

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

DKK

Support person present: No.

1. My name is DKK. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1977. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into boarding school

2. My mum and dad are [REDACTED], although they are divorced now and my mum's surname is now [REDACTED]. I was born in [REDACTED] in Ayrshire and I've got two younger sisters who are [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I think [REDACTED] is three or four years younger than me and [REDACTED] is six or seven years younger. They are both teachers now.
3. Originally we lived in Girvan where my family worked at the Grants distillery there, before we moved up to Ardrossan, which is where my mother's family were all from. My father worked at ICI and we lived there until I was in primary five, I think, when I broke my collar bone at school and missed about a year of school.
4. I would have been about nine years old at that time and, after my dad got a job in the oil industry in Saudi Arabia, we all moved there. We stayed at Yanbu on the Red Sea and I went into primary six at an American school called Yanbu International School. I enjoyed school at Yanbu, the only difficulties I had were around spelling and English because I had gone from a Scottish school to an American one.

5. The following year, along with the rest of my friends and classmates, I should have been moving to another school. There were kids from all over the world and it was almost the norm for a lot of the UK kids to go to boarding school. As a result, I kept telling my parents that I wanted to go to boarding school as well.
6. When I talked to my dad years later he told me that he and mum thought I was really clever. I had been building televisions and doing other electronics with my dad in Saudi. He told me they had wanted the best education for me, but I think my mum just wanted an easy life. My going to boarding school certainly hadn't been a kudos or a snobbish thing, because all the other British kids were boarding. It was all paid for by the oil company.
7. Eventually my parents agreed and they got a prospectus of independent Scottish schools so that they could choose one for me. Keil was picked because it was the closest to Ardrossan, where my gran and aunts were. Most of my friends in Saudi Arabia went to Fettes or Loretto in Edinburgh, nobody else was going to Keil.
8. About two weeks before I started Mum and I went back to Scotland and I had to go to the school to sit an IQ test. There was no entrance exam as such, the oil company my dad was working for were paying the school fees, so I was never not going to get in. I'm not sure, but I think while I sat the test someone must have shown my mum around. Afterwards we both had a chat with SNR CGC.
9. After that and before I started, mum and I had to rush around getting everything I was told I would need. The school had given us a big list of several hundred things I had to have, including my uniform and a trunk to hold everything. I think those things were all my parents had to pay for. I remember being stressed out rushing around Ayr trying to find a trunk and a kilt.
10. I first went to Keil a year early in August 1988, when I had not long turned eleven. I was a year younger than the rest of the boys, but that was because it was a convenient break in the school system. My parents thought I was bright enough to go early and the school agreed.

11. The family home remained in Saudi Arabia until I was eighteen or nineteen and both my sisters ended up going to boarding school in Scotland as well. My parent's marriage broke up when I was about sixteen and mum ended up moving back to Ardrossan.

## **Keil School, Dumbarton**

### *General*

12. Keil was set up by the McKinnon Trust so that boys from the Highlands and Islands could get a good education. It was mostly boys when I first went there in 1988, although there were four or five girls in the older years. I think it only became properly co-ed in my second year at the school.
13. The school was set in its own grounds of about fifty acres, with various buildings scattered around, three rugby pitches, a walled garden, other gardens and wooded areas. While I was there they built some new classrooms in the walled garden and put the art block and the science block in there.
14. The road leading to Keil was probably the poshest in Dumbarton and then behind the school was the most deprived area, Bruce Hill. We regularly had problems with the locals from Bruce Hill, who thought we were all spoiled brats. Those problems turned into violence on a weekly basis.
15. In my first year I nearly got hit with a crowbar when the school grounds were invaded by about fifty local kids. They had been fighting with older Keil boys and they actually destroyed most of Mason House, the junior boarding house. They put in all the windows and smashed up most of the downstairs.

16. There was a main schoolhouse where the headmaster was and where there were quite a few classrooms, the gym and the cafeteria. When I started the head boy stayed in the main schoolhouse as well and then when more girls came they stayed there.
17. The boarding houses, which were scattered throughout the grounds, were called Mason House, which was for first and second year boys, Islay Kerr and McKinnon House. Islay Kerr and McKinnon were both the senior boarding houses. Islay Kerr was a grand old house that was about a five minute walk from the schoolhouse. McKinnon House, where I ended up eventually, was a newer build and a bit nicer.
18. McKinnon was quite a bit away, maybe half a kilometre up a track and that track was a common ambush point for the locals to get boys that were heading between the schoolhouse and the boarding house.

### *Pupils*

19. There were about two hundred pupils at Keil when I was there, I think two hundred and forty was the most there ever was. Everyone was organised into what were called 'squads' for lunch and other things, such as sport. We were all numbered and I was number [REDACTED], which was written on all my clothes. All the teachers would call us by our surname, it was only really my friends that would use my first name.
20. There were far more boarders than day pupils. In the dining hall there were ten squads of boarders, so there were probably about one hundred and forty boarders and sixty or so day pupils. As time went on more day pupils came to the school.
21. I think the financial problems the school had was the driver for it going co-ed. There were a lot of different cultures as well because there were a lot of international students. There were boys from Hong Kong, New Zealand, Nigeria and others like me whose parents were working abroad.

*Staff*

22. The housemasters and SNR [REDACTED] were all teachers as well. I had CGC [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] when I arrived, for a few classes and later on I had one of the [REDACTED], Tom Smith, as well.
23. I think CGC [REDACTED] had been SNR [REDACTED] for a while before I arrived, during a time when the school had almost gone bankrupt, and he remained SNR [REDACTED] for the first three years I was there. [REDACTED] it was a guy called John Cummings, who was very different. He never made much of an impression on me, all I really remember is having tea at his house one night. [REDACTED], [REDACTED]
24. CGC [REDACTED] was much more involved with the school, he taught [REDACTED] as well as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. He was a visible presence, whereas Cummings was a bit more remote. After Cummings, Tom Smith, who I'd known as a teacher, took over.
25. Things changed when Cummings came because he tried to stop the bullying and he took the power away from the prefects. I think both he and then Tom Smith tried to take the harshness away and things softened a bit. It was also less harsh when they made a guy called Mr White the housemaster of Mason House.
26. I don't know who SNR [REDACTED] was [REDACTED] CGC [REDACTED], possibly CDK [REDACTED]. Tom Smith was the deputy under Mr Cummings for a long time before he became headmaster himself. The staff that made the biggest impression though were not the SNR [REDACTED], it was the housemasters. If you annoyed a housemaster you were in a world of trouble.

*Structure*

27. The structure of the school consisted of a headmaster, his deputy and various teachers, some of whom were housemasters as well. Most of the teachers who were

not housemasters were local and some of them lived on the grounds in a couple of houses that there were.

28. The school was run by the kids though, not by the staff. There was a head boy and there were also prefects, or 'chiefs' as they were called. In each house there was a house chief and his deputies and there were also day pupil prefects who looked after the day pupils.
29. I don't know how prefects were chosen. When I started the head boy was always the biggest and toughest in the school, not the brightest. It was only in my last couple of years that the school dux became head boy. I don't remember what marked you out as a prefect, you certainly never wore a badge and I don't recall there being a special tie unless you were a chief, who did have their own tie.
30. Boys started in Mason House, which was looked after by one housemaster, OCQ OCQ, along with a house chief and three deputy chiefs. OCQ was and he and his wife lived in his own house, which was accessed through a door from one of the dormitories. Even though they were senior boys, the chiefs all slept in Mason House too. If OCQ ever went somewhere or had any time off, Mr CQL, the teacher, took over from him.
31. Mason House was split into two dormitories with about twenty boys in each one. The dormitory I was in was a long room with a door at one end into the washrooms where there were sinks and showers and a door at the other end into Mr OCQ's house. Even though there were all those boys in my dormitory, there was only one toilet for all of us.
32. After Mason House boys could choose to go to either Islay Kerr or McKinnon Houses. In Islay Kerr there was a housemaster, Tom Smith, who eventually became headmaster, and a deputy housemaster, who was William Bain. They both lived in the boarding house itself.

33. In McKinnon the deputy housemaster, Mr OZC lived in and the housemaster, Mr OP, had his own big house just across the road. There was a door from the TV room into the deputy's house and Mr OPR had an office in the boarding house.
34. All the first and second year boys stayed together in Mason House, but when you got older the dorms were more mixed with different ages in Islay Kerr and McKinnon. In fifth and sixth year, if you were lucky, you had your own room, but generally you shared with another boy. I never had my own room, although I did get the option at one point. I turned it down because I think I had just become used to sharing.
35. I had three years in Mason House because I repeated my first year and after that I went to McKinnon House. The school decided after my first year that I should repeat the year because I hadn't really settled and because I was quite a bit smaller than the rest of the boys. That meant that the guys I started with were all the year ahead of me as I grew older.
36. I think boys left if they got thrown out for something and boys left if they were weak. I saw boys leave after they had only been there for six months. At Keil, if you showed any weakness, or if you were different in any way, you were relentlessly bullied. Even something like wearing both straps on a rucksack would prompt you being bullied. Perhaps I was lucky that I did repeat the first year because perhaps I was a bit tougher by the time I went back.
37. I do not want to name any of the kids responsible for the bullying because I do not believe they are culpable for what went on. The behaviour they displayed was behaviour they had learned and been subjected to during their own early years at Keil and it was behaviour that was either ignored or sanctioned by the staff. I know that I certainly wasn't like that before I went to the school, I learned that behaviour from the way I was treated.

## **Routine at Keil School**

### *First day*

38. I was excited to be going to Keil and, to my mind, going back home to Scotland. I think it was in August, in line with the rest of the Scottish schools.
39. I can't remember who drove my mum and me to Keil, but when I arrived there were loads of other kids starting at the same time and lots of them were crying. **OCQ** the housemaster of Mason House, was there to meet us and show us into our dormitories.
40. It was pretty basic, we had a small locker and a wardrobe that we could lock beside our bed and we all got to pick our own beds from what was left. It was like an army barracks. We all introduced ourselves and once our parents left we started unpacking our trunks. Later on, when we got to bed, we all stayed up chatting till the early hours.
41. Once we were settled, **OCQ** told us what our timetables were, what we had to do, where we had to go and what our 'orderlies' were. An orderly could be tidying, washing things, cleaning the boarding house, or cutting the grass. It could also be running about after one of the prefects, doing whatever they told us.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

42. I think we were woken by one of the prefects at six-thirty or seven o'clock in the morning and we'd have to do our orderlies for thirty minutes. It was more relaxed in the older years, but in Mason the prefect would come in, flash the lights a few times and scream and shout at everyone to get up. The prefect would go away and come back five minutes later and if you weren't awake you'd be chucked out of your bed or something would be thrown at you. Sometimes your bed would be upended with you in it.



43. On a Saturday in Mason House Mr **OCQ** woke us up and he'd do the 'bank', which was giving us our pocket money. He'd walk through the dorm with a metal box and he'd bang a stick off it to wake us up. We'd all then queue to get our fifty pence, or however much it was, and he'd mark it off in an old ledger.
44. After orderlies we'd go to breakfast in the schoolhouse and then morning assembly for the whole school was held in the gym hall. Sometimes we'd have to run back to our boarding house and get our hymn books for assembly and the rest of our books for school. You could tell who was the most bullied boy in the school because he would be carrying the most hymn books.
45. At morning assembly the headmaster would tell us about whatever was going on that week or the week before and then we would sing hymns and somebody would read a passage from the bible.
46. After assembly we all went to school and at the end of school we'd have a little bit of free time before dinner when we might go back to the boarding house. After dinner we'd have forty-five minutes before prep when we'd go to a classroom and do homework for an hour.
47. After prep we went back to our boarding houses and had free time until bed. Lights out changed over the years. I think in Mason House, when I was young, it was eight-thirty, when everyone had to be in bed and silent. I think it was ten o'clock in the other houses, but after fourth year, certainly in McKinnon House, nobody really cared.
48. At bedtime, because our beds were like old army ones with springs, you might come back to find that someone had taken the springs out and you would fall right through. The beds were quite light and in my later years you might find that someone had thrown your bed out of the window.
49. It was generally pretty quiet after the lights went out, but sometimes there would be people messing about. In Mason House, if it was known that the housemaster wasn't around, it was quite common for there to be fights between the first and second years

when the dorms would turn into battle zones. Beds would be turned upside down and fire extinguishers sprayed everywhere.

### *Bed Wetting*

50. I think bullying cured bed wetting at Keil. There were boys who wet their beds, although not me. If a boy had wet their bed, or if they defecated in bed, as did happen, the whole dorm would know about it and they would be picked on by one of the prefects. Any weakness at all instigated you getting bullied.
51. Some boys were intentionally made to wet their beds. Boys would put the hands of other boys who were sleeping in a basin of cold water and that made them wet their bed. It was a common boarding school trick.

### *Mealtimes/Food*

52. All meals were served in the dining hall in the main schoolhouse where we'd sit in squads of ten or twelve kids, all mixed ages and from different boarding houses. There were two rows of ten tables with boys down each side and at the end of the dining hall was one long table where the staff sat for breakfast and lunch.
53. The staff table was at right angles to the other tables, so that half of the teachers had their backs to the boys. One of my favourite memories is of when we were all served pots of yoghurt and someone decided the teachers should be wearing it. Two hundred kids all threw their yoghurt pots at the teachers and it was fantastic.
54. At dinner the staff ate in a room behind and they'd have meals such as would be served in a Michelin starred restaurant. For a long time I was responsible for looking after the dining hall for some reason and I had to clean up after the staff at dinner as well. They had silver cutlery and china and I'd have to tidy it all away.
55. The head of each table would generally be one of the prefects and the prefects would pick kids to serve everyone else at the table. Usually the youngest kids would be

picked and they would have to go and get the food from the kitchen, bring it back to the table and serve it out for everyone.

56. I did that for the whole of my first year and usually I never got any food because there would be nothing left. Afterwards the boy serving the others would have to stay behind and tidy up after everyone else had left. At the weekends any teachers who stayed at the school would be served as well.
57. If there was someone on your squad who the head of the table disliked they would get nothing. Even worse, they would get something and one of the prefects would ruin it. They would throw something over it, put the teapot on top of it, spit in it, or whatever. I don't know how much weight I lost in that first year.
58. There was a tuck shop where you could go and buy snacks, sweets and crisps and things. It was run by the prefects again and so in my last year, when I was a prefect, I never paid for anything.

### *Washing/bathing*

59. We looked after ourselves in Mason House and washed when we wanted. There was a room full of sinks and a room full of showers, which was an open room with about ten shower heads along the walls. There was no privacy whatsoever, except in the one toilet, which had its own door.
60. There were never any staff watching over us, although sometimes they might come and call someone out for something or they might come into the showers at rugby matches. The staff never supervised our washing.
61. I found it weird at first and in my first year only used the showers twice. I didn't feel comfortable because I didn't want to shower with anyone else. As I got older I got over it, but at first I just washed in the sink.

62. In McKinnon House there were six toilets in different parts of the building. Showers were still open in a room with shower heads around the walls.

### *Clothing/uniform*

63. The uniform was a green and gold jacket with a kilt, which we wore on Sundays to go to church and when we had away games for rugby. We also had to wear it for anything important like, for example, if there were any parents visiting or if we went singing in the nursing homes or on any other trips with the school.
64. The school had originally been set up for Highland children and it was maybe for that reason that our kilts could be our own clan. I think that was the only bit of individualism left. I never knew how to put on a kilt or how to iron clothes when I arrived, but like all the other boys I was expected to learn.
65. Normally during the day we wore shorts or trousers and the funny thing was that if you were a boarder you wore a grey shirt and if you were a day pupil you wore a white one. I'm guessing that was because white shirts get dirty more quickly. Boarders never had to wear a tie either.
66. If you left the school to go down to the town centre you had to wear your blazer, so you were quite an easy target for the locals. One time I was walking down the street and got punched in the face just for being from Keil.
67. We all had our own laundry bag to put our dirty clothes in, which we took down to the schoolhouse and left in the laundry room there on whatever our laundry day was. I'm not sure who did the washing, but we all got our laundry back a day or so later.

### *Leisure time*

68. There were probably a couple of hours of free time at night, certainly when I was older and we didn't go to bed till later. We were allowed outside and used to play football or, if you were that way inclined, go and fight with the local boys or chase the local

girls. Later on they built an 'AstroTurf' pitch that was floodlit so we could even play in the winter, until someone stole the lights.

69. Sometimes in our free time a group of boys would bodily pick up a teacher's car and move it somewhere else in the grounds. There was never a member of staff supervising us and the owner of the car was obviously not happy when they found out, but the police were never involved.
70. There were TVs for us to watch, or we could play card games, or read. We used to watch rugby on a Sunday, but there was always the chance that things could turn violent if one boy wanted to watch one thing and another wanted to watch something else.
71. Lots of the boarders would go home at the weekend; probably less than half were left. We would have day passes on a Saturday when we could go out and do what we wanted as long as we were back for dinnertime. After dinner we might go and play football or just mess about.
72. After church on a Sunday was all free time, so the way to get out of going to church was to go hillwalking. Some of the teachers would take us walking or take us camping for the weekend. Eventually we did the Duke of Edinburgh award with the help of some of the teachers off their own backs.

### *Sporting Activities*

73. Keil was all about rugby. It was compulsory three times a week and we played a game on a Saturday morning. We played all the big private schools in Scotland and there were tours as well. We were coming from a school of two hundred pupils and playing schools with a thousand, but even so we generally did pretty well. Probably because we were all pretty tough.
74. The thing that marked boys out in school was rugby so if you were in the first fifteen you got a special tie and if you played five games for the first fifteen you got special

socks. To get the socks you had to run naked round the school after dinner. That started years before I got there and continued even after girls came to the school.

75. I was always more into football, but it just wasn't the school's sport, which was perhaps a class thing. It was the same amongst all the private schools, they were all about rugby and cricket, not what I would consider were traditional Scottish sports.
76. Later on we were told we couldn't even have a kick about of a football in case we got injured and were unable to play rugby. None of us were even allowed a bike, even one of my friends, who was a [REDACTED] BMX rider.

#### *Trips and holidays*

77. We used to go for away matches at rugby and the school would take us singing at nursing homes in the area. We also used to go on hillwalking trips, often with William Bain, the physics teacher and deputy housemaster of Islay Kerr. Sometimes we would camp overnight and go wild swimming and climb the Munros for the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. I guess it was to keep us occupied.
78. William Bain was different to the other teachers, he was a single man and he used to give kids sweets or money and have them in his flat. He would even take us for a meal at McDonalds on some of those trips. I went on those camping trips a lot, because it got me out of going to church.
79. I think the school were trying to get boys into the army, there were certainly often army career people at the school and there was an army cadet force. Lots of my friends used to go on trips with the cadets, although I never got involved in that and I never went on those trips.

#### *Schooling*

80. When I got to Keil I was a year ahead of where I should have been and so all my classmates were more than a year older than me.

81. Keil was all about rugby and when I arrived there was nothing about academia. At first I was getting top marks in my class and then academically I fell apart to the point that in later years I was told I'd be better signing up for the army. The teachers told me and my parents that I was never going to get the grades for university.
82. I think most of the teachers were trained and I wouldn't say many were very young. The music teacher who came along later was a lady and she was young, but other than her I would say they were quite experienced. The housemasters were definitely older and they all taught, but I don't know whether they were all qualified teachers. In terms of my own education, there were probably only a couple that actually got anything out of me.
83. Most of the teachers were men, there were only a few ladies, one being Tom Smith's wife who taught German. With the exception of one or two, we lived in fear of most of them. They were all aggressive and they took their lessons by shouting at us and putting us in a state of fear. Four in particular that stand out are Mr **OPR** Mr McMurtrie, **OCQ** and Martin Lennie. I was good at technical drawing, but I chose not to do that subject because of Mr Lennie's aggression.. Only one or two were okay, Mr Mair the biology teacher was awesome but he was a rarity.
84. Generally it was teaching by rote with the teacher dictating what we were to do. There was no teaching of the individual and no acceptance that each of us needed taught in different ways. We just had to copy down whatever we were told or recite things, there was no challenging of ideas or anything like that. We were just being taught how to pass exams.
85. Morning classes would last for about an hour and then we'd have a break when some boys would go to the tuck shop. Some went back to their boarding house, although we tended not to during the day. McKinnon House was about a fifteen minute walk so there wasn't enough time to go back there.

86. After morning break some boys would have activities before lunch, other boys would have activities after lunch. Depending what time of year it was activities would be either rugby or cricket for three days and music, swimming or badminton the other days. There was a bit of a choice for activities and I used to do electronics.
87. Afterwards we would be back to lessons again until the end of the school day when the day pupils would leave. At prep in the evening we'd all sit in a classroom in schoolhouse and a prefect would be in charge. In sixth year there was a room in the boarding house where we did prep.
88. The prefect in charge of prep would just be looking for an excuse to leather you so we all sat in silence with our heads down and got on with our work. A teacher would walk around the various rooms, but that was the extent of their supervision. If a prefect didn't turn up for some reason or if they went to the toilet, the class just went mental, mucking around or fighting.

#### *Healthcare*

89. There was one matron for all the boys and she looked after the sick bay in the schoolhouse. There were a few matrons over the years, possibly three, but they don't stick out. I do remember getting measles and spending two weeks in the sick bay, but other than that I only suffered rugby injuries.
90. If you had to go to the sick bay for anything you went after breakfast in the morning and you either got a 'Tubigrip' or you got a paracetamol. Looking back, I think the matron possibly thought there were a lot of hypochondriacs in the school, just trying to get out of things.
91. One day a week one of the local doctors would come, but he just continued the paracetamol abuse and never listened to anyone. He couldn't get you out of his room quick enough.



92. During my time at Keil I broke both my ankles playing rugby at different times. I'd been taken to the Vale of Leven hospital and had crutches for several weeks. Only recently I discovered that the school had never told my parents.
93. There were a lot of kids who were badly bullied and the rugby covered up for that. There wasn't a week went by while I was in second and third year that I didn't have a black eye, either from rugby or from being bullied and beaten up by someone.
94. I had to stop playing rugby when I was sixteen because I had sustained brain damage and that caused a lot of problems for me. At that time there were no yellow and red cards in rugby and the games were pretty brutal. I used to get knocked out on a regular basis and there was really no care by the school. After being knocked out I'd spend the rest of the Saturday afternoon in the sick bay with the matron and then I'd be playing again the following week.
95. It got to the point where I had migraines permanently and I couldn't work because I couldn't concentrate. I think that was maybe in November because not long afterwards I returned to my parents in Saudi for Christmas. I told them and ended up in hospital getting CT scans when it was discovered I had bruising to the rear of my brain.
96. When I went back to the school in the new term my parents said I couldn't play rugby, as the consultant had advised, but the school's response was that I would be, even though they had received a copy of the scan and the consultant's report. I'm not sure who gave that response, either Tom Smith or OPR.
97. I had been told that I could have serious problems if I had any more concussions, but even then there was a proper argument between the school and my parents that went on for a few weeks. The school eventually relented and agreed I didn't have to play and instead I had to coach the younger ones. All the time though the school kept pressurising me to get further scans when I went back to Saudi, trying to get me back playing.

*Religious instruction*

98. I wouldn't say the school was particularly religious. There was religious education, as there was at every school, and they used to make us go to church at the West Kirk in Dumbarton every Sunday, however I've no idea what religion the school was.
99. All the boys except the Catholic ones would walk down in our kilts and listen to the minister going on about something. There was a convent just beside Islay Kerr and that's where all the Catholics went. I used to wish I was a Catholic because they never had to go to a Mass, they just got a bacon roll and coffee.
100. The minister from the kirk had some involvement with the school, he used to come along to the speech day at the end of term and give a talk. I can't remember his name, but it was the same minister for my entire time at Keil. Occasionally throughout the year he would come and do an assembly as well, but he was never someone you could go and talk to. He was never pushed by the school as someone we could speak to. He was always this nice, cheery guy, who only seemed interested in the collection box and seemed to live in a world apart from ours.

*Work*

101. In the morning there was orderly duty, supervised by the prefects, when we cleaned everything in the boarding houses. All the cleaning was done by the boys, even the toilets and the showers, there were no cleaners.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

102. The idea if it was your birthday was that everyone beat you up. Everyone would jump on you after assembly in the morning and punch you or try and kick you.
103. There was a Christmas tree, but nobody exchanged presents. We did go to Princes Square Gardens in Glasgow and sing as a school choir every year and we also went

to a local nursing home and sang there. I think there was maybe a Christmas play too, although I'm not sure.

*Personal possessions*

104. We could lock our wardrobe and keep any personal possessions in there or in the cabinet beside our beds, if we wanted. A padlock though isn't much good if the whole wardrobe is wedged open or if it's turned upside down and shaken as happened. Nothing was safe.

*Pocket money*

105. I think my parents used to send money every month for the school to keep and then give to me. At first **OCQ** used to dish it out on a Saturday morning, but when I was older I convinced my parents to open a bank account for me.

*External Inspections*

106. I remember there was an inspection once while I was at Keil, although there may have been more and I just wasn't aware. I don't know when it would have been, but I remember we were all prepped on what to say and how to act if an inspector approached us. Some kids were selected to talk to the inspectors, but not me. No inspector approached me and I never spoke to one.
107. Before the inspectors were due to arrive, the school was tidied and cleaned from top to bottom by all the boys. I remember we were all sent outside to tidy the grounds and paint white the stones that lined the driveway, which was about half a mile long.
108. I don't know what the inspection involved. I suspect they went to the boarding houses, although I never saw them doing so. I don't remember them sitting in class and they certainly weren't at the school after hours. They never sat in at any mealtimes either.

*Relationship with peers*

109. I made a few friends at Keil and I'm still friendly with them, although I don't see them that often. Sometimes I'd spend time in the holidays with some of them.
110. I started a relationship with a girl who eventually became my wife when I was sixteen. She was a day pupil at Keil and I'd known her since my second year there.

*Family contact*

111. My parents weren't allowed to talk to me for the first month I was there, which was a rule the school made. I might have been feeling homesick, but there was no way I could talk to them. I don't think I'd had a day away from my parents before I went to Keil and suddenly I didn't have that support network. At one point in that first month I was really upset about something and asked **OCQ** if I could phone them, but I wasn't allowed.
112. I couldn't go home at weekends and I couldn't even speak to my parents. There was a pay telephone in each boarding house, but we never had any money. In the early years the only money I had was what I was given by **OCQ** every week and that was £1.50 maximum. That didn't go far phoning Saudi Arabia and the phone in Mason House didn't accept incoming calls either. As a result, I never talked to my parents on the phone and I never had much to do with them in all my time at Keil and afterwards.
113. I did get letters from my mum maybe once a month and I went back to Saudi for two weeks, three times a year, which was paid for by the oil company my dad worked for. It was also possible to post mail, but I wasn't good at English and I wasn't good at replying.
114. I went to my gran's in Ardrossan maybe once every two months or so and also in the holidays. The problem was that the family I had in Ardrossan didn't drive, so it was a hassle to get to Ardrossan from Keil by train and took three or four hours. When I did go, I wouldn't get to Ardrossan till about five or six o'clock on the Saturday evening and then I'd have to leave at lunchtime the next day.

115. When I went to Saudi, because of the flights, sometimes I would leave a day after everyone else, sometimes I would be at the school a couple of days before the others. When I was older I had to be back two weeks before for pre-season rugby training.
116. Eventually I only went home to Saudi for the minimum amount of time I needed to keep a Saudi visa. I would go back at Christmas, Easter and in the summer but only for two weeks or ten days or thereabouts. In the summer my parents came over as well and we'd spend a week or so together, but by the time I was older I was generally away doing something else. I would do something so I wasn't there with them.

*School contact with family*

117. There was little contact between the school and my parents. I would get report cards to take back to Saudi with me and sometimes they made it to my parents, sometimes they didn't. The only time the school actually spoke to my parents was after I had run away one time because I refused to do languages and when I refused to play rugby.
118. My parents only visited once, which was to talk about what I was going to do when I left. I was going to sign up for the Parachute Regiment until my parents got involved. The school were really pushing for me to join the armed forces, but my parents weren't happy with that.

*Running away*

119. I ran away once after I had been at Keil for a year, when I was about twelve, although I never actually left the grounds. I don't know what I'd done, but I had been beaten up by one of the prefects and I just wanted to get away. I'd had enough.
120. I had a tent and stayed in it for a few days until the school gave up looking for me. They phoned my mum and she came to the school because she happened to be in the country at the time. My mum came with one of my parents' friends, who I called my uncle and who worked for the Ministry of Defence, looking after the nuclear

submarines at Faslane. He came in uniform and they walked round the grounds shouting on me until I came out.

121. Life was actually a bit better after that because I think my uncle had threatened the housemaster if anything happened to me he would be in trouble.

*Alcohol and drugs*

122. There was just no supervision of us by staff at all. Alcohol and drugs were consumed regularly by many boys and we also used to sneak out at night to get an Indian takeaway. I recall the entire first fifteen rugby team were suspended for two weeks for drinking at one time.

123. Drinking was rife, as was smoking and there were boys who would take drugs, sniff aerosols and sniff the petrol fumes from the lawnmowers. Magic mushrooms were a big thing too. There was no supervision, especially when we got older and became prefects ourselves.

124. Boys were only punished if they were caught and that was only by accident. On one occasion the Bursar opened a letter to a boy and found marijuana inside. The police were contacted and the boy was suspended.

125. After rugby on a Saturday, we would get what was called a long day pass to go out from twelve until seven o'clock in the evening. I sometimes got the train into Glasgow and from when I was fourteen I used to go to the Cellar Bar in Ingram Street. There was no supervision of what we did when we were out. I don't know how many times I went back to the school quite drunk.

126. Later on, in my last year at school, I was suspended for drinking. Mr White, the housemaster of Mason House at that time, caught me drinking the leftovers of a large carry out. My friend was the prefect in charge of Mason House and we were having a drink. One of the boy's fathers was an MP and the other was the son of the [REDACTED] [REDACTED], so it ended up in the newspapers.

127. Afterwards, the boarding houses were all searched and they found something like two thousand empty cans and bottles in the loft. All that happened to me was I got suspended for a week by my housemaster, OPR [REDACTED], and I had to go and stay with my grandparents and was told I was no longer a prefect. When I went back to the school nobody said anything and I was asked to be a prefect again within a couple of weeks, but I declined. I was never asked why I was drinking or if there was a problem.
128. At one point in my third year there was an amnesty after a couple of boys were caught with drugs and were expelled. The police came and searched and I know that there were lots of drugs found, but I don't know if anyone was prosecuted. I think before it got to that stage the school had a bit of influence and the police must have been happy with the school dealing with it. A lot of the boys' parents were quite influential people.

### *Discipline*

129. There was a punishment issued by the teachers called 'Natural History' or 'NH', which involved cutting grass, painting the stones on the driveway, or picking up rubbish and was generally done at the weekend. You never had to actually do anything wrong, if a teacher decided they wanted to punish you, they just told you that you were getting NH. Anyone that had NH would spend three or three-and-a-half hours on a Saturday or Sunday doing some sort of manual labour.
130. A teacher could also put a boy 'on report', which meant they had to wear their number one uniform, their kilt, their blazer and everything else, and stand silently to attention outside the masters' common room. You had to do that every spare moment you had and you had to get what was called a 'status card' signed by your teacher who would say whether you had been behaving or not.
131. Additionally, boys could be suspended or, as an extreme, expelled. Expulsion was pretty rare though and to me felt like it was because the school needed the money. I think what tended to happen rather than expelling people was that they were told they should leave.

132. I think it was recorded if we were disciplined by a teacher, but I don't know where. It was certainly written in our report cards, which I was supposed to show my parents.
133. I would have hoped that part of the housemasters' role was to support and help the boys, but I never felt that any of them did. I think the housemasters set the culture within each boarding house and that culture was one where the prefects ruled and bullying was rife.
134. The school was run by the prefects and they did so brutally. They would say that we had it easy, that we should have seen what had been done to them and I can understand that now. They were beaten up for three years and so it then became their turn to do the beating. The teachers had given away their responsibility for discipline and for looking after the boys.
135. The housemasters must have known what was going on in their boarding house and they could have stopped anything at any time, but generally they did not. All the prefects had been through that system and had been subjected to bullying themselves and were then put in charge of children themselves. They had an ingrained idea that they were allowed to treat boys as they had been treated themselves. I have talked to former pupils who had been at Keil in the seventies and they had a very similar experience to what I had.
136. Examples of the punishments prefects could issue included making you write out the school rules, or making you get up at six o'clock in the morning, run six or seven miles and then have a cold shower.
137. There were differences between the Boarders and day pupils with discipline as well. A day pupil prefect couldn't tell me what to do. My wife went to the school as a day pupil and she had an entirely different experience to me. I wouldn't say she would call it a positive experience, just different and her experience would be primarily relating to the education side of things, she did not have exposure to everything that went on after school hours.



138. Even in the boarding houses there was not much interaction with the housemasters, they were run by the prefects. We did have a meeting on a Sunday night with the housemaster who would ask if everyone was back and who would then tell us what we had all been doing wrong. The only other time we would have any interaction with the housemaster was if we had done something wrong and when they did a locker inspection on a Monday or a Friday evening.
139. When there was a locker inspection we had to take out all our kit and lay it out on our beds all pristine. The housemaster would come down and critique our stuff and throw it about as if we were in the army. If a button was missing on a shirt for example, you had to fix it yourself, you had to learn how to sew and put it back on. I guess it was very much like how recruits are treated in the army.
140. When we got older, the housemaster at McKinnon House didn't get us to lay all our stuff out, but they did come and look through our lockers. I think then they were more looking for alcohol, drugs or pornography.
141. The rest of the time, both in Mason House and McKinnon House it was the prefects that ran things. The prefects would issue any punishments and deal with discipline. They all had boys who were known as their orderlies and those boys had to run about after them. They had no choice, they were told they were to be an orderly and that was it, there was no pocket money or any reward, it was just the way it was. When I became a prefect in my older years I picked my best friend to be my orderly so that he wouldn't have to do anything.
142. In my first year I was the orderly for the head boy of the school, [REDACTED], so I had to go down to the main school building, run about and organise all his stuff for him. I would have to sort his clothes out, get his laundry done for him and things like that. Prefects were allowed rations of a loaf of bread and a pack of butter, milk and some jam every week, so I had to run about getting his breakfast ready.

143. As I got a bit older I got accused of bullying someone and had to go and see **CGC** **CGC**, **SNR** at the time. I can't remember who it was, other than it was someone in the same year, but I don't remember any more of what I had done. He fined me £15 of my pocket money as a punishment.
144. I became a prefect when I went into fifth year, when I was sixteen and about the time Mr Cummings **SNR**, which meant that things changed and I couldn't tell any of the junior boys what to do. I couldn't make a younger boy do my laundry or carry my books. I thought it was a good thing, but then I'd been in that culture and it almost didn't seem fair that I wasn't going to have my turn.
145. I was never told what the rules might have been when I was made prefect. Nobody ever told me what I could or couldn't do, or what I could punish a boy for. I don't know how I was chosen, perhaps they thought giving me more responsibility would calm me down. I only made it to house deputy, I never made it to chief.

### **Abuse at Keil School**

146. My first year at Keil was pretty tough, I was badly bullied and I didn't settle well. I think the school realised that and that was why the decision was made for me to repeat the year. My parents and I were consulted and although academically I had top marks in the class, I thought it was a good thing to do because things were bad.
147. I was bullied relentlessly that first year. I was different in that I was into electronics and computers, I built models and electronic things and I was picked on for that. I was also into football, not rugby, and I got picked on for that.
148. I recall one boy being punished by a prefect after he had been caught messing about. He was made to stand holding two dumb bells in his outstretched hands. He kept dropping them so one of the prefects went up and punched him in the stomach. The boy just collapsed on the ground and vomited.

149. Another boy was forcibly put in a luggage trunk by a prefect and flipped end over end, up and down the dormitory in Mason House for about an hour. When he was eventually let out, he started shouting and screaming so the prefect punched him and knocked him out.
150. I recall a prefect being asked to leave after he beat a boy so badly that several of the boy's bones were broken. The boy was in his third year and the prefect would have been at least a couple of years older, but he wasn't expelled, just asked to leave.
151. These punishments were the norm, but the worst punishment I had was actually issued in my early years at Keil by the housemaster of Mason House, **OCQ**. One of the boys in my dormitory decided he didn't want to wait for the one toilet our dormitory had and instead urinated in all our wellington boots in the washroom.
152. Eventually **OCQ** found out and the entire school were punished. The whole school had to go back to our boarding houses during any free time that any of us had and stand to attention at the end of our beds, in silence. Even the day pupils had to go to the school gym and stand in silence. After prep in the evening we boarders had to do the same until **OCQ** decided we could go to bed. Sometimes that was about four or five o'clock in the morning.
153. If anyone made any noise the prefects would punish us and I remember an occasion two boys were. They were put in big black bins that were filled with cold water and made to stand in them. That never worked so they were told to hold their hands out and the prefects held a lighter flame under their hands, burning and essentially torturing them.
154. Nobody ever did actually own up and the punishment was only stopped after two and a half weeks, when boys started fainting during class. I think **SNR**, **CGC**, **CGC**, put an end to it, but that was only because the matron had become involved when boys started getting ill. I can't remember who the matron was at the time, but she left not long afterwards.

155. There were always rumours of things more sinister happening, although I never thought much of them at the time. One thing that did stick in my memory was in 1992 when a boy from Nigeria who was, according to the official story from the school, let into the girls' dormitory and a girl called [REDACTED] had sex with him. She said that she was raped.
156. There was some sort of investigation and I think the police were involved. Apparently the boy was deported to Nigeria and [REDACTED] was suspended. The rumour was that everyone had been drinking, but to my mind it was all a big cover-up. I don't know for sure whether there was a police investigation, but I do recall that [REDACTED] was not at the school for a few weeks afterwards.
157. The day before I was fined by CGC [REDACTED] after he accused me of bullying, I had seen another three prefects hold a boy down and shove a broomstick up his backside. I was incredulous that I was getting fined when I had seen other boys do far worse things.
158. The teachers used to punish us physically too, although it became less common as I got older and the threat of violence was probably enough.
159. The original [REDACTED] teacher Mr CQL [REDACTED] used to hit you with a keyboard or a book on the back of the head if you got something wrong. He disappeared after I'd been at Keil for about three years, but I don't know why. There were all sorts of rumours and one was that something had happened with one of the girls. I remember he actually pulled the bra strap of a girl in my class in front of us all.
160. One of the [REDACTED] teachers who coached rugby, Mr OLZ [REDACTED], used to twirl his whistle around and then hit you with it. We used to call them 'stingers' because it stung when it hit you. Mr CDK [REDACTED] was the [REDACTED] teacher and he used to throw a book at you or hit you with one. He was a scary guy.
161. The worst form of physical punishment was on a Monday morning. If it was considered we had disgraced the school by losing the rugby match on Saturday, we were all

punished by the rugby coaches. One of them was Mr **OLZ**, others were Mr **OPR**, Mr Bain and Mr **KPC**. We would spend the first hour of rugby training running up and down the steep hill in front of the schoolhouse until we were sick.

162. I heard a lot of stuff about William Bain while I was at Keil, but I just thought it was rumours and I didn't believe it. Boys would make jokes about Mr Bain as well as Mr **OZC**, the deputy housemaster at McKinnon House. The jokes and rumours were about them touching boys, playing with them and that sort of stuff. One of my friends told me and three or four other boys that Bain had touched him inappropriately, but we just didn't believe him.
163. I liked electronics and when I was eleven or twelve I used to spend a lot of time in Bain's physics lab, building flashing lights for the Christmas tree, or listening devices and that sort of thing. I never thought anything of it at the time, but more recently, after hearing Bain had been convicted of abusing boys, I started to make a few connections.
164. Bain was a bit different to the other teachers. He was probably the only one I felt I could have talked to if I'd wanted. He was always open to the young kids and super nice to them. He would give us biscuits or whatever and I know now he was probably grooming us.
165. While I was in his physics lab and when we were out hillwalking he would touch me and rub himself up and down against me. He would tickle me and massage me and touch my privates above my clothes. He would stand behind me and as if by accident his privates would touch my back. At the time, I never thought any more of this behaviour. The rumours about Bain had been about bondage and I just thought at the time that this was the behaviour of someone being friendly.
166. It was all done in a friendly sort of way, but I now know that what he was doing wasn't as innocent as I thought it was at the time. No other member of staff had been friendly to me as he was and I know now that he was grooming me. I don't know how I wasn't more seriously sexually abused and I consider myself pretty lucky that I wasn't.

## Reporting of abuse at Keil School

167. The first rule of boarding school was that you don't tell on anyone and you don't admit to anything, ever. In any case there was nobody I felt I could trust to speak to. I couldn't talk to my parents either, they were six thousand miles away and I never remember them asking anything about school anyway.
168. 'Childline' existed at the time, although it wasn't advertised in the school, just on the TV, and I was aware that some boys phoned it. I never did, but I know that some boys did so for a laugh. I remember a boy got in trouble one time because he had spent four hours on the phone to Childline and it was traced back to the school. I think whoever the boy had spoken to was so concerned that they'd contacted the police and we all got a lecture from **SNR**, **CGC**, about making prank calls.
169. I never reported anything, but my friend who had talked to us about Bain told his parents. This was in my second year at the school and I don't want to say his name. Apparently his parents approached **CGC** at the school about it, but apparently it got swept under the carpet. My friend told me at the time that they just made him out to be lying.
170. I didn't even feel I could talk to Mr Mair, my biology teacher. He was only there during school time and there was never an opportunity that I could go and see him and talk to him if I'd wanted to.
171. I cannot believe that the housemasters and the teachers did not know what was going on. At Mason House, **OCQ** lived on the other side of the door into our dormitory. I cannot believe he would not have heard what was going on, for example when the boy vomited after being punched in the stomach. The prefects were taking direction from the housemaster and in such a small school I find it impossible to believe that the housemaster would not have been aware how they were enforcing his direction.

172. I can't believe that no boy left that school and didn't tell their parents what was going on. I never had that relationship with my parents, but there must have been some who did.

### **Leaving Keil School**

173. I left Keil in 1995 when I was seventeen, but I wasn't really there much in my last year. I had got one A-level and some Highers and I already had university in the bag after I got an unconditional offer of a place in Aberdeen. I probably got the exam results I deserved because I'd only put enough effort in after my dad promised me money for passing them. I certainly never passed exams because of the teaching.
174. I did the first term of sixth year and then pretty much did my own thing. My wife had already left at the end of fifth year so I spent a lot of time with her and my mum and dad had a house in Scotland by then so I just went there.
175. After my exams, when it was time to leave, I didn't do so with a sense of relief, strangely. The last couple of years hadn't been so bad because I'd been a prefect and had a bit more freedom and responsibility. Nobody had been bullying me by then and it was actually a nice end, given what had happened in my early years.
176. On our last day my friends and I burnt everything in a quarry that was in the school grounds. We chucked everything in, our kilts, jackets, books and everything and had a massive bonfire.

### **Life after boarding school**

177. When I first left Keil I went to Robert Gordon's University in Aberdeen after the summer and I lasted there till December that year. I just went off the rails for six months and I was kicked out of the halls and went back to live at home for six months. I'd been

taking drugs and abusing alcohol and it was only after I got kicked out that I managed to straighten myself out.

178. At the start of the following academic year I got a place at Paisley and studied microbiology and immunology. Eventually I bought my own flat and never really went back home.
179. Eventually I married the lady I met at Keil who has been my girlfriend since I was sixteen and we now have two boys together.
180. Now I work for one of the biggest food companies in the world and I would say I've done pretty well for myself. I travel all over the world and audit factories, but a lot of the time I work from home, which is great because I get to see my kids a lot. Ironically now, after Keil telling me I would never make it to university, I lecture at various universities.

### **Impact**

181. I am not an emotional guy at all, but I can be quite aggressive even yet, which is probably on the back of surviving Keil school. I wouldn't be the person I am now for both good reasons and bad. I have a work ethic and a level of determination and tenacity that I might not have had were it not for my experiences at Keil.
182. It has made me a tougher person, but some of that is bad because emotionally I'm pretty ruined. Having kids has definitely helped, but I find it hard to talk about things with people.
183. I'm hard on myself because I'm a perfectionist and I'm critical of other people for the same reason. I think that comes from Keil when I was always trying to be better and trying to do better.



184. It's hard to get away from my memories of Keil School. Most of my long term friends were there too, so it naturally comes up occasionally. I don't think about it every day, but it does spring into my head sometimes.
185. My relationship with my parents is the same today, it's really bad. I look back and think there is no way I could send my child to boarding school, let alone one that's six thousand miles away, and I wonder how they could. I wonder how money could be more important to them than looking after their children.
186. I don't have much to do with my sisters or my extended family now either. Occasionally I speak to my mum, but that's more to do with her wanting to speak to my children. I speak to my dad even less, I've gone for six or seven years without speaking with him and that's because of Keil.
187. I suppose that's because of them sending me there in the first place, but also because of the separation and the lack of contact while I was there. Our relationship has been worse since I had my own kids because I just cannot understand how someone could do that. I also don't understand how it didn't occur to my parents to question me being covered head to toe in bruises whenever they did see me.
188. When I found out two years ago that William Bain had been convicted of abusing kids at Keil I was quite badly affected. It didn't take too much to work out who the boys that had been impacted were and I became depressed. A few of the friends I'd made at Keil reached out to me and helped me out a bit.

### **Treatment/support**

189. When I went through that period of depression I went to see a psychologist and she really helped me out. I learned that a lot of my problems stemmed from always trying to be perfect and being hard on myself.

## **Reporting of Abuse**

190. I have never reported what happened at Keil. I try not to think about it and I have no contact with any former pupils' groups or anything. I've never been to any reunions and I could never report it to the police or anything.

## **Records**

191. I've kept my school report cards from my time at Keil, but I've never applied for any other records they might have.


## **Lessons to be Learned**

192. I think the lessons that could be learned from my time at Keil were learned a long time ago. I think there's a George Orwell book about it. Kids should not be allowed to look after other children. They should not be in positions of authority, or if they are they should be closely supervised.
193. I don't think Keil was unique, I think it is the culture of boarding schools. Ground rules should be set around what is acceptable and what is not and all children should be aware of those rules.
194. I'd like to think that technology nowadays would save some children. These days children can video and take pictures of things, we couldn't.
195. I don't know how you can fix child sexual abuse because you wouldn't have picked that up at Keil. I don't think an inspector going into the school would have picked out William Bain as a child abuser.

- 196. I think child sexual abuse in places like Keil is still going on to this day. As long as kids are in this sort of system they are vulnerable and it will happen. I believe these places should be shut down.
  
- 197. I visited Longridge Towers boarding school in Berwick-upon-Tweed after my oldest son was offered a bursary and it is just the same as Keil had been. Perhaps there isn't the same brutality, but the opportunities are still there and there was no way I was going to send my son.
  
- 198. If a boarding school still relies on prefects to look after the younger children then there is bad stuff going on. I still read reports of things happening to this day and I don't believe they have changed, despite what the schools might say they're doing. They have not changed and they need to and that's what I hope the Inquiry will achieve.
  
- 199. I wouldn't like to think of any child going through a fraction of the stuff I went through. If any child does, someone must be held responsible.

**Other information**

- 200. 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.

Signed.....  .....

25 September 2020

Dated.....