

1 Friday, 7 June 2024

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning. Welcome to the last day this
4 week of evidence in Chapter 6 of Phase 8 of our case
5 study hearings. This is the chapter in which of course
6 we're looking particularly into the provision of
7 residential care by Dr Guthrie's and Loaningdale.

8 Now, Ms Forbes.

9 MS FORBES: Good morning, my Lady.

10 The next witness is available by Webex and her name
11 is Ann Matheson.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

13 Ann Matheson (affirmed)

14 (Evidence via videolink)

15 LADY SMITH: My first question for you, I hope, is an easy
16 one. How would you like me to address you? Would you
17 like me to use your second name or your first name?

18 A. You can use my first name.

19 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

20 A. I'll still call you 'Lady Smith' though.

21 LADY SMITH: It's just my label. It's my working name.

22 I know we both have the same first name, although

23 I think we spell it differently.

24 A. There we go then.

25 LADY SMITH: Ann, thank you for that.

1 You know what we're interested in hearing from you
2 about this morning, going back to your experience at
3 Loaningdale, and I do understand we're asking you to
4 take your mind back quite a number of decades, so please
5 don't worry if some things don't come back clearly
6 immediately or you can't be precise about dates or
7 times.

8 I know from your written statement -- which is
9 already evidence before me -- that you've been very
10 helpful and you've been able to give us quite a bit of
11 detail there.

12 A. Really?

13 LADY SMITH: But don't worry if there are some things that
14 seem to be missing now.

15 Otherwise, Ann, if you want a break at any time,
16 don't hesitate to let me know. Or if there's anything
17 that you don't understand that we're asking, that's our
18 fault, not yours. We're not being clear enough so do
19 tell us. Don't hold back. All right.

20 A. I won't hold back.

21 LADY SMITH: Good. If you're ready I'll hand over to
22 Ms Forbes and she will take it from there.

23 A. Yes.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

25 Ms Forbes.

1 Questions by Ms Forbes

2 MS FORBES: Thank you, my Lady.

3 Good morning, Ann.

4 A. Good morning.

5 Q. I think we spoke before and you're okay for me to call
6 you by your first name as well; is that right?

7 A. Absolutely, yes.

8 Q. Ann, you have given a statement to the Inquiry, which is
9 evidence before the Inquiry already, and I think that is
10 with you just now, is that right, in a folder?

11 A. It's on my knee here, yes.

12 Q. At the very last page of that statement there is
13 a declaration and then a place where you've signed it
14 and dated it, so I think the declaration is at
15 paragraph 80 and it says:

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

20 You have signed that on 3 August 2023; is that
21 right?

22 A. That's right, yes.

23 Q. Just for our purposes, Ann, that statement has
24 a reference for our IT systems and I'm just going to
25 read that out for the transcript. It's WIT-1-000001311.

1 That is not something for you to worry about.

2 Ann, I just want to start by asking you some

3 questions about your background. I understand you tell

4 us that you were a teacher in your working life mainly?

5 A. I was a teacher until 1994.

6 Q. I think you tell us that you were a principal teacher of

7 geography; is that right?

8 A. That's correct, yes.

9 Q. You did that for about 30 years?

10 A. Round about 30 years, yes.

11 Q. Was that locally to you?

12 A. Yes, I lived and worked in the same community in Biggar

13 for most of that life.

14 Q. We don't need your date of birth, but you were born in

15 1944, is that right?

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. Your retirement then was early retirement; is that

18 right?

19 A. Yes. It was early retirement. I was only 49 they were

20 offering a package which was irresistible, because they

21 were trying to reshape the structure of secondary

22 schools and it was going to be cheaper if they got rid

23 of me because I was a head of department.

24 Q. That was in 1994, was it?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. But after that, I think you still did some interesting
2 things. You tell us you became a curator and a museum
3 manager?
4 A. Correct.
5 Q. You also did a degree in Scots Language and Literature?
6 A. Yep.
7 Q. Was that after you retired?
8 A. I did that -- I finished it after I retired, I had
9 started it when I was still at school.
10 Q. Also you have an interest in local history and you have
11 been writing about that; is that right?
12 A. That's correct.
13 Q. Also, I think you have an interest in theatre in the
14 local area as well?
15 A. Theatre and language, yes.
16 Q. I think you tell us about something called the
17 Braw Clan?
18 A. Braw Clan is a new Scottish theatre company.
19 Q. That's in Biggar, is it?
20 A. It is based in Biggar.
21 Q. But I think there was also a time you maybe had to take
22 a break from work, is that right, for about eight years?
23 A. I had to be the carer for my husband, who had multiple
24 sclerosis.
25 Q. Was that before you took early retirement or after?

1 A. That was after I took early retirement, and I had to
2 finish my job in the museum so that I could look after
3 my husband, and then after he died I went back to the
4 museum again.

5 Q. Ann, you then go on to tell us how you came to be
6 involved with Loaningdale School and this is from
7 paragraph 3 of your statement and you tell us that
8 Loaningdale, as we have heard in the Inquiry, was near
9 Biggar, near to the town?

10 A. Mm-hmm.

11 Q. You could just walk to it, even though it was outside
12 the sort of town boundaries?

13 A. Well, I didn't ever walk to it. You could, but I didn't
14 ever do that.

15 Q. You tell us that you had a sort of understanding of the
16 purpose of the school, and this is at paragraph 4, and
17 you say that it was, as far as you were aware, some sort
18 of rehabilitation for the pupils to try and get them to
19 return to normal school hopefully?

20 A. Yes, that's what I believed it to be.

21 LADY SMITH: Where had you picked up that understanding
22 from, Ann?

23 A. Just from the general feeling within the community. You
24 know, it was called a List D School and I knew that it
25 was only for boys and that there was an emphasis on

1 attempting to help them to be reinstated in a normal
2 programme or something like that. I really was never
3 very sure, but that was my impression.

4 LADY SMITH: So something of that nature rather than
5 punishment?

6 A. Yes, I think there was an emphasis on no punishment,
7 positive reinforcement.

8 LADY SMITH: Yes.

9 A. But I'm not sure to what extent that was practised.

10 LADY SMITH: No. I was just interested in what the thinking
11 in your town was about Loaningdale. That would seem to
12 fit with my understanding.

13 A. That's fine.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

15 Ms Forbes.

16 MS FORBES: My Lady, thanks.

17 Ann, were you aware at all whether or not
18 Loaningdale had a particular type of boy chosen to go
19 there, for example, boys of a particular intelligence or
20 something of that nature?

21 A. No, no. The only boy I knew about in Loaningdale was
22 a laddie whom I'd taught in Biggar High School and he
23 was expelled from Biggar High School for his
24 behaviour -- he was actually a friend of mine, I liked
25 him -- and he was sent to Loaningdale and he ended up

1 being the only person who was ever expelled from
2 Loaningdale.
3 Q. I think you tell us about him later in your statement.
4 I think you say he's now a successful businessman; is
5 that right?
6 A. Absolutely. Absolutely.
7 Q. But back then he was expelled from Loaningdale?
8 A. He was expelled from Loaningdale. It was quite
9 a triumph for him.
10 Q. Do you know what that was for?
11 A. No. Just bad behaviour, I suppose. But I don't know
12 how bad the behaviour was.
13 Q. You go on, Ann, to tell us about how you came to be
14 a trustee at Loaningdale School.
15 A. Yes.
16 Q. That this was for a period of about three years or so
17 from the late 1980s until Loaningdale closed; is that
18 right?
19 A. Yep.
20 Q. But I think --
21 A. Did you say the late 1980s there?
22 Q. Yes, I did.
23 A. Did Loaningdale not close in 1980?
24 Q. I think Loaningdale closed around 1990, and I think you
25 say to us that you were there for about three or four

1 years in the late 1980s until it closed.

2 A. Right. The dates are really weird for me. I'm quite
3 confused about that.

4 LADY SMITH: Do we have a clear date for the closure of
5 Loaningdale? Can you remind me, Ms Forbes?

6 MS FORBES: Yes, my Lady, I'm told it's either very late
7 1989 or 1990. So round about that time.

8 LADY SMITH: Does that help you, Ann, from records we've
9 studied?

10 A. -- have to readjust my thinking.

11 LADY SMITH: From your statement it seems that when you were
12 first recalling this, you linked your time as a trustee
13 as being a few years in the run-up to the closure of
14 Loaningdale.

15 A. That's correct, yes. It was the last couple of years
16 before Loaningdale closed.

17 LADY SMITH: So that would make it some time in the second
18 half of the 1980s.

19 A. Yeah. Well --

20 LADY SMITH: About 35 years ago. Over 35 years ago perhaps?

21 A. I am confused about the date when Loaningdale closed.
22 I can't get it sorted out in my mind in relation to
23 other events.

24 LADY SMITH: Do you remember how long it was after you
25 retired that you became a Loaningdale trustee,

1 approximately? I'm not looking for a precise --
2 A. It was before I retired.
3 LADY SMITH: Before you retired you became a trustee?
4 A. Yes.
5 LADY SMITH: So you wouldn't even have been 50 then?
6 A. That's correct.
7 LADY SMITH: Okay. That is helpful. Thank you.
8 MS FORBES: Yes, I think, Ann, you tell us that you took the
9 early retirement in 1994 and --
10 A. Yeah.
11 Q. -- so if Loaningdale closed around 1989/1990 you would
12 still have been working at that time. Is that right?
13 A. I guess so, yeah. I'm sorry, I'm so vague about this.
14 LADY SMITH: Don't worry about it. That would fit with your
15 recollection if it was when you were still working as
16 a teacher that you became a trustee and you did that for
17 a few years, were you still working as a teacher when
18 you stopped being a trustee at Loaningdale?
19 A. I think so, yes.
20 LADY SMITH: Right. That is fine. That makes sense from
21 the other things you've said. Thank you.
22 A. Right.
23 MS FORBES: I think you already obviously knew about
24 Loaningdale from working and living in the local area
25 before that?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. I think you say one of your friends, was it
3 Eilidh Shirrefs?

4 A. My friend Eilidh Shirrefs was the educational
5 representative on the trustee board.

6 Q. She was already a trustee?

7 A. Yes. And she didn't divulge any private information
8 about Loaningdale but talked about it generally.

9 Q. I think you had another person that you knew was
10 a trustee -- that was involved with Loaningdale and that
11 was a good friend of yours, GYF [REDACTED]?

12 A. Yes, correct.

13 Q. Did you know him through the theatre connection?

14 A. I knew him through [REDACTED] Theatre Workshop. We both
15 sang and danced and played parts and things like that.

16 Q. What did he do as far as you were aware at Loaningdale?

17 A. I think he was a housemaster, houseparent person. He
18 certainly was not on the education team. He was on the
19 social work team.

20 Q. Did you know if he was a qualified social worker or not?

21 A. I don't, no.

22 Q. When you knew him and he was a housemaster at
23 Loaningdale, where did he live?

24 A. He lived in [REDACTED]. He had a house.
25 It was [REDACTED], but that was

1 where he lived.

2 Q. This was a place that was [REDACTED]

3 [REDACTED], is that right?

4 A. Very close to it.

5 Q. Was it [REDACTED]?

6 A. No, you could just [REDACTED]. As far as I know.

7 I mean, I only visited his house maybe a couple of

8 times.

9 Q. Would you describe it as a house, Ann, or an apartment?

10 How would you describe where he lived?

11 A. Oh, I don't -- I couldn't really tell you. It was

12 [REDACTED], I think it was maybe

13 two storeys, but -- it's still there. I could take

14 a walk up and describe it to you after that.

15 Q. Who did he live there with?

16 A. Just by himself.

17 Q. Just thinking about how long you knew GYF [REDACTED] for.

18 Are you able to give an estimate of how many years you

19 were friends with him for?

20 A. From the 1970s until he died.

21 Q. You tell us later that he died after Loaningdale closed;

22 is that right?

23 A. Yeah. After Loaningdale closed he had another job in

24 Lanark.

25 Q. From when you first knew him in the 1970s, as far as

1 you're aware, was he always working at Loaningdale up
2 until it closed?
3 A. Until it closed, yes.
4 Q. So throughout that time he was a housemaster or
5 something of that nature at Loaningdale?
6 A. Yes, whatever, a houseparent, I think.
7 Q. More involved in the social work side of things?
8 A. Yes, he wasn't education.
9 Q. He would also be involved in the theatre, as you have
10 said --
11 A. Yes.
12 Q. -- so you would see him there?
13 A. Yep.
14 Q. You have told us that you would visit his premises [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]; is that right?
16 A. Well, I visited him about a couple of times but he used
17 to drop in regularly to our house, because he knew my
18 husband wasn't very mobile. And he used to drop in and
19 stay for his dinner and things like that.
20 Q. Then you also tell us that you would sometimes go to
21 events at Loaningdale as well?
22 A. Very few of them.
23 Q. You mention a Halloween party, is that the kind of
24 thing?
25 A. I think it was a Halloween party or just one or two

1 events, fundraising events and things like that.

2 Q. You would go to those events with GYF [REDACTED]; is that
3 right?

4 A. No, I wouldn't go with GYF [REDACTED], because he would be
5 involved in the organisation of them. But, you know,
6 there would be -- I would certainly meet him there.

7 Q. You describe your contact with Loaningdale as being very
8 superficial before you became a trustee?

9 A. Yes, it was pretty superficial even when I was
10 a trustee.

11 Q. Yes, I think you go on to tell us a bit about that and
12 we'll come to that shortly, Ann.

13 You say that you were always interested in difficult
14 children and that led to you deciding to apply for a job
15 at Loaningdale at one point?

16 A. Yeah, yep.

17 Q. That was head of education?

18 A. I think it was.

19 Q. But you tell us you weren't successful in getting that?

20 A. That's correct.

21 Q. You tell us there was you and another person
22 shortlisted, a young man, is that right?

23 A. That's correct.

24 Q. It was this young man who ultimately was appointed?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. But I think you say that you had some misgivings about
2 that?

3 A. I did, yes.

4 Q. And what were they?

5 A. I felt he wasn't -- he wasn't -- he didn't have
6 a serious -- not an 'application', qualification in
7 education, you know. He had a kind of quasi-degree. He
8 didn't have a degree at all and I felt they needed
9 somebody with more bottle to do the job. I mean, I was
10 not at all disappointed that I didn't get it. I was
11 quite -- absolutely relaxed about it, because my
12 application had been wavy.

13 Q. At that time, were you still head of -- were you
14 a principal teacher --

15 A. Yes, I was still principal teacher of geography.

16 Q. Did you just stay in that job after --

17 A. I stayed in that job until I retired, yes.

18 Q. I think you tell us a little bit about a group interview
19 that you had and this young man was involved in that; is
20 that right?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. You mention someone called John, was that the headmaster
23 of Loaningdale?

24 A. I think John was his name, yes.

25 Q. During this group interview, the young man had a sort of

1 expression that he came out with, I'm not sure if you
2 can remember it?

3 A. Yes: 'You're not filling bottles but lighting candles'.
4 Q. I think you tell us that you -- that kind of toned in,
5 is the way you described it, with Loaningdale?

6 A. Yes, and I challenged him on it but instead of allowing
7 him to meet the challenge, John whose name I think it
8 was, intervened and said: 'Well, how would you answer
9 that?', to me, which was not really what you should have
10 done.

11 Q. You tell us what you said about this metaphor, as much
12 as you liked it, you said --

13 A. I didn't really like it, I pretended to like it.
14 Q. Okay.

15 A. I was being polite.

16 Q. You said at paragraph 9 you remember saying: 'These
17 bottles are going to have things in them when you get
18 them and what are you going to do with what is in the
19 bottle before you light the candle?'

20 A. That's correct.

21 Q. So is that how you saw it? That these boys, they
22 weren't coming as empty bottles, if we're using the
23 young man's metaphor, they were coming with issues
24 already?

25 A. Well nobody's an empty bottle and you have to have some

1 kind of ability to find out what is in that bottle
2 before you attempt to light a candle. I'm sorry, even
3 now it seems such a silly thing to say.

4 Q. When you were questioned about that by John I think you
5 tell us that you gave him an answer?

6 A. I did, yes.

7 Q. What was your answer that you remember? What did you
8 think --

9 A. My answer was there must be some kind of litmus paper in
10 terms of the psychologist or some kind of therapies that
11 you can do to test what is in the bottle before you can
12 do anything more about it, and perhaps you can manage to
13 change the contents of that bottle or empty it out.

14 We're extending this metaphor wonderfully.

15 Q. You felt that you needed to know really what had gone on
16 before with the child --

17 A. Yes, of course --

18 Q. -- what they were coming with, before you could attempt
19 to change --

20 A. -- absolutely, you can't light a candle until you know
21 what you're lighting. It might blow up in your face.

22 LADY SMITH: And it will be even harder if the bottle is
23 dark brown or dark green glass --

24 A. Indeed --

25 LADY SMITH: -- so you can't see properly what is in it.

1 A. -- with grey scummy stuff on the top.

2 LADY SMITH: No, but seriously, the point you make is
3 an interesting one, Ann, because no child comes without
4 at the very least a mixture of their own innate
5 personality and their experiences before you meet them.

6 A. Absolutely.

7 MS FORBES: As you say, Ann, the issue you had with this
8 young man getting the appointment was his real lack of
9 qualifications and experience?

10 A. Yes. I felt he wasn't serious enough. He didn't really
11 know about -- perhaps it was my own snobbery of, you
12 know, being a proper teacher, but I felt it was a really
13 Loaningdale thing to do, you know, to appoint someone
14 who didn't really have brilliant qualifications or
15 experience.

16 LADY SMITH: Maybe the children would have benefitted from
17 what you call a proper teacher?

18 A. Absolutely. Well, within a few weeks they actually
19 called me in to see if I could do the timetables for
20 them, because the small number of teachers that were
21 there were working a timetable without any break at all
22 in their working day.

23 MS FORBES: I think you say that you introduced that
24 timetable to allow them to have some prep time
25 essentially?

1 A. Some prep time, yeah. They were extremely grateful.

2 Q. Ann, I was interested in what you had to say there, you

3 said it was a really Loaningdale thing to do. Are you

4 able to tell us a little bit more about that? What do

5 you mean by that?

6 A. I always -- well, we in the secondary school never

7 thought of Loaningdale as a serious educational

8 establishment. There seemed to be a bunch of teachers

9 there and they were heavily focused on boys doing

10 physical things like woodwork, technical and very little

11 else. You know, there was nobody there who was maybe

12 teaching art. There was an English teacher who was

13 struggling hard, I think she was a young woman. But

14 there was nobody to have an overall view. There was no

15 vision and no grit.

16 This was the impression we had and they would go for

17 the easy option. The focus was a kind of charismatic

18 social work. I don't know how else to describe it.

19 Q. Thank you, Ann. That was really interesting to hear

20 your view about that.

21 I think after this application, you then heard again

22 from Loaningdale with an invitation to join their board

23 of trustees, is that right?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Was that something you were anticipating?

1 A. No. No, it was the last thing I was anticipating. But
2 I think they actually needed somebody --
3 Q. And this was something --
4 A. -- and it would have been churlish of me to refuse.
5 Q. Sorry, I missed that, Ann, I was talking over you.
6 A. It would have been churlish of me to refuse. It would
7 have indicated a kind of anger or disappointment on my
8 part and I wasn't going to let that happen.
9 Q. But this is an unpaid position. You're doing this --
10 A. Oh, yes.
11 Q. -- as a trustee. Had you ever been a trustee before?
12 A. No.
13 Q. When they asked you to be a trustee, were you told
14 anything about what they wanted you to do?
15 A. Not a thing.
16 Q. You say that they didn't ask you for any references?
17 A. No.
18 Q. But I think you would have -- when you applied for the
19 job as head of education, did you tell them about your
20 background?
21 A. Yeah.
22 Q. So they would have known about that?
23 A. The trustees were such a mixed bag of people.
24 Q. You point out, Ann, that you didn't get a letter or
25 anything of appointment?

1 A. No, no.

2 Q. Nothing to tell you what your roles and responsibilities
3 would be?

4 A. No, no.

5 Q. Were you just advised you have to attend a meeting when
6 the trustees meet once a month or something like that?

7 A. Yes. And we heard about the balance sheet and that kind
8 of thing, but there was no real discussion about the
9 school itself. I don't remember any, anyway.

10 Q. These meetings that you went to with the other trustees,
11 did they really focus on the financial aspects of
12 running the school?

13 A. Yep, yep.

14 Q. I think you did tell us just there, Ann, about the
15 timetabling help that you gave them. Was that after you
16 became a trustee?

17 A. Yes -- no, I can't remember, I think -- yes, it would
18 be.

19 Q. I think, apart from that, was that really your only
20 involvement --

21 A. That was my entire contribution.

22 Q. To the running of --

23 A. I mean shortly after that, the school closed anyway.

24 Q. You tell us, Ann, this is going to a part of your
25 statement that's headed:

1 'My role as a trustee.'

2 At paragraph 14 you tell us:

3 'I think I must have been responsible for overseeing

4 staff and education, but I'm not sure.'

5 A. Yes, that sums it up.

6 Q. When you say that, were you actually involved in any of

7 the day-to-day staff issues and education decisions?

8 A. Apart from the timetable, no.

9 Q. You tell us that when Loaningdale closed you had to sign

10 the redundancy cheques for the staff?

11 A. I did, yes, and I don't know why I did that either.

12 I don't know what position I was in then which made me

13 the person to be signing the cheques.

14 LADY SMITH: You must at some point have been asked to be

15 a countersignatory to the cheques. I would imagine the

16 chair was the other signatory.

17 A. Yes.

18 LADY SMITH: Perhaps with your long experience as

19 a responsible teacher, head of department, you were

20 reckoned to be an obvious target for that.

21 A. Oh, there were people there who were much better than

22 I would have been at that.

23 LADY SMITH: You are maybe being diffident, Ann.

24 A. A bank manager, a builder.

25 LADY SMITH: Well, the bank manager might not be allowed to

1 do it by his employer.

2 A. Right. Right. There was another teacher. I don't know

3 why I did that. I really don't know.

4 LADY SMITH: You have a clear memory of doing that,

5 obviously?

6 A. Yes, I remember the green ink on these cheques.

7 MS FORBES: Ann, you tell us a little bit about the other

8 trustees and you have named them and their backgrounds

9 that you knew of at paragraph 18.

10 You say that there was a policeman there and you

11 give us his name?

12 A. Sergeant Archibald, yes.

13 Q. He's passed away?

14 A. He's dead, yes.

15 Q. The lady that you knew who was a friend of yours before

16 you became a trustee?

17 A. Eilidh, she's dead.

18 Q. She had been deputy head at the high school?

19 A. That's right.

20 Q. Was that the same school that you worked at?

21 A. Yes, yes.

22 Q. Also there was someone you have named, Jim Ness, who was

23 your assistant at Biggar High School?

24 A. He was my assistant at Biggar High School and he still

25 lives in Biggar.

1 Q. So that, it seems, that there is -- those two and
2 yourself from Biggar High School, if you were still
3 working there at that time?

4 A. Yeah, Jim Ness replaced Eilidh Shirrefs when she
5 retired.

6 Q. You have mentioned Hazel Gourlay?

7 A. Hazel Gourlay was the chairman of the trustees, she
8 would know more about Loaningdale than anybody.

9 Q. Do you know what her background was?

10 A. I think she was a social worker. Her husband died
11 a couple of weeks ago, his funeral was last week. So
12 there was quite a lot of information about Hazel there,
13 which I think was confirmed that she was a social
14 worker.

15 Q. You mention Ted Gordon, who was a banker?

16 A. Yep, and he's dead.

17 Q. And Gavin Littlejohn, who was a builder?

18 A. Ditto.

19 Q. There was someone else you say who used to come from
20 Edinburgh, who was a chartered accountant?

21 A. I can't remember his name.

22 Q. I think you say he seemed to charge quite a large fee
23 for looking after the money?

24 A. That's correct, yes.

25 Q. You also name 'Stuart Houston', I think the spelling

1 that we have in the statement, Ann, is maybe a different
2 spelling of 'Stuart', I think he is a 'Stewart', but he
3 was the Procurator Fiscal, was that in Lanark that he
4 was Procurator Fiscal?

5 A. Yes, yep.

6 Q. He was also a trustee at some point?

7 A. Sorry, about that.

8 Q. No, no, not at all. Don't worry about that. It will
9 stop.

10 Is everything okay, Ann?

11 A. Yeah, it's just my landline. Probably a nuisance call.

12 Q. Sorry, we couldn't even hear that --

13 A. You couldn't? Sorry. Well, we heard it in here. John
14 has gone to shut the door for you.

15 Q. So Stewart Houston, the Procurator Fiscal, was a trustee
16 as well at some time?

17 A. At some time I think Stewart was a trustee, yeah.

18 Q. Was that the same time you were there or was that before
19 your time?

20 A. I can't remember whether Stewart was there when I was
21 there or not.

22 Q. You tell us, Ann, that you think the trustees could have
23 played a bigger role, but the way you've described is it
24 you had a feeling it was a closed shop?

25 A. Yeah. I mean, it was such a mixed bunch of people.

1 I mean, what did they all have to contribute? I suppose
2 the builder was there for maintenance of the property
3 and things like that. I mean, it was -- I don't think
4 any of us knew anything very much about the actual
5 working of the school.

6 Q. When you use the phrase 'closed shop' are you referring
7 to the school being a closed shop or the trustees?

8 A. The school.

9 Q. Okay. Did it appear to you that the school didn't
10 really want the trustees to get involved in the
11 day-to-day running?

12 A. I don't know whether that would be the case or not. It
13 just didn't happen. It was as if the trustees were
14 there just to manage the finances and the property and
15 that was it.

16 Q. As we've gone through the fact that you had the
17 education background, a lot of experience and the other
18 people from Biggar High School as well, there were
19 people on the board who could have had a --

20 A. We never got anything to do.

21 Q. But there certainly were people who had a lot to offer
22 perhaps in the --

23 A. Absolutely, yes. I'm not sure how much, but it's true
24 and we would have been willing to help, but it was not
25 asked for.

1 Q. The monthly meetings that you attended whilst you were
2 a trustee, I think you tell us the other trustees would
3 be there, but also the headmaster, John?

4 A. Yeah, if that was his name. I think it was John.

5 Q. Would he be the only one from the school itself that
6 would be at the meetings?

7 A. Yeah, I think so, yes.

8 Q. But certainly you weren't aware of being asked to be
9 more involved apart from --

10 A. There were other occasions when I did have
11 an involvement, because the PE teacher had been accused
12 of lingering in the girls' dressing room and things like
13 that and twice I had to discipline him, and that's why
14 I think I must have been there for educational purposes.

15 I mean, I'm the only person I can remember doing
16 anything that was connected with the school in any way,
17 but the others must have been involved.

18 Q. I'm going to ask you, Ann, about what you were asked to
19 do in relation to the PE teacher. I think you tell us
20 his name, is that Mr IPW ?

21 A. IPW .

22 LADY SMITH: Sorry, you think it was 'IPW' ?

23 A. IPW , yes.

24 LADY SMITH: We may have been given the wrong spelling by
25 other people who thought it was 'IPW', but you knew

1 him and it was IPW ?

2 A. It's IPW .

3 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

4 MS FORBES: Apologies, Ann. Thank you.

5 I'll come to ask you a little bit about that in

6 a little while, Ann.

7 Just to go through what you tell us about

8 Loaningdale, though, as you became a little bit involved

9 as a trustee.

10 You say that your first impressions of Loaningdale

11 were before you became a trustee, when you were

12 an occasional visitor in the school. That's, as we have

13 discussed, your visits to see your friend GYF

14 and these events?

15 A. Yes, yes.

16 Q. You tell us that you knew there were a lot of

17 psychological theories going on and this seemed to be

18 emanating from the head? Is this the person you think

19 is called John?

20 A. Yeah. I think it was kind of experimental.

21 Q. When you say psychological theories, did you know

22 anything about that?

23 A. No, no.

24 Q. But I think the way you describe it is there seemed to

25 be a lot of fashionable psychology?

1 A. Fashionable psychology, yes, a bit esoteric.

2 Q. But the times that you did go to these events, like the
3 Halloween party or fundraisers, you tell us it seemed to
4 be a fairly happy place. This is among the staff, is
5 that right?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. You say that at Hogmanay whoever was off at Loaningdale
8 used to go about as a bunch and GYF [REDACTED] would bring
9 them to your house?

10 A. I'm afraid so, yes.

11 Q. They would socialise together?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Ann, I think you say you don't ever recollect seeing the
14 children at any of these events?

15 A. I don't remember seeing the children, no.

16 Q. But --

17 A. These were fundraising events and I don't remember any
18 children.

19 Q. I think you say you do remember an occasion where there
20 was an incident with girls?

21 A. When I visited the school? I can't remember that. Can
22 you refresh my memory?

23 Q. Of course, Ann.

24 You tell us at paragraph 23 that you do recollect
25 seeing children when girls were there, because I think

1 there was a time when Loaningdale was boys only, but
2 then became mixed?

3 A. Yeah, towards the end, they mixed.

4 Q. You describe a terrible screaming match where the girls
5 were screaming at everyone and no one seemed to quite
6 know what to do about it?

7 A. Nobody knew quite what to do about it, yeah, or they
8 didn't know what to do with girls at all.

9 Q. Were you in the school at that time?

10 A. That's one of -- I think that's the only time maybe
11 I was actually in the school.

12 Q. These monthly --

13 A. Apart from when I went for the interview and I had
14 a look around the school the day before.

15 Q. The monthly meetings you went to as a trustee, Ann,
16 where did they take place?

17 A. In the boardroom, I think. There was a wee room which
18 was known as the boardroom.

19 Q. That was on Loaningdale grounds?

20 A. In the main building, yeah.

21 Q. But this occasion you remember involving the girls, that
22 was a time when you were in the school where the
23 children would be?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Ann, you do say that at paragraph 24 that you think the

1 whole organisation of Loaningdale was 'iffy',
2 particularly the levels of professionalism?
3 A. Yes.
4 Q. Is that really along the same lines as you have
5 explained to us?
6 A. Yes, yes, I think so.
7 Q. You comment that it was always like airy-fairy
8 psychology and you would have liked to have seen more
9 guts in the administration?
10 A. Absolutely.
11 Q. Do you mean by that, Ann, is that in relation to the
12 education of these children?
13 A. The education, yes. I think they needed a broader
14 curriculum and I think they just -- they needed firmer
15 psychology, you know, more substantial stuff.
16 LADY SMITH: Ann --
17 A. More professionalism.
18 LADY SMITH: Sorry, Ann, did they seem to have a clear
19 curriculum at all?
20 A. No.
21 LADY SMITH: I wondered about that. Thank you.
22 A. I don't think there was an education policy anywhere or
23 whether the teachers kept records of work as we did in
24 mainstream secondary. I don't know anything like that
25 happened in Loaningdale.

1 MS FORBES: As far as you were aware, Ann, they weren't
2 following any sort of curriculum that would compare with
3 Biggar High School for example.
4 A. Absolutely not. Their staffing was overbalanced in
5 favour of practical subjects for boys.
6 Q. As far as you're aware, was there an ability for any of
7 these children to have recognised qualifications when
8 they left?
9 A. No.
10 Q. You mention, Ann, at paragraph 25, this 'closed shop'
11 again, that phrase. You talk about the fact that they
12 may well have dealt with things and got them out of the
13 way without involving the trustees or anyone else?
14 A. I think so, yes.
15 Q. Does that mean that things that went on in the school --
16 A. Stayed in the school.
17 Q. Stayed in the school. Okay.
18 A. Yeah. A bit like Las Vegas.
19 Q. You say that that's the impression that you had whilst
20 you were there?
21 A. Yep.
22 Q. As we have said, the trustees really had no involvement
23 other than the financial requirements of the day-to-day
24 running of the school?
25 A. Financial and probably building preservation and the

1 occasional wee bits of educational intervention.

2 I mean, I don't know whether Eilidh Shirrefs had a lot

3 of things to do, but Jim Ness didn't.

4 Q. Certainly, as far as you're aware, that wasn't something

5 that was talked about at the meetings?

6 A. No. Not unless there was a problem like -- what was the

7 man IPW's first name again?

8 Q. I think you tell us, Ann, in your statement, is it

9 IPW?

10 A. IPW, yes.

11 Q. Just looking then, before we move on to that Ann, about

12 the Loaningdale structure, you tell us that John was in

13 charge and you think under him was Bill Whiteside, who

14 was the head of social work?

15 A. I'm not sure whether Bill was the head of social work or

16 head of education. He may have been head of education.

17 He was actually good at what he did. I think he had

18 good relationships with the children.

19 Q. We have gone over, Ann, the fact that you applied for

20 this job as head of education there. Was that to

21 replace Bill Whiteside?

22 A. It must have been.

23 Q. As far as you're aware --

24 A. Or maybe it was assistant head of education, I really

25 can't remember.

1 Q. That's fine.

2 A. It was a promotion -- it was to be -- oh, God, I can't
3 remember whether it was ...

4 Q. Don't worry, Ann --

5 A. ... to replace Bill Whiteside, would it, because he's
6 not that much older than I am.

7 Q. You tell us though that there was also social workers,
8 these houseparents or housemasters and there was
9 a handful of teachers as well?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. But the only person that you knew to be in charge of the
12 staff was John at the top of the tree?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And the trustees were quite separate?

15 A. Well, apart from Hazel Gourlay. I think Hazel had quite
16 a lot to say about the running of the school. She was
17 a social worker.

18 Q. I think you tell us a little bit about your impressions
19 of John, this is the headmaster. What did you think of
20 him, Ann?

21 A. I don't think he was extremely well qualified. I think
22 he was good at -- he talked the talk. I think he could
23 persuade other people to try things out, maybe, but
24 that's just guesswork. I didn't really know him at all.
25 These are just hazy impressions. I don't think I ever

1 had a conversation with him by myself. I only really
2 encountered him through the board.

3 Q. You do say though that you think John was quite
4 a dominant personality?

5 A. I do think so, yes.

6 Q. You didn't form the impression that other staff had much
7 involvement in the leadership of the school?

8 A. That's -- that was my impression.

9 Q. We have mentioned Bill Whiteside and you do tell us
10 a little bit about him. You say that you think he was
11 a very fine man and you liked him very much?

12 A. I agree with that statement, yeah.

13 Q. You tell us about another couple of people at
14 paragraph 33, there was a woman called Shona?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. And a man called Arthur Fossey?

17 A. Yep.

18 Q. What did Shona do --

19 A. Shona was a houseparent as well, and she was very much
20 in love with GYF .

21 Q. Were you aware of them having a relationship?

22 A. No -- well, they went about together a lot, but they had
23 no relationship.

24 Q. In the time you knew GYF , were you aware of him having
25 a relationship at all?

1 A. No, there were lots of woman who were in love with him.
2 He was a very charismatic guy, GYF . And I could name
3 even now four women who were -- who confessed to being
4 in love with him. Shona was one of them and Shona kind
5 of latched on to him, so you would quite often find the
6 two of them together, and I think Shona was desperate to
7 have some kind of sexual relationship with him, but
8 GYF was definitely not interested in women. I don't
9 know whether he would be in the LGBTQ+ scale now, but he
10 wasn't interested in men or in women, he was kind of
11 asexual.

12 Sorry, that's not the question you asked me.

13 Q. Thank you very much, Ann.

14 I did ask you whether they were ever in
15 a relationship, so it is I suppose connected there.

16 This Arthur Fossey, I think you tell us you don't
17 know what he did --

18 A. No, I think he was social work as well, but I'm not
19 sure.

20 Q. Looking at culture then, Ann, you tell us what your
21 impression was of how GYF was with the children and
22 you tell us that you think he was very caring about the
23 children and that you think he had very good
24 relationships with them?

25 A. I think so, yes.

1 Q. Your impression was that the staff were all caring
2 people?
3 A. I think so, yes. But I didn't know all the staff,
4 I only knew a few of them.
5 Q. I think somebody asked you about this phrase 'the
6 Loaningdale experiment' when you were giving your
7 statement and you said that's not something you had
8 heard about?
9 A. Yes, but I do know now what it is.
10 Q. What's your understanding of it now, Ann?
11 A. The Loaningdale experiment was that the doors were all
12 open, there were -- you know, and it was again
13 a freedom. No punishment and complete freedom and as
14 a result the boys were going out of the school at night
15 and causing a lot of problems in the town and it ended
16 with the murder of the lassie, Peacock.
17 Q. I think that was before your time there as a trustee?
18 A. It was, yeah, it was quite a bit before my time.
19 Q. But you would still have been in the local area when
20 that happened?
21 A. No, I lived somewhere else when that happened.
22 Q. It is something you were aware of before you became
23 a trustee at Loaningdale?
24 A. Yep, yep.
25 Q. Was that something that the local community still

1 remembered and talked about?

2 A. Absolutely. I was speaking to her -- was it

3 Linda Peacock? I was speaking to her nephew just a few

4 weeks ago, they drove me somewhere and he was saying it

5 is still painful.

6 Q. From your involvement at the high school and living in

7 Biggar or thereabouts, what was your impression of how

8 the town saw Loaningdale?

9 A. I think they were still a wee bit suspicious. I mean,

10 the -- a murder was a huge thing to happen to

11 a community and I don't think they were ever going to

12 accept Loaningdale wholeheartedly. I think they wanted

13 the boys to be locked up at night, which of course this

14 did happen.

15 They were still a wee bit uneasy, as you would

16 expect. I can remember dishing out some textbooks in

17 the secondary school and one boy threw the book down and

18 said, 'I don't want that', and it was because

19 Linda Peacock's name was on it. So there was still

20 a shadow.

21 Q. You say that you became aware of the Loaningdale

22 experiment and the open doors, but I think you

23 mentioned, Ann, that there was a time when the boys were

24 then locked up at night?

25 A. After the murder.

1 Q. As far as you're aware, was that the situation when you
2 were involved with the school?

3 A. Yes. You didn't find Loaningdale boys wandering about
4 the town.

5 Q. Were you aware at all about how the town treated the
6 boys if they did go into the town?

7 A. They didn't really go into the town.

8 Q. Is that because they weren't welcome?

9 A. No. It's because they just were not permitted. They
10 had to stay within the premises and I presume that some
11 of them might have gone into town with their
12 housemasters and housemistresses, but I was never aware
13 of that.

14 Wait a minute, I've just remembered something, GYF
15 came to me about arranging work experience in the town
16 for the children, because I had already done a work
17 experience programme in Biggar High School and GYF
18 came down to the school to see my notes and the way
19 I had organised it. So there must have been children
20 going about the school to do some work experience, so
21 there must have been a willingness on the part of the
22 community to accept them.

23 LADY SMITH: That would be in a controlled environment, not
24 a group of boys being allowed to go out?

25 A. It would be one child per workplace.

1 LADY SMITH: Not children on their own doing their own thing
2 in the town?
3 A. Oh, absolutely not.
4 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
5 MS FORBES: You tell us, Ann, there was an involvement with
6 yourself on an interview panel for a maths teacher at
7 Loaningdale?
8 A. Yes.
9 Q. Is that right?
10 A. Yes.
11 Q. You were involved in that process, and appointed
12 someone?
13 A. Yes.
14 Q. I think you say that you didn't know anything about the
15 recruitment policy?
16 A. Nope.
17 Q. The person I think you say that you appointed said he
18 wasn't then taking the job and it had to be given to
19 someone else?
20 A. That's right, but the person who got the job was
21 a proper maths teacher.
22 Q. As you've talked about, Ann, was that something that was
23 important to you?
24 A. I think -- well, I believed it was important for the
25 school, but not to me personally.

1 Q. From the way that you thought Loaningdale should be run,
2 that was something you thought was important, to have
3 a qualified --
4 A. Yeah, to have a really well qualified teacher was
5 a great thing.
6 Q. You tell us a little about that interview process and
7 you say, Ann, that all you knew was that they had to
8 attend an interview but apart from that you weren't
9 really involved in any other process of the recruitment?
10 A. No.
11 Q. You think maybe references would have been required and
12 you presume that they were taken up and provided, but
13 you don't remember if you saw any?
14 A. I don't remember them.
15 Q. I think you quite frankly tell us, Ann, that you didn't
16 have any involvement in placing children at the school
17 and you mentioned this boy that we talked about earlier,
18 who had been at Biggar High School and was expelled?
19 A. [REDACTED], yes.
20 Q. He was the only one you knew personally?
21 A. Yeah.
22 Q. You tell us a funny story about him at paragraph 41,
23 that he would sometimes come to your door?
24 A. Yes.
25 Q. He would tell you that somebody was after him?

1 A. The Procurator Fiscal.

2 Q. Did he say the 'Prosecutor Fisher', is that what he
3 said?

4 A. That's correct.

5 LADY SMITH: That's not a bad way of putting it actually,
6 Ann.

7 MS FORBES: You tell us that the Procurator Fiscal -- is
8 this the person you mentioned before, Stewart, he lived
9 in the same street.

10 A. He lived just across the road.

11 Q. Just going on then to the question of child protection,
12 Ann. You were asked about that and you didn't know
13 about any of the complaints procedure that might be at
14 the school; is that right?

15 A. No.

16 Q. You didn't know if there was a trusted person or
17 confidante that the children could speak to?

18 A. No. I presumed that would be their houseparent, but if
19 they -- but there wasn't a person appointed for that, as
20 far as I know. There may have been half a dozen and
21 I didn't know about them.

22 Q. You say that, again, the children were never given
23 opportunity to speak with the trustees and that wasn't
24 really the remit as far as you were aware anyway?

25 A. No, no, no.

1 Q. Just to ask you, Ann, about what you tell us at
2 paragraph 48. You say that because of your friendship
3 with GYF [REDACTED] you were aware that children were
4 allowed to go to houseparents' rooms?

5 A. Yep. I can remember wee boys running about with
6 Newcastle scarfs and things on, because GYF [REDACTED] was
7 a Newcastle supporter and they were watching Newcastle
8 on the telly.

9 Q. When you say houseparents' rooms, are you referring to
10 GYF [REDACTED] --

11 A. I'm referring to GYF [REDACTED]'s house.

12 Q. You remember seeing children at GYF [REDACTED]'s house?

13 A. Yep.

14 Q. You say that one thing you remember is them having
15 Newcastle scarves on?

16 A. Yep.

17 Q. What were they doing at the house as far as you were
18 aware?

19 A. Some of them were playing computer games. Some of them
20 were watching the telly, because there was a Newcastle
21 game on. That's as far as I remember.

22 Q. How many children did you see there?

23 A. Maybe about half a dozen, not a huge number.

24 Q. Was that once or more than once?

25 A. It was only once.

1 Q. As a result of that, did you speak to GYF ?

2 A. I did. I said: 'This is quite a dangerous thing to be
3 doing. Is this permitted?', and he didn't worry about
4 it at all. So I assumed it must be part of the
5 rationale of Loaningdale.

6 Q. What was it, Ann, that made you think it was dangerous
7 and that you needed to speak to him about it?

8 A. Because I don't know a male teacher who wouldn't have
9 been aware of that. I've got a nephew who was
10 a headteacher and always left the door open when he was
11 interviewing children.

12 Q. You say 'aware of that' what do you mean? Is this in
13 relation to any allegations --

14 A. Children could so easily accuse someone of some kind of
15 abuse.

16 Q. So because GYF was a friend of yours, that was
17 something you were concerned about for him?

18 A. I felt he was making himself vulnerable.

19 Q. As far as you're concerned, that conversation resulted
20 in him saying that he wasn't worried about it?

21 A. He wasn't worried about it at all. He had no anxiety
22 about it. He felt it was a good thing to be doing and
23 ... I suppose he was on duty that morning. I think it
24 was a Saturday morning, or a Saturday afternoon, and
25 I think he was on duty then and took them to his house,

1 but --

2 Q. At that time, Ann, on that occasion, that wouldn't have
3 been all the boys that were at Loaningdale School at the
4 time?

5 A. No, no, it would just have been the ones who were in his
6 houseparenting group, I would think.

7 Q. That was your impression, you thought those were the
8 ones that were under his charge, if you like, as
9 a houseparent?

10 A. Yep.

11 Q. In relation to the question of abusive behaviour, in
12 your statement, Ann, you say the few times you were in
13 the school you never saw any behaviour you would
14 consider abusive, but you didn't see much behaviour
15 between staff and pupils in any case, because you
16 weren't there very often?

17 A. That's right.

18 Q. You weren't aware of any inspections taking place whilst
19 you were involved as a trustee?

20 A. No.

21 Q. In relation to records, did you have anything to do with
22 record keeping when you were there?

23 A. No.

24 Q. These trustee meetings you attended, were there minutes
25 taken of those?

1 A. I'm assuming there were. There must have been. Yes,
2 there were, but I don't know who took them, but I think
3 again Hazel Gourlay would be your person.
4 LADY SMITH: Have you any memory of minutes being circulated
5 to you in draft for approval?
6 A. Oh, I think they must have been.
7 LADY SMITH: They should have been, as a trustee body.
8 A. They must have been. I have no recollection of them.
9 They must have been.
10 LADY SMITH: Okay. Thank you.
11 MS FORBES: You mentioned something earlier, I think you
12 have referred to him in your statement as
13 'IPW [REDACTED]', not 'IPW [REDACTED]', so apologies,
14 because I suggested IPW [REDACTED] to you, but you say --
15 A. That's what he was called.
16 Q. Was it IPW [REDACTED] that you were aware of him being called?
17 A. Yeah.
18 Q. You told us earlier that there was a time or a couple of
19 occasions when you became involved in something in
20 relation to him. Can you tell us about that?
21 A. I just had to discipline him. I had no idea what
22 disciplining meant, so somebody must have given me the
23 requisite documents to read to him, but I just remember
24 reading stuff out to him and then he didn't change his
25 behaviour, so I had to do it a second time, with

1 a stronger warning saying, 'If this happens again you'll
2 be dismissed', or something like that but it's all so
3 vague. I'm sorry it's so vague.

4 Q. No, it's okay.

5 I think you do tell us a little bit more at
6 paragraph 58 about that, Ann, and you say:

7 'As a trustee I had to give IPW [REDACTED]
8 a warning. He was the PE teacher and had been accused
9 of lingering in the girls' dressing rooms.'

10 Is that what you recall?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. You later had to advise him that disciplinary action
13 would be taken against him?

14 A. Yep.

15 Q. Was that the second time or the first time?

16 A. I can't remember.

17 Q. You go on to say:

18 'I think it must have been the girls who made the
19 complaints against him. The girls were only there for
20 a short time before the school closed and they were not
21 really equipped to deal with girls, because the staff
22 were predominantly men.'

23 A. Yep.

24 Q. This came about, you were asked to deal with this at
25 a trustees' meeting, is that right, Ann?

1 A. What was that? I was asked to deal with the
2 IPW [REDACTED] thing?
3 Q. Yes.
4 A. Yes, that's right.
5 Q. You don't remember who it was specifically who asked you
6 to do that?
7 A. It must have come from the chairperson or John.
8 Q. And --
9 A. The chairperson and John worked closely together.
10 Hazel Gourlay was in Loaningdale a lot, so she and John
11 really ran the show and made all the connections between
12 the trustees and the staff.
13 Q. Did you find it odd at all that it was you who was asked
14 to be involved in that?
15 A. I did, because I felt I wasn't really equipped to do
16 that. I mean, I had taught IPW [REDACTED]'s wife.
17 LADY SMITH: Was there any explanation of why the head
18 didn't administer these warnings?
19 A. That's interesting.
20 LADY SMITH: Thinking back to your time in the high school,
21 if a teacher had needed to be warned about the their
22 conduct in some way, who would have done it?
23 A. It would certainly have been the headteacher.
24 MS FORBES: At these meetings, as you've said, Ann, John,
25 the headmaster, attended with the trustees?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. But in any event it was you that was given the task?

3 A. I was given the remit. Presumably because I was part of

4 the education remit, in the same way that I got the

5 timetable to make up, I got IPW to discipline.

6 Q. You tell us, Ann, that you had no idea how the decision

7 came about that a warning was to be given and you

8 describe yourself as really just like a foot soldier

9 carrying out duties?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. 'It was discussed at a trustees' meeting and it was

12 apparently part of my job, part of my remit to do the

13 business.'

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. You say that you remember there being discussion that it

16 should be you who gave the warning and you don't know if

17 there was any other form of investigation carried out

18 into the allegation made by the girls?

19 A. No.

20 Q. You did give IPW the warning as requested and

21 you tell us about that at paragraph 63 and you say, he

22 took it on the chin?

23 A. Yes, it didn't bother him at all.

24 Q. From your recollection --

25 A. It didn't seem to.

1 Q. -- did he deny it at all?

2 A. No, no. He remained silent.

3 Q. You comment, Ann, that there didn't seem to be any

4 ill-feeling?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Was that from him to you, do you mean?

7 A. Absolutely.

8 Q. You don't know if, in relation to the girl or girls who

9 made the allegation, you don't know if their parents

10 were made aware about that?

11 A. No idea.

12 Q. That was the first time that you had to speak to

13 IPW [REDACTED].

14 Then you tell us about a second time, about a year

15 later, is that right?

16 A. It might have been, yeah, I'm not sure of the timescale.

17 Q. You say that was pretty much the same thing?

18 A. Yep.

19 Q. So the same sort of allegation from girls or a girl?

20 A. Yes, yes, yes.

21 Q. This time though you were asked to advise him that he

22 would be the subject of disciplinary action?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. When you say that, was that to be a warning then or

25 something else?

1 A. I'm not sure. I don't know what it would mean.

2 Q. You tell us, Ann, you met with him and he just accepted

3 the warning?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. This second occasion, did it go similarly to the first?

6 A. Absolutely the same, yes.

7 Q. From your recollection, was there any denial from him

8 when this was put to him?

9 A. No.

10 LADY SMITH: Ann, you explain in paragraph 58 that the

11 allegation that came from the girls was that he had been

12 lingering in their dressing rooms?

13 A. Yes.

14 LADY SMITH: Can you help me understand what or where, or

15 what and where, their dressing rooms where?

16 A. No. I'm just assuming they were part of the gymnasium,

17 the girls' dressing room, there would have been

18 a dressing room for the children and when they were

19 getting dressed and undressed IPW was there.

20 LADY SMITH: So not the sleeping area --

21 A. No.

22 LADY SMITH: -- but --

23 A. I think there was an occasion when he was hanging about

24 their bedrooms as well, but it's all so vague now

25 I can't remember.

1 LADY SMITH: I can understand that. But of course he was
2 a PE teacher, so he would have been around that area,
3 when I say 'that area', I mean the area where the girls
4 would change for PE anyway.
5 A. Yes.
6 LADY SMITH: They were not comfortable with him being there?
7 A. No, not when they were dressing and undressing.
8 LADY SMITH: Understandable perhaps.
9 A. Absolutely.
10 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
11 A. I think he was also sniffing about their bedrooms, but
12 I just have that impression. I vaguely remember that.
13 LADY SMITH: Thank you.
14 MS FORBES: Having been involved in those two allegations
15 with IPW [REDACTED], were you worried at all about him
16 being a PE teacher at Loaningdale?
17 A. I think he would have been better somewhere else and
18 certainly he shouldn't be teaching girls, but then they
19 wouldn't have had enough money to employ a female PE
20 teacher. I don't think they were prepared for the girls
21 going there at all.
22 Q. Did you have any concerns about how appropriate or
23 inappropriate he was?
24 A. I think everybody had concerns. Some people would maybe
25 have said, 'Oh, that's just his style'. I think he

1 mouthed a bit, but he's dead now, so I have no idea what
2 happened to him.

3 Q. Were there any conversations that you remember where
4 there were concerns about IPW raised?

5 A. No, only the times I was asked to do the disciplining.

6 Q. Certainly you have said that there were other people
7 that had concerns about him being there as a PE teacher
8 when the girls were there?

9 A. I don't know. I couldn't confirm that, I don't --
10 I really -- I had concerns, but I don't know whether
11 other people had or not.

12 Q. It wasn't something that was talked about among the
13 other trustees or even with your friends?

14 A. It was discussed at the meeting and I was directed to do
15 the job, but I don't think anybody had much to
16 contribute. I don't think the trustees contributed
17 anything. It came from John and the finger was pointed
18 at me to get on with it, so that was it.

19 Q. You are then asked, Ann, in your statement, about
20 allegations of abuse after Loaningdale closed.

21 You tell us about that at paragraph 67. You say
22 that there was a series of events that happened and that
23 involved your friend, GYF, is that right?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. This is after Loaningdale closed?

1 A. After Loaningdale closed, GYF went to work in Lanark
2 and I think he had one of the Loaningdale boys come to
3 visit him and the boy stole his electronic equipment and
4 GYF was very angry and charged him with it. And as
5 a kind of counterattack the boy charged GYF with
6 sexual abuse.

7 Now, I think if GYF had any paedophile tendencies,
8 there is a huge army of people who would have -- there
9 would have been a whiff of it from somebody. Somebody
10 would have noticed. None of us thought for a minute
11 that GYF had any sexual attitude towards children or
12 men or women. He just was asexual.

13 But this boy charged GYF with sexual abuse and
14 GYF committed suicide.

15 Q. And --

16 A. But on the day he committed suicide, on that same day,
17 the police officers were at his door posting a thing
18 through to say the boy had dropped the charge.

19 Q. Was this in 1996 or thereabouts?

20 A. No. GYF died when I was still at Biggar High School
21 and I had left there in 1994, so it must have been about
22 1992/1993.

23 Q. So that's your recollection of the timescale?

24 A. I was definitely still working at the time, because
25 I'd gone home for lunch and my friend, Kate, arrived at

1 the door in the middle of the lunch hour to say GYF 's
2 dead. And it was such a shock, because only the night
3 before we'd had a rehearsal and he'd been in good
4 fettle. He was funny and his usual self. He was very
5 charismatic, GYF .

6 Q. Was GYF then -- I know you said after Loaningdale he
7 moved to another job, but was he still living in the
8 house after Loaningdale?

9 A. No, no, he had bought a little house in Biggar.

10 Q. I just want to understand, Ann, part of your statement
11 where you say:

12 'I think the incident was alleged to have happened
13 in GYF 's house because he was a houseparent.'

14 I'm not sure if this is you referring to the
15 allegation of sexual abuse that was made by the boy?

16 A. I really don't know where the incident -- the alleged
17 incident was supposed to have taken place. No, it must
18 have been in GYF 's own house, because GYF had
19 charged him with stealing equipment.

20 No, no, that could have happened earlier when he was
21 still at Loaningdale, so I really don't know.

22 Q. Your recollection is that this was a boy who had been in
23 any event at Loaningdale?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. That's how he knew GYF ?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. But in any event they were still in contact after
3 Loaningdale had closed?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And this is how this theft or alleged theft had taken
6 place?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Which resulted, you say, in this counter allegation
9 being made against GYF ?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. You tell us a little more about GYF from paragraph 68,
12 Ann, and you have the view quite firmly, to be fair,
13 that you say:

14 'GYF would never abuse a child.'

15 A. I'm certain he would never abuse anybody.

16 Q. That's your impression of him from what you know?

17 A. He was a kind, good man.

18 Q. You say you had been friends with him from 1979 until he
19 died?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. You had remained in contact after Loaningdale had
22 closed?

23 A. Yes. We were still doing things in the theatre
24 workshop.

25 Q. You witnessed him with children, you tell us, and you

1 describe him having lovely relationships with them?

2 A. Yes. I mean, he worked with children in the theatre
3 workshop as well and performed with children and there
4 was always much laughter. He was very good at nonsense.

5 Q. You tell us, Ann, as well that prior to this allegation
6 from this boy you had never heard any allegations of
7 abuse against GYF ?

8 A. Never, oh no.

9 Q. You are asked about some other people and you tell us
10 about a HIA who was working at Biggar?

11 A. I think it was HIA, actually. He was a techy
12 teacher. He had been at the high school and he was
13 pretty vicious.

14 Q. When you say 'pretty vicious', can you tell us a little
15 more?

16 A. He would hammer children across the knuckles. You know,
17 techy teachers always had a reputation for violence and
18 he used to hammer children across the knuckles with
19 metal rulers and things like that. He's dead as well.

20 Q. Your knowledge of him doing that, Ann, does that come
21 from when he was at Biggar High School or did that carry
22 on --

23 A. That was Biggar High School, yeah. And he wouldn't
24 change if he went to Loaningdale.

25 Q. His reputation certainly at Biggar was of that, as

1 you've described him?

2 A. Yes, yes, he was a hard man.

3 Q. I think you are asked about some other people, but you

4 don't recall them.

5 A. Other names. No, I think GYF was the only name I knew

6 on the whole list.

7 Q. Ann, you tell us that you left the post of trustee when

8 the school closed?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. The trust continued after that time; is that right?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. You say you weren't interested in administering it?

13 A. I was not interested in administering money.

14 Q. Had you thought when you were asked to be a trustee that

15 you would be involved more in the running of

16 Loaningdale?

17 A. I don't think so, because I know that the people who

18 were trustees already didn't have any involvement in

19 running Loaningdale. It was just a place they went to

20 for the monthly meeting.

21 Q. Certainly, going forward, after it closed as a school,

22 you didn't want to be involved?

23 A. No, I was not interested.

24 Q. You tell us a little about helping the Inquiry and you

25 say at paragraph 79:

1 'I would say I think that adults also need
2 protection.'

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Why is it you say that, Ann?

5 A. Well, the fact that GYF [REDACTED] was accused and that was
6 withdrawn. He needed protection. He didn't tell any of
7 us what had happened and it was so hurtful and if he had
8 told any of us we would have been in there fighting on
9 his side and I also -- this is the second time I've been
10 involved in a child abuse case and the last one was the
11 local priest, and he was -- he was incapable of
12 anything. He never made a wrong move and he was loved
13 greatly. But an old sweetheart from when he was
14 a teenager, she was a teenager, and now in her 50s had
15 accused him of sexual abuse. And his lawyer advised him
16 to plead guilty, because then he would get a lighter
17 sentence. He would only have to maybe work in a charity
18 shop for a few months or as a volunteer, community
19 service and his -- I was furious with him, because
20 I wanted him to plead innocent, because I knew he wasn't
21 guilty, but his mind was just -- he couldn't bear the
22 thought of having to go to prison and he did what the
23 lawyer told him and he was sent to Barlinnie for six
24 months.

25 He needed to be protected more than he was.

1 Q. Your experience, Ann, in relation to this issue is
2 really having had people that were friends of yours that
3 you've known been accused and --
4 A. Yeah, that's true.
5 Q. -- as far as you were concerned, these were good people?
6 A. Yes.
7 Q. You didn't believe the allegation that was made against
8 GYF [REDACTED]; is that right?
9 A. No, absolutely not.
10 Q. You have talked there about the priest and you don't
11 believe the allegation in relation to that either?
12 A. No. Am I some kind of innocent?
13 Q. Well, Ann it might be that some people can appear one
14 way to someone and can be completely different behind
15 closed doors, would you accept that?
16 A. I don't think -- I think -- I don't think that was true
17 though in the case of the two people I know who have
18 been accused.
19 MS FORBES: Ann, that's really all of the questions that
20 I have for you today.
21 Thank you --
22 A. I'm sorry my answers have been so vague and my timescale
23 is so warped.
24 MS FORBES: You've been very helpful. Thank you very much.
25 Unless there is something you want to say that you

1 haven't had a chance to tell us about, that --

2 A. No, I think I'm good and I need my second cup of coffee.

3 I'm sure so do you.

4 LADY SMITH: Ann, I was just about to say you are probably

5 ready for a coffee break and it's getting to the time of

6 day that I normally take a break anyway.

7 A. Absolutely.

8 LADY SMITH: Before you get your coffee, can I just thank

9 you again. I do appreciate we have asked a lot of you,

10 both in providing your detailed statement and in being

11 prepared to tolerate all our questions this morning and

12 help us with them.

13 Please don't think that you have been vague and

14 unhelpful. Far from it, your evidence has come across

15 clearly and, as I say, has been very helpful to me.

16 It's much valued to have had your contribution.

17 Thank you very much.

18 A. Well, thank you and I don't believe you.

19 LADY SMITH: I hope the rest of today is more restful for

20 you than it has been so far.

21 A. Thank you.

22 I do have a question now. Will I get to hear what

23 happens after this?

24 LADY SMITH: Well, you can see on our website everything

25 that happens here. We keep updating it. You will see

1 what the news is, what you --

2 A. Does [REDACTED] have a note of your website?

3 LADY SMITH: Yes, he can show it to you.

4 The ease of access to information on the website is

5 improving all the time. In fact, I can tell you that

6 another helpful tool has just been added to it that will

7 go live next week.

8 That's where you'll find everything about us.

9 A. Okay.

10 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

11 A. Thank you very much.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you again, Ann.

13 A. I hope you enjoy your coffee.

14 LADY SMITH: Bye.

15 Before I take the break, the plan for the rest of

16 today, can you remind me, Ms Forbes?

17 MS FORBES: There is one more read-in left that Mr Sheldon

18 has ready and that might be something that would take us

19 up to the lunch break, and I think then that's --

20 LADY SMITH: That would probably complete the business for

21 today.

22 Let's take the coffee break as usual and if we sit

23 again about 11.45 am.

24 Thank you.

25 (11.25 am)

1 (A short break)

2 (11.45 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Mr Sheldon.

4 Hazel Gourlay (read)

5 MR SHELDON: My Lady, this is a read-in of the statement of
6 Hazel Gourlay.

7 As I think last witness told us, Hazel was a board
8 member at Loaningdale from about the end of 1982 until
9 1989. Although she says she wasn't there for the final
10 closure of the school, she left before that.

11 She does distinguish, as the statement will tell us,
12 between the board of managers, which she says she was
13 on, and the board of trustees, which was separate, but
14 we'll come to that.

15 My Lady, Hazel was born in 1947.

16 In the first couple of paragraphs she talks about
17 her background. She went to school in England. She did
18 an honours MA in English at St Andrew's University,
19 graduating in 1971. She became a social work assistant
20 in Dundee, which she says was a new post set up by the
21 Director of Social Work there to ease the caseload, and
22 she worked at that for four years, working with people,
23 including children with learning difficulties.

24 She then left to have a family and lived in Biggar.
25 She says that while her children were going up she did

1 adult basic literacy with the community and was also
2 an Open University tutor in children and early learning
3 and English.

4 She went on to the community council as
5 a representative of children and latterly was chairman
6 of the community council, which she thinks was for three
7 or four years.

8 Over the page, she describes being recruited to the
9 board at Loaningdale by the local minister, as she says,
10 he invited her in order to 'play table tennis with the
11 boys in the evening'.

12 She says it was quite an informal conversation. She
13 started as an ordinary board member and went on to be
14 the staffing convener and then chairman. At that time
15 she had already been a social work assistant in local
16 authorities, so she knew a List D School was for
17 children on a residential order and under supervision.
18 However, she says she knew very little about the school.

19 Reading short to paragraph 6, she says:

20 'I joined the board of Loaningdale at either the end
21 of 1982 or the beginning of 1983. It was a List D
22 School for boys aged 11 to 16. I think we did have some
23 boys who stayed on beyond the age of 16, but I honestly
24 don't remember that. I remember vividly that there were
25 26 boys in the school when I first started on the board,

1 but I think the numbers varied a lot. I know at one
2 point there were 50 boys in the school when John Wilson
3 was headmaster. He wasn't happy about that, because the
4 school wasn't designed to house so many. It was
5 designed to take 40 and we were probably up to that
6 number most of the time. I know that we tried to run
7 full all the time, because it was economically viable
8 and better for the children. It depended on local
9 authorities being prepared to send children.'

10 Pausing, my Lady, although this was a relatively
11 small school in terms of other List D establishments, it
12 is still a lot of children.

13 Paragraph 7:

14 'I never actually played table tennis with the boys,
15 although that was how the minister had put the role to
16 me. The role involved running the school in terms of
17 administration, appointing staff, making sure that the
18 finances and buildings were all right and that sort of
19 thing. It wasn't about working with the children at
20 all. My position wasn't a job. It was a voluntary
21 position of being on the board of managers.

22 Before joining the board, I was introduced to the
23 headmaster, John Wilson. He showed me round the school
24 and introduced me to some of the staff. A lot of the
25 staff were local so I'd known quite a few of the staff

1 beforehand. John Wilson was on the point of retiring.
2 He was a very old-school Scot. He wore the kilt.
3 I didn't know him beforehand, but in my opinion he had
4 been broken by the fact that he'd set up a therapeutic
5 community. It had been working extremely well but he
6 was forced to turn it into an Approved School, which was
7 a short, sharp shock therapeutic community. A lot of
8 children had troubled backgrounds.'

9 Pausing briefly, again, my Lady, John Wilson had
10 been the headmaster since the start up of the school in
11 1963 and seems to have been well thought of by the
12 Inspectorate, at least in educational terms. HMI Murphy
13 described him as 'an outstanding thinker in the
14 educational sphere' and someone who was 'trying
15 something different'.

16 Returning to paragraph 8:

17 'A lot of the children had troubled backgrounds.
18 They had been taken out of peer pressure situations.
19 Some of them were truants. Suddenly he had to take
20 people who were on supervision orders. He was polite
21 and pleasant, but my own impression was that his
22 ambitions for the school were no longer being fulfilled.
23 There had been a murder in Biggar in 1967 and a pupil at
24 Loaningdale had been convicted of the crime, which had
25 put a severe strain on the school's relationship with

1 the community and made it difficult for him to pursue
2 what he saw as the ethos of the school.

3 Mr Wilson said that he'd be very glad to have me on
4 the board. It was very informal as I remember. No
5 references were obtained when I was appointed. I'm not
6 aware of any references being obtained before board
7 members were appointed. I then attended the next board
8 meeting and tried to gather what it was all about.
9 During my first meeting with him, Mr Wilson didn't
10 explain the ethos of the school nor what the role on the
11 board was all about. I learned about the ethos of the
12 school because I made it my business to do so, but
13 I didn't know much about it before that.

14 I thought I was just going to go up to the school
15 and be social, but that really wasn't what it was at
16 all. The board met on a Saturday morning once a month.
17 Initially the board comprised of what my father might
18 have called 'the great and the good', most of whom were
19 from Edinburgh. Several of them were titled. The whole
20 thing was very informal and people were asked if they'd
21 like to join.

22 I wasn't aware of the 1967 murder before joining
23 Loaningdale, as we didn't move to Biggar until 1978.
24 After the murder, efforts were made to involve far more
25 local people who would be more hands-on and possibly

1 mend the breach that the murder had caused. I was more
2 in that latter phase. Most of the other members of the
3 board were local people when I joined.

4 I can remember the first board meeting I attended
5 very well.'

6 She describes an old councillor who fell asleep on
7 the scones at one of the meetings. She said another
8 board member was Janet Hassan, who was a psychologist
9 from Glasgow:

10 'She had actually trained me when I was a social
11 work assistant. I did a year-long course at Dundee
12 University and she had taught me there. She used to
13 bring her dog to board meeting, who would quite often
14 wee on the carpet and eat the scones. That gives
15 a little flavour of the casualness of the board when
16 I first joined it. It did improve. I think it improved
17 because the board engaged more local people, whose
18 involvement was more relevant to the running of the
19 school. People were also being selected based on their
20 expertise rather than their titles, which made the board
21 more functional and fit for the purpose of running the
22 school.

23 The board meetings were always once a month, unless
24 we called an extraordinary general meeting. Other board
25 members included a forensic psychiatrist [who she names]

1 who lived in Biggar and became a very great friend ...
2 There was also Dr Jean McMillan-Watt, who was one of the
3 original board members and chair when I joined. There
4 was Lady Hilda Morton, who played the piano and raised
5 money for the school like that. She used to talk about
6 wearing her very best hat to see the Secretary of State.
7 There was the local minister ... who is also dead now.
8 The local GP, Angus Cameron, sat on the board. There
9 was a policeman on the board, who was a court duty
10 officer and also the local policeman. We subsequently
11 had a second police officer on the board. I believe the
12 guidance teacher from the local secondary school was
13 also on the board when I joined. She was the staffing
14 convener at the time. We soon got a local builder on
15 the board. He was a lovely man who had his own building
16 firm, he used to identify problems [presumably
17 structural problems, my Lady] and get his team in to
18 sort them out. We got a bank manager on the board. It
19 was mostly local people. Eventually we got the local
20 Procurator Fiscal on the board.'

21 That may be Stewart Houston who was mentioned by the
22 last witness:

23 'But he resigned because he felt that there were too
24 many conflicts of interest. There were two local
25 councillors on the board.'

1 She says one of the councillors was from Motherwell
2 but can't remember where the other one was from, he
3 might have been from Carluke:

4 'The board meetings were fairly formal. We would
5 have an agenda and the minutes of the previous meeting.
6 We had a bursar who would give us a financial report and
7 report on any building work that might be necessary. We
8 would discuss any staff issues. We would talk about any
9 boys who had come into the school and learn a little bit
10 their backgrounds. I expanded that a lot because
11 I thought it was important.'

12 She goes on to mention some of the other issues
13 which the board would consider, such as finance, admin,
14 buildings and so on:

15 'I appointed a friend of mine, who was a librarian,
16 to take the minutes.'

17 She felt it was important to have more women on the
18 board:

19 'I don't know who took the minutes before she was
20 appointed. She provided minutes for the managers. We
21 also had a firm of accountants from Edinburgh.
22 Graham Thom audited and took formal minutes for the
23 school. Graham kept his minutes in the firm of
24 accountants in Edinburgh. I think minutes would also
25 have been kept in the bursar's office. I kept my notes

1 myself of board meetings, but I've been unable to find
2 them. If there were action points after a board meeting
3 the headmaster would normally be responsible for them.
4 The accountant was obviously responsible for anything
5 financial. The staffing convener might speak to
6 relevant members of staff if an issue came up.

7 I think some of the staff members would come into
8 the board meetings if they had something to raise. For
9 example, if the person in charge of education wanted to
10 change the syllabus or the head of social work wanted to
11 do a field outing, then they might come into the
12 meetings. The secretary of the school was very good at
13 contacting everybody and everybody knew her. It would
14 mainly be senior staff who would come into board
15 meetings. We did do several fundraising dances and
16 I think the fundraisers came in.'

17 She goes on to talk about one of the members of
18 staff who was a talented fencer and wanted a leave of
19 absence to compete in the Olympics but wasn't permitted
20 to do so.

21 Paragraph 17:

22 'In those days, people joined boards because they
23 felt that it was a social duty. They turned up on
24 a Saturday and they said yes and then they went home.
25 I was not prepared to do that. I felt it was far more

1 important than that. Most of the board members were at
2 the school once a month, whereas I was there every day.
3 I joined as a board member and later became staffing
4 convener, then chairman. I can't remember exactly when
5 I became chairman of the board, but it wasn't very long
6 after joining. It was one of those things where if you
7 showed your head above the parapet then you were very
8 quickly appointed. I have always felt it important to
9 use my qualifications and abilities to best effect in
10 whatever setting.'

11 She says that she knew the minister's suggestion
12 about table tennis with the boys was not appropriate and
13 she knew from social work experience that you didn't
14 just crowd in:

15 'As it happened, after I'd been there for a number
16 of years, the headmaster thought we should extend some
17 of the activities. I was fortunate enough to have two
18 ponies. From around 1987, I would take the ponies up to
19 the school and trot around the football field. I think
20 it was the headmaster's idea to give the boys another
21 activity. The boys had another experience, but that was
22 as close as I got to socialising with the boys.

23 I worked very closely with John Weatherhead, the
24 headmaster who took over from John Wilson fairly soon
25 after I joined the board. He became a bit of

1 a grandfather figure to me and my children. I was the
2 chairman of the board and we were trying to keep the
3 school open for a lot of years. I got on extremely well
4 with John Weatherhead. We had the same idea that
5 children were like mushrooms if you gave them the right
6 environment. Some of our kids came back with their
7 wives and children to show them the school. That's the
8 best recommendation you can have.

9 I was the only board member who did anything
10 hands-on with the boys or knew any of their names.
11 I was at school every day. Anybody had access to me.
12 Some of the kids did talk to me. I did know some of the
13 children and got to know them. I used to have lunch
14 with them quite frequently. I thought that it was part
15 of them knowing who I was in case they needed anything.
16 I used to visit the depute head social worker,
17 Bill Whiteside as well. I had a lot in common with him.
18 We went to the same church. We would also discuss
19 students.'

20 She says they had several students coming on
21 placement for social work qualifications:

22 'The guidance teacher also got up to the school
23 quite often to assist with staffing issues. The
24 forensic psychiatrist was also at the school frequently.
25 He had been very involved in the murder in 1967. He

1 always maintained that the boy who was convicted hadn't
2 done it.'

3 Reading short, she says Jean McMillan-Watt was also
4 at the school a lot as chairman of the board.
5 Lady Morton was also there a lot, because she helped
6 with the Secretary of State:

7 'There were a lot of moves to shut the school after
8 the murder. I don't think the board members were ever
9 amongst the boys when there wasn't a large group of
10 people present.

11 The managers all went to socials at the school, but
12 the boys weren't involved in those. I think all of the
13 staffing people on the board were there a lot during
14 employment of new staff, but they weren't in contact
15 with the boys. The builder probably talked to the boys
16 when he was working at the school. I'm not sure whether
17 the two policemen were involved with the children. The
18 Procurator Fiscal, councillors and bank manager
19 definitely weren't. Other than the boys seeing them
20 wandering about, I don't think they would have had any
21 contact with those board members.

22 In those days, boards named people who looked good
23 on paper. Most of the board members turned up and
24 rubber stamped whoever was daft enough to take over as
25 chair. It went on like that. That is not what I do.

1 My father always said that if a job was worth doing, it
2 was worth doing well. I felt that the children and
3 whether they improved was the important things in the
4 school. They did improve, because we worked really hard
5 at balancing the therapeutic side and making sure the
6 staff all melded together and the kids all melded
7 together. It worked very, very well. For at least
8 three years of being on the board I was very proud to be
9 associated with it.

10 Although I was very involved at the school,
11 I wouldn't have accepted a paid role there. I was doing
12 it philanthropically and voluntarily.'

13 Reading short to paragraph 25:

14 'As well as the board of managers, there was a board
15 of trustees at Loaningdale. I don't know when it was
16 set up but it was people who were responsible for all
17 the money. We had five houses which the staff lived in.
18 We had Loaningdale itself. We had a massive amount of
19 ground, which was sold to Story Homes after the school
20 closed. There was a lot of money. A local bank
21 manager, who was a friend of mine, was chair of the
22 board of trustees. After the school shut, people
23 applied to this trust for grants to do things, mostly
24 connected to children. There was a lot of money, which
25 was put into trust for the benefit of children.

1 There was no overlap between the board of managers
2 and the board of trustees. I didn't even know it
3 existed when I was at the school. In recent years, my
4 friend who had been on that board, spoke to me about it.
5 I think he had been approached by the police as part of
6 an investigation into Loaningdale. He told me he had
7 been a member of the board of trustees. I had only been
8 vaguely aware of it until he spoke to me.

9 When I was on the board, I made myself aware of what
10 was known as the "Loaningdale Experiment". I can
11 remember a speech in the House of Commons about the
12 "Short, Sharp Shock". That idea was that if you removed
13 children from their difficult home backgrounds and peer
14 pressure and allowed them self-discipline rather than
15 external sanctions, then they would learn
16 self-direction. Many of the children at Loaningdale did
17 learn self-direction. The difficulty was that if you
18 then put children back into their home situations, quite
19 frequently they're not strong enough to withstand the
20 pressures.

21 Loaningdale was a place with no locks and no
22 sanctions. I do remember an incident with one boy who
23 decided that he wanted to go home for the weekend, which
24 had not been planned. He hung on to the bottom of the
25 milk float to go down the drive. Afterwards we asked

1 him why he hadn't just walked out of the grounds. He
2 said that wasn't as exciting. Boys could have just
3 walked out at any time. They stayed because they wanted
4 to.

5 We had children from Wales, Ireland and the islands.
6 We had children from all over the country who we felt
7 were appropriate and who would benefit from the system.
8 It then changed so that the children only came from
9 within the Strathclyde region. We had to take the
10 people that they needed to accommodate. It unbalanced
11 the school. The decision was taken by the local
12 authorities.'

13 Pausing there briefly, my Lady, Loaningdale seems to
14 have been the only List D School which was outwith what
15 was called the bed bureau system, which seems to have
16 been a pooling system of beds and local authorities in
17 the early years could apply directly to Loaningdale, so
18 they seemed to have had more say in who came and who
19 didn't, but that clearly changed at some stage. It's
20 not entirely clear when.

21 LADY SMITH: Are you saying there had to be an application
22 rather than just accept an allocation?

23 MR SHELDON: Yes:

24 'The length of time children stayed at the school
25 varied greatly. I remember one 13-year-old boy who came

1 to the school because of truancy. After a year he was
2 absolutely fine and he went home. His home background
3 was so dreadful that he was back about a year later for
4 another year. He went to England and ended up in
5 borstal. I would say that the average stay was about
6 a year.

7 It was all boys at the school until the very last
8 year, when girls were introduced. I thought introducing
9 girls was a bad mistake. There was no possible
10 justification for not realising that girls and boys need
11 different schools. Initially, five girls were accepted
12 to the school. All my social work career, I felt that
13 girls caused more problems. I found them much more
14 difficult than boys.

15 To my knowledge, staff weren't consulted or given
16 extra training before girls started at the school. That
17 was one of the contentions I had, that it wasn't a good
18 idea to place girls there. The school had always
19 treated boys. The whole facility was not geared towards
20 having two sexes in the school. I thought it was a very
21 bad mistake and so it proved. The local authority
22 pushed for girls to be introduced. By that time,
23 Strathclyde had taken over and other regions weren't
24 sending children to us. The two councillors on the
25 board applied a lot of pressure because a lot of the

1 finances were coming through them.

2 The decision to stop sending children outside their
3 regions was purely financial. Councils couldn't justify
4 spending money outwith their regions. All the List D
5 Schools fought against it because we all offered
6 a different type of care. They were lumping everybody
7 together, which they don't even do in the prison system.
8 I really thought that it was a very bad idea, but so
9 many things are economically driven rather than
10 therapeutically driven.

11 She talks in paragraph 34 about her involvement in
12 strategic planning and budgeting.

13 Paragraph 35, she says:

14 'Safeguarding wasn't part of strategic planning.
15 Obviously the whole modus operandi was about
16 safeguarding children and making sure that they had
17 a good life. It wasn't something that we spent ages
18 doing. It was just understood. There was no
19 safeguarding officer or anything like that. It was
20 a different time.

21 At paragraph 36 she talks about staff, she says
22 John Wilson was headmaster, John Weatherhead took over
23 from him and he was then succeeded by LUJ [REDACTED], who
24 closed the school:

25 'There was a deputy head of social work,

1 Bill Whiteside and deputy head of education,
2 Arthur Fossey. On the teaching side of things we had
3 English, maths, metalwork, woodwork and PE teachers.
4 There were a lot of social workers working in the
5 school. I can't remember how many, but it was enough
6 that each child could have a key worker. I don't think
7 all of them were qualified social workers. A lot of
8 them may have been social work assistants. When I got
9 there, everybody was in the process of being qualified.'

10 She says there was a secretary of the school,
11 a seamstress who was lovely and she says that the cook
12 who had originally been there was replaced, because she
13 didn't know anything about nutritional cooking and the
14 new cook introduced a choice of menus and tried to
15 extend the boys' knowledge of things like aubergines and
16 peppers.

17 On recruitment she says:

18 'I can't honestly remember when I became the staff
19 convener, but I think it was probably within a year or
20 two of joining the board. I think the other board
21 members voted for me and elected me, as they did when
22 I became chairman. I think the existing staff convener
23 wanted to give it up as she was still working as
24 a guidance teacher. She remained very useful when it
25 came to asking questions of potential recruits,

1 particularly with teaching staff because she knew what
2 was needed.'

3 She talks about board meetings and the recruitment
4 process. She said there would frequently be large
5 number of applicants for a particular post.

6 Towards the foot of paragraph 39 she says they would
7 go through them as a committee and get a shortlist:

8 'The committee would comprise of the headmaster,
9 guidance teacher, forensic psychiatrist and me. And
10 interviews took place over two or three days. They
11 would have an individual interview in the morning. The
12 candidate would then have lunch with the staff and the
13 boys so that the staff and boys could see whether they
14 fitted. We would get feedback from the staff and the
15 boys to see how they had interacted. In the afternoon
16 we had a group interview to see whether they fitted with
17 other people. It was hard going. In the time I was
18 there, most of the people we appointed were social
19 workers, although we did appoint some teachers.
20 Teachers were different and needed to have a teaching
21 qualification. I remember one of the social work jobs
22 that we advertises was a social work assistant. We
23 received 150 applications.'

24 She repeats some material about the interview
25 process, and says towards the foot:

1 'There was someone who applied from the local
2 long-stay hospital. He couldn't understand why we
3 didn't just inject the boys if they were troublesome.
4 He said that in his interview and amazingly enough he
5 didn't get the job.

6 By the time I became staffing convener, I had
7 trained as a social work assistant ...'

8 LADY SMITH: I wonder if that was a reference to Carstairs?

9 MR SHELTON: I assume so, my Lady, I can't think of any
10 other --

11 LADY SMITH: It's not that far from the site of Carstairs --

12 MR SHELTON: Yes, that's right:

13 'By the time I became the staffing convener I had
14 trained as a social work assistant. I had studied for
15 degrees. I read extensively, as I still do. I knew
16 what was necessary in terms of fitting in with the other
17 staff at Loaningdale. I knew that we needed to have
18 people who believed in the ethos of the school, unless
19 they did they wouldn't be able to get that across. One
20 of the things I really emphasised was that if anybody
21 didn't try to visit the school before coming for
22 interview they didn't really have much of a chance of
23 getting the job. If you weren't interested enough to
24 see what it was about, you shouldn't really have a place
25 in it. I felt very strongly about that.'

1 42:

2 'Some of the candidates we interviewed were quite
3 obviously good, but wouldn't have fitted in with the
4 other staff. That was important as well, because it was
5 a team. As a therapeutic community, you have to
6 actually get on with each other. Otherwise the children
7 are the first people to play the system. The staffing
8 board tended to agree on which candidate to appoint. It
9 was usually fairly obvious. The only time that there
10 was disagreement was the last time, when a headmaster
11 was being appointed to take over from John Weatherhead.'

12 She and the forensic psychiatrist had thought this
13 new person, LUJ [REDACTED], would be a disaster, but the
14 councillors wanted him. They had the finances so they
15 had the final say.

16 She talks about the process of offering candidates
17 a job and she says that they would obtain two references
18 that the candidate had named:

19 'But we always got in touch with whoever they had
20 been working with as well. I can remember one
21 particular person who had wonderful references and
22 wonderful qualifications. We phoned the person he had
23 been working for and he said not to touch him with
24 a bargepole, so we didn't. I think that was the
25 headmaster's idea but it was already an established

1 practice when I became staffing convener.

2 He had been in a lot of schools and was very
3 experienced. He realised that what is said on paper is
4 not always accurate, especially if employers are trying
5 to get rid of someone. Sometimes people can't commit to
6 paper what they really think.

7 We did criminal record office checks for all the
8 staff that we appointed. We submitted names to the
9 Criminal Records Office.'

10 She doesn't think the board's processes such as
11 recruitment were written down and said they were a very
12 communicative group and that most people on the board
13 became friends. She also notes:

14 'Some of the staff were in a theatre group of which
15 I was a member.'

16 I think we heard some of the evidence about that
17 from last witness as well, my Lady:

18 'Boys coming into the school were referred. I think
19 that the headmaster and the two deutes had a lot of
20 animated discussion about whether to accept boys or not.
21 It wasn't just a rubber stamp job. The board members
22 had no influence in that. We were told about it, but it
23 was really as a courtesy. The headmaster did discuss
24 with me whether we thought new members of staff would
25 benefit the children. There was no point in taking

1 someone on who might upset the balance or would not
2 benefit. We wanted to help people. It wasn't
3 a punitive system. There was no suggestion of
4 punishment. It was a suggestion of giving people
5 a chance who hadn't had a chance.

6 I don't remember there being any written policies
7 when I was at the school. If there were written
8 policies, I've forgotten. It may be that they did have
9 policies. I've worked in about 17 different settings in
10 my life and I can't remember. I know we spoke about the
11 policy of the school verbally all the time. I wouldn't
12 have joined the board unless I believed in what they
13 were doing, but I can't remember there being written
14 policies. I read screeds and screeds of stuff when
15 I was on the board, so maybe there were. I did a lot of
16 reading around the subject. The forensic psychiatrist
17 was very good at providing me with books. I like to
18 keep up to date with current thinking.'

19 She says there was a general therapeutic ethos in
20 the school. There were no locks and no physical
21 punishments:

22 'But I'm not aware of anybody telling me about
23 written rules about the policy of the school. Maybe the
24 staff had that, but I don't know.

25 I wasn't involved in the training of new or existing

1 staff members. What I did was tell them what our ethos
2 was but training of staff wasn't the role of the board.
3 Bill Whiteside was involved in training. He would take
4 people on. I can remember him allowing someone to have
5 hands-on experience at Loaningdale because she was going
6 to do the social work diploma. He definitely trained
7 staff. He used to supervise people who were training
8 and doing courses.

9 I wasn't involved in any supervision of staff or
10 staff appraisal, but if there was a problem I was
11 sometimes involved. I can recall one occasion when that
12 occurred, probably in either 1987 or 1988. After
13 a weekend, the headmaster phoned me on the Monday
14 morning. He said that one of his members of staff,
15 a social worker, was really upset. He had lost his
16 temper with one of the more infuriating boys. I can't
17 remember whether he said that he had in some way
18 physically struck the boy or pushed him. The boy
19 definitely wasn't injured. At most, it was
20 a backhander. I didn't speak to the boy about the
21 incident, but the headmaster definitely did. The member
22 of staff was very upset. He wanted to resign. He said
23 that it was against everything he believed in.

24 The headmaster asked me if I would go and see the
25 member of staff with him. We spoke to the member of

1 staff. It was fairly obvious that the boy had been
2 pushing him in order to get him to do what he had done.
3 We discussed with the member of staff what effect it
4 would have on the boy if he resigned as a result of it.
5 I think we convinced him that it was the worst possible
6 thing he could do for the boy, because he would then
7 know that he was in control. He would know that all he
8 had to do was behave like that to everybody and he could
9 control adults. The member of staff agreed, but he was
10 very upset. I think it took a while for him to get over
11 what happened. I can't remember the name of the boy.
12 The member of staff was GYF, who was known at
13 GYF. He was a very gentle soul and he was very upset
14 about what happened.

15 I'm certain that the incident with GYF
16 would have been recorded. I would certainly have
17 mentioned it at a board meeting. I would have thought
18 it important to do that. The headmaster would have
19 mentioned it to his head of department, Bill Whiteside,
20 so I think it would be recorded somewhere. It certainly
21 should be. That was obviously important. Bill would
22 have had to talk to GYF about it as well. It
23 wasn't something he would want to hide.'

24 On education and training, she says:

25 'I don't think the people involved in Loaningdale

1 felt there was more of an emphasis on practical and
2 social skills rather than the academic side of
3 education. The deputy head was very keen on education,
4 but obviously the social side of the children was
5 important. They needed to learn to integrate with each
6 other and society. I think the education was
7 superimposed on that, but I wouldn't have said it was
8 less important in the eyes of the staff. I think some
9 of the children did sit external exams, but I wasn't
10 really involved in that side of things. I was more
11 interested in the social work side of things.

12 The practical skills of metalwork and woodwork did
13 stand the boys in good stead. A lot of the boys really
14 enjoyed those subjects. They made a lot of things which
15 they loved doing. I don't think many of the boys were
16 wild about English and maths, but then how many children
17 are? There was also the PE side. Children went to
18 learn to ride Icelandic ponies. They also went
19 swimming.

20 When it came to moving on to independent living, the
21 cook taught boys cookery and basic skills. I think the
22 woodwork and metalwork teachers used to help them with
23 some practical things so they could do basic DIY and
24 that sort of thing. I'm not sure if they were given
25 help when it came to finding a job after leaving the

1 school. I would have thought that would have been
2 Bill Whiteside's remit, and he was good like that. To
3 a large extent, I would think that people in residential
4 care would expect that to be the work of the social
5 worker in the community. That social worker would be
6 responsible for discharging the order and seeing what
7 happened afterwards.'

8 She notes that the school was mixed religion and
9 a local minister did come to visit the boys, but it
10 doesn't seem to have been a particularly strong element
11 in school life:

12 'There were different staff involved in the
13 residential side of things than the education side. It
14 was clearly divided, although there were times when the
15 teachers were involved in the weekend and evening rotas.
16 The residential section was separate from the main
17 building, which was a big country house. It was a newly
18 built glass building. The residential section had the
19 bedrooms and was divided into two halves. Downstairs
20 there were the kitchens and canteen, the office of the
21 deputy head and recreation rooms.

22 The admin block was in the main building. It
23 contained the headmaster's office, the seamstress, the
24 bursar and the secretary. The headmaster's flat and the
25 meeting room were upstairs. There was then the

1 education block, which was a separate building. They
2 were all within close walking distance. There were
3 sheds and things as well. One of the first things I did
4 was to question why we were paying a vast amount of
5 money for one of the sheds. It turned out that the
6 gardener was heating the potatoes so that they didn't go
7 off, which I didn't think was particularly financially
8 viable.

9 The social workers worked in shifts. There were
10 always people there, including at night. The
11 supervision levels were very good. The depute who
12 supervised the local work staff was very good. His name
13 was Bill Whiteside. I really can't be sure what the
14 ratio of staff to children was. I know that it was
15 a reduced number during the night, but I don't know what
16 that number was. It was a rota system, so you would be
17 on nights, weekends or whatever.

18 I can't remember which members of staff lived on the
19 premises. I can remember we had houses and that was one
20 of the attractions for staff who came to the school.
21 The deputy head of education who took over from
22 Arthur Fossey definitely had a staff house, as did
23 Arthur. I can't remember whether GYF [REDACTED] lived in
24 a staff house. The school was up on a hill. There was
25 a big field [REDACTED]. But

1 I can't remember whether it belonged to the school.
2 There were flats on the estate. The headmaster lived in
3 a flat above the administrative block. Unless he was on
4 duty, he went home at weekends and had a house
5 elsewhere.

6 Anybody could walk into the residential areas. They
7 weren't locked but there were always staff there. The
8 domestic staff were there all the time. They did the
9 cooking, the meals, the washing and the cleaning. There
10 was never a time when there wouldn't be a member of
11 staff in the residential blocks.

12 When the girls started at the school, they must have
13 been housed in a different section. By that time, I was
14 working in Key Housing. John Weatherhead had left and
15 the new headmaster, LUJ [REDACTED], had arrived. I had very
16 little contact with him. I don't think I ever went into
17 the actual dormitories at the school. I was aware that
18 there were two sections and that the dormitories were
19 upstairs. I don't know how many children were in each
20 section. I'm not aware of the children doing chores,
21 but I would think it unlikely that they weren't expected
22 to sweep the floors or clear the tables.'

23 She talks about meal times and food and she repeats
24 really what she has already told us that the cook had to
25 be replaced because she couldn't do proper nutritional

1 cooking.

2 She says she was instrumental in choosing the person
3 that they did, who she names. She says she was a very
4 good cook and introduced choice menus, which was unusual
5 in those days and tried to extend the boys' knowledge of
6 different sorts of food.

7 She tells a story about one lad who would never eat
8 the dinner beforehand. After she introduced the choice
9 menu the headmaster said to him he must be happy he had
10 a choice. He replied, 'No, it's worse now there are two
11 things I don't like':

12 'A lot of the Glaswegian kids had a great sense of
13 humour.

14 I often ate meals at the school. After Helen took
15 over I thought the quality of the food was very good.
16 People used to comment on the food being good when they
17 came for interviews too. Most of the children liked it,
18 but some of them didn't because they wanted to eat chips
19 with everything. I don't know what happened if they
20 didn't want to eat the food. I suppose they would fill
21 up on things from the tuck shop. They used to get
22 "ginger", what Glaswegians call fizzy pop.

23 Children were taken on a lot of trips. They went
24 riding, went to zoo and the seaside. They went fishing
25 with Bill Whiteside.'

1 At paragraph 67 she says:

2 'I'm aware that two of the staff had a caravan.
3 Children who weren't able to go home on holidays went to
4 the caravan. I wasn't aware of that when I was on the
5 board, but I learned that subsequently. I think the
6 caravan belonged to GYF [REDACTED] or a member of staff
7 called Shona. It was the two of them who took children
8 to the caravan, but I only discovered that latterly.

9 In the summer, most of the children went home and
10 kept to school terms. Some of them didn't get home
11 because there was no home to go to. GYF [REDACTED] and
12 Shona would take those children away to the caravan. As
13 far as I was aware, both GYF [REDACTED] and Shona were always
14 present on these trips. I wasn't aware that was
15 happening at the time, but I would have thought they
16 needed to get permission for doing that.

17 At the time I thought it was tremendously
18 philanthropic of them both to give up their holidays to
19 do that. I then began to believe that it was probably
20 not a great idea. It opens you up to all sorts of
21 debate. It's one of these things that if you're kind to
22 someone, somebody will misinterpret it somewhere along
23 the line. I don't know. Maybe if I had been involved
24 in a professional capacity I would have advised against
25 it, but that's retrospective thinking and I wouldn't

1 want to be wise after the event. I don't know of there
2 being any other informal trips.'

3 She says some of the kids stayed at the school over
4 the Christmas holidays at the school and they used to
5 have a Christmas dinner. She can't comment on Christmas
6 Day itself, because she always went home for that.

7 Paragraph 71:

8 'When it came to healthcare we had a local GP who
9 was on the board.'

10 She says she thinks it would have been
11 Bill Whiteside's responsibility to ensure boys were
12 taken to the doctor if they needed treatment.

13 Reading short to paragraph 72:

14 'When children were in the school, their key worker
15 in Loaningdale and their allocated local authority
16 social worker would monitor their progress.

17 Bill Whiteside would oversee that. The local authority
18 social worker was responsible for putting the child in
19 the school. I don't know how often social workers met
20 with the children. That wasn't part of my role.

21 I don't know whether children met their social workers
22 alone. I do know that there was a room allocated for
23 social work meetings in the residential block.

24 When it came to children leaving the school, I think
25 that most of them went through the Children's Panel

1 system. Most of them were at the school under a section
2 for a residential placement.

3 I wasn't aware of there being any corporal
4 punishment at Loaningdale. I was very much against it.
5 I would not have sanctioned it if I had known it was
6 happening. I'm sure I would have stopped anything like
7 that. I don't believe in that. Hitting someone is
8 never going to make them feel any better. I'm not aware
9 of the school having any written policy about corporal
10 punishment. I'm not aware of boys having any
11 responsibility for disciplining other boys.

12 Corporal punishment was something that I discussed
13 with the headmaster, John Weatherhead. He and I were
14 both of the same view. He told me that he had been
15 subject to physical abuse as a child and there was no
16 way that he would have sanctioned it. I used to belong
17 to the head's association. I can remember sitting for
18 dinner at a conference in Yorkshire. Someone from
19 another List D School spoke about his headmaster
20 regularly beating the children. I can remember John
21 being so upset that he walked out of dinner and drove
22 back to the school. He was very much against physical
23 punishments. He was a good man.

24 As far as I was aware, withdrawal of privileges was
25 used as a punishment. Boys wouldn't be allowed to play

1 snooker or watch television or whatever. I can remember
2 one occasion when someone visited the school the
3 headmaster mentioned the fact that boys were put in
4 their pyjamas as a punishment. Boys didn't like that
5 being done. It was done to prevent them leaving the
6 place, but there was also an element of indignity. As
7 far as I was aware, punishments tended to involve
8 withdrawals of privileges, but I don't know whether that
9 included going home. Most of the boys didn't want to go
10 home. Most of them wanted to stay in the school.

11 I know that bullying was considered to be
12 unacceptable. Any sort of stealing, spitting or
13 anything antisocial was not allowed. The staff were
14 very hot on any sort of bullying or mocking. They
15 clamped down on it, unless it was good humoured. The
16 board wasn't involved in disciplinary matters.

17 I wasn't aware of any guidance about restraint.
18 There were certainly courses about how to do physical
19 restraint and how to hold people. Obviously some of the
20 boys would get upset. I did those courses in other
21 settings. I'm pretty sure that as I was doing those
22 courses staff at Loaningdale would have been doing
23 similar courses as well. I don't know that for certain,
24 but there were recognised courses about restraint
25 locally. That was certainly available and I would have

1 thought that Bill Whiteside would have used that, but
2 I don't know that to be the case.'

3 She says she was never aware of a parent visiting
4 a child at Loaningdale, but that doesn't mean they
5 didn't come. She was in the administrative block most
6 of the time unless she went to see Bill Whiteside:

7 'We had social workers and councillors visiting the
8 school. People from other schools would also visit in
9 the same way that we visited other schools. We would
10 see whether they were doing things better than we were
11 and if so how. I went to Raddery on the Black Isle,
12 Ballikinrain in Balforn, Wellington School near Penicuik
13 and one in England, but I can't remember its name. We
14 were trying to find ways of doing things better.
15 Raddery had a thing about foot massage, which I found
16 extraordinarily suspect. They all sat around, massaging
17 each other's feet. I found it really difficult to sit
18 there and have my feet massaged by the boys.'

19 Pausing there, my Lady, there was a conviction from
20 Raddery in 1994, one of the houseparents was convicted
21 in relation to five girls, the conduct taking place
22 between 1983 and 1989, so around that.

23 LADY SMITH: It could be this period. I thought

24 I recognised the name. Yes, thank you.

25 MR SHELTON: 'Originally I think these trips started because

1 the headmaster, John Weatherhead, thought we should know
2 what other schools might be doing better. He had been
3 at Ballikinrain, so we went there. He felt that they
4 had been good he was depute there. We went to Raddery
5 because they were a therapeutic community, because the
6 therapy involved feet I think we quickly dismissed that
7 one. At the time everything was up in the air, people
8 were putting embargoes on sending people outside their
9 regions. We wondered if there were ways we could
10 diversify, which would make the school economically
11 viable.

12 I also went to meetings of chairmen and heads of
13 schools in an attempt to learn better ways of doing
14 things. They would suggest that I come and visit their
15 schools. I think the school I was most impressed with
16 was Ballikinrain. I think it was the closest in
17 therapeutic thinking to Loaningdale. I wouldn't have
18 sent children to Raddery, because I think there were
19 very few children who would have benefitted from that.
20 Wellington wasn't my sort of regime at all. It felt
21 harsh, military and unfriendly. I didn't feel welcome
22 there as a visitor. It sounds smug, but I learned that
23 I thought we were doing better than they were.'

24 She wasn't aware of any inspections taking place at
25 the school:

1 'The councillors on the school obviously visited and
2 inspected in as much as it was part of their
3 establishment, there must have been inspections of the
4 educational side, but I wasn't aware of that. That was
5 to do with the running of the school professionally and
6 not part of my role.'

7 In relation to record keeping, she thinks that
8 minutes of board meetings must have been kept in the
9 bursar's office: 'They were also held by Graham Thom at
10 a firm of accountants in Edinburgh. Every member of the
11 board was given a copy of the minutes after each monthly
12 meeting. There would be notes from staff meetings as
13 well. I kept all my copy minutes, but I've been unable
14 to find them. I wasn't at Loaningdale when it shut so
15 I'm not aware of what happened to minutes from board
16 meetings. A teacher from Biggar took over to wind the
17 place up. I think it's likely that she would have kept
18 the notes, but I don't know. I don't know who was
19 responsible for the records when the school closed.

20 I can remember there was a filing cabinet in the
21 corner of the bursar's office where children's records
22 were kept. The bursar was also dealing with the
23 financial arrangements with the councils responsible for
24 the children, so that would be in their files as well.
25 The bursar would have been responsible for those

1 records, but Bill Whiteside would also have kept social
2 work notes and Arthur Fossey would have had notes from
3 the education side of thing. The issue of records came
4 up when the police came to speak to me. The difficulty
5 was that the social work department had destroyed all
6 the records of all the children. I thought that the
7 whole point in keeping these records and minutes was so
8 you could go back to them, but the police officer
9 couldn't find any records for any of the children who
10 had been in Loaningdale. I would have thought that the
11 social work department should have been responsible for
12 those records when the school closed, because they were
13 confidential. They shouldn't have been allowed just to
14 float, but I don't know what happened because I wasn't
15 there.'

16 There are some records of some children, it may be
17 patchy but there are certainly some records out there:

18 'When I was at the school I didn't have any concerns
19 about safety or welfare of the children. If I had,
20 I would have done something about it, whether I thought
21 it was my role or not. I have never ever backed away
22 from doing that. I felt very strongly that one of our
23 roles was to help the children. If I felt that anybody
24 was hurting the children, there is no way that I would
25 have let that go on. It would have been against

1 everything that I believed.

2 Before I left the school in 1989 a man called
3 LUJ was appointed to take over the role of
4 headmaster. I didn't think that he was right for the
5 job. He was used to public school kids and not used to
6 the sort of kids who attended Loaningdale at all. The
7 councillors on the board wanted him. The forensic
8 psychiatrist and I did not. We didn't have anything
9 against him as a person, but he didn't have any
10 experience of any sort of delinquency. He had not been
11 used to any sort of discipline problems or anything like
12 that. Within a year of his appointment, the school was
13 closed down.'

14 Reading short, he just had no control:

15 'I had already applied to the university when
16 LUJ called me out at 3.30 am. He said that there
17 had been a riot and he'd lost control of the school.
18 I had just had an operation but I went up to the school.
19 The police had sent up dog handlers. It didn't need
20 that. It just needed someone with authority and
21 LUJ simply didn't have any. The staff were upset
22 because they'd never had any broken windows before and
23 we had 27 windows broken. I sent the police dog
24 handlers home. Some of the children had cuts because
25 there was broken glass around. It was just chaos.

1 I arranged for children who had been injured to get
2 treatment. They just had minor injuries like cuts.
3 I think some of them might have been taken to the local
4 cottage hospital. I don't know, because all I was
5 interested in was establishing control. I don't think
6 anyone was badly hurt, but nobody was doing anything.
7 It was just awful. There was someone in charge who
8 wasn't in charge and the staff were all so shocked.'

9 LUJ then went to work in a public school in
10 England:

11 'If a child wanted to make a complaint about
12 a member of staff there may have been a process among
13 the staff. There certainly wasn't a formal procedure
14 among the management board. We would have been open to
15 anybody speaking to us about a complaint. The children
16 did know that. I would say that when I was having lunch
17 with people I would tell them that my door was always
18 open. I now feel that I should have made that a lot
19 clearer. I should have had a morning a week when staff
20 or children could have come to speak to me. I was doing
21 my best. If I was doing it now I would say that it was
22 important that boys, staff and management could come to
23 me with anything that they wanted to talk about. At the
24 time I was just learning on my feet.

25 I suppose there must have been a complaints

1 procedure at the school, but I wasn't aware of any
2 formal complaints being made. I wasn't aware of any
3 member of staff raising a concern about another member
4 of staff. There were the usual moans that you would get
5 among any group of people, but I wasn't aware of any
6 formal complaints.

7 The headmaster, John Weatherhead, was very good. He
8 was the sort of person that people could go and talk to.
9 He'd had a difficult childhood and he was very
10 sympathetic.'

11 She says he was good at DIY, he had been in the army
12 and good with the boys. She says:

13 'He could do this thing where he would just touch
14 them with two fingers and they would fall over. He
15 would do that to all the staff as well and they would
16 fall over. The boys thought it was wonderful and asked
17 him to teach them how to do it. He was certainly very
18 approachable. All of the staff would have gone to him
19 if they had needed to. I think it was the same for the
20 boys. He was always there.

21 There was one member of staff who we would have
22 dismissed if the school hadn't closed. His name was
23 IPW and he was the PE teacher. He had a drink
24 problem, we sent him to the Icelandic pony place with
25 a van full of children. Someone there phoned the school

1 to say that he wasn't fit to drive. We had to send
2 a member of staff to drive the children safely back to
3 the school. IPW had taken the children for a riding
4 lesson. It was right next to a hotel. I think he'd
5 gone for lunch and had a couple too many. The people at
6 the riding school were worried he wasn't fit to drive.

7 On another occasion, we had a fundraising dance at
8 the school. Everybody was drinking quite a lot of wine
9 and we ran out. IPW was given money to go and buy
10 some more and disappeared and never came back. The
11 second incident, he wasn't on duty so there was only one
12 occasion during school hours.

13 After the incident when he wasn't fit to drive it
14 would have been the headmaster's responsibility to speak
15 to IPW. He was never given that
16 responsibility again. You can't risk children with
17 someone who is liable to drink. He carried on in his
18 role in a sort of playing football way, but not in a way
19 that he had any sort of influence over the children.
20 When you live in a small town you know when someone had
21 a drink problem. He was being closely monitored after
22 that incident. The headmaster was absolutely furious.
23 You spend so much time building up a reputation of
24 a place, then someone phones and says one of your
25 members of staff is not fit to drive. I did feel sorry

1 for IPW [REDACTED]. An alcohol problem is an alcohol
2 problem, but we made sure that it never affected the
3 children. He was monitored very closely and he was
4 never drunk on duty again.'

5 LADY SMITH: It's interesting, the previous witness didn't
6 speak about this man having an alcohol problem at all.
7 Now, one might say maybe it was mentioned at a board
8 meeting and she has forgotten, but it doesn't seem
9 likely she would forget that, given everything else she
10 has remembered and the detail about the girls'
11 allegations regarding him being around their changing
12 rooms and in their bedrooms, which she told us about
13 today.

14 It sounds as though this wasn't shared with the
15 whole board in that case.

16 MR SHELTON: Yes, it's an odd detail.

17 LADY SMITH: It might actually fit with him having a lack of
18 awareness of the inappropriateness of hanging around
19 a girls' changing room.

20 MR SHELTON: Yes. It's odd, as my Lady I think points out,
21 the lack of crossover between the two accounts.

22 LADY SMITH: Yes. Yes.

23 MR SHELTON: Paragraph 95:

24 'If a child was concerned, I think there were people
25 that he could talk to. Children are different. Some of

1 them are very confident. Some of them aren't. I think
2 that Bill Whiteside and John Weatherhead were both very
3 approachable. There were also two very good female
4 members of staff, along with Helen, the cook. I think
5 there were lots of people that the children would have
6 felt happy to talk to. They all had a key worker within
7 the school and an allocated social worker in the
8 community.'

9 In relation to abuse, she says:

10 'I didn't see or hear of any abuse when I was at
11 Loaningdale. I've been asked to explain how abuse might
12 have occurred, given allegations of abuse have been made
13 to the Inquiry. Certainly in the classroom situation
14 there shouldn't have been any time when the teacher was
15 on his own with a child. There would have been several
16 children in the class, so I wasn't aware of that.
17 I suppose that in the social work setting there might be
18 occasions when key workers would have been alone with
19 the child they were working with in a room in the
20 building. I'm not aware of it, but it's a possibility.

21 I don't think staff were involved in extracurricular
22 hobbies which meant they took children off the premises.
23 I think it was all done on the school grounds, other
24 than taking them to riding, when it would have been
25 a group of children. The only time I'm aware of

1 children being outwith the school with members of staff
2 was when GYF and Shona took children to the
3 caravan. I suppose that when staff dropped children off
4 at home for the weekend maybe three might be dropped off
5 and one would be left. I was never aware of that
6 happening. Although there were members of staff who
7 lived in close proximity to the main building, to my
8 knowledge they never took children back to their homes.
9 I wasn't ever aware of that.

10 I'm not aware of there being any child protection
11 arrangements in place at the school. It was a different
12 age. On one occasion, I can remember it was discovered
13 that two children at the school had been sexually abused
14 at home. The staff were very upset. They were fond of
15 the children and had found out that they were suffering
16 in that way. It was the first time that the staff were
17 aware of children being there who had been sexually
18 abused. I think the children had already been at the
19 school and then the abuse had been revealed. We weren't
20 given the details of the abuse. All I was told was that
21 these children had been at the school and the staff were
22 concerned because suddenly they had found out they had
23 been abused.

24 The staff had been unsure how to react. They
25 weren't used to it. We didn't have children who were

1 abused. We had children who were truants and threw
2 bricks through windows and that sort of thing. Maybe we
3 did have a lot of children who were abused, but we
4 didn't know that. The awareness wasn't there in those
5 days. The staff were very upset.

6 I can remember the head, John Weatherhead, saying
7 that he would have to call all the staff together and
8 talk to them. He informed me that he'd reminded the
9 staff that these children were still the same children
10 as they had been on Friday. He told the staff that the
11 most important thing was to let the children feel that
12 it was a safe place to be. Bill Whiteside had been
13 a local authority social worker so I think he also gave
14 the staff professional guidance. He was very good.

15 Abuse wasn't talked about among the board of
16 managers. It might have been amongst the staff. Nobody
17 was talking about abuse in those days but there may have
18 been staff who did so. However, it came as a great
19 shock to the staff when it emerged that two of the
20 children at the school had been abused. That would
21 imply to me that it wasn't a subject that was regularly
22 discussed.

23 I can remember having a discussion with the head
24 about him speaking to the boys about physical abuse. He
25 spoke to them about the fact that you didn't beat up the

1 wife or the children because the football team had lost.
2 He said that was quite an accepted thing for a lot of
3 the boys in their home background. He was certainly
4 aware that a lot of the children had either seen or
5 suffered from physical abuse at home. He was
6 tremendously anxious that they should feel safe.
7 I'm sure work would have been done with the children
8 about physical abuse, but not by me.

9 I wasn't involved in any investigations into abuse
10 at Loaningdale while I was on the board. Several years
11 ago, the police got in touch with me. I can't remember
12 exactly when it was.'

13 She was on holiday she thinks two or three years
14 ago:

15 'They said there had been accusations against two
16 members of staff and asked me what I knew about it.
17 I talked to the police on four or five occasions. The
18 police officer then told me that he thought it was all
19 fantasy. I think the police officer came from Lanark
20 but I can't remember his name. The two members of staff
21 were GYF [REDACTED] and IPW [REDACTED]. I wasn't given
22 the name of the boys who had made the allegations.
23 I told the police that I had no concerns about either
24 member of staff being involved in the abuse of children.
25 I did tell the police that I was aware that IPW [REDACTED] had

1 a drink problem. I think IPW was still alive at that
2 point. The police officer had actually spoken to IPW
3 and thought that he was a poor soul. GYF was
4 long since dead.

5 I'm not aware of any other investigations into abuse
6 at Loaningdale or any civil claims against the school.
7 I'm not aware of anybody that I worked with at
8 Loaningdale being convicted of abuse.

9 I have been told that the Inquiry has received
10 evidence of alleged abuse against members of staff who
11 worked at Loaningdale at the same time as me. I've been
12 asked to share any knowledge I have of these individuals
13 with the Inquiry.'

14 In relation to GYF, she says --

15 LADY SMITH: Just before we go into that, when she says
16 'worked at Loaningdale at the same time as me.'

17 She was never an employee.

18 MR SHELDON: It seems not, my Lady, but I think she must
19 just have regarded herself as part of the management
20 team, if you like.

21 LADY SMITH: She was a volunteer.

22 MR SHELDON: Yes.

23 LADY SMITH: It's quite interesting. The references earlier
24 to her saying that she told children, 'My door's always
25 open'. Maybe, she should have set aside one particular

1 morning to hear them.

2 MR SHELDON: It seems she was there pretty much full time,
3 if not absolutely full time.

4 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

5 Sorry, I stopped you, you were about to go to the
6 GYF section.

7 MR SHELDON: GYF was at Loaningdale the entire
8 time I was on the board until his death. He was on the
9 social work side of things, but I don't know if he was
10 a qualified social worker or not. He was already
11 in situ when I arrived. He was involved in the
12 residential care side of the school so he would have
13 worked on the shift system. He would have been at the
14 school as much as any other social worker. He didn't
15 take the children out on trips, other than to the
16 caravan with Shona.

17 I observed GYF to be a very gentle soul.
18 He functioned at a high intellectual level. He was very
19 caring. He was a bit depressed. He suffered a lot from
20 being sad. He wasn't married and he wasn't in
21 a relationship as far as I was aware, but he was popular
22 and he had a lot of friends of both sexes. Shona was
23 his best friend, but she was married to someone else.
24 I think he would have been a similar age to me. He was
25 a very talented actor.

1 I didn't have any concerns about GYF [REDACTED].
2 I've already spoken about the incident that occurred
3 when he disclosed to John Weatherhead that he'd
4 overreacted to a boy and given him a backhander at
5 worst. He was very upset about the incident and
6 volunteered what had happened. He had been on duty at
7 the weekend and I think there were fewer staff and more
8 children. He was under pressure. This boy had pushed
9 him and pushed him and he was very upset by the fact
10 that he had overreacted.'

11 In relation to LUJ [REDACTED]:

12 'LUJ [REDACTED] was appointed as the headmaster after
13 John Weatherhead left the school in the late 1980s.
14 I think he was in his 40s. He was incredibly efficient
15 on paper. He turned up at his interview with screeds of
16 paper. I think he impressed as being someone who was
17 very intellectual. I think that was why the councillors
18 were impressed by him, because he did a very good job at
19 the interview.'

20 She repeats that she didn't feel he was suited to
21 the job:

22 'I would not have put it past LUJ [REDACTED] to have
23 reacted to a boy in some way. He told me that he'd lost
24 control of the school. You don't say that to the
25 chairman of the board, a woman who he knew was just out

1 of hospital, unless you really are losing control. When
2 I went to the school on night of the riot, he appeared
3 a bit shamefaced. He just left it to me to sort it out.
4 I thought that he was ineffective. On one occasion, we
5 were working together and one of the girls subjected me
6 to verbal and physical abuse. He did nothing. I was
7 very angry about that, but I didn't hear about him
8 abusing children. If I had, he would have been out on
9 his ear. I definitely didn't know anything about him
10 abusing children. I thought he was just useless.'

11 She talks about Mr HIA [REDACTED], I think Ms Matheson
12 said that his name might have been 'HIA [REDACTED]'. She
13 recalls him being the metalwork teacher:

14 'I think he must have been into his 60s, because he
15 wanted to take early retirement on the grounds of
16 ill-health. He applied to us for retirement because his
17 back was very bad and he was unable to work. He then
18 went cycling around the Alps.

19 I didn't like Mr HIA [REDACTED] [or Mr HIA [REDACTED]] I thought
20 he was quite a curmudgeonly sort of person, I would
21 imagine that he might lose his temper quite easily but
22 I had no suspicions that he would strike any child. If
23 I had, he would have been cycling around the Alps
24 a bit earlier. He left the school before I did. I saw
25 him working with children if I went into the classroom.

1 I don't think that he was one of my fans either.
2 I didn't hear anything about him abusing any children.
3 I think everybody else just thought of him as being bad
4 tempered. His heart wasn't in it. We were quite glad
5 when he retired.'

6 She says she can't remember a Mr HHX, who was
7 suggested to be the gardener. She says:

8 'I've been asked about Mr HGK. I understand that
9 he was PE teacher at the school.'

10 But she doesn't remember him.

11 She goes on to talk about leaving the school:

12 'The school went on until 1990 when it closed.
13 I left the school in 1989 and went back to university in
14 Edinburgh. It was actually John Weatherhead who told me
15 that I was wasting my life doing all this voluntary
16 work.'

17 She goes on to talk about her work at Key Housing.

18 Paragraph 117, she was working at Key Housing while
19 she was still on the board at Loaningdale and had
20 applied to John Weatherhead for references.

21 She says she left because:

22 '... the school that I had loved and nurtured wasn't
23 there any more. We'd introduced girls and none of the
24 staff were used to dealing with girls. Those who have
25 worked in social work will know that girls are a great

1 deal more difficult than boys. Putting girls and boys
2 into a setting where most of the staff had never had
3 girls was not a good idea. There were so many
4 complications with doing that. Adolescent girls have
5 different moods and physical needs. The juxtaposition
6 of adolescent boys and vulnerable girls seems
7 ill-advised, without a great deal of careful planning.
8 By the time girls come to the attention of social work,
9 their behaviour is often more extreme and difficult to
10 manage.

11 All of the regions had stopped sending children
12 outwith their region because of finances, so we also had
13 everybody that couldn't be housed anywhere else. It
14 just went from bad to worse. I couldn't bear it because
15 the school had done such a great job. In any event,
16 I was also going back to university to do a post-grad
17 qualification.'

18 She says:

19 'It was very sore when the school closed. It was
20 something that I thought was very good and it was
21 destroyed by outside agencies. It wasn't a comfortable
22 feeling. I can remember the headmaster having a nervous
23 breakdown and being signed off by the doctor.'

24 Paragraph 121:

25 'When I resigned from the board of Loaningdale,

1 I said that it would close if I gave up my job.
2 Everybody said: "Oh no, nobody's that essential." It
3 closed within six months.'

4 Paragraph 122 on lessons to be learned:

5 'I think there should have been an identified person
6 that was well advertised and that children and staff
7 could have gone to with concerns. Perhaps there should
8 have been several people in that role, because not all
9 of the boys would have been happy to speak to a woman
10 for example. Either a man or a woman should have been
11 available and we should have had that advertised.
12 I think we should certainly have done more training in
13 terms of awareness. For example, what is appropriate
14 touching and what isn't, what to do if you feel
15 something is inappropriate. These are all things that
16 I think should have been done in hindsight.

17 I would definitely make sure that we were aware of
18 the dangers, which we weren't. I think that we were
19 ignorant and naive in those days. We wanted to believe
20 the best of people who went into caring, because that's
21 what we thought they did. My feeling would be that
22 Loaningdale was a wonderful place to be. I felt that
23 everyone really cared. There were some exceptions to
24 that and some people who were serving their time, such
25 as Mr HIA. In general terms, people were there

1 because they really cared about the children. From that
2 point of view, I think the children were safer and also
3 because of the way the whole place was run there was
4 always somebody on duty and follow-up people. I really
5 genuinely believe that if any of the staff had witnessed
6 physical abuse then they would have reported it.

7 I think Loaningdale was better than most places at
8 that time. Subsequently there were far more checks in
9 other places that I went to. Staff had a lot of
10 training in appropriate touching. However, I would say
11 that of its time it was a very caring place. A lot of
12 the schools I visited didn't have nearly as good care.
13 Some of the schools I visited I would have been loath to
14 leave my own children there. I think children were
15 safer at Loaningdale and I hope they were. I would feel
16 that a lot of my life had been wasted if they weren't.
17 I think it was a very good place and people did some
18 very good work there.'

19 She has made the usual declaration, my Lady, and
20 signed.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

22 MR SHELDON: That, my Lady, is the last of the read-ins for
23 this chapter. We have two live witnesses on Tuesday.

24 LADY SMITH: They're due to give their evidence via a Webex
25 link on Tuesday.

1 MR SHELDON: That is right.

2 LADY SMITH: Very well.

3 Thank you very much. You have neatly taken that
4 just before 1 o'clock, Mr Sheldon.

5 I hope everybody has a good weekend and I'll rise
6 now until Tuesday morning at 10 o'clock.

7 (12.57 pm)

8 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am on
9 Tuesday, 11 June 2024)

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24

25

1	INDEX	
2		PAGE
3	Ann Matheson (affirmed)	1
4	Questions by Ms Forbes	3
5	Hazel Gourlay (read)	63
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

