching monks would interact with us during our free time in the evenings. I think they just didn't want to go back to the abbey. In the winter you had to stay within the school itself. You played snooker or you played records on the record player. There was a metal and woodwork room where you could do your hobbies. There was a TV that was kept in the TV room. I can't remember how they worked out who could watch the TV at what time. It was probably by age group. I think we were given certain times we could go in there. I didn't tend to latch onto TV much myself.
67. In the lighter evenings you could go fishing. Quite often there was rugby practice or something. We used to get a film on Saturday afternoons in one of the music rooms. Father **MEW** was in charge of that. There was a membership to the local golf course for the boys who were interested in golf. I didn't really take to the golf. My outside interest, apart from fishing, was helping out on the canal lock gates when the trawlers were coming through. I would open and close them for the boats that came past.

### *Trips*

68. Fort Augustus was quite a long way away from anywhere. The roads weren't as good as they are now. Because of that you tended not to go on trips. There wasn't really that type of thing. Various societies in the school might have trips. The choral society might go to give a concert in Fort William or Inverness. There was an amateur dramatics society who occasionally put on plays in the village hall.
69. Every three weeks Fort Augustus had something called a "three weekly." You didn't know what day your three weekly fell on. It was all a bit weather dependant. I think they looked at the weather and decided whether it was a good day for the lads to go out. The headmaster would announce who would be having their three weekly after morning prayers. You would go out in groups of three for the day. You would go out

into the mountains or something like that. We would take a camping stove. The kitchen would provide stuff to take with you. Baked beans was the favourite.

70. They didn't tell you where to go on your three weekly. You did have to say to your housemaster where you were going though. You would give him a rough itinerary. Later on, you went out further because you had access to bikes. Generally, you left about 10:00am and were back at 16:00pm. You came straight back to the school. You were given half an hours grace to come back. If you were later than that they would know more or less where to go looking. That very occasionally happened. We were kind of trained like boy scouts. We knew what we needed to do if we got lost. We could make a fire and that sort of thing. I think it was MIH who taught us those things.

#### *Chits*

71. You had to get a chit if you wanted to go outside the boundaries of the school. That was either if you were going out of the school on your own or with a visitor. A chit was a little bit of paper with writing on that you had to give to somebody. The chits had written on them your name, the time you could leave and when you had to return. They were issued by housemasters. It was quite hard to convince your housemaster to give you one.
72. Chits were used for all sorts of things. You could get a chit if you had to go into the village for something or other. I would need to get one to go fishing. My housemaster liked fishing so I didn't find getting a chit off of him too bad. I used to get a chit for working on the lock gates. I remember the lock master would ask whether I had my chit but never look at it. I think the main thing for him was knowing it was there because of something to do with insurance.

#### *Holidays*

73. Our half terms really only lasted two days. Very few people could get away over half term because of where Fort Augustus was. Half term really became just a couple of

days of free time. Invariably the relatives who lived further away would come to stay near Fort Augustus to visit. They would use [REDACTED] MIH [REDACTED] over the half term.

74. The holidays were longer because our half terms were so short. Our summer holidays ran from the beginning of June until the end of September. At the end of terms you were taken in a the coach to the station in Spean Bridge. After that you were dumped.
75. During the summer holidays I went to Bombay. Later on I went to Singapore. The other two holidays I was sent over to my Auntie [REDACTED] and Uncle [REDACTED] farm in County Cork, Ireland. They were from my mother's side. That's where I was happiest. I loved going there. My aunt and uncle were so lovely and gentle. I think that rubbed off on me. I liked farming. I was allowed to drive the tractor on my own with the dogs. I liked the animals. It was heaven. I also had cousins there to play with which was also nice.
76. After my holidays my Auntie [REDACTED], who was on my father's side and very Presbyterian, would collect me in London and take me up on the train to Glasgow. She would drop me off at Queen Street. Three or four monks would come down to collect all the boys. There was a train that took all of the boys back to the station in Spean Bridge. I think the school reserved a couple of carriages for the boys. When you got to Spean Bridge you then got a coach to Fort Augustus.

#### *Birthdays and Christmas*

77. There wasn't an official thing for birthdays. I think you used to get extra pocket money on your birthday. Any presents that had been sent in by your family would be kept by the housemaster and given to you on the day itself. You always got your present. Your parents would know the rules about what would be allowed or not. I remember there was one guy whose sister sent him a teddy bear. He was ripped for days about that.

78. There were celebrations in the school in the build up to Christmas. There was praying for the coming of the lord and all of that. I went home for Christmas itself. I was always able to get away. I was either able to go to my parents or my aunt and uncle's. There were a couple of boys whose parents lived too far away and didn't have any nearby family. I think they may have stayed. I think they stayed in the lodge with Kitty. I'm not sure.

*Visits / inspections*

79. Boys did get visitors when they could. If the visitors had come from a long way then the school would try and accommodate the visitor regardless of when they arrived. The school was good on that. My Dad used to sometimes attend meetings in the Hague with Shell. He would come across to see family in Scotland. He'd then come and see me. If my dad visited I would be given the day off to go into Fort William for fish and chips or something like that. To my knowledge, visits weren't ever withheld by the school as a punishment.
80. I don't recall any external school inspectors coming in. I think it was a system that internally inspected itself. We used to quite often see people who had come up from the English Benedictines in Downside inspecting the place. I don't know what sort of things they were looking at. Sometimes they came in to look at a class. They didn't say much. I suppose they were just keeping an eye on things. They never spoke to me individually. I don't know whether they spoke to any of the other boys.

*Healthcare*

81. I'd say that the healthcare at Fort Augustus was as good as they could provide. I have no complaints about that. There was an isolation ward in the gatehouse for boys who got ill. There were six to eight beds in there for people who were ill. People could be kept in isolation there. I was only in there a couple of times.
82. Kitty was in charge of the infirmary in the old gate house. You could go to her for anything. An example may be if you had a headache. You could go to her and she

would give you an aspirin. Every now and again we had the usual flu epidemics. There was a GP locum in the village who would come in for something like that.

83. If there was something unusual that Kitty couldn't diagnose an outside doctor from Inverness or Fort William would be called in. I remember that there was one boy who was ill who had been out on holiday in Sierra Leone. A team came out from Inverness. They whisked him away for tests. I don't know what was wrong with him but he was alright in the end.
84. When I broke my collarbone in a game of rugby against Rannoch Moor I was taken to a hospital in Inverness. I quite enjoyed that bit. It was nice being surrounded by nice young nurses having come from an all-boys boarding school. When I came back Kitty was very against me playing rugby again. MIH thought I would be up to it. Ultimately, I did play again and I was alright.
85. There was a dentist who came in every month. He was also the hairdresser. He multi-tasked. It was always short back and sides.

*Running away*

86. There is an instinct in all of us that makes us want to run away. There are times when you are unhappy wherever you are. Running away wasn't something that we talked about. I never ran away. It would have been very difficult for me to do. I didn't really have anywhere to run away to other than my auntie and uncle's farm in Ireland.
87. There were a few runaways who went to Spean Bridge to get a train. They mostly absconded during their three weeklys. There was one boy who stupidly tried to run away in the early evening. His absence was noticed fairly early on when it came to bedtime. Nobody really ever got away. I found out later on that the station master at Spean Bridge was a relative of one of the monks. He would call up the school when one of the boys turned up.

88. When the boys who had run away came back they were punished so severely that no one else wanted to try to run away. I remember the boy who ran away in the evening was brought back and given the cane. It would have been one of the housemasters or the headmaster who caned him.

*Bed-wetting*

89. I didn't wet the bed but some other boys did. One of the problems with the bed-wetting was that none of the boys who wet the bed would want to admit to the other boys that they did it. I don't really remember what happened if a boy wet the bed during the night. I do remember a few of the boys getting caned for wetting the bed in the morning. I think the housemaster was the one who did that. The boy would be referred to him after Kitty had inspected the beds each morning.
90. From recollection there was one boy who wet the bed a lot. First of all he got the caned by the housemaster. That's what the punishment was. He ended up serially wetting the bed for weeks on end. I think they must have decided that there was something else going on. That was how Kitty became involved. I remember the boy being put in the infirmary because of the bed-wetting. We all thought that was very strange.

**Discipline**

91. Discipline was key to the way the school was run. I didn't question it too much. Discipline became second nature to me because of the environment I was in. The knowledge was that if you did step out of line then you were in trouble. You knew that if you tried to buck the system, you would get into trouble and getting in trouble would not sit easy with you. When you'd been at boarding schools as long as I had your acceptance level of things was far higher than those who were new to it. You learnt not to question things too much.

92. There were certain things I instinctively knew because I had been to a boarding school before. However, a lot of the boys who hadn't would run foul of things. An example of this might be not keeping your hands in your pockets.
93. There was a rule book. I think there was one in each housemaster's study. I don't remember it being pulled out and showed to you. I never bothered to read it. There might be some people who did. I don't know whether there were some sort of obscure rules that some people wanted to look at. There were certain rules you just knew and others that you assumed. To some extent you followed what the other boys were doing when you arrived. I think to begin with you are a bit like a sheep. You just followed other people. You gradually got used to it.

*Corporal punishment*

94. Your parents knew that the school used the cane before you went. I used to get given the cane but I expected that. It happened to all of us. It had happened to me when I was in my first school in Ramsgate.
95. The main people who gave out punishment in the form of the cane were the two housemasters, Father [MFE] and Father [MFG] and [SNR], Father [MKT]. They kept their canes in their offices. You would go to their offices to get punishment. There were two types of punishment involving the cane. One was on the backside and the other was on the hand. We got a lot of caning. I preferred to have three strokes of the cane rather than have to sit through detention. If you got the cane it was done then you could go off and play rugby.
96. Father [MFE] never did anything sexual but he was a bit of a sadist when it came to the cane. I remember one occasion when I was leaning on a wall outside of Father [MFE] office talking to my friends with my hands in my pockets. Father [MFE] came out, told me to take my hands out of my pockets and said that I was going to get the cane. He didn't take me straight into his office. He took me down the corridor and down through this rambling school. I had to follow him this whole

way whilst he said that I was getting the cane. I then got given the cane. All that was a bit sadistic.

97. I remember getting caned for sneaking a radio into the dorm. It would have been Father [MFE] who did that. I can't remember who caught me. For some reason everybody wanted to listen to a programme on Radio Luxemburg that night. I was a stupid idiot. I knew I wasn't allowed to have it in there and then I turned it on. I also remember being caned by Father [MFE] for throwing a snowball through a window. That was fair enough. I could understand that.
98. Some of the teaching monks carried canes when they went around the school. They would use them in class. I remember a couple of occasions where teaching monks used their sashes to hit boys. It didn't happen all that often. It didn't happen to me. The teaching monks using corporal punishment wasn't actually allowed in the school. I think that the housemasters and headmaster turned a blind eye to that.
99. I'm not aware of any of the lay teachers using corporal punishment. The lay teachers could refer you for the cane. They could send you up to the housemaster with a note. Invariably the housemaster would follow through on what the lay teacher said. The only thing I can remember is one of them whacking a boy over the head with a blackboard duster. That was unusual. I can't remember which lay teacher did that.

*Punishment by prefects*

100. Prefects were allowed to punish other pupils. The prefects didn't carry canes. They gave out things like detention. Most of the time they gave you lines or gave you chores to do. They could refer you the housemaster and the headmaster if they deemed you had done something wrong. If the thing you were referred to was serious enough you could then get given the cane by the house master or the headmaster.



*Other forms of punishment*

101. There was detention. That was held on Saturday afternoons. There was also something else called "lines". You had to fill in a piece of paper with "I must not be a naughty boy" or whatever it was. If you had lines you had to get a sheet to write them on from your housemaster. The housemaster would sign them when you were done and write "½ d." That amount would then be taken from your pocket money. Different monks used different forms of punishment. You mostly got the cane rather than detention or lines.

**Abuse at Fort Augustus***Bullying*

102. Apart from the discipline from the monks there was also the bullying from the boys. In enclosed communities there are inevitably hierarchies. I'm not sure how much I noticed all of that when I was there. I may have just chosen to forget that. I used to find a lot of things I saw distasteful but then again I didn't do anything about it. It was one of those things you just learnt to put up with. You don't "buck the system." It never works out if you try to swim against the tide.
103. There was quite a lot of bullying that went on. I think it was kind of overlooked by the monks and the teachers. I think it was viewed as "part of the making of the young man." The unfortunate thing was that that meant the boys who were neither academic or good at sport got it rough from all sides.
104. When I first went to Fort Augustus I was teased because of my Australian accent. I was called "Kangy." However, I had already been to boarding schools before. Most of the teasing that went on wasn't new to me. Fortunately I was a reasonable stature so I was left alone.

105. A lot of the Carlekemp boys had been day pupils. I think they found that sort of thing more difficult. Some boys got bullied a lot. It was murder for them. I have heard that some people were terribly bullied. I don't know if I even noticed it most of the time.

*The "fagging" system*

106. They had a "fagging" system. There weren't written rules about it. It was just something that happened. The first year pupils had to polish the shoes of the boys in the upper and lower sixth years. You stopped being a fag after you left first year. I didn't have to do that because I went in at second year.
107. I was at Fort Augustus until I was old enough to have my own fag. However, I never really took one. I don't know why but I didn't particularly get involved in the fagging. It might be because when I was seven years old at Ramsgate I had experienced being a fag. Maybe I realised how horrible it was. I do remember that when I was in my lower sixth year one of the first year boys latched onto me a bit. I don't know why. He was Irish so perhaps it could have been that. He did my stuff but I never asked him to do that. It could be that he wanted to do things for me so that he didn't have to do it for someone else.

*Abuse by Father Aiden Duggan*

108. My mother and father first visited Fort Augustus in the summer of 1961. That was the summer just before I started. They met Father Aiden Duggan. He was from Sydney. He was an Australian priest. I think because of the Australia connection they got him to take me under his wing. They got him to look after me and all the rest of it.
109. During the early part of my first year in Fort Augustus I would go to Father Aiden when I was troubled about things. He was quite kindly. He did a few extra things for me. He got me into the metal model making class early because there was a waiting

list. There was a specific thing I wanted to make and he helped me get into the class so I could do that.

110. The school offered piano lessons. My dad decided that I would do piano lessons. I didn't have an aptitude for the piano but I wanted to do the lessons. Father Aiden would help me whilst I did my practicing in one of the music rooms. I didn't notice it particularly at the time but Father Aiden used to put his hand on my knee. I just thought he was being friendly. Occasionally he'd move his hand up further, I'd move it and he'd stop. I remember having a peculiar emotion. On the one hand I was thinking that he was just being a nice guy and on the other I was thinking something wasn't quite right.
111. I was given a camera on my birthday in [REDACTED] 1961. I took a couple of reels of photographs. The school had a little darkroom. I didn't know how to develop the films. Father Aiden said that he would help me. We were both in the room. He asked me to reach for something under a bench. As I reached down he grabbed me from behind, pulled my trousers down and penetrated me. I remember it being sore. I couldn't believe it. It was strange. I knew that it was wrong. I'd heard of rape but I'd never thought it was something that could be "man on man." Father Aiden then left the room.
112. I couldn't sit down for a while. It was like I had had a beating. I didn't dare discuss what had happened with Kitty. I couldn't have discussed something like that in female company. I just walked around for ages. I didn't know what to do. I knew that I couldn't write to my parents because there was a risk that I could be found out.

#### Reporting of abuse to Father [REDACTED] MKT

113. I had to do something but I didn't know what to do. I decided to tell Father [REDACTED] MKT what had happened with Father Aiden about a day after the incident. I think I just had to say something. At the point I first reported what happened I hadn't had any dealings with Father [REDACTED] MKT. I think I chose Father [REDACTED] MKT for two reasons.

The first was that Father [MKT] was a kindly sort of person. The second was because he was simply the nearest person to me when I decided that I wanted to report what had happened.

114. I told Father [MKT] what had happened in his office. After I told Father [MKT] what had happened he had a real go at me. He told me off for lying about a priest. He walked around me as I was sitting down. He gave me a lecture about lying being a mortal sin and things like that. He didn't cane me though. That was unusual because lying would ordinarily be a caning offence. The fact that he didn't cane me has made me wonder whether he perhaps believed me. Perhaps there was some other reason that he couldn't. I suppose the trouble was that, in my case, there were no other witnesses who could provide corroboration.
115. I don't know what Father [MKT] did after I spoke to him that first time. I don't know whether he may have gone and spoken to the abbot. If he had that might have been why Father Aiden was ultimately moved.

#### **After the abuse by Father Aiden Duggan**

116. There was never anything else after the incident with Father Aiden. No other priest came on to me after the incident with Father Aiden. Strangely, after the incident, Father [MEW] became really kind to me. He had me in the film projection room on a Saturday during the films. That was a real big thing for the boys. Father [MEW] never touched me. I think that is why it came as a shock to me when I heard that he had been accused of touching other boys. I heard that through a BBC documentary I was involved with called "Sins of our Fathers."
117. Father Aiden never acknowledged me after the incident. He ignored me. He was eventually moved. I can't remember when he was moved. However, it was after Christmas 1961. He was gone by Easter time in 1962. He disappeared off of the scene. There was no announcement that he was going to leave. I suspect that Father [MKT] must have had words with the abbot.

118. Father Aiden came back just before I left Fort Augustus for good. That was in 1964. I remember seeing him in the distance at that time. His return is also documented in a contemporaneous copy of "The Corbie.". There were priests and monks who came in from the abbey, taught their lesson and then went back. That meant you would only see them if you were in their class. The school was structured in a way that Father Aiden might have come back and not come into contact with me.

### **Reporting the abuse to family**

119. I told my mother and father about what had happened at Christmas time in 1961. When I told my mother she said "priests don't do that sort of thing." She was very Catholic. I don't know what my father thought. He just didn't say anything. Whatever they thought they still sent me back. I didn't actually talk about what happened again with mum. My mother must have told Father [REDACTED] MKT because, after Christmas, I was called into his office again, accused of lying and then given the cane.
120. After being caned by Father [REDACTED] MKT I shut up about it all. It wasn't something that you talked to your friends about. If you had the cane for being naughty you might talk about that. The incident where I was taken through the school and given the cane for having my hands in my pockets by Father [REDACTED] MFE was the sort of thing you would talk about. However, you wouldn't talk about the sexual abuse.
121. I did tell my Uncle [REDACTED] in Ireland. He was really sympathetic. He believed me. He was very much of the perspective of "you must now decide what you want to do." By the time I told him I wasn't being abused any more. He thought that it was probably unlikely that I would be abused again. He was also aware that my mother would be distraught if I did anything further. He gave me a lot of advice and was very good to me. He ultimately advised that I keep my distance and don't stick my head above anything. He said that if I tried to excel at rugby they wouldn't look at anything else. That was perfectly true.

### **Other incidents of abuse**

122. Nobody mentioned any other incidents to me whilst I was at Fort Augustus. It was just something that we didn't talk about. I have obviously heard since that other boys were suffering things. I guess they decided that they didn't want to talk about it as well. I don't know, even now, whether they spoke to their housemasters at the time.

### **Leaving Fort Augustus**

123. I didn't really do any exams in my last year. I don't know why I was there. I left after upper sixth form in 1965. I didn't keep in contact with any of my friends in the school. My parents had moved to Singapore in 1963. I went to join them. I was out there quite a while before I went to college. It wasn't a gap year as such but I had a great time. It was a good place to be as a teenager.

### **Life after Fort Augustus**

124. I went to college in Stafford to study an HND in Engineering. After that I went to Aston University in Birmingham and did a degree in Business Economics. I joined the Rank Organisation after I graduated. At that time they had a division making televisions and radios. I worked down in Plymouth working on TVs. I got involved with designing some of the very first remote controls. After that I went to Intel and worked on microprocessors there. After that I went to Samsung in London. I did that for quite a few years.

### **Impact**

125. I struggled through school after the incident with Father Aiden. There's no doubt that I was much more introverted after it happened. I was already aware, having been to

other boarding schools, that you had to keep your head below the parapet.

However, I was a bit more aware of that after the incident. I was a lot more wary of monks generally.

126. After I left the school, went to college and got married I told my wife that I had been beaten at school. I didn't tell her about the sexual abuse until years later. I used to get these awful dreams about it from time to time. I started drinking. My drinking got worse and worse. I became an alcoholic.
127. My wife picked up on something that I hadn't realised at the time. I had a very weird experience when Anne Robinson came on the Weakest Link one time. Now I understand it was because she was dressed in long black clothing. I see the connection because that was what the monks wore. It must have been a vision or a flashback or something.
128. Various counsellors have mentioned how institutionalised it seems I became. When I returned to Fort Augustus after a couple of years in Sydney it all seemed to come straight back. There was a little bit of self-preservation there as well.

### **Treatment / support**

129. I initially went to the NHS for treatment for my drinking but it was decided that it wasn't working. I ultimately ended up in rehab three times because of my drinking. I was originally in The Priory in Roehampton in Surrey. I was then in Clouds in Wiltshire. I then went to the St Thomas's Fund in Hove. That was a secondary rehabilitation clinic. I was residential but given more freedom to go out. I was there for about twelve weeks. I hadn't really talked about the abuse I had suffered up until that point. After about three weeks I opened up to my counsellor there. He said that he didn't think I had a problem with alcohol and referred me to a counsellor who dealt with abuse.

130. I started my counselling directly concerning my abuse at Fort Augustus in 1997 or 1998. That was with a counsellor called Caroline. That was the first time that I had really discussed what had happened. The dreams I was having at that time were very particular to the incident in the dark room. A lot of other things were a blur. Caroline at that time thought that I had deliberately “blurred things.” In time, through my counselling, other things came out. Things like the number of times I was beaten with the cane and why I was beaten. Those weren’t things that I really dwelled on or have dwelled on since.
131. Caroline dragged it out of me. She was good at getting every last detail out of me. I came to realise that I wasn’t really alone. She told me that I must tell my wife. I did that. The explosion that I thought would come didn’t happen. My wife was really glad that I told her because it helped her understand one or two things. After getting my counselling with Caroline, and speaking with my wife, I haven’t had a drink for fourteen years.
132. I have had a lot of cognitive behavioural therapy, or CBT, with another doctor called Claire. That has helped me with how to handle things. The CBT has taught me not to go and get a drink of gin but do something else instead. It’s all obvious things to do, things I didn’t think of doing when I was going through these things.

### **Reporting of Abuse after leaving Fort Augustus**

133. In 2013 I was packing my bag to go and see my son in Galashiels. There was a knock at my door. The guy standing there was a reporter called Mark Daly from the BBC. He had found me through talking to other people at the school and looking at the electoral rolls. He wanted to talk about my abuse at Fort Augustus. I was gobsmacked. He started telling me about the abuse he had heard of in the school. He showed me a photograph of a load of monks and asked me to pick out the one who abused me. I pointed to Father Aiden straight away. Mark Daly must have been looking for some sort of credibility in the whole thing.



134. I was then asked whether I would like to go to Glasgow and be in a programme which became "Sins of Our Fathers" about the abuse in Fort Augustus. I agreed to that. The programme aired either in May or June 2013. Apparently, after the programme came out, a whole load of people came forward to the BBC saying that they had also been abused whilst they were at Fort Augustus. The documentary went on to win a BAFTA. After going public about it all there was so much sympathy and belief that started to come out from people like my neighbours. I just didn't have that before then.
135. After the programme came out I waited for an apology from the Benedictines. My very last words on the programme had been "all I really want is someone to say sorry." I felt that the Benedictines could have easily then apologised to me. They could have easily got to me through Mark Daly. Nothing happened though. I then tried to get hold of Richard Yeo. He was the Abbot President of the Benedictines in England. He had been in the programme. I was essentially stonewalled. When he replied he said that he hadn't been able to find me. That was a load of rubbish. No apology was given. They could have easily got in contact with me to apologise. Indeed they even could have got in contact with me to call me a liar. They didn't even do that though.
136. I was in conversation with two of the other people who had become involved in the programme. They had gone to their solicitors and said that I should go to a solicitor. I went to a solicitor in November 2013. My solicitor got in contact with the Order. He raised a claim. In reply, I got a letter from Richard Yeo saying that he couldn't speak to me because I had gone to solicitors. That was on 9 December 2013.
137. A few months ago, in 2018, the Benedictines suddenly popped up again. I guess that was around about the time that the Inquiry started to get inquisitive. They offered me £45,000. My solicitor said that I was never going to get an apology and advised that I took the money. I told him that I wasn't going to shut up if I took it. My solicitor said that I didn't have to. I accepted the offer through my solicitor. I would have much preferred to have received an apology from The Benedictines admitting

they were wrong.. I think they offered the money because they were looking for some sort of damage limitation. I don't know how that will work for them.

138. The producer of "Sins of Our Fathers", Murdoch Rogers, has since told me that they want to do a follow up. He obviously saw a lot of the other people who were abused and he can't talk to me about them. He said that the church's conduct has been appalling and that he doesn't believe that they have actually been brought to book.
139. I haven't been in touch with the police to report what happened at any point.

### **Records**

140. The school had records for everything. They had books on everything. Your records followed you right the way through school. They had a pocket money book, a book for when you lost things, a punishment book and a book for attending the dentist or the nurse. I know Father **MKT** and Father **MFG** kept records in a book for when you were punished. I remember that if it was the headmaster who was punishing you, you had to give him a little chit for your housemaster that would be placed in his book. There were also termly reports, which you had to give to your parents, and an annual report which was posted out to your parents.

### *Records kept by me since leaving Fort Augustus*

141. A lot of the records I had have got lost in my travels. I have some of my termly reports. There was a yearbook style of thing called "The Corbie." They came out once a term. I still have some of those. A Corbie is a raven. The raven holding the holy Eucharist in its beak was the symbol and badge of Fort Augustus. I think it was something to do with St Benedict. I believe it's a story similar to Robert the Bruce and the spider in the cave. I have some photographs of Father Aiden with my mother, sister and my dad. The photographs were taken in late August 1961. They are from when I was just about to start.

*Records obtained through my solicitor*

142. I approached the Benedictines through my solicitor to obtain my records. I eventually got some of my records from their archives in Edinburgh. I believe that the Scottish archives are held in the basement of the Edinburgh Catholic Cathedral.
143. The Benedictines provided a photocopied version of my records. What interests me is not what has been given but what is missing. I'm absolutely certain that there are records that the Benedictines have not provided to my solicitor. My solicitor is certain of that also. He has looked through my records and said that there are parts that don't flow. He has said that there is definitely some stuff missing. I don't know where the missing records have gone. My solicitors couldn't find them. I know that he chased the punishment books in particular but couldn't recover them.

**Learning about Father Aiden in adult life**

144. In adult life I learnt more about Father Aiden. Most of what I have learnt is through my involvement with "Sins of Our Fathers" and through meeting up with other people who had been abused. Des Austin, another former pupil who had been abused at Fort Augustus, got in contact with me via email in 2001. He was one of the people I have spoken with about what happened.
145. Father Aiden was originally based in Sydney [REDACTED] [REDACTED] accused of interference by altar boys. He was then sent to Fort Augustus as a novice master. He was then suspected of abusing some of the young novices. Those novices would have been eighteen or nineteen year olds. Father Aiden was then sent to Carlekemp. Whilst he was in Carlekemp he definitely abused boys. I know that two of the parents of boys there separately complained to the school about his behaviour. I learned that through my involvement with the producer, Murdoch Rogers, of "Sins of Our Fathers." He showed me letters that substantiated that. Father Aiden was then sent back to Fort Augustus and put on the teaching staff. I have been told that after the incident with me he was sent to a girls school run by

nuns in Lancashire somewhere. At that time girls couldn't be altar boys so local boys used to come in to do that. I have been read out over the phone the content of copies of letters that the BBC has that are dated about late 1964. One is from a local GP down there saying something along the lines of "he can't stay down here. We can't handle this." The other letter was from the Mother Superior of the convent. That letter roughly says the same thing.

146. Father Aiden was then sent back to Fort Augustus. After that he was then sent back to Australia. That was in the early seventies. In Australia he continued to abuse altar boys, as far as I know, until he died. I know that because I have heard about those accusations through my involvement with the documentary.

#### **Lessons to be learnt**

147. I think they now have external inspections of most institutions. If Fort Augustus had had external inspections there would have been a lot more care taken to prevent the sort of things that happened to me. I am pretty certain of that.
148. I think boarding schools, by their nature, are very closed. That is particularly so if they are in a remote area like Fort Augustus. I really think that boarding schools should have a permanent external person present who is not responsible to the school. That person should be there to oversee the conduct of the teachers and the staff there. They should be there to oversee the welfare of the pupils.
149. I had no one to turn to other than the headmaster. If I had a problem the only real people I could have spoken to were the teachers. If the problem concerned that teacher then that was it. Looking back, I would have maybe liked an external person that I could have spoken to.

### Final thoughts

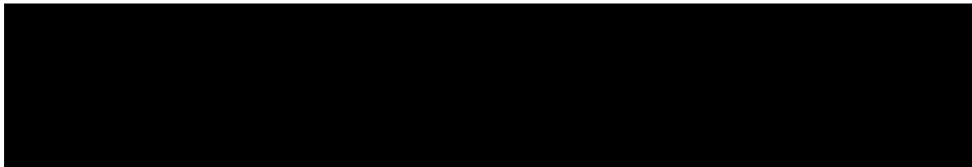
150. Not everyone who goes to a boarding school has a bad experience. We all suffered the beatings. I suppose the sexual abuse overshadowed everything for me. I put all the beatings aside. I thought it was just something that mostly happened to others. If the sexual abuse hadn't have happened to me I wouldn't be speaking to the Inquiry.
151. I think you have to make a very big differentiation between the school itself and the abuse that went on in the school. The school itself was run quite nicely. There were good times and there were bad times. There were times it was really good to be there with your friends. There were other times when it didn't work out. Apart for the one incident with Father Aiden I didn't really have too bad a time at school. As a boarding school it was just like any other to me. I think that because of Fort Augustus's location and the way it was used by the English Benedictines it made it stick out. It wasn't the only institution to suffer from problems.
152. It would be wrong to go as far to say that I was in an institution like a prison or the army. It is sort of like that but not like that at the same time. It is difficult to explain. You are in an institution that has some similarities. People who go to prison, or are in the army, soon find that there are certain things that they need to be wary of and shouldn't do. In that way going to a boarding school is much the same. The regimentation and routines do have certain inevitable parallels.
153. There was a certain inevitability in realising that you just don't buck the system. It would have been difficult for a day pupil to buck their school never mind someone who was sleeping there as well.
154. Having suffered from an addiction myself and learning more about Father Aiden's history in adult life I think that he had some form of addiction. What I don't understand is why the catholic church, and the English Benedictines in particular, moved Father Aiden around when they knew this problem existed. I have been told that the same thing happened with other priests as well.

155. I have a friend who is a priest. He said that I didn't understand the conflict between canon law and temporal law. He said that it was a bit like if you had a gunman you knew was going to kill a number of children in a school. You have an option to kill him before he goes on to do what you know he is going to do. It is a sin to kill the gunman but if you are killing him to save thirty lives then it is not. This priest said that, in the situation I was in, "the powers that be" in the church would say that not reporting the crime committed against me would be far less serious than allowing the reputation of the church to be damaged. I think that was why the police were not involved. At that time both rape and homosexuality was a crime. They had a law and a duty to report it to the police but they didn't. They were more concerned with protecting the church. I find that hard to take.
156. The daft thing is that if they had gone to the police at the time in my particular case Father Aiden would have been prosecuted. If he had then been found guilty it would have all died. The whole situation would have been dealt with and it wouldn't have continued. Father Aiden wouldn't have gone on to abuse other boys. However, because the Benedictines didn't do that, forty years on, we are still talking about what happened. You can't keep things quiet. I don't know why they ever thought that they could keep it quiet. Mark Daly has said to me that the Benedictines probably don't care. I don't believe that. I think they do.
157. The interesting bit for me is why Father Aiden abused me and Father [REDACTED] MEW, who has been shown up to be an abuser, was so nice and kind to me. I think he might have known what had happened. From reading up on other people's experiences with Father [REDACTED] MEW their experiences are nothing like what happened to me with Father Aiden. I wonder whether Father [REDACTED] MEW thought that, as one of the priests who had that particular leaning, Father Aiden had perhaps gone too far. I've thought about that a lot but I really don't know. I've ended up with more questions than answers really.
158. It is extremely difficult dealing with a powerful institution like the catholic church. I wouldn't even know where to begin with doing it. They've had over a thousand years

practice with dealing with people. I'll never know whether the way in which I have handled things has been the best way. However, I couldn't just sit and do nothing.

159. Quieting and hushing things up appears to have been a common theme in my dealings with the catholic church. It's the absence of a reaction and the "head in the sand" response from the church which is the thing that really gets to me. I used to get a lot more annoyed than I do now. It does still annoy me though. I still think that if they were sincere then the catholic church or the English Benedictines would have apologised by now. They still have a lot to answer to for what went on. I thought that when I thought I was alone. I triply think that now that I have heard about other people who suffered similar things.

160. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.



Dated..... 17 / 01 / 2019 .....