

## **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

**Eric McBAY**

Support person present: No

1. My name is Eric William McBay. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1946. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### **Early employment history**

2. I left school at the age of sixteen. I was bright enough at school, but I didn't apply myself. I never served an apprenticeship. I started working in motor engineering. I did that for about four years. I then moved from London to Birmingham to work in heavy engineering. I did that for several years and was promoted to assistant works manager. I didn't like that as I preferred to work on the floor. I hardly ever had to attend job interviews. There was a shortage of tool setters and engineers at that time. I then moved in to sales, which I did for a couple of years, before becoming self-employed and running a garage.
3. At that time my cousin, Elsie, and her husband, Alistair Murdoch were house parents at Quarriers Village in Bridge of Weir. My wife, Carol, and I would visit them on holiday. They were in charge of cottage 10. We met the kids there and became more and more interested in childcare.

## **Quarriers Village, Bridge of Weir (1973 – 1981 or 1982)**

### *Recruitment*

4. We decided we wanted to move to Scotland. We wanted away from the Midlands. We thought [REDACTED] would have a better mainstream education in Scotland at that time. My family was from Scotland originally and we liked it there. Alistair had a word with Joe Mortimer of Quarriers and then we had an informal meeting with him. We decided to apply to become house parents there.
5. We then received a letter from Joe Mortimer which appeared to say that we weren't suitable. I'd never been refused a job in my life and I contacted Mr Mortimer to find out why. He said it wasn't that we weren't suitable candidates, but there were no positions available at that time. We had a further meeting with Joe Mortimer followed by a final meeting with Doctor Davidson, one of the general directors. I can't remember what took place at that meeting. I think Carol and I nodded and smiled at the right times as he was speaking for his benefit and we couldn't understand his accent.
6. I think Mr Mortimer was the main guy. He asked us questions about our hobbies and interests. We were asked about our family ties and any connections with the local area. We were asked why we were interested in the role. We were also asked about our Christian beliefs, as there was a very strong emphasis on that. Carol and I were both church goers but we weren't members of an official church.
7. I recall Mr Mortimer saying that my wife was the first person to wear a mini skirt at an interview. We were amongst the youngest house parents at Quarriers. Our son, [REDACTED] was three years old at the time. We were asked for references and for details of our employment history. We had to provide personal references. I think I named my brother in law, who was a policeman, as a reference. We were certainly aware that there were ongoing checks.
8. Carol and I had no prior experience of working in childcare. I had no formal qualifications. It seemed there was more focus on people who showed a keen interest

and were minded to get things right for the children. A lot of the emphasis was on our own upbringings, our relationships with siblings and our contact with relatives.

9. Shortly after that, we received a letter to say that an opening had become available at Quarriers. We sold the garage and house in Birmingham and moved to Quarriers around January 1973.

#### *Staff arrangements*

10. Before Carol and I arrived, the house parents in charge of cottage 6 had been the Wilsons. We inherited their staff, the cottage aunty and the cleaner. The cleaner came from Port Glasgow. She would bring the kids sweeties. We had two cleaners whilst we were there and they were both excellent. They were homely, nice people and they were part of the team. They would stay for their lunch and talk to the kids.
11. There were three or four aunties over the years I spent at cottage 6. I think one was called Maureen. She may have been the aunty that the children nicknamed "Bawler" because she was always shouting. Carol encouraged the aunties to discuss children and bring ideas to her. They worked alongside us. We had one day off a week when the aunty would be in charge.
12. Carol and I were joint house parents. I think our contract stated the day we started, our salaries and the pension provision. It was just one sheet of paper. There was no staff manual or written directions. I think we were told what time to get children to school, when the laundry days were and how to order food. Everything was verbal. There was nothing in writing that I can recall. We picked things up as we went along. If we didn't know what to do, we asked other cottage parents.
13. Alistair Murdoch and [REDACTED] were very approachable. [REDACTED] door was never shut. There were 526 children in Quarriers. George prided himself in knowing every child by face and by name.

14. The general directors were Doctor Minto and Doctor Davidson. I felt as though they were beyond us. Doctor Minto knew me, but he didn't know anything about me. On one occasion, I had to drive him to Dumfries. I let him rabble on about the cars Quarriers were buying being a waste of money. He was sitting in my Rover. I just let him carry on. He didn't know what he was talking about. He didn't know what was happening at the grassroots and he didn't know the staff. I realise that senior staff can't know everything that's happening, but it was still a small enough place that he could have known the staff better. I don't remember ever seeing him. He was there, but I never had any contact with him.
15. One of the other directors was Bill Dunbar. The children used to call him Buffalo Bill. I think he dealt with the internal and external post. That was all he was in my mind. He had no power. He was a house father, but I had no need to respect him. He still lives in the village to this day. He didn't come across as management. He gave Carol a row for having a picnic on the grass and said the grass was to be seen, not for having picnics on. On a couple of occasions, our personal post arrived open.
16. I remember a man called Mike Laxton being at Quarriers. He had been seconded from the Scottish Office. I don't know what his role was, but I think he was a great advocate for progression. He certainly looked after Carol's interests when she handed in her notice. Quarriers was shrinking at the time and she was asked to become a cottage aunty, as she had a place to live outside the village. That would have been a demotion for her, having been a house parent for many years. She handed in her notice and Bill Dunbar accepted it and said she could leave in a month's time. Mike didn't want Quarriers to lose her. He arranged for her to go to Southannan School, where I was already working at that time.
17. There were monthly staff meetings which took place in Sommerville Hall. They tended to revolve around mince and tatties and numbers of toilet roll sheets, minor things rather than procedure. However, Carol introduced regular staff meetings within our cottage team. We talked about long and short term plans for each child.

18. Whatever people were suited to, they tended to work in that role. My role wasn't one hundred percent in childcare. Because of my engineering background, I was sent to the laundry. I maintained the large machines there. I also assisted with transport, hospital runs and delivering the bread. I would go to East Kilbride to pick up donations.
  19. After assisting Carol with the children at breakfast time, I would go to the laundry. Some house fathers worked in one of the stores. Others went to their own work out with the village. I would return to the cottage to have lunch with the children. In the evenings, I did things with the kids and helped them with homework.
  20. I knew a lot of children from other cottages as well as our own. As a house father, I had to carry out park duty. That entailed wandering around the village about once a month, checking there were no fights on the football pitch, nobody was leaving the village, nobody was damaging the grounds and that kind of thing. I quite enjoyed wandering around the village on summer evenings.
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21. I think each cottage had a social worker from within Quarriers assigned to it. He or she would pop in to discuss different children. I think Alistair Murdoch and George Gill oversaw those social workers and Joe Mortimer was above them. I think the social worker assigned to cottage 6 was called Rob Murphy. Not all the children had local authority social workers in addition to Rob. If children had been placed in Quarriers voluntarily by their parents, they didn't have a social worker from the outside.

### *Training*

22. In 1975, Carol and I attended a training course at Langside College. We weren't directed to do the course by Quarriers. It was the first formal training either of us had received. It was an in-service study course. I think we went there on day release. There were quite a lot of essays. I remember sitting up all night doing the essays, as I always left things till the last minute.

23. It was good course. In hindsight, it should have happened immediately upon or prior to us starting at Quarriers. We shouldn't have been able to walk in and be house parents to fourteen kids.
24. We went to see some children's homes to see how they operated. I can't remember the names of all the places. We went to a Barnardo's home in Watford or Hemel Hempstead. We spent the whole day there. It was a very similar set up to Quarriers. We went to Toddhill training farm, which was for people with severe learning disabilities. A boy of sixteen was sent there from Quarriers, which shouldn't have happened. He was put in with old men. It was a horrible place with big dormitories.
25. I remember children's rights being discussed at Langside College. We were already aware of this subject as we had books about it and spoke to George Gill and Rob Murphy about it. We had looked into that ourselves because we wanted to do things right. It wasn't pushed at us. We saw our role as a calling, not a profession. I think that's what Joe Mortimer wanted, rather than people who saw being a house parent as a profession.
26. We also discussed physical abuse of children at Langside, but not sexual abuse. One lecturer did raise the issue of sexual aggression, but other than that nothing of a sexual nature was discussed. We discussed the signs of physical abuse in care, at home or in foster care. We were told to look for children flinching, backing off quickly or drawing away into a corner. We were told to look for bruises.

*Children in cottage 6*

27. There were around fourteen boys and girls in cottage 6. I think there were more boys than girls, but I can't remember the exact ratio. The youngest child was about four and the eldest sixteen. I remember some of the children. We had contact with some of the families after they left, but not many. I tended to think we'd done our job properly when we didn't hear from the children we'd looked after. It was natural for them not to need us, to be doing things on their own.

28. We had [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. There was a big family called the [REDACTED]. We had some contact with the [REDACTED] QLK [REDACTED] after they left. We also had [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was a bit of a tearaway. He joined the army after leaving Quarriers. We contacted his commanding officer and told him that he could be easily led. On pay day, his commanding officer got him to babysit his children to keep him out of bother. [REDACTED] would come to visit us when he was on leave from Northern Ireland or Germany.

*First impressions*

29. When we arrived at the village, I think we spent a month training at other units. We stayed with my cousin in cottage 10 for a week or thereabouts. After that, the house parents at cottage 31 left so I think we went there. We were then allocated cottage number 6. After that, Carol and I were on our own. There wasn't a lot of guidance or support. It was there if you shouted loudly enough for it, but we never did. We just got on with it.
30. My first impression of Quarriers was that it seemed quite Victorian. When we reached cottage 6, we would give the kids a shout at breakfast time. When they didn't come downstairs, Carol went up to the bedrooms. All of the children were standing next to their beds, waiting for bed inspection. Carol went along with that for a while, but she felt that making beds shouldn't be part of the child's role. She told them just to leave it and she would make the beds when they had gone to school. The beds would be inspected by matron, who insisted upon hospital corners. Carol felt that was our responsibility, not the children's.
31. Things appeared to be quite regimented when we arrived. The children had chores, like cleaning and polishing shoes and peeling potatoes for eighteen. I didn't think that was appropriate and I found it quite distressing.

## **Children's Routine at Cottage 6, Quarriers Village**

### *Mornings and bedtime*

32. Carol and I got up at the same time. We would give the kids a shout, then help them with breakfast and to get ready for school. Some of the children went to school out with the village. We would make sure they caught the bus or transport. There was a mini bus that would collect staff members' children and take them to school.
33. The cottage had a main dormitory for girls and a main dormitory for boys. There were also two smaller bedrooms for two or three children. The boys dormitory was a big, long room. When we arrived, they had no privacy. We built wardrobes with chests of drawers and placed them sideways between the beds. That way, when you walked down the centre of the dormitory, it was as if the boys had their own rooms to the left and right.
34. We thought eight or nine boys in one bedroom was too much, but there was no way round the fabric of the building. Our son tended to vacate his bedroom and go into the dormitory with the boys. They loved it. One of the boys would use [REDACTED] room.

### *Mealtimes / Food*

35. The meals were prepared in the kitchen. There were five tables in the dining room. We ate our meals with the kids. Staff and children ate the same food. At lunch time, there would be around eighteen people in the dining room. The cleaner would eat her lunch with us as well. She was part of the team. We tried to make things as normal as possible for the children. If a child wanted to talk to the cleaner about something, that was fine. She'd tell us what the child had said and we would try to help if there was a problem.
36. The food was generally very good and I think the kids were happy with it. There weren't menu choices, but if a child didn't like something, he or she didn't have to eat it. My son was a fussy eater and I wouldn't expect another kid to eat something he didn't



like. I had a contact with Mr Kipling cakes so we were given lots of cakes which were almost out of date. We were able to supply cakes to the rest of the village.

37. I used to cut bread and jam sandwiches with a pastry cutter and put them in the deep fat fryer. We would have them at supper time. They tasted a bit like donuts and the kids often asked to have those. The older kids could make their own snacks if they wanted. They made things like porridge. We told them that was fine, as long as they cleared up after themselves.

### *Washing / bathing*

38. The bathroom in cottage 6 had damp so it was renovated a lot. I think there were showers. It looked modern. There were rows of sinks and toilets. There were separate toilets for boys and girls and a separate staff toilet. The children ended up using the staff toilet. We didn't want to tell kids to go downstairs to the toilet when there was a toilet just outside their door.
39. I'm not sure how often the children had showers. It was mainly Carol who dealt with that kind of thing. I think the kids might have showered every night, more if they were muddy from football.

### *School*

40. Bob McLaren was the headmaster of the school within Quarriers. If he felt that a child would do better in a mainstream school, he met with the child's social worker and house parents. I think the brighter children tended to go outside to school. If Carol and I thought a child should go outside for school, we could also approach the school. The child would need extra funding for uniform so we had to justify it, but it was encouraged by social workers and the education department.
41. Carol used to attend parents nights and school meetings for children who went to outside schools. I don't think there was a parents' evening at the Quarriers school. I think we just got a written report or we were called in if a child had been unruly. If we

were told that a child had been misbehaving at school, we would try to talk to the child and explain that it was wrong.

42. The children used our old sitting room as a quiet space to do their homework. They could be on their own if they wanted, as long as they were safe. Some of the children liked to study. I remember one child in particular who spent a lot of time studying.
43. [REDACTED] QLM was the oldest child in cottage 6. He was sixteen and he couldn't read or write when we arrived. He used to sit with Carol every night. She would practice reading newspaper headlines with him. He did well and became a plumber after he left Quarriers.

#### *Leisure time*

44. We were encouraged to follow any interests we might have and share them with the children. I bought my son a train set on the day he was born. I started a railway club. We met one or two nights a week in one of the cottage buildings. I also liked playing football so I would do that with the kids. Carol and I both enjoyed picnics. I remember Bill Dunbar told us off for having a picnic on the grass.
45. Each child had a locker for their own stuff, but I don't think they had keys. There were also hampers full of toys. I had a contact in London who brought us lots of toys. We had two televisions in the cottage. We also had a radio and my sound system. I would play my music loudly, much to the displeasure of the other units. The kids would turn the volume up when I played Queen and other music that I liked.
46. There was a library in the village. I'm not sure how often it was open, but it was a building on the left hand side, just after you came through the main gate. We also had lots books in our cottage. The children could read in our sitting room, which became a quiet room, or upstairs in their beds.
47. I used to take the older boys camping. I also used to make trollies or bogies with the children. I would scrounge for stuff and get wheels. We used to race two or three kids.

Some of the other cottages started to do the same thing and we would have intra cottage races.

48. There were organised clubs within Quarriers, but I can't remember what they all were. QLL was in the choir. Some of the children went to clubs outside. I remember one girl was really good at gymnastics so we encouraged her to go to a club outside of the village.
49. Albion Motors used to collect money for the children. It was used if they needed money for special outings, like to the cinema. Every year, Albion Motors organised a whole day out for the children.
50. Some of the older children had friends in Linwood, especially if they went out to school. They were allowed to meet up with their friends, as long as they came back at a set time. I don't remember that being abused. The kids were pretty good.

### *Chores*

51. When we arrived at cottage 6, I remember there being talk of a pot boy, who was responsible for cleaning all the pots. I think other units might still have had children doing chores. It seemed to me that everything had been very regimented in cottage 6 prior to our arrival. I remember there was a back shed after you went through the playroom. I remember seeing a kid in the shed taking eyes out and peeling potatoes. To see a kid doing that was wrong. He shouldn't have been peeling potatoes for eighteen, nineteen people. It was alien to us. The children also polished all the shoes for children, staff and children of staff. They weren't slaves, they were children. I found all of that a little bit distressing.
52. If a kid wanted to help with the chores, he or she could. They all loved polishing the long corridors. My son loved doing that too. They would slide up and down. However, there were no specific jobs or chores for the kids. Jobs were done by the staff. I don't know what happened in other units. I heard snippets about children being on bathroom

duties, but I never witnessed it. I think a kid might have told me that somebody had had to clean the toilet.

### *Trips / Holidays*

53. Carol and I took the children from our cottage down to London for three or four days. Our brother in law was a policeman so the children stayed with various police friends of his. We took them to see the sights, like Buckingham Palace. There was no procedure for vetting or monitoring the people the kids stayed with. We just asked George Gill or Joe Mortimer and it was left to our judgement, rightly or wrongly.
54. We also went to Turnberry for holidays. The whole cottage would move down there. Carol and I tried to get the kids nice clothes for their holidays. I remember going to Girvan for the evening. I also took the kids on beach walks. I got permission to go the lighthouse and have a midnight feast. It was fun for me too.

### *Religious instruction*

55. When we arrived, the children had to go to church twice on a Sunday. The children had to wear their Sunday best. The girls wore gloves and the boys wore kilts. Carol and I stopped that and the children in our cottage only had to go once. We encouraged bible studies if a child was interested in that, but we didn't force it. I think there might have been some remarks after staff meetings such as, "Our children don't want to go to church in the evenings because your children aren't going."

### *Birthdays, Christmas and special occasions*

56. Christmas was magic. A lot of the time, my family would visit from London. My parents and my sister and her kids would come. They would stay locally and visit the cottage. The cottage 6 children were spoiled. They got money to spend and Carol would take them out individually to spend their Christmas money. Carol and I bought them toys, my parents bought them toys and my sister bought them toys. I've always loved Christmas.

57. One kid, [REDACTED], was given a new bike. I remember seeing her pushing it along. I asked her what she was doing and she said she was taking it to the dump because it had a puncture. I helped her to fix it. We tried to get bikes for all the kids.
58. On a child's birthday, we took him or her out and bought presents. The child would have a birthday tea with a cake and candles. We would organise party games. Children were also given a present by Quarriers.
59. Carol and I liked to make Easter special as well. On Halloween, we dooked for apples. We did these things for ourselves as well as the children. We had a son and we wanted to make these days special for him. We probably spent more money on our son, but we tried to make these occasions special for all the children.

*Visits and inspections*

60. I think contact agreements were made by the child's social worker along with Carol. Family contact was arranged by Carol. Some parents kept in contact with the children. Some were in prison. Carol had to chase up some of the parents about contact. If contact was weekly or fortnightly, Carol tried to make sure it occurred. She thought it was important. If something went wrong, Carol would follow it up herself. I recall one little girl had been taught how to masturbate by her mother. Carol went in at the deep end when I wouldn't have had the diplomacy to have spoken to the woman.
61. The kids' family members would come to the cottage. Some stayed there for the day. Others would go out into the local area, if they were allowed to. Some children went home for the weekends.
62. Carol would make food parcels for kids going home if she knew there were problems. She had the blessing of Quarriers for that kind of thing. It was quite progressive. I can't remember anything being stopped. Joe Mortimer was quite young. Doctor Minto and Doctor Davidson didn't stop anything. The management were supportive of Carol.

63. Some children had no contact at all with their family. There was a befriending scheme in Quarriers. I remember befrienders coming to visit the cottage, but I'm not sure how that worked. I'm not sure if children went away overnight to their befrienders' homes.
64. My dad lived nearby in Houston. It was my dad who got the kids the Mr Kipling cakes. He used to come and build snowmen with the kids in winter time. I don't remember there being a visitor book or log.
65. I think internal inspections were ongoing, but they were mainly physical inspections of the cottage. I remember a man called [REDACTED] QFE who came to inspect the building. I think he had a [REDACTED]. We used to call him, [REDACTED] QFE. He would call the furniture store if we needed new items of furniture. There were also monthly fire alarms. They timed how long it took everybody to get out and the time was logged. I can't recall any external inspections.
66. I do recall that a field social worker or Mr Murphy said that something was wrong in our cottage. Carol got a letter about it and insisted on seeing Joe Mortimer. Whatever it was, Joe Mortimer had followed it up but I don't know what it was all about.
67. If a child had a complaint about me or Carol, he or she could speak to other staff members or the cottage social worker or an external social worker. The children were left alone with their social workers. Carol or I might have been present for ten minutes, but then we left. Generally, the social workers took children into Bridge of Weir. Carol insisted that the local authority social workers came to the village at least once a month. I know Carol had to chase some of them up. I don't know if that happened elsewhere at Quarriers, but she certainly enforced that in her unit.
68. The children who were placed voluntarily didn't have an external social worker. The Quarriers social worker visited at least once a month. He was friendly and the children got on well with him. I think he spent time with the kids on their own, but I wasn't usually at home for social work visits as I would be in the laundry or doing transport. Joe Mortimer would walk past and come in for a chat, but that wasn't a regular, formal thing. He had his office and that was where he was based.

*Review of care/moving on from Quarriers*

69. Carol arranged monthly planning meetings and weekly staff meetings within our cottage. At the meetings, staff would discuss whether the time had come for a child to move on to a foster home or whether to bring a child in from the baby homes. It was better if children came when they were younger. I remember one child coming from the baby homes to be with siblings. At the meetings, Carol and the other staff also discussed setting up or withdrawing family contact.
70. Carol would be involved in fostering children out, if she thought they were ready. She would meet prospective foster parents several times and if she thought the placement wouldn't work she would say so. For example, if she thought the foster parents were too old. The [redacted] QLK [redacted] were supposed to be fostered, but because of the size of the family they couldn't be fostered together. The practice was that family groups should be kept together. [redacted] QLL [redacted] had moved on to the hostel at Quarriers. The younger children looked up to her so they didn't want to be fostered out.
71. Fostering wasn't always successful. Sometimes, the child didn't like it. I remember one child wrecking a house because he wanted to be back at Quarriers. Not many of our kids were fostered, but it did work for some of them.
72. There was a hostel at Quarriers for older children. Gavin Roy ran it and he was superb. He had a great attitude with the kids. Kids would go there when they were about fifteen. Gavin would talk the to the child and their social worker. He tried to find them local jobs or sometimes work in Glasgow. Some children didn't go to the hostel. They either went home or they went straight to lodgings. Carol and the child's field social worker would help them find supported lodgings.
73. We tried to give the children in our care independent living skills. We would talk to them about budgeting and about their expectations for life when they left. We didn't want them to feel they were just thrown out. I've never known a child to approach Quarriers for help and be turned away. I felt we had a good team at that time and it was important to support the children as they moved on. Carol left home when she

was sixteen. She knew what the kids would need and what counselling was required. I think the training we did at Langside College also helped with that.

### *Healthcare*

74. If a child needed a doctor, the cottage aunty or house parent would take him or her. I think the children went for regular health checks or medical reviews, but that was Carol's remit. Within Quarriers, there was a matron, matron McCreath, and a dentist. It also had its own hospital but I don't think that was running any more. We could get cough medicine and things like that from the matron.
75. The children were seen by the local doctor from Kilmacolm, Doctor Wooten. He was fantastic with the kids. He was our doctor as well. He had five Dalmatian dogs. There wasn't one bit of leather left in his car because the dogs had eaten it all. He came into the village a lot. The kids were always pleased to see him.
76. I remember a child ran into the side of my car. She hit her knee on the wheel arch and went over the top. The bone was sticking out of her leg. Carol called an ambulance. When we were waiting for the ambulance to arrive, matron McCreath came over and said, "It's not your job to call an ambulance. You should have come to me first." She cancelled the ambulance and called one herself. The girl's house parents went on holiday the day after the accident. Carol and I were supposed to be going on holiday too, but we felt guilty. We cancelled our holiday so we could visit the girl in hospital every evening.
77. The children didn't like going to the dentist. I remember one child, [REDACTED] had a temper tantrum and broke the dentist's drill. He ripped it out of the ground. Our son didn't like him either. He swore at the dentist and bit his arm.
78. When we first arrived at Quarriers, there was designated driver who would do the hospital runs if a child needed to attend an appointment. Carol felt it was important that we took our own children to hospital. Before, things had been more centralised.



Carol thought the adult should have a link to the child attending hospital. Other house parents started to do the same and it became a more general practice.

79. I remember one boy in our care, [REDACTED] had been badly [REDACTED] by his parents. He had a terrible [REDACTED] which had been provided by the NHS. Carol and Mr Mortimer went privately to get him a better [REDACTED]. There was provision for that kind of thing. In the end, [REDACTED] decided not to wear a [REDACTED] and just accepted that he had a [REDACTED]
80. No children died in my time at Quarriers, so I'm not sure how death was dealt with. We did have children who were told by their father that their mother had died. She hadn't died, but he had beaten her up and was in jail for doing so.

#### *Family life of house parents*

81. I think [REDACTED] got more of our time than the other children. He wasn't in care and there were more of the other children. We didn't want our own child to suffer. [REDACTED] talks happily of his childhood. He thought he was a Quarriers kid. He didn't want to be treated differently. He became the youngest life boy there. He mixed happily with the other children. We did withdraw him to take him on family holidays, but we usually took one of his friends from Quarriers. I think a boy called [REDACTED] came on holiday with us when we went away in the caravan.
82. There was a staff sitting room and a children's sitting room. We moved most of our furniture into the children's sitting room. We liked being with the kids. It was alien to us to demarcate our room and their room. Eventually, the children used our sitting room. It ended up being a quiet room where they could do homework and things like that.

#### *Bed Wetting*

83. When we first arrived, the bed wetters stripped their beds in front of all the other children. We felt sorry for them, standing in front of all the other children in their wet pyjamas. We put a stop to that. There were three or four bed wetters. Carol would tell

them just to make their beds as normal, go and have a shower and then the staff would strip the bed and clean the sheets when the children were at school. When the children became more relaxed, they stopped wetting the bed.

### *Discipline*

84. I don't remember there being any guidance in relation to discipline. I can't remember it being talked about. I did know that some houses were stricter than ours. We brought our own experiences to the cottage and dealt with things that way. We had guidelines for the children in our cottage, based on our own beliefs, but they weren't written down.
85. If a child did something wrong, such as get caught stealing, we might say that he couldn't go out for football or send him to bed half an hour early. He would be grounded for a couple of nights. We told the children not to hurt each other or damage each other's property. Any punishment would be logged by Carol or the cottage aunty. The kids knew we were fair. We told them what our expectations were. They were happy with that.
86. One or two of the kids were shoplifters. We couldn't really control it, apart from stopping them going out. Woolworths was always a target. They had a policy of calling the police. I remember being present when a policeman asked a boy why he had stolen a Mars Bar. He said he was hungry and the policeman shoved the Mars Bar down the boy's throat. I had to intervene.
87. If a child was caught stealing, we would talk to the child about it but there wasn't a punishment that would stop a kid stealing. We couldn't lock them up. We couldn't stop their money or they would just steal something else. It all came down to talk. That was what I had been used to growing up, if I did something wrong. I was never smacked. I had a happy childhood. We were new to it all, especially dealing with teenagers.
88. We were too insular to be aware of discipline practices in other cottages. We were friends with some of the other house parents, but not all of them. I do remember being with Bob Durrent, who was the house father in the cottage next door to us. The children

lined up to show him that their nails, hands and feet were clean. The children would line up to have toothpaste dispensed onto their toothbrushes. He was a lot older than us so I just thought it was something they did.

### **Abuse at Quarriers Village**

89. I categorically never saw a child being physically abused at Quarriers, either by an adult or another child. I did hear something about [redacted] QAJ [redacted] although I'm not sure whether it was said in jest, [redacted] QAJ [redacted] has a remedy. Smother a child's bottom in Vaseline, smack their bum and then put them in a bath and it doesn't show." [redacted] QAJ [redacted] had left by the time we started. That was the only thing I ever heard. I can't remember where I heard it, but it stuck in my mind.
90. I heard that house parents might be strict and bed time was bed time and that was it, but nothing I could class as abuse, either physical or sexual, while I was there. If a child was unhappy about some kind of treatment within our unit, he or she could speak to myself, Carol, the cottage aunty, the cleaner, Rob Murphy, George Gill or Joe Mortimer. There were a lot of office staff as well who were quite approachable. The children got to know them and could have approached them as well. There was never any barrier. Any of those people's doors were always open. I never heard of a kid being prevented from talking to an adult. I never got the feeling a child was frightened to speak to me as an adult.
91. If a child had said something untoward was happening, I'm not aware of there being any procedure in place. If I had heard a child say such thing, I would have discussed it with Carol. I would then have reported it immediately to George Gill or, if George wasn't available, Joe Mortimer. I wouldn't have gone to Doctor Minto or Doctor Davidson because I didn't know them.
92. Although I wasn't aware of any abuse taking place when I was at Quarriers, I've heard things since about people who have been prosecuted. I can remember one such person, John Porteous. I knew John fairly well. He was a fire officer. I think he was

involved in the Life Boys or the Boys Brigade. I knew his wife, [REDACTED] his children and where he lived, but that was it. We didn't have any other contact and I didn't know him socially. I never saw anything in relation to him that raised any suspicion at the time.

93. If John Porteous abused a child, I think somebody let the child down. The child wasn't given somebody like myself whom he or she could trust. If it had happened to a child in our unit, I like to think that the child would have felt secure enough to say, "Uncle Eric, John Porteous has suggested I do this."
94. In hindsight, I feel that whichever unit the children abused by Porteous were in has failed them. They weren't given the confidence to go to a person within that unit to say that they were being abused. I don't know how old those children were, but they should have had those skills or felt enough trust by that time. I think it comes down to trust. I hope our children trusted us enough. John Porteous came into our unit once a month, but he was never alone with any of the children in our unit that I can recall.
95. I was aware that a lady called Ruth Wallace was involved in a court case after I left. She was a big, tall woman. I'd heard that she was involved in some sort of abuse. Personally, I wouldn't have believed it if somebody had told me she was involved in abuse but I would've followed it up. There was never any mention of abuse whilst we were there and I didn't see or hear of anything in relation to Ruth Wallace that would have aroused any suspicion.
96. I knew of Alexander or Sandy Wilson. We took over his unit, but I didn't know him or his wife. We heard snippets of the past from the children. For example, they had to stand by their bed for inspections. I got the feeling that Mr and Mrs Wilson were dictatorial, but I wasn't aware of any physical abuse. I wasn't even aware he had been prosecuted, but I did hear stories that he was very strict.
97. I'm in contact with a man called [REDACTED] QLN who was in Quarriers as a child. He is now an electrician and has his own company. He said that Bill Dunbar and his wife used more soap for bad language than they did for cleaning. I asked [REDACTED] QLN what he meant by

that and he said they would shove soap in children's mouths. **QLN** is still fond of Bill Dunbar. He goes and visits him.

98. I can't remember an adult taking a special interest in a particular child. If I had been aware of something like that, I would've acted upon it. I've been asked how children might have been physically and sexually abused at Quarriers and people were unaware of it. In the case of John Porteous and Sandy Wilson, they were family members. It's very hard to break into things occurring within a family and accepted by a family. If it was happening in my family and Carol colluded with me, it would be very hard to break into that. I don't know how you do it or how you stop it. If people want to hide it, they can hide it.

### **Reporting of abuse at Quarriers Village**

99. In that period of time, I hope most of the staff at Quarriers were confident enough and modern enough in their outlook to act upon reports of abuse. There were older staff members there. Maybe a young cottage aunty in those cottages wouldn't have felt brave enough to approach a cottage father in his sixties in relation to an allegation against him. I don't know.
100. If a child did report something, I had complete faith in the staff in our unit. I felt we were all modern enough in our thinking and worldly enough. We'd read stories about kids being abused and needing somebody talk to and we would have encouraged the child to talk and listen to him or her. If a child had made an allegation against me, I think the staff member would have taken it on board and approached Carol or vice versa. They would know the door was open to speak to somebody.
101. There's truth in the assertion that the house parents were fairly autonomous at that time. However, I knew the management at the time and I would categorically say George Gill and Joe Mortimer would act if something untoward was reported to them. Joe is now deceased. I had great respect for George's openness and fairness. He was

an advocate for the child. As far as George was concerned, the child always came first.

102. I don't know how the general directors might have responded to a report of abuse. I think the general directors were aloof. Doctor Davidson and Doctor Minto were beyond us.

103. If there had been a report of abuse to the staff that I knew, it would have been actioned. There certainly wouldn't have been any cover up. I would have anticipated that if a child was physically or sexually abused by a staff member, that staff member would have been told to leave the village immediately. I would expect the police to be called. I would have called the police in. I had the confidence to do that. I don't think the management would have tried to stop me at the time. There was no talk of keeping things in house.

104. I've never been subject to any complaint, civil claim or police inquiry. Nobody has ever come forward to say they suspect something of me. I've never given a statement to the police or anybody else about my time at Quarriers Village. I was never approached to give a statement about John Porteous. In hindsight, Carol and I should have been asked if he had ever been in the cottage and had access to the children.

105. I did have to go to court in relation to [REDACTED] QFX [REDACTED] I don't remember being approached by the police or defence lawyers, but for some reason I had to go to court. I don't remember actually standing up and giving evidence. George was called on the same day. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I said I was unaware of anything untoward in relation to him. He had a nice wife and two lovely daughters. I saw him as a family man. I had no reason to suspect anything at all. Evidently, it was a girl in our unit who he was meant to have abused. To this day, I think she would have shouted loudly if something had happened.

106. I couldn't believe that of [REDACTED] QFX [REDACTED] He had too much going for him and he didn't come across to me as somebody who would do that. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I

remember thinking it was ludicrous that QFX should have been accused of this. If I had been told he had done something, I would have listened and I would have done something about it, but I still wouldn't have believed it at that point.

107. I know the allegations ruined QFX life. I've never seen a man go downhill so fast. He was a bit younger than me. He was a good looking lad, but when I saw him he was gaunt and grey. It was probably just the worry, guilty or innocent. He had a new partner by the time I met him.

### **Records at Quarriers Village**

108. Carol had a folder she wrote up every night about every child. She would note whether they had had a good day, whether they wanted to go home and that kind of thing. She would also note down if they appeared distressed after a home visit, together with their physical state. I think each child had his or her own handwritten, loose leaf page.
109. I don't think Quarriers required records to be kept, but Carol decided it was a good thing to do. When the social worker, Rob Murphy, came in, Carol and him would sit down together and prepare written reports on each child. I'm not sure if the cottage records were separate to his records. I think punishments were logged in the same book, along with visitors, on a daily basis. Everything was handwritten.
110. I think George Gill must have come to look at the records, as he was up to date on them. The folder would be kept in the cottage. I don't know what happened to the folder after I left Quarriers. When a child left cottage 6, I think his or her records went to Homelea. If the child went to the hostel, the records also went to Homelea as it had its own system for records.
111. QLN an electrician we came across in Largs, told us that he was in Quarriers as a child. He asked Carol to help him with his records. He went up to get them and they were just handed to him. Half of the records were obliterated. Carol said she wouldn't

go through them with him, but she put them in some kind of order for him. At two or three years of age, he was classed as, "A wee fly boy." I call him the fly man now.

### **Lessons to be learned from Quarriers Village**

112. I can't understand why abuse wasn't picked up. People should have been aware of children being taken away or an adult taking a particular interest a child. John Porteous was called the Beast of the Belfry. He was taking children into a private place of his. Somebody should have been aware that was happening. If he had asked to take one of our children to clean or ring the bells, I would be wondering what was in it for the child? No adult should be able to withdraw a kid into a situation like that without some form of vetting.
113. Individuals have to take responsibility. You can't just let these things go on. I've been involved with children I knew were at risk of sexual abuse in Southannan. I did something about it. Fortunately, something else was done about it afterwards. Everybody has to take that on board. Generally, these things don't happen without warning. I had special relationships with children, but they were different. If a kid is being withdrawn from situations, somebody should be seeing it.
114. It has to come into education about childcare. If one of our kids at Quarriers had been withdrawn from our care and I thought something wasn't right, I would like to think I would have done something about it. People need to be taught the warning signs. Nobody taught me, but the knowledge was within me. There are plenty of things that act as warnings. You get to know people, their make-up and their general behaviour. Not everybody has that skill and people need to be trained.

### **Southannan School, Fairlie, North Ayrshire (1981 or 1982 – 1995)**

115. One weekend around 1981 or 1982, Southannan was short staffed. Southannan was also run by Quarriers. George Gill asked me to go down and help for the weekend. I



never returned to Bridge of Weir. It never occurred to anybody to send me back. It suited me. I enjoyed the work. There was never anything official to say that I was no longer a house parent. I don't remember a new contract or anything like that.

116. I became a residential social worker at Southannan. Prior to starting work there, I had never been there before. I knew very little about it, but I knew it was for emotionally damaged, maladjusted children. Southannan was a fantastic place to interact with children and use the skills and experience I'd developed with a lot of support. My first impressions were excellent and it was a place I wanted to be.
117. I was there until 1995 when I retired through ill health and was pensioned off. I probably stopped working there in 1994 because I was off work long term with coxsackievirus. It's a virus that takes you down and can either leave the system in weeks, months or years. At first, they thought I had ME but coxsackievirus was eventually diagnosed after numerous blood tests. It can be passed on by spit or inhaling spit. I was spat on quite a few times by kids, so it's quite possible I picked it up from one of them.
118. Southannan was an old family house with lots of grounds. There were a couple of cottages within the grounds. It was a fantastic place for children and for adults who wanted to be children. It had a burn running through it. George and I dug the burn out to make a pond and put a death slide up. You wouldn't be able to do that now due to risk factors. Children had the opportunity to express themselves, to get over their problems and to build trust in adults. To my mind, Southannan was the place to be for these kinds of children.
119. The school and the sleeping areas were in the same building. Downstairs, there were four classrooms, a dining room, office accommodation, a soft play room and stores. Upstairs there were bedrooms and a big communal play room with a TV. I also started a room for the older children to encourage independent living schools.
120. Southannan was not a secure unit. The door was locked up at night, but it was bolted from the inside. If a child wanted to escape, he or she could. It was a trust thing. Nothing was ever locked. The onus was on the child wanting to be there.

*Staff arrangements*

121. My job title at Southannan was residential social worker. George Gill was the principal at Southannan and Joe Broussard was deputy principal. Janet Long and Ian Lamb were management, but I don't know what their titles were. There was another lady in management called Edwina. There was also a secretary. I tended to ask Joe for advice on educational matters and George for advice about a child's home life.
122. In my role, I was a key worker for two children. Everything to do with those children came through me. There were other people the child could go to, but education or social work would come to me. I could get advice from Joe or George. I never made any major decisions about a child without consulting upper management. For example, if I was considering sending a child to outside school.
123. My day to day routine involved helping children get up and ready for school and ensuring they were ready for anybody coming in. It was really just about controlling the day for the child. We worked as a big team. There was a strong overlap with the teachers. We went in the classrooms with the children and acted as support for the teachers. The teachers had to stay in the school one night a month so they'd know how the children were acting in the evening.
124. We also worked with external social workers because there was a strong input from them. George and Joe made sure field social workers did their side of the input and carried on working on the home situation. We did home visits and hospital visits with the children. I also met with outside schools if there were any problems.
125. After a couple of years, I became a senior social worker at Southannan. I had no qualifications, so it was just a title with extra responsibility. George was a great believer in qualifications, but he said they just showed an ability to learn. He said there were people out there could do the job but they weren't qualified. A few of us were promoted to senior because we had put a lot into the school. When I became a senior social worker, I entered the on call system and other staff would ask for advice. I remained

a key worker for two children. My additional staff responsibilities were transport, fire, pocket money.

126. The staff didn't live in at Southannan. There was a cottage on the grounds which was used for a staff member, but it wasn't even in sight of the main house. Carol and I lived there for a short time whilst we looked for a house locally. It was a horrible place, full of mice.
127. I think guidance for staff was all written down in the philosophy. We were certainly trained to be of one mind. There was an expectation that we dealt with things in accordance with that philosophy. Some people didn't like it and they left. I think one or two were asked to leave. It was a residential school where you gave a lot of yourself.
128. I was always happy with the way things were dealt with at Southannan. There was an open culture. At the staff meetings, people could bring up any concerns they had. We were free to talk about whatever we wanted, even if the item wasn't on the agenda. There was a good overlap of shifts so we could share with each other what had happened to the children. We had a handover period at the end of each shift. There was a lot of communication amongst the staff.

### *Training*

129. We were given a lot of in house training about how to manage children's behaviour. Joe Broussard, George Gill, Janet Long and Ian Lamb were very much on the ball. They did a lot of work finding out how to deal with emotionally disturbed and maladjusted children. We learned how to deal with the behaviour and how it would affect us. We learned how to immediately respond to a child and when it was the correct time to withdraw a child from a situation.
130. There was a lot of training. No staff member was brought in and just expected to do the job. The more experienced staff would tail a new staff member and that staff member became your responsibility. George would ask you to keep an eye on that person for a couple of weeks and give him or her pointers.

131. We were trained in a restraint method which I think was called therapeutic intervention. It involved making physical contact with a child and taking them to the ground with you. Joe taught new members of staff how to do it. He would demonstrate with another adult.
132. The training wasn't solely in house. We did have other people come in to give us lectures. I can't remember specifics, but I know other agencies were brought in to give us skills. I do remember doctors and nurses coming in to tell us about diabetes because we had a child with diabetes. The scale of support on offer to the staff at Southannan was tremendous. If we wanted something, it would be found. I never felt alone. If I felt something was out of my depth, there was always somebody within the unit who had the correct skills.
133. We didn't gain any certificates or formal qualifications as a result of the training, it was just in house. We were encouraged to go to college if we wanted to and some staff members did go. I'm not academic so I chose not to go. The ethos of Southannan was to use people's strengths and help them with their weaknesses.

#### *Children at Southannan*

134. There were about sixteen to twenty children at Southannan. They were mainly boys, but I think there were four or five girls. The youngest child was about eight and the oldest sixteen. There were no day pupils when I was there, it was purely residential. Most of the children were placed by the local authority in Strathclyde. Some came from North Ayrshire.
135. Generally, social workers would contact us to ask if we had a place. If I had a vacancy as a key worker, I would have an initial meeting with the social worker along with Joe or George. I would then have a couple of meetings with the child. I would make sure the child knew what they were coming into and what the expectations were. It was important that the child wanted to be there. I don't remember any children saying that they didn't want to come. What they saw, they liked. They saw that there were decent people and they could have fun.

136. Education departments would also approach Southannan about placing children. One child came from a hospital in Dumfries where he had been having treatment for a mental health issue. The hospital was the wrong place for him. He had been placed in the hospital by his mother as a panic measure. I went to the hospital with George Gill and visited the boy. We were told that he could not communicate unless through a computer. The boy said to us, "All they want to do is prove that I'm mad and I'm not." When he moved to Southannan, he turned out to be a very well balanced boy. Some of the children were placed by Children's Hearings and some were there on a voluntary basis. The children had to meet the criteria.
137. Children who came to Southannan tended to have behaviour problems. Some displayed temper tantrums, ran away or had a tendency to violence. We had children with a full spectrum of challenging educational and emotional behaviour. I remember we had one hundred broken windows in one day. The children went on the rampage. Children were placed in Southannan based on individual need so they weren't placed with siblings. However, there was a brother and sister who came from Cardross children's home. They both had strong needs and they didn't want to be separated.
138. It could be very rewarding if you got a little breakthrough. We shared the good times with the children. For example, I remember coming across a boy crying for the first time. It was fantastic because nobody had ever seen him cry before. It was an opening. He was upset because a member of staff had taken the micky out of his private parts.
139. The child actually got himself referred to Seafeld Children's Hospital in Ayr about his small willy. I made a joke of it and told him, "You may have a small willy, [REDACTED] but you've got the biggest pair of balls I've ever seen." It sounds ludicrous, but it gave the boy a lot of self-esteem. I put a lot of work in with [REDACTED] He's a [REDACTED] today. He was one example of the sort of child in Southannan. He had himself put into care. He knew there was more for him in care than at home.
140. One girl came from Quarriers to Southannan. [REDACTED] wanted to follow Carol. She made sure she got herself placed in Southannan by displaying behaviour that warranted her being moved. There were two boys who came from Quarriers, Bridge

of Weir. They were called [REDACTED] QLO [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] QLP [REDACTED]

There may have been more, but I can't remember their names.

141. If the children had a complaint, they were told that they didn't have to tell their key workers. The children knew that every adult there was an advocate for the child. Every child knew that every single adult in that building was a key person, not just the key worker. Every adult was there for the common good of that child. Not one child was there to be punished. We told them that from the start. Southannan was not a secure unit.

### **Children's Routine at Southannan**

#### *Mornings and bedtime*

142. There were single bedrooms and rooms for two people. I don't think any of the bedrooms were bigger than that. Due to fire regulations, all the doors had to have locks and self-closures fitted on them. The kids didn't like locks and a lot of them hated doors being shut. We got verbal permission from the fire officer to have wedges on the doors, on condition that we would get the kids out and kick away all the wedges if there was a fire.
143. At night time, the children were supervised by night staff. I think there were three night staff who came in. They were on a waking shift. On top of that, there would be an on call person. Six or seven of us provided on call cover. We were back up if the night staff needed support. For example, if a child wouldn't settle or wanted to attack another child. We would help out if a child was playing up or if a child had ran away or there was police contact. We were called in a lot. If you were on call, you knew there was a good chance you would be called between 10.30 at night and 1 in the morning. It did our relationship with the kids some good. If something had happened the night before, we could talk to them the next day. They would learn that we weren't there to punish them and it helped to build trust.

*Mealtimes / Food*

144. The food was all cooked on the premises. It was good quality food. The chef actually moved to become the groundsman and his deputy took on his job. They were both involved in the running of the school. At the weekends, the care staff took over the role of the cooking. We would ask the children what they wanted. If I was on duty on a Sunday, the kids would ask for a roast because I did a homemade roast with Yorkshire puddings.
145. We would occasionally bring in suppers as a treat. If one of the kids wanted a curry, we would go and get one. There was never a shortage of money, but we had to justify that we had spent a bit extra.
146. We all came to eat at slightly different times. Sometimes, it might take a while to find a child if he or she was playing out in the woods. We would generally try and eat at the same time.
147. If a child didn't like food, we put something else on. He or she didn't have to eat it. There was girl who had celiac disease so she had her own menu. We had children who couldn't eat certain food because of their reaction to it. We had one boy who reacted to smoked fish. He knew it and would grab it off people's plates and gulp it down. The next thing we knew, he would be on top of a fir tree. It was as if he getting the effects of glue. You had to watch kids' diets.
148. If a child had a special need, he or she was catered for. There was a boy who was diabetic so we had to put things on for him and make sure he had his own drinks readily available. Everything was catered for.

*Washing / bathing*

149. There was no specific bathing routine. The kids loved taking baths. They flooded the place. A lot of our play was dirty play. We would be out in the woods or in the burn and pond. The kids knew they had to have a bath straight afterwards. Generally, they were

okay at that. Some of them tended to look a bit scruffy. We would try and get them to put their good clothes on, but if they were comfortable we let them be.

### *School*

150. The school ran within normal school hours. There was a play time and then the children went back into school. Quite often, children weren't ready to go back into school. Their social workers would stay with them or go into the classroom with them.
151. Sometimes, school inspectors didn't understand. I remember on one occasion, a child was sitting on top of a filing cabinet, reading. The inspector asked why he was up there reading a book. We told him that the child felt secure. Nobody was going to annoy him and it was his own space. I think it was quite a forward thinking philosophy at Southannan.

### *Leisure time*

152. The children did a lot of sport. They loved swimming. If we went swimming, there was an expectation that the care staff would go swimming too. There was no point in putting the kids in by themselves. The staff members had the whistle blown at us more often than the kids. We'd have them standing on our shoulders and that wasn't allowed.
153. One of the staff was heavily into horse riding so she encouraged the kids to do that. There were a lot of physical activities available to them. It was fun for the child and the adult. I feel it's good for children to see adults enjoying the fun. You should bring yourself to their level. You shouldn't make the child come to your level every time, you should go down to their level in play. That's what we tried to do.
154. The children didn't always want to go into class. It was shut during the evening. My wife, Carol, had the keys. She would open the classroom and she would fill it every night. They would beg her to open the classroom. They just related to her. I remember Carol being in the class room with ten children on her own. Some would be doing school work and others would be making beads and doing crafts.



155. The children would help the cleaners if they were in the mood to. Some of them liked to help the groundsman dig potatoes and plant stuff. They liked to clean vehicles and work on vehicles. While I was there, I had a couple of old cars that I was stripping down for the kids. They all had their own little tool boxes. One of the boys had his own boiler suit. We had to cut the sleeves because he was so small. All of these activities helped us to get to know the kids and the kids to get to know us.

### *Holidays and trips*

156. Some children went home for the holidays. We also had a full summer time programme of camping activities, caravanning and that kind of thing. Hotels couldn't really be done because of the children's behavioural issues. We would take them out at night for something to eat in a café. Generally, café owners knew us and would give us our own separate area where we could contain things. Otherwise, it could be mayhem for other people and it wouldn't be fair.

157. During the school term, we would take the children away at weekends. We'd take them on educational trips during the day with both care staff and teaching staff. We took them to places like New Lanark. They loved it. It was my niche with another teacher. We took about five at a time. As long as there was education involved as well, we could justify it.

### *Personal possessions*

158. Children would break into things. If they had something special, a toy or a radio, they would ask a staff member to look after it. If they didn't, they knew there was a risk things could get damaged. If a child was in a temper tantrum, things could be kicked over and smashed. Personal possessions didn't last long.
159. I used to put my key children's personal possessions in my locker. One of my children had a bike, so I kept it in the staff locker room. There were plenty of secure places, but if the kids kept things with them there was a danger they would get damaged.

160. The kids would get regular pocket money. Some of them saved for holidays. Some of them could go out on their own. For others, if it was pocket money night, we would take them into Fairlie or Largs and do whatever they wanted. Others would save up to go to Irvine or Glasgow.

*Religious instruction*

161. There was no expectation that a child had to attend church. It was there if they wanted it. We talked about it, but it was on the fringes. In retrospect, I presume it was in the curriculum.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

162. Birthdays had to be made special for the child. We had to do something in the class room and try and do something at tea time. We might take them out somewhere special. We made sure the child got birthday cards. It was the key worker's responsibility.
163. At Christmas time, the staff went on holiday for a few days so the care staff did all the cooking. Whatever the children wanted, we would make.

*Healthcare*

164. Two of the care staff were trained nurses. They weren't on shift all the time, but they were there to pick up on things. The staff were all aware of what could happen. We had a good relationship with the local doctors in Southannan. They knew what we were about and they wouldn't pass any judgement if the bedrooms were in a state or damaged.
165. I had one child who was in hospital after a car accident and he contracted meningitis. The doctors would come in regularly. We were on the ball with medication. There was a log of medication given out.

*Visits / Inspections*

166. Family members were encouraged to visit children at Southannan. All the staff knew who they were. There would always be staff members around, checking everything was happening as it should be. We encouraged the children to make regular contact with their families. They would make phone calls at night time. We generally sat with the children when they were on the phone, but we always asked them whether or not they wanted to be on their own.
167. We would also get the odd person from the local community turn up with donations. Sometimes, those people wanted to see around. We would give them guided tours around the school and let them say hello to a couple of kids. We would try and make sure somebody guarded their cars, just in case the kids tried to damage them.
168. We would insist that the children's social workers visited at least once a month. We would expect them, where possible, to take the child out and spend time with the child alone. The child then had another person to speak to about problems in the school or at home that we hadn't picked up on. We felt that other agencies were just as important as us. They weren't a threat. We welcomed it and, in fact, demanded it. Placing a child in Southannan was expensive. The social workers had to play their part. If a child wanted something that we couldn't provide, the child felt free to express that to the social workers.
169. There was no oversight from Quarriers that I can recall. Southannan seemed quite insular. Joe Broussard's boss would have been Joe Mortimer, but he never came to visit. Mike Laxton, who had been seconded to Quarriers from the Scottish Office, came down but I don't know what his role was.
170. We attended Children's Hearings with children. No child was put in Southannan and forgotten about. The children were free to express their views about what they wanted. I did a lot of home visits. I broke up a relationship between a couple once. The child was at serious risk if he went home, so I told his mum that he wouldn't go home unless she broke the relationship off. I told her it was likely her other son would be taken into

care as well. In the end, she did end the relationship and the boy was able to return home.

171. I think the school was inspected annually. I think some of the older inspectors were ready to retire when they were given the job. They didn't understand Southannan. It didn't fit in their book. They didn't think it was education. The school inspectors did speak to the social workers as well as the teachers. They understood that it was a residential school and there was a big overlap.
172. The inspections involved a physical inspection of the place and talking to staff from groundsman, kitchen, care staff, teachers through to management. All the staff knew what the inspectors were there for and were encouraged to talk openly. If we felt we had a problem that management couldn't solve, we might raise it with the inspectors. We might ask for more funding.
173. The inspectors spoke to the children as well. Some of them would sit down and talk to children at their desks. We never lingered if a child was speaking to an inspector. We felt confident enough not to eavesdrop.
174. I think the inspections lasted three or four days to a week. Some of them might have been shorter. The school was open to any inspection. On occasion, there would be a follow up if the inspector had made recommendations. Otherwise, they would phone George or Joe to check recommendations had been implemented. I can't remember any particular examples, but sometimes they thought we were a bit lax when a child wasn't in class. We would explain that some of the children couldn't emotionally deal with being in class for the usual required time. They didn't always agree with us at the time, but generally they agreed afterwards that what we were doing was right.

#### *Access to children*

175. We could all have access to the children unsupervised, but we always had to tell another staff member where we were and who we were with. The other staff member would hover. If a child was in a temper tantrum, we would tell another staff member

and ask them to sit outside the room until we came out. Nobody was left on his or her own without another staff member being able to hear what was going on.

176. This practice also took place at night time. It was a waking night shift. If I was called in to bring a child back at night time, I would tell another staff member that I had brought the child back and that I was going to spend some time talking to him. I would ask that staff member to sit outside. The door was always open. We were never in a room with the door shut. That was the practice for all staff, from top to bottom. Anybody could sit and talk to a child if there was a need, but they would never be left alone.
177. I think the only time I was ever alone with a child would be if the child was being taken to a hospital appointment or on a special outing to spend clothing money. That was the practice throughout my time at Southannan. I don't think it was written down, but it was very strongly enforced. The practice was for the protection of both the child and the member of staff.

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### *Running away*

178. Southannan wasn't secure. Nothing was locked. If a child wanted to run away, he or she could run away. The onus was on a child wanting to be there. Some of them did run away, but generally they wanted to come back.
179. If I was on call and a child ran away, I'd get a phone call late at night. I would have a look around the locality if the staff hadn't done so already. I would then start making phone calls. The police would be called. If they turned up at home and the parents contacted us, I would go up to the house. Occasionally, the child would be left in the house, as long as it was a place of safety. There was no point escalating things further.
180. If the police found the child, we would go to the police station. I can't think of a case when a child had to be kept in the police station all night long. Whatever time of the day or night it was, we would go and collect him.

181. We would talk to the children about why they had ran away. We would ask them what had upset them and why they felt the need to go. Some of them just liked the thrill of running away. Others might have had bad news from the family. For example, they might have been told they couldn't go home for the weekend. They might be upset and want out. We always tried to find out what they were running away from or running to. We tried to follow it up as best we could.

*Managing challenging behaviour*

182. If a child behaved violently, the philosophy was that he was allowed to display that behaviour. We taught the children that they couldn't damage another child's property, hurt another child or hurt themselves. As soon as we saw signs of a child displaying violent behaviour, we immediately withdrew him from the situation to protect the child and the other children. If a child was putting himself or others at serious risk, the child was told it wasn't up for debate and we wouldn't allow it to happen. The kids accepted that. They might have had a temper tantrum, but it had to be that way.
183. We were given training on how to restrain a child. There was a right and a wrong way to do it. Some people didn't have the skills, but there was always one of us who could deal with it. Some staff didn't have the strength. Fifteen, sixteen year old boys could be very strong. It is difficult to restrain them without actually hurting them.
184. I think the restraint method used was called therapeutic intervention. It was almost as if we were cuddling the child. We would cuddle them from behind and take the child down. We would go down first and the child would go down with us. We never pinned a child to the floor. Any bully can do that, but the child isn't being protected in the true sense. Through the physical contact, the child was able to relate to the adult. The child felt secure.
185. Children would relate to certain people doing the restraint. Sometimes, I'd go into a room and see a child being restrained. I'd take over because I knew I had that kind of relationship with the child. I would say, "It's Eric that's got you now." Sometimes, other people took a child off me.

186. The only danger was head butting. The child didn't get hurt because we didn't have to grip hard. It was restrictive to the child because they couldn't break away from us. 99 times out of 100 they wanted that. They physically felt better to be restrained. They knew they weren't going to get hurt. They knew it was wrong to hurt another child. Most of the time they didn't want to hurt other children because they were all the best of friends.
187. If a child was physically restrained, it was logged. If you didn't do it yourself, there was a coordinator on duty every shift. The coordinator's role was to keep a log on every child. They would log what the child had done and what his behaviour had been. If a child didn't go.
188. My skill was getting children off the roof. I was scared of heights. The children believed I would go up on the roof after them. If a child was up on the roof, the staff would call me up and ask me to come in. There was a trust element. If I was telling them to come down, they would come down because they knew I wouldn't punish them. I would go and sit on the roof for two hours. If the time was right, I would suggest we go back down.
189. The children weren't punished for running away. I never saw a child punished for bad behaviour. If a child was abusive to me, I would deal with it rather than tell the child I would tell his or her key worker later. We saw it through to the end. I saw staff members who had finished their shifts at 10pm stay there till all hours of the morning. They weren't getting paid over time. George had a good team that was there for the right purpose.
190. We did have children who went into people's lockers at the swimming pool and flushed their belongings down the toilet. Those children would be told they couldn't go swimming for the next week and that what they had done was wrong. We told them that we would be putting them at risk if we took them, as the people who had had their possessions stolen might wonder why they weren't being punished. We explained to the children in quite an adult way why they weren't being taken. They saw it as a fun privilege to be taken swimming. If they abused it, they understood that they might not

be taken for the next week. However, it had to be justified. That kind of thing had to be recorded and a reason given.

191. Behaviour was dealt with through counselling. We would talk the behaviour through with the child, right from where it started to where it finished and where it should have gone. We would discuss how they should have dealt with the situation. We would tell them to try and deal with things themselves and if they couldn't, go and find help rather than run away from the situation. The onus was very much on the child to feel secure enough in their relationships within the school so that they could talk about their problems.
192. Because it wasn't a secure unit, children were going home. We could only control things so far. Most of the control did come through relationships. We would explain our expectations to the child. For everybody that built up a relationship with a child, it could be so rewarding for the child and the adult. If that happened, it was fantastic. Southannan was working.
193. We had quite a lot of contact with the police. If a child was breaking into houses in the neighbourhood, the police would attend. We saw them quite often and they would ask if we knew the child, what it was about, that sort of thing. I wasn't involved in anything that went to court. We would talk to the police, the police would do their report and that was usually the end of the matter.
194. No children died whilst I was at Southannan. [REDACTED] QLO [REDACTED] committed suicide after he left . There was another child who died when I was on long term sick leave. I'm not sure whether he'd left Southannan or not. [REDACTED] was a great kid. His mother couldn't cope. She was an alcoholic herself. He would go three steps forward and then if he went to his elder brother, he went five steps back. His brother was a bad influence on him, but we couldn't do anything about that.
195. [REDACTED] was a tearaway. He loved stealing cars. He was involved in car chases when I was at Southannan. I told him not to let himself down at the weekends. I would say to him that if he wanted to get up to nonsense, he should wait until I was on shift. He was



as good as gold when I was on shift. That was how relationships worked. I think it could have worked long term, but he was killed after sniffing glue when I was off. I felt I should've been told about it, but I wasn't. I mouthed off about that at the time.

*Discharge from Southannan*

196. When children moved on from Southannan, it would be done in conjunction with the local authority. We also tried to prepare children for independent living. We started up a unit in the community to help the children learn independent living skills. It was a council house for three boys. They still attended Southannan School for their education but they went back to the house at the end of the day. We gave them more leeway to go into Largs and meet friends. We did work on budgeting, how things would affect them and what jobs they would do. We tried to get them ready for leaving or going into supported lodgings.
197. We wanted them to know how much a loaf of bread cost and how much money we received per child per day. They were given an allowance every week and they had to plan how they wanted to use that money. If they blew it on the first day, that was unfortunate. We tried to teach them that was a fact of life.
198. The independent living unit was called Keppelburn. The children who went there were almost ready to leave Southannan. The staff had a sleep-in duty. There was a staff bedroom, so once the kids had settled you went to bed. There was only one staff member on duty when I was there. Because it was in its infancy, George Gill used to come and sit with me every night. I think there may have been two staff members on duty after I left.
199. When children left, a lot of them went home or into supported lodgings in the local area. We would find lodgings with an understanding landlady. She would give them support and phone us. I would see them into supported lodgings or home.

## Abuse at Southannan

200. On one occasion, I came across a boy crying in the bushes. Nobody had ever seen that boy cry before. He was crying because a staff member said he had a small willy. I reported the staff member to George. George dealt with it and very soon afterwards, the staff member left. I think his Christian name as [REDACTED]
201. On another occasion, I saw a restraint being used wrongly by another residential social worker, [REDACTED] QFK [REDACTED]. To my mind, he was hurting the child, not restraining the child. [REDACTED] QFK [REDACTED] called it the Indian death lock. It was something to do with pinning the child's legs and if the child moved, it hurt. I can't remember the name of the child, but I could see that he was in pain. I immediately stopped it, took the child away and reported it to George, who followed it up. I told George the next morning and George asked me to send [REDACTED] QFK [REDACTED] to his office. I don't know what action George took and I never asked, but [REDACTED] QFK [REDACTED] left soon afterwards. I can't remember whether or not I recorded that incident in the log book.
202. I did see one boy who I thought was sexually abusing another boy. He had his trousers down and he was on top of him. I don't know whether they were having intercourse or not, but the older boy, [REDACTED] QLT [REDACTED] jumped off. [REDACTED] QLT [REDACTED] was the perpetrator and the younger boy's surname was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] QLT [REDACTED] was about fourteen and the other boy was twelve or thirteen, but a lot smaller. It got to me a little bit. I didn't like it.
203. If there had been other incidents of abuse, I think I would have known. There was no culture of children behaving in a sexual way towards each other at Southannan. If there had been warning signs, I think we would have picked up on them.
204. I think the incidents I witnessed were unusual. The other staff members would have talked about it if things like that were happening. There was no hidden culture amongst the staff to allow things like that to go on. There was nothing swept under the carpet.

### **Reporting of abuse at Southannan**

205. If we saw anything untoward, we went to our immediate senior. On any occasion I had to intervene with another staff member, I told the staff member that I was going to do it. I would then report it to George.
206. When I came across [REDACTED] QLT sexually abusing another boy, I reported it to Joe Broussard and George Gill. Both the young people received counselling. I don't think there was any repetition. [REDACTED] QLT was aware that I'd reported it, but he didn't hold any kind of grudge against me. I would imagine that incident was logged by management. I doubt that incident was reported to the police. I don't think it was a criminal thing that was going on. I don't know whether the young boy was consenting or not.
207. If something like that happened to one of my key children, I would have discussed it with the social worker from the local authority. I can't speak for other key workers. I was always quite happy with the way things were dealt with.
208. I never reported anything at Southannan to the police, nor did I give a statement to the police at any time. As far as I'm aware, I've never been the subject of any kind of complaint myself.

### **Records at Southannan**

209. The behaviour of each child was logged on each shift. If you arrived in the morning, you would be able to read the night shift log. It might say the child had slept through the night or had been restless or the on call worker had been called due to behaviour. We followed it up with the children, either by positive encouragement or discussion with the child. Behaviour had to be addressed so it was important it was logged.
210. I think each child had a page. We wrote things down and I think they might have been typed up by the secretary. All of the records were kept in a locked room. I remember

a child coming back to ask what had happened on a certain day. I was able to go into the records room and find the log book for that day. The records were kept in the old wine cellar of the house. There was a thick, steel door.

211. The log book was a folder with a page for each child. They were all dated. It was primarily a behavioural record. Everything was in that book, including visits, medication, punishments. If a child complained about a staff member, it would be recorded in the log book. George or Joe read the logs every morning. I was party to doing it with them on several occasions.
  212. In addition to the log books, each child had a folder. The folder contained all important information and records about the child. There would be records of social work meetings and hospital records in that folder. There was also information about home life or possibly fostering. The children had access to their folders. They could sit down and discuss them. Nothing was hidden from them.
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213. When a child left, the records were kept in the cupboard with the rest of the records. The child could have access to them if they wanted, but I can't remember a child asking for access to his or her records.

### **Lessons to be learned from Southannan**

214. Southannan was running successfully when I was there. It was a happy place. I think things changed when Southannan moved to Seafeld, but I had left by that time. My wife still worked there and she didn't like the way things were set up.
215. In hindsight, there should have been two adults present when the unit for independent living was set up. I now feel that kind of risk was unacceptable. I think there should be more education that abuse happens. Adults are abusers. Children are abusers. The risk factors should be removed.

216. 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.

QBG

Signed.....

Dated.....

14/9/2018