

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GEG

Support person present: No

1. My name is GEG. During my time at boarding school I was known as GEG. That was the name that I was known as throughout my time at boarding school. My date of birth is 1955. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going to Morrison's Academy

2. My father's name was . He was a doctor. He was a highly trained surgeon but always wanted to be a GP. He later became a GP practising on the Isle of Skye. My mother's name was . Before my parents married she was a nurse and theatre sister. I have one younger sister called .
3. I was born in Dundee. My early years were spent growing up in Newton Mearns near Glasgow and the Isle of Skye. I attended a couple of primary schools prior to going to Morrison's Academy. The first was in Newton Mearns and the second was in Skye. Primary school was good for me. The decision surrounding sending me to a boarding school was made because of the education I was receiving on Skye. My school was located in Portree but, because of the geography, I more or less had to board there. The system was just different back then. My grandparents were in Dunblane so that was why Morrison's was selected.
4. I knew a little bit about Morrison's before it was considered as a place to send me because some of my grandparents' friends had attended there. The idea of being sent

there didn't come as a surprise or a shock to me. I went for an interview at Morrison's before I was accepted. That would have been after Easter time in 1967. I went with my father to the school. I was just there for the interview and wasn't shown around the school. There were three separate interviews held with the headmaster, Mr Quick, on the day. The first was with my father and myself together, the second was just with me and the third was with my father on his own. The interview where I was on my own felt like it lasted five minutes but it could well have been longer. I think my parents were told that I had been accepted fairly quickly. I remember there was plenty of time after being accepted to plan for going, getting my uniform and so on.

### **Morrison's Academy, Crieff, Perthshire**

5. I started at Morrison's in [REDACTED] 1967 in first year. I would have been eleven years old. I left in 1972 when I was seventeen years old. I don't know who owned the school but I know it was run by a board of governors. It was a fee paying school. I believe it cost my parents £143 a year to send me there. My parents paid full fees. There was a scholarship system open to local boys. The school made a point of taking on local kids for free. That was part of the remit in the school. You never knew which boys were under scholarships and which ones weren't.

### *Layout of Morrison's*

6. There were two parts to Morrison's. The part where the school was and the part where the boarding houses were. The school was located across the road from where my boarding house was. Within the school grounds was a cadet hut, cricket pitches and other grounds.
7. In total there were four or five boarding houses. I believe two of the boarding houses were called Academy and Glenearn but I don't remember the rest. I think, when I first began at the school, two of the boarding houses were for boys and three of them were for girls. That later changed to three houses for the boys and two for the girls. I was placed in Academy House. It might be a rumour, or I may be wrong, but I heard that

Academy was where they placed boys who the school thought may be a problem or boys they considered to be less academic and more sporty in character.

8. There was a driveway that led up to Academy. On the right hand side was what would have been an old garage or stables where we kept our trunks. There were two parts to the boarding house itself. The modern part contained the lockers, a place for doing your shoes and the drying room. Upstairs was the common room. In the old part of the building on the ground floor was a room that had a bit of a library in it, the kitchen and where we ate. Upstairs was where the dormitories were. Above the dormitories was where the housemaster's flat was located.

#### **Staff and other adults who were present at Morrison's**

9. Mr Quick was the headmaster. Above him was a board of governors. They were the controlling group who had the power to hire and fire staff. The only governor I knew was Mr McNeil. He stayed in Dunblane. I am sure I saw him on occasion in the school.
10. Below the headmaster were teachers. Harry Lauder taught English and Latin. John Williamson, nicknamed Johnny Willy, taught History. CDU taught . George Sutherland taught Economics. Mr Boyd and Mr Sharp taught Art. Miss McBain taught Biology. Mr zKMR taught . Mr Stoddart taught Music. CFS CFS taught . Mr CFR was teacher. He taught things like by Jim McGregor .
11. Mr RZB taught but he was also the housemaster attached to the boarding house I was in, Academy. He lived in the flat with his wife, Mrs . Mr RZB didn't have a deputy but his wife, Mrs occasionally helped out in the boarding house. I remember her helping out when I was ill. I think she organised the kitchens and things like that.

12. There were kitchen staff and cleaners in Academy. I think there was maybe two of them and they were part time. There was also a matron attached to the boarding house. I don't remember the names of any of those members of staff.

### **Siblings and other children**

13. My sister attended Morrison's later on during my time there. I think there was one year when we crossed over. I maybe saw her once in a blue moon over the course of that year. I would maybe see her if I was down in Crieff or something like that. Although there wasn't really any contact it wouldn't have been something that I had wanted were it on offer.
14. There were both boys and girls at the school but they were kept completely separate. The girls effectively attended a different school. The age range between the boys was between seven and seventeen or eighteen years old. All those age groups boarded but there were also day pupils. The man who founded the school was quite adamant that the school also served the local area. There were local kids who were day pupils who came from places like Crieff, Comrie and Dunblane. Some of them came under scholarships.
15. I would estimate that there were about three hundred children in total who were pupils at the school. Of those there would have been in the region of a hundred and fifty boarders. Boys I remember who were boarders in Academy whilst I was there include  
GEU [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED],  
[REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

### **Routine at Morrison's**

#### *Early memories of being at Morrison's*

16. I hadn't really even seen the school before the day I arrived. I remember all these new bodies flying around and there being a bit of a shock and a feeling of newness. It was



surreal. I suppose I was apprehensive, however, it wasn't as if I hadn't ever been away from home. I had been away with a different family and been on visits and things like that so that side of things wasn't new to me.

#### *Daily routine*

17. The routine slightly varied in the mornings depending on which dormitory you were in. If you were younger you were in dormitories where there were certain duties attached. After those duties, or getting up, the day started. You would get washed, dressed, go for breakfast then head to school. You had to be at school for about 8:30 am for assembly. After assembly you went to whatever your first class was. Morning classes broke for lunch around about 12:30 am. You would go back to your boarding house for lunch. After lunch you went back up to the school for either classes or, on one afternoon a week, games. School finished about 4:00 pm. If you were younger you would either be doing duties or just trying to survive after school. If you were older you got a bit of free time. You would then have your main meal at about 5:00 pm followed by prep in the boarding house. Prep lasted until about 7:30 pm. After prep you would get washed and ready for bed. The younger children could be in bed as early as 7:45 pm but it was later for the older boys.
18. You got up at the same time on Saturdays. If there was sports on you would go down to either watch or play. If sports weren't on you were allowed to sign out and go into Crieff. Afternoons were spent just really trying to survive and avoiding the older boys. You got an hour extra in bed on Sundays. You would then go to whatever church you went to in the morning. After that was lunch followed by going out for a walk with Mr RZB. That was mostly for the younger boys. If you were older you were left to your own devices.

#### *Sleeping arrangements*

19. There were four dormitories in Academy with between seven and ten boys in each dorm. The dorms were roughly split up into age groups across the school. One would be boys between eight and twelve years old, the next would be boys between twelve

and thirteen years old, the next one had boys between thirteen and sixteen and the final one had boys who were over sixteen. Only one of the senior boys would have a room of their own. That room was for the house captain. I remember that I didn't sleep very well at night in the dorms. That was because of either exhaustion or waiting for whatever was going to happen next.

#### *Mealtimes / food*

20. Meals were taken in your boarding house. It was only those boys who were in that house who ate together. In the winter we had porridge and in the summer cornflakes for breakfast. I don't quite remember what we got for lunch. I think I remember soup and a lot of bread and butter. The full meal was had at night. The only thing I liked was the spring casserole. That consisted of macaroni cheese with tomato, peas and egg in it. Mr<sup>RZB</sup> would sit at the head of the table. He ate at the same time as us and would eat the same food. That was part of his system to manage the boys.
21. Unfortunately the food wasn't great overall. However, you just had to eat all your food. That was the rule. You weren't allowed to leave the table until your food was eaten. Some of the boys were held back at the table as long as that took. I don't remember anyone being physically force fed or anything like that. As far as I am aware there wasn't an occasion where any boy ultimately refused to eat something. They ended up realising that they just couldn't leave any food. I remember that sometimes, as soon as Mr<sup>RZB</sup> looked away, boys would place what they didn't like on each other's plates. The food would end up moving from one boy's plate down to the next all the way down the table. I remember on one occasion having food placed on my plate by another boy, getting up, walking along the line and putting what had been put on my plate back on the boy's plate who had originally been served it.

#### *Washing / bathing*

22. In the normal course of the week after sports and swimming we would shower using the facilities at the school or the swimming baths. There was no privacy during those

times but I don't remember there being any supervision. There were problems there but not in a sexual sense. It was all older boys to the younger boys.

23. If you wanted to wash within the boarding house you had access to washbasins and two baths within the house itself. I can't remember whether we had a bath once or twice a week but I remember that you were told when it was. The bath was just a normal bath filled with water. When it was time for you to have your bath it would be before bed time. You'd brush your teeth and so on then go off to the bathroom. There was no privacy when you had a bath. The prefects would check up on you and the level of your bath water. If they discovered something that they didn't like then there would be a further 'kick off.' That may lead to problems later on. I can't think of specific incidents but link bath times in my mind to instances where there was physical and verbal abuse.

#### *Clothing / uniform*

24. The school provided a list of the items your parents had to buy prior to you starting at the school. All of that would be purchased in Crieff. I can still remember the bill because it amounted to exactly £100. The list comprised of everything you can think of surrounding uniform and sports kits. You wore your uniform every day both within and outside of the school. You very occasionally wore casual clothes if you were senior and allowed to go into Crieff. Looking back, I can only recall one occasion being in jeans and a t-shirt. Your shoes had your number in them and your clothes had your name in them. My number was fourteen.

#### *Personal possessions*

25. I remember having a radio which I would listen to under my pillow. You tended not to have things though because you knew you wouldn't have them long. Inevitably one of the senior boys would take whatever it was that you had. Occasionally we bought things for the boarding house amongst us. I remember an occasion when we purchased a record player for the house. We all put money in to get that. Unfortunately, when it was purchased it ended up going to the senior boys.

### *Pocket money*

26. Your parents would hand in something like a ten shilling note a term. Each week you would get sixpence or a shilling out of that. You would keep receiving that until there was nothing left.

### *Schooling*

27. I did well in the primary schools prior to me going to Morrison's. When I got to Morrison's I started in first year. Academically they were a year ahead where my primary school would have been had I stayed on there. When I got to the end of first year my marks weren't as good as they could've been so I was made to repeat that year. I loved History and Geography. It was only after first year that my marks really started to plummet. That was all due to what was going on elsewhere in the school. I was basically written off academically by the school. I ended up leaving with four O Grades. I did fourth year but left after that.

### *Religious instruction*

28. There was a minority of Catholic boys in the school. I think there was one boy in my boarding house who was Jewish but I don't think he was practising. Everybody else was a mix of Church of Scotland or Episcopalian. Religion wasn't a problem for anyone and it wasn't forced upon you by the school. Prayers were said and hymns were sung during the morning assemblies. A little bit of religion was taught in subjects like History and English but there wasn't a specific Religious Instruction lesson. You went to church on a Sunday. What church you went to depended on what religion you were.

### *Chores*

29. There were different duties allocated to different dorms up until about the time you were old enough to be in the third or fourth dormitory. If you were in the dormitory where the younger boys slept one of you might have to be up about 6:30 am because

you held the duty of waking the other boys up in the house. That involved going to each dorm and ringing a gong. That duty was given to a different boy in the dorm each week. The time you woke the boys in the dorms had to be five minutes apart and to the second. Those timings were checked. You had to time how long it took you to run up the stairs in the boarding house so that you could get there exactly on time. You would get punished by the older boys in that dorm even if you were a point of a second out. That would then lead to you being late for the next dorm's gong being rung and so on.

30. Another duty involved cleaning up or cleaning other boys' things like their games kit and shoes. You would be putting things into the drying room and things like that. I think you were also responsible for sweeping up. You were again constantly checked up upon by the older boys and prefects that you were doing those duties. If you left even a tiny mark on another boy's shoes then that led to you getting punished. The punishments could vary and I can't think of a specific example relating to where it occurred in connection to not doing my duties. There were other duties but those are the ones that come to memory. I think I remember the ones I do specifically because there was so much pressure placed upon them to get them right.

#### *Sports / leisure time*

31. Games consisted of athletics and cricket in the summer. In winter it would be rugby. On Sports Day houses competed against one another but the rest of the time teams were made up of boys across all of the houses. If on Sports Day your parents didn't attend you were allowed to go to the cinema the subsequent evening.
32. At the boarding house you could go out into the garden in your free time to do something but you daren't do that. That might lead to the regime coming down on you for doing something. Looking back, you just spent most of your time just trying to keep your head below the parapet. I remember that all the boys in the boarding house shared the same common room. It was a deadly place to be in because the senior boys would pick upon the younger boys in there. There was access to a television but that was on special occasions. I remember watching the moon landings. My own



personal escape was the school's library. The school really did have a fantastic library. They had everything in there and that was where I found my love of books.

#### *Trips / holidays*

33. I didn't really go away on any trips and spent most my time at the school during term time. Some of the other boys did though. At times they were given tickets to Murrayfield to see Scotland play rugby.
34. Mr **RZB** did take boys out on walks on Sunday afternoons. That was usually the younger boys but sometimes it involved boys who were old enough to be in the third dorm. The older boys would do their own thing whilst we were on those walks. Mr **RZB** really made you walk but that was good. It provided us all with really good levels of fitness. I remember him pointing out things of interest to us as we went along. If Mr **RZB** didn't take you out some of the older boys might take you out instead. That led to problems and could be pretty horrendous. I can't think of specific examples but that was a situation which may lead to older boys using it as an opportunity to bully you.

#### *Leave / half term*

35. The academic year was split into three terms. There was a half term every eight weeks. The half terms weren't any good for me because of the distances that were required for me to get back home. I occasionally got to go and meet my parents at my grandparents but not always. I remember having a great time if I stayed at the boarding house over half term. There would be four boys at the most staying in the boarding house over the half terms but usually it was one or two. Mr **RZB** would be there and you were given the freedom to do what you wanted. There was no hassle. You could go into the town, go to the cinema or do different things.
36. It was interesting because after the school holidays and breaks there would be a time period of exactly one week where nothing would happen. Those boys who were the abusive ones would have been adjusting during that period as well as ourselves. After

that week passed it would all start again. It was literally from one weekend to the next before it all kicked off again.

#### *Birthdays / Christmas*

37. You could get a parcel sent in with presents from your parents but I think largely parents didn't bother. I can't remember how the other boys would find out when your birthday was but that could be entertaining. A blanket would be pulled tight amongst boys in the main dorm and you would be thrown up in the air off of that. The boys would always pull the blanket away after the last throw so you would come clattering down on the floor.
38. I always went home for Christmas. In the lead up to that there were decorations put up in the boarding house. Each year one dormitory would be picked to put on something like a play. That was probably the best time but in reality it was only a couple of days a year and the bullying didn't really stop over those two days.

#### *Letters*

39. You were allowed to write letters home on Sundays. To give Mr <sup>RZB</sup> his due he would remind you to write letters to certain people to say thank you if you received a parcel. That was supervised but our letters were never checked. Letters that came in weren't checked either. You could write in your letters whatever you wanted. I know that because I still have some of the letters. There is one of them with tear stains on it asking my mother to take me out of the school. It didn't tell her exactly what was happening but you can see the marks left by the tears.

#### *Visitors*

40. I think you were allowed a day out with your parents once every half term if your parents were in the area. That wasn't something that would happen with me because of the distances involved. The boys who had parents in Glasgow and Edinburgh would maybe see their parents more. There were times when your parents visited the school

but you didn't see them. I remember a time when my parents visited the school when the school was trying to raise funds for the new primary school and I didn't see them.

### *Inspections*

41. I don't remember there being any inspections of the boarding house. I don't remember anyone at all coming to look at the boarding house. We might, if Mr RZB was away, have another teacher step into the boarding house to supervise. That was usually CFS who was teacher in the school. Other than that there were no other 'outside' adults who would come into the boarding house.
42. I remember at school there would be an inspector come in to check every so often. I know that they were inspectors because I remember staff telling us to behave ourselves in front of them. I have no idea where those inspectors came from. I am not aware of any of them ever speaking to the pupils.

### *Pastoral care*

43. The closest thing to pastoral care would have been the presence of your housemaster or maybe a little bit the matron. There were no mentors or anything like that. In reality there was very little or no pastoral care in the school. You were on your own. We had nothing like that and nobody to go to. I think because of the way the regime was you wouldn't have trusted anybody anyway were that to have been in place.

### *Healthcare*

44. If you were poorly you went into the sick room. There was a matron attached to each boarding house. They would just come in and out of the boarding houses rather than staying. That would be during the day or maybe during the first part of the evening. If anybody was ill the matron would be the person involved with looking after them. Occasionally that also involved Mr and Mrs RZB-SPO I remember being so ill that Mrs had to bathe me on that occasion.

45. I remember a time when I had pneumonia. That was partly as a result of an incident when an older boy called [REDACTED] tried to drown me. I ended up with a lot of stuff in my lungs. I remember being in the sick room coughing after that. Unfortunately, the sick room bordered the senior boys' dormitory. As soon as the housemaster was gone the senior boys would come in and make sure that I wasn't coughing. I remember boys smothering me to stop me from doing that.
46. The only other times I was in the sick room was following receiving vaccines. I was ill after receiving a vaccine and that ultimately ended up with me having to be taken to hospital. It was because of the complications with my chest. The same thing happened in second year. There weren't check-ups but there was an outside doctor who came in on the occasions I was ill. I remember one occasion when I was really bad when he came in twice a day. I don't remember any other boys ending up being needed to be taken to hospital. Looking back, I think the school were quite good when it came to responding to injuries and illnesses amongst the boys.
47. Other than the incident where I contracted pneumonia, I can't remember whether any of the things I suffered by way of abuse required medical treatment. If it had it would have been matron that would have dealt with it and an excuse would have been provided by me. You would say that you had fallen out of a tree or something like that rather than revealing what had actually happened.
48. If you needed dental treatment you could go to the dentist. Everything was fine when it came to receiving dental treatment.

#### *Running away*

49. You would think about running away and plan that out in your head. However, it wasn't something I ever actually did. There were a few boys who did attempt to run away. They didn't get very far. They probably got into Crieff then were picked up there. The red socks we wore meant that they were easily identifiable and caught. I can't fully remember what happened to those boys who were caught and brought back. It would have probably been something that was dealt with by a teacher or Mr <sup>RZB</sup> [REDACTED].

You never really got to hear what happened. The boys would just appear and that was it. If they were belted that would have happened in the school rather than within the boarding house.

### *Bed-wetting*

50. Bed-wetting was never a problem for me personally but it was for other boys. Mr RZB and the matron dealt with those boys who wet their beds. They would provide a rubber sheet and so on. There were no problems with either of them surrounding bed-wetting. Those boys weren't condemned or anything like that by the matron or Mr RZB. The problems more came from the system of the older boys and prefects being around. That magnified the problem. It was another thing that was used to pick on younger boys.

### **Discipline**

#### *Corporal punishment*

51. Corporal punishment was more used within the school rather than in the boarding house. If what the boy had done was really bad it would be issued by the headmaster, Mr Quick. Otherwise it would be whoever your form teacher was. Corporal punishment consisted of the belt and sometimes a ruler. There were canes that hung outside the headmaster's office but I don't remember them being used. The ruler was used if you were sitting down. When you received the belt it was usually six times you were hit on your hand. The belt was given for things as small as forgetting a pen or a jotter. It was sometimes given for poor educational attainment such as not following the teaching properly or not hitting the targets that were set. Things that would maybe go to the headmaster would be things that had gone too far like skiving. I received the belt most commonly from a History teacher called Johnny Willy. He was known for a double flick that allowed him to get you with his belt a second time as he brought it back up. He was probably the one teacher who issued the belt the most. Mr RZB very rarely used the belt and it was always in the school. He was more



the quiet sergeant major sort of character. There was only one occasion when I received the belt from Mr RZB. He hit me only one or two times with the belt on that occasion. I have no idea whether corporal punishment was recorded by anyone.

#### *Suspension and expulsion*

52. I think there were some boys expelled but they were in other houses. There were maybe three or four boys expelled but I couldn't say what they did. I don't recall boys being suspended.

#### *Prefects role in discipline*

53. Prefects had a role in the discipline after the teachers were involved. You would be sent along to the prefects' room to tell them what you had done. They would in turn work out another form of punishment for you. They could give you lines or essays to do. The essays could be three thousand words long and on topics like 'shoelaces' or 'silence.' You would have to have the essay done by 8:00 am the following morning. If you got something wrong in the essay you might be given another three thousand word essay to do.
54. Sometimes the prefects' discipline went beyond discipline and would be what I consider abusive. Looking back, that system, and the way in which the teachers interacted with it, effectively condoned the way in which the prefects were behaving. Both the teachers and the headmaster must have known what was happening in that regard. I think Mr RZB might have twigged as to what was going on but I am not sure. I say that only because he was located in a classroom slightly removed from the main school where the prefects room was.

#### *Discipline in the boarding house*

55. If there was discipline required in the boarding house it would be Mr RZB who would be involved. He would be the person who would give you a talking to. He was very good at taking the boys who were bullies down. The older I got the more I became

aware of how clever he was with dealing with them. He had a way of dismantling them and almost making fun of them in front of you. It was as if he wanted to show you that they weren't as tough as they thought they were.

56. Mr RZB was never physical and very rarely did he use corporal punishment. He sometimes would give out lines and things like that. I can't remember what that would be issued for because, in the grand scheme of things looking back, that was nothing in comparison to what you were dealing with in the regime elsewhere. He did sometimes issue those out to the senior boys who were the bullies.
57. In the normal course of a day, if you took away the extremities, things would be checked. When it came to duties attached to the drying room Mr RZB and the senior boys would check that you had cleaned that away, tidied up properly and things were being properly heated so that the clothes could get dried. Likewise, your uniform and shoes were checked in order to make sure that they were tidy. That was the normal regime with normal punishments associated with that where those duties hadn't been done or completed.
58. It was hard but it was normal to be given things like lines and so on were you found not to have done those duties properly. Where things went beyond the normal regime the discipline turned into something else. There were some older boys who used their authority to just pick on things rather than there being something that was actually wrong. If, for example, an older boy discovered that their rugby shirt hadn't been properly hung to dry that would then lead to you being punished in a way that went beyond discipline by the older boys.

*The relationship between discipline in the school and in the boarding house*

59. Things might go across from the school to the boarding houses. A quiet word might be said by one of the teachers to someone else then that might go on and impact you in some way in the boarding house in terms of things happening that I would consider more to be in the bracket of abuse. Similarly that would happen within the school. You might receive the belt from the teacher then get told to report to the prefects. The prefects would then instigate some form of punishment. It was interconnected in that

way and could grow in terms of what happened. Predominantly for myself, the more serious things happened when things found their way back into the boarding house and the senior boys were involved.

### **Abuse at Morrison's Academy**

60. In my mind I have the things that I experienced in three stages. The first set of memories are surrounding what the school was like, why it was like that and the regime that was there. The second set of memories surround what I would class as 'normal bullying.' The third set of memories surround what I would consider as the regime amongst the older boys and prefects going beyond that. Reflecting back, in some ways I find it very difficult to disentangle what would be considered a normal disciplined regime, bullying and what I would consider as abuse. The abuse side was perhaps where the more sadistic elements came in surrounding punishment. Boys were picked on and really treated horrendously.
61. I am not sure how bad it was in the other boarding houses. I think some of them were on a par with Academy House but others weren't quite so bad. I presume the abuse I suffered was a constant throughout all of the boarding houses at Morrison's. However, I can only talk to what I experienced in Academy. All I can say is that in Academy House it was particularly bad. You were scared when you were at the school but in the boarding house it was constant. Every minute of every hour you were fearful. As soon as you were back in that boarding house you were fearful. Anything that happened in there could result in things happening and you being hurt both physically and emotionally.

Mr <sup>CFR</sup> [REDACTED]

62. I didn't primarily come forward to the Inquiry to discuss the teachers and the school side of things but, reflecting back, there was one teacher whose actions make me feel uncomfortable. Mr <sup>CFR</sup> [REDACTED] was a very highly thought of [REDACTED] If he felt boys were underperforming on the rugby pitch he would 'drop kick' them. You would

have to bend over then he would run up as if he was kicking the ball over the posts then kick you full force on your backside. There was no playing around. I think I only ever got it once. However, I remember watching it happening to other boys constantly. If your knees weren't dirty when you came off the rugby pitch you were drop kicked. Looking back, I have never thought of how I felt when that happened to me. All I thought about was the pain. You were obviously afraid when you were waiting.

*Abuse from other boys*

63. There were times when the prefects and senior boys would take over in the boarding house and at the school. They acted in much the way as I imagine the Japanese or the Germans acted during the war. They followed the traits and ways to act around other boys that the boys that had been older than them had previously acted. That was the key problem in the boarding house. That trait of that 'hell' continuing from one set of older boys to the next continued throughout my time at the school. I very much separate the behaviours I experienced from bullying. Bullying is unacceptable but I view it as a normal feature in school life. The behaviours I experienced from the senior boys during my time there went far beyond that.
64. There was a regime and the way the older boys and prefects behaved ran through every single thing you did. The victims were all of us who were younger. From your first time in the first dormitory right through to the end of your time in the second dormitory you were totally under it. Beyond those ages upwards there was slightly less of it. That was the period when the boys who were predisposed to those abusive behaviours would start also acting in that way towards the younger boys. There was no rhyme or reason why myself or other boys were picked on. You never knew when you were going to be picked on. You could just be sitting there and they could decimate the group to pick who they wanted to torture or they would randomly pick an individual. You could be walking down a corridor or through a room and the next moment these sort of things would just be happening. Sometimes it was systematic where every second boy was picked upon. It was constant. It wasn't like it was once in a blue moon.



65. I learnt very quickly that I needed to develop. I remember watching how the older boys who were bullies operated. When you were small you couldn't do much against the more senior boys. However, when you got older you could figure out what you needed to do. I remember during the school holidays I would be out climbing and running in order to get fit and grow the muscles in my arms. I learnt that I had to get in there hard, fast and first. I worked out how I would have to hit them in retaliation. I decided that if I was going to be hammered then I would take the bullies with me. It was a self-preservation thing. If they were coming towards me to do something then I would respond quickly. I would try and take them out before they got to me. I would aim for areas that were visible rather than anywhere else. If you hit them in their face they would have to explain why they had a black eye or a bleeding nose. I knew that I just wasn't going to survive if I didn't get it in quickly. I realised that there was no way I could take them out because they were essentially men but I at least wanted to make them hesitate before they approached me. Their abuse still continued but at least in my mind I was figuring out a defence.
66. It wasn't just the very senior boys who were part of the abusive culture in Academy. You could see semblances of bullying amongst the younger boys in first year. You could see the boys who would become part of that regime in later years. In that way it was more of a peer group that spread from the senior boys. The behaviour of boys became increasingly more extreme the older they got. By the time they were in fifth year I would describe their behaviour as 'through the roof' in terms of the level of abuse. There were a number of boys who were weren't quite in power but would do bad things just to keep in with the other boys. Those boys were different but they were still part of the senior regime. Then there were the boys who were particularly bad. They were the real sadists amongst the older boys. [REDACTED] was the same age as me but he was an evil piece of work. [REDACTED] was an older boy who was bad. [REDACTED] was another older boy who sticks out in my mind.
67. It's difficult for me to put into specifics the things that went on because it was such a constant thing. It was a regime of people constantly coming down upon you. A lot of the things that happened I have locked away and are difficult to bring back. It was a mixture of both emotional and physical abuse. It was a mixture of psychological pain



and physical torture. The older boys would think up ways to torture boys then get a few younger boys together to try out that torture. They would then see which boys would last the longest under that torture. It wasn't just a slap with a towel, it was real torture. There were things like beatings, drownings, force feeding things that they had made up but there were other things too. The standard thing would be for an older boy to raid your dorm and upend your bed. That was at the minor end of the scale. At the other end of the scale you would be taken out by a boy, taken away and have things done to you. That was mostly done by an individual older boy. Sometimes there would be multiple boys involved and you would receive a mass beating.

68. I remember boys being made by the older boys to eat soap or given 'the rat's tail', which was being whipped with towels, during shower times. Sometimes the senior boys would hold you under water by way of torturing you. Sometimes that was at the swimming pool and other times that was in the bath or in the toilets. The occasion I caught pneumonia followed an occasion when [REDACTED] held me under the water at the swimming baths. I remember occasions where our shirts and pants would be soaked and hung out in the winter air so that they would be frozen solid in the morning. The senior boys would wait for a good frost so that they could do that. There were occasions in the boarding house where we were made to run around the common room and they would throw darts at us. There was an incident where I was shot at by one of the senior boys with an air pistol. I wasn't the only one who experienced that. That was with both pellets and darts. I can't recall which specific boys were involved in all of these incidents but it was usually the same people and simply done for their own amusement.
69. Sometimes boys would be hung out of windows two or three floors up. You'd be held out of the window either by one or two ankles. That type of thing would go on and happened to me on one occasion. There was no reason why that was done to me. The two or three boys involved just did it. It was [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and a third that I don't remember the name of who did that. When I was pulled back in the boys tortured me and made sure I was beaten. I was terrified.

70. There was boy whose surname was [REDACTED] who was totally mad who would use a bayonet to torture you with. He definitely had something wrong with him. Knives would be used to repeatedly cut your arms. I remember other occasions having my head placed in a locker to hold me down then being beaten with running spikes. That happened once to me but I saw it happening to other boys too. Other times I was beaten with golf clubs, broom handles and belts. I saw that happening to other boys as well. These sort of things were happening all of the time. There wasn't an evening or a time where there wasn't somebody getting it or something wasn't happening.
71. [REDACTED] used to, as an individual, take you away and twist your arm right round and thump a particular nerve to cause more pain. He'd keep doing that until he reached the point where tears flowed. If you were like me and refused to cry the level was pushed up. Looking back, it would have been very easy for me to have relented and cried but that wasn't what I did.
72. I remember that some of the senior boys involved in the abuse would keep a book to note down how the boy's tears flowed and what bruises were on your arms after torturing you. There were boys who kept notes on the amount of time and how long it took you to run around for them. I remember being sent by them to buy a penny chew for them from a local café. For every minute late you would get beaten or further tortured. Those boys would note all of that down. [REDACTED] would note down the times he physically hurt you in his book alongside measurements of your injuries and anything else he could think of. Those notes weren't a formalised thing from the school. They were purely a thing those senior boys did for themselves. It was all part of their sadism and they got a kick out of doing that.
73. I was never the victim of sexual assault, however, there are two occasions when I can recall there being sexual abuse. Both of those instances involved older boys rather than staff members. The first occasion involved senior boys forcing other boys to masturbate them. I think that [REDACTED] was one of the victims. The other occasion surrounded something happening between an older boy and a couple of younger boys at the top of The Knock, which was a hill nearby to the school. That was on one of the occasions when the senior boys took the younger boys out for a walk.

A senior boy called [REDACTED] was supposed to be taking us on the walk but left us supervised by other boys. I was on that walk but the incident happened separately to me. I have a feeling that one of the boys who was a victim was [REDACTED] and the other boy was called [REDACTED]. I was nearly called to go by the older boy but somehow I evaded it. When that happened that caused major issues because that did get back to staff. That's when I heard about what had happened. There were hints amongst the boys surrounding what had happened before then. I think the boys who were the abusers just received a telling off. There weren't any further consequences.

74. The abuse and regime didn't only affect those pupils who were boarders. Day pupils were affected by the senior boys as well. I have spoken to a former pupil, who is now a farmer, who was a day pupil and he had a horrendous time during his time at the school. He said to me that it was the boys who were boarders who were horrendous to him. He told me that his schooling was destroyed because of that. He recounted to me that Mr <sup>RZB</sup> [REDACTED] had picked up on that and had said to him privately that at least he had the ability to drive a tractor, plough and a combine harvester and that wasn't what other boys could do.
75. A lot of the incidents involving the other boys I have blocked out but occasionally memories do come back. There are snippets of memories that I have but don't recall the specifics. I just can't get into that next level of memories about what was happening. Things will flash in then go. I remember the screams and cries of the other younger boys who were suffering. I recall boys being burned by cigarettes. I don't recall that happening to me. I remember instances of boys having their fingers shut in doors and being stretched out over things and beaten. It would have been some of the same senior boys that would have been involved in all of that. All those sorts of things went on all of the time.
76. I was about eleven or twelve when the abuse started and it continued until I was in about third year. I had it bad but not as bad as some of the other younger boys. Some of those boys had a horrendous time. Looking back, I think I got off lightly compared to some of the other boys because I was somewhat of an oddity at the start. If, say, the older boys made the younger boys line up in the common room and made them

kiss their feet all the other boys would do it and then maybe receive a slap across their head. I'd come up and refuse. That would then lead to further things happening. That was just how my internal stubbornness operated. That is one of my proudest things. I remember that when I left the school Mr RZB wrote something like 'GEG will not be led' and I am proud of that.

### **Awareness of abuse by staff**

77. Mr GEK was the housemaster of Academy before I arrived. He left the year before I arrived at the boarding house. I have learnt in later life that he was the one who allowed the boys, rather than the staff, run the boarding house. That was where the regime started. Mr RZB started to combat that culture after Mr GEK left. He was one of those teachers who didn't want to be a teacher but was actually one of the best teachers you could get. He was the most natural teacher there. For me, and a few others, he was one of the teachers who tried to direct you. He had a genuine enthusiasm.
78. It took Mr RZB working hard with the boys right up until I myself became a senior boy to overcome that culture within the boarding house. I knew at the time that he had twigged what was going because he saw that we all had massively bruised arms when he saw us washing. I think that was when he started to genuinely work on the senior boys to try to change their behaviour. I suspect there were limits to what he could do because some of their behaviour was acceptable by that times' standards but other things would have gone beyond it. I think that he genuinely tried but was having a hard time of it from further up the line.
79. I don't think Mr RZB was present when any of the abuse took place but there were occasions when he heard things happening and came into the room to stop things. I remember him dealing with things as best as he could through giving boys a talking to. I remember an incident with [REDACTED]. I had made the decision that attack was the best form of defence and went for it. Mr RZB walked in at that point and shouted at [REDACTED] to get downstairs and for me to remain. He later hauled me downstairs afterwards and spoke to me. I didn't know what was going to

happen but when I got into his office Mr RZB just asked me what I wanted to drink and what I was up to. He then apologised to me and thanked me for responding in the way I had to. That was an example of the way in which he was dealing with the culture amongst the senior boys. In a sense, he was giving the younger boys the confidence to fight back. He was also thanking us for doing what he dearly would have loved to have done which was to serve them a bit of their own medicine.

80. You could see that Mr RZB saw the problems and that he quietly tried to sort them out. You could see that he tried to sort the kids who had major problems and were causing major problems. Just before he died I had a conversation with Mr RZB. I tried to explain to him what had been going on in the boarding house. He explained to me then that he hadn't wanted to be a teacher but had taken tests that led to him becoming one after leaving the army. He also explained what he had had to deal with and how he had tried to do it. I have to give Mr RZB credit. He genuinely was trying to solve a major problem that no one else was trying to overcome. He was probably trying to do that with not much backing. I think anyone else in his position would not have succeeded and there would have been a continuation of the abuse from the boys in the boarding house into the next generation.
81. Mr RZB would have ultimately answered to Mr Quick and the governors. Looking back, I think his hands were sometimes tied by the system and people above him. I did talk to another teacher in adult life, many years after I left Morrison's, who had gone on to become the Deputy Headmaster. He admitted that he got no backing in terms of trying to overcome the bullying and abuse in the school. I don't think that those who were in the higher positions in the school were really interested in what was happening in the boarding houses. They were interested in the main school, what was being taught, how the school was doing in games and what the end result was. I think the boarding houses were viewed as a separate entity. When it came to tackling these things in the boarding houses it came purely down to the housemaster rather than the school.



### **Reporting of abuse whilst at Morrison's Academy**

82. There was no structure in the school which you could use if you had a problem. There was no one you could go to speak to or dare to speak to. There was no one you could ask for help even amongst the teaching staff. There was nothing whatsoever that would allow problems to be dealt with. There wasn't anyone I could report things to. That was partly because there wasn't anyone to speak to and partly because there may be consequences if you did. You even felt that you couldn't say anything to your parents. I never reported what was happening to my parents. It wasn't because of what my parents were like. It was more that if I had then that would have got back to the school. I had seen people where it had worked out like that and all hell had broken out. It was like another level what happened afterwards, almost like a witch hunt. The bullying would just become even worse when somebody reported something.

### **Leaving Morrison's Academy**

83. Quite early on I realised that academically I wasn't doing all that well and I wanted to leave Morrison's. By the time of sitting my O Levels I had lost all interest. I realised that boys like me who weren't aiming for university, or who weren't good at sports, were effectively written off by the school. I told my parents that I was finished after fourth year and just didn't go back. My parents were ok with that and contacted the school to let them know. I ultimately left Morrison's when I was just about to turn eighteen in 1972.

### **Life after being at boarding school**

84. I didn't want to go to university and I had been written off by the school anyway because of my exam results. Myself and another boy called **GEU** decided that we would show them and join the forces. During the war my father had been in the Special Forces during the early stages of those forces being created. He had been out to India to train people up and had ended up behind Japanese lines to get people out. Through him I got listening to men who were former Special Forces and had that

in my mind. When I walked down the steps leaving Morrison's for the last time I had that in the back of mind and thought to myself "I will show them what toughness is."

85. I have always set myself goals and looked to achieve them. I initially joined the parachute regiment when I was seventeen. I later was commissioned and moved onto the next lot. I was badly injured in 1976 and ultimately came out of active service in 1978. I continued to operate in various things right up until 1990. That was more specialist stuff when they needed me. After leaving active service I became a silversmith and do that up until this day. I have had two failed marriages. My first marriage came when I was twenty four. I have children. I have two boys and two girls and have since had two grandchildren.

### **Impact**

86. I have never had flashbacks to Morrison's but I have from my experiences in the military. All I remember about my experiences at Morrison's are the extreme things that happened. I think about Morrison's every day if not every second day. None of those memories are pleasant. I understand the problems it's made for me. There have been things that have always been with me and things that have started creeping out in later life. It's not until you stop and think about things that you realise how much your time at boarding school affects you in later life. The whole regime destroyed me emotionally, it destroyed my confidence and it destroyed the way I related to other people. Many of these things came out for me in later life but it is clear to me that that was what the regime did.
87. There has been a physical impact from my time at the school. I have scars on my body from when I was tortured at school. Every few years I get a really bad bout of pneumonia and I link that back to being held under water by [REDACTED] when I was at the school. That was when all of that started.
88. It had a negative impact on my emotions surrounding relationships. Some things I can be very clinical about, like things I did in the forces, but others I can be very emotional

about. Those things are not always things I would expect to be emotional about. I am a bit colder on the human side of things. I am ok with very close friends but not with others. I only have three really close friends but no one really beyond that. It affected my marriage. I kept very much to myself and didn't show emotion. However, at the same time I would cry at a black and white film in the middle of the night. I wasn't really able to show affection towards my wives and children. I wasn't a tactile huggable person.

89. Being written off by the school affected my confidence in adulthood. In the past it stopped me questioning people in certain situations. I remember sitting in meetings with people like senior lawyers and questioning internally what they were saying. Even though I would feel that there was another way, and I should speak up, I still wouldn't say anything. I allowed a lot of things to be pushed down and it is only now that has changed. I'm the opposite way now and will look to cut down people who I feel aren't solving the problem or answering the questions correctly.
90. I am not the 'golf club' type of person. I step away from anything where I see people become fanatical about whatever the thing is. I don't know whether that is a result of the bullying I experienced. When I see someone becoming fanatical, to me, they are not actually enjoying the thing they are fanatical about. It becomes an almost win at all costs mentality. I appreciate that is a contradiction considering what I did in the forces but that is how I feel. I have a difficulty with authority in the sense that I don't like people who I know wouldn't do what I would do as well. I struggle with people who haven't done it. I can work with people who know what they talking about but not those who think they do purely because of the position they are in. I think that when you get people who are in a position of authority who haven't experienced what they are talking about that can lead to bullying.
91. The older I have got the less I have been able to tolerate people who are bullies. In the past I could control things, and had a long fuse to calm down, but that doesn't happen anymore. When I see things going on and people doing things to other people I just can't hold back. If I am fresh, and not tired, I can deal with it and contain it. At most it is a quiet word and I walk off. If I am weak, in a lot of pain or really tired, it is

far more raw. I won't physically go for the bully but I will verbally go for them. I am taken back to the way I responded to similar situations when I was at Morrison's. It isn't, however, because of trying to protect myself like it was at school. It is more me making sure that I am not going to ever get bullied again. It doesn't matter what that situation is. If I am caught unawares there would be no build up and I will snap and roar.

92. I remember that when you were at the school you could recognise when there was change. There would be moves that would lead to something happening and there would be a situation. That was useful in the military but not so much now. I think that is why I react and sometimes, on certain occasions, I don't. I will sit silent and not open my mouth. It doesn't make sense. There are things that I have no patience for now, things like cycling on pavements, that combined with my issues with certain people in authority can lead to problems. I remember speaking to a police officer about people cycling on pavements and asking whether something could be done about it. Instead of agreeing and walking away he gave me a lecture. That then descended into an argument and very quickly I found myself in a situation where I had to watch what I was saying.
93. Some of the things I suffered at school helped me in my career in the forces. In that way it was a positive. It brought in a survival instinct. It helped me pull through and sustain injuries. During my training we would be trained around sustaining torture and interrogation. We were also asked to sleep in uncomfortable places like on rocks or whatever. All that came as no problem to me. I could sleep there and lie down for weeks with no problem. I think that came easy to me because of my experiences at the school.
94. I probably didn't as quickly reach my full potential as I could have because of my experiences at the school. Looking back, it probably led me down a completely different direction to what I could have been. I think I am very lucky where I am today but getting to that good stage could have come earlier. I think things might have been different in terms of my education if I had gone to another school. I had always admired my uncle who was a plastic surgeon. He would allow me in to watch

procedures and I found that amazing. I loved the type of thing he did and the reconstruction he was involved with. I do a similar thing now with silver but I always regret that I never got to follow my uncle's career. A lot of the people who were viewed as successful during my time in the school went on and became failures as people and in what they did. I have been recognised for lots of things I have done in my career but I don't think one bit of that is down to the school. All that school provided me was the motivation to prove that they were wrong. They made me more determined just to show them who I really was.

95. Over my time at the school and in adult life, particularly in my early fifties, I have thought about ending my life. My experiences have left a bit in me that I can't tie together. I never took any active steps to do it but it did go through my mind. Emotions didn't come into my thinking when I contemplated that. Contemplating ending my life was specifically to do with my experiences at Morrison's when I was there but when I was older that was more to do with how the impact of that related to specifics in my life then. In both times I felt there was no escape and I think it was because of the level of despair I found myself in. There are other lives that have been far more destroyed than mine from what happened at Morrison's. I heard in later life that there had been a boy who had ended up committing suicide just after his time at the school.
96. If I had never had the pain of having to deal with the injuries from my time in military now then I don't think I would have had to confront the pain I suffered during my time at the school. I have now learnt that pain reaches a certain level and it doesn't get any worse. Because I have managed to deal with this it has been a godsend. It has made me better understand myself. I can now see myself warts and all. I am more at peace with everything. Out of the badness came something good. I think that if I didn't try to find positives in that way then I wouldn't be here today. I would say that I am at my peak of understanding myself now and what I can achieve. That understanding and the associated hopes should have been with me when I left school not now. If it had I would have been at my peak as an emotional person a lot earlier on in my life. I could have slipped into being a really nasty piece of work with the impacts it had on me.



97. I have been very lucky. I have achieved a lot on in my life but you will never see things like my decorations up in that school. That is partly down to me and partly down to the school. I am not alone in that because I know there are former pupils who have experienced the same. We have, in a sense, surpassed what was expected from us by the school. We were boys who were written off when we left but we showed them that they were wrong.

### **Treatment and support**

98. I haven't received any psychiatric help or counselling connected to my experiences at Morrison's. I have, however, spoken with close friends and talked through some of the things I feel with my surgeon. I think those things are more to do with my experiences in the military rather than my experiences at the school.

### **Reporting of abuse after leaving boarding school**

99. I've never reported my experiences to the police or anybody else.

### **Contact with Morrison's since leaving**

100. I came back to live in Perthshire in 1985. After returning I started running a Duke of Edinburgh awards scheme. I would take kids way out into the mountains. I was asked by Morrison's whether I could take a couple of kids from the school out. They were kids from the school who needed to be taken out to complete their awards. They just needed a bit of a lift up so that they could get their Gold Awards. I said no problem and agreed to that. I then had a couple of my kids who could have benefitted from the school's assistance and asked them whether they would be willing to help in return. Unfortunately, the school refused. That made me feel that nothing had changed and the school was just the same.

## **Records**

101. I have never sought my records from my time at Morrison's. I'm not interested in doing that.

## **Lessons to be Learned**

102. Looking back at the way the teachers were, they were predominantly men who had either fought in the first or the Second World War. They would have had to have dealt with things in war then come back to civilian life as teachers sometimes teaching horrible brats. There must have been a massive frustration that they would have been dealing with within themselves. I don't want to appear to be offering excuses for the way that some of them were, more I want to try and explain why maybe there was the regime in place in the way that they behaved.
103. Within that boarding house you still had the remnants of Empire and the Commonwealth. There were kids with military parents from Hong Kong, Guadalcanal and Africa. There were then boys like me who had parents who were just trying to put their kids through a better educational system. The boys who had the problems were the ones who were from the former set of circumstances rather than the latter. They were the boys who hardly ever saw their parents or, I suspect, had been treated badly themselves within the family home then been sent off to school. I suspect that they were boys who saw their parents treat the people in those countries in a similar way to which they ended up treating us. There was definitely something in those boys that was way out of kilter. It really was beyond bullying and strayed into pure sadism.
104. Within educational settings you need good leaders and teachers. They should be taking a lot of the good non-commissioned officers, or persons with that equivalent experience, into schools. A person who has seen it, done it and knows how to respond. I don't mean that so that they can go in and order people around but to see the weaker children, lift them and give them confidence to do something. It should be people like that in that role rather than people just saying "it's ok." You need to

encourage children. You need to bring out those who are unsure and pull down the ones that are too cocky. There needs to be that good old fashioned balance and I think that is what many schools lack today.

105. Everybody should be able to leave the school, whether they want to go on to academia or not, with the confidence to do what they want to do and to do their best. School shouldn't just be the academic side of things, it should be an all-round thing. It should be about sport, discussion and conversations about all sorts of things. Children should be allowed to open their minds and discuss things. They shouldn't feel afraid. There need to be a balance though. There has to be a bit of discipline. I feel now that we are probably going too much the other way. The education system today seems to have dropped off into a different space. I have seen children who are educated in Montessori systems. Every one of those children have hit problems when they have entered the wider world because they have been told they are fantastic and all of a sudden someone says that they are not. Children and young adults now have the voice that suggests confidence but in reality that confidence and ability isn't there.
106. Pastoral care, and having someone available to speak to, has to be in place within boarding schools. If that is in place then it will only work if the individual assigned that role not only has the trust of the child but also can trust the people who are above them. They need to have a way in which they can say what they have found out and for that to be responded to appropriately. The people in superior positions to those individuals shouldn't be people who would destroy that trust and then, say, approach the child themselves. That would destroy that whole chain of trust.

### **Hopes for the Inquiry**

107. The things I experienced in Morrison's should never have happened. Even though it was a different time those things still shouldn't have happened. I think boarding schools had to exist for the period I was at the end of. At that time you had people from Britain who were working all over the world and maybe couldn't get the education they needed for their children in those places. I still think they have a place today. I

have seen that through my own children who have boarded. If a boarding house is run correctly by those who have the correct experience, and they provide the right level of discipline and rules, they can be fun places that work. I can see how lucky my children have been, compared to me, when it has come from their experiences of boarding school.

108. I hope that education in general changes so that children really leave with something that they can use outside. I hope children are enabled to have real confidence and an ability to do brilliant things with their lives. Everybody has problems but a little fewer problems inevitably helps. There needs to be some justice for those who have had to live with what happened all their days. They're the ones who should have something. I hope through this Inquiry that that will be achieved.

109. 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.

GEG

Signed

Dated. 4/10/22