

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

GQD

Support person present: No.

1. My full name is GQD, I'm known as GQD. My date of birth is 1954. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born and brought up in the Northfield area of Aberdeen. My father was and my mother was. I'm one of six children, my mother had five boys and one girl. The eldest is who's eleven years older than me. Second born was who died at four months old, he had gastroenteritis. Then there was who was five years older than me, who's four years older than me, me and finally my younger sister who's four years younger than me. was killed in an accident when he was twenty. death had a huge impact on the family.
3. My dad was self-employed and tried a lot of things. In his younger days he was a semi-professional footballer and was quite well known in the Aberdeen area. My mother looked after the kids as it was more or less one after the other. I'd say she had a hard life and was basically just dumped with the kids. My dad wasn't interested in looking after the kids, he was always away doing whatever he wanted.
4. I would say my dad's whole life was up and down. When he played football he was given some great jobs and I remember when I was really young, up to about the age of four, it was a good life, there was nice furniture in the house and things were good. As I got older things sort of deteriorated and became more sporadic.

5. My oldest brother [REDACTED] acted more like a father in the house and he spent a lot of time doing that. [REDACTED] was very close to my mum's dad, he spent a lot of time with him and was virtually brought up by him. He got encouragement and went to school beside where my grandad stayed, he got an apprenticeship when he left school and was really the golden boy of the family.
6. Additional strain for my mother was that my sister was born with a hair lip and a cleft pallet, so that made things very difficult for my mother. I think it all had an impact because my mother became crazy, a nut case and beatings became regular.
7. My mother did have a home help who would come in and help with the washing and maybe make some meals for the kids and that was something that was really needed. That was a little bit of sunshine in life for us all but that was only for a short time to help at home after my sister was born.
8. My dad was involved in a horrendous vehicle accident when I was in my first year at primary school and he was in hospital for about nine months. He was permanently disabled after that and my mum was just a wreck. He did get back to work but it wasn't until after about two years.
9. I remember being distraught because there being no food in the house at all. I was going down to the social security place on my own and sitting in a queue waiting to speak to someone about letters they had been sending my mother. My dad wasn't paying his stamps or National Insurance and back in those days if you weren't paying or didn't know what to ask for you didn't get very far.
10. Things became absolutely terrible. There was no food, my dad was disabled, my mum had to go out and work, she would be out working from 1:00 pm until 11:00 pm and sometimes the only food I was getting was school lunches. There's a stigma attached to that as well, getting free school lunches, but sometimes my mother didn't apply for it and I didn't even get them, so that was all going on.

11. I used to go down to the local Co-op shop and ask the delivery drivers if they wanted a hand. I would sometimes get to go out with them and help them deliver bread and at the end of the day I would get some of the almost out of date bread and cakes to take home. I remember getting a pair of shoes with a hole in the bottom of the shoe and I walked up the road looking for old cigarette packets to put over the hole. After a while you would wear through the cardboard though. That was the kind of things I had to do to, it was real poverty. I was also basically bringing up my younger sister as well.
12. The thing was we always had a car as well. My dad always had a car, the only car in the street, we didn't have anything else but we had a car.
13. I went to Smithfield Primary School and I got on okay there, apart from the things at home that interfered with that. Things like a lack of clothes and materials that you had to have when you went to school. You had to have a pencil, a pen, a ruler, a rubber all things like that, they were quite strict about that and I didn't always have those things.
14. I would say that the early part of primary school was good and that I achieved quite a lot. I did well and I remember getting gold stars from the head mistress but that all changed as I got older and the teachers changed.
15. I remember Mrs Robertson who was a primary school teacher and how she changed things for me. She would write things on the board and tell us to copy it down. Once she'd decided everybody had had enough time the board got put up and we were left to try and remember what was on the board. I'd learnt to take my time and to write neatly and that absolutely destroyed me. To this day I still can't write properly, it just changed everything for me and I couldn't do it because of the pressure she put on us, she was very strict. I had her for a couple of years and then I had a gem of teacher and I achieved second top of the class.
16. At primary school there were a couple of teachers that felt sorry for me and knew what was happening at home, they could see. There was just the odd teacher that helped

but not all of them, and there was no other help at all. We didn't have any social work involvement with the family when I was younger.

17. I do remember the school had an attendance officer, a Mr [REDACTED]. He would come to the house and he didn't even knock on the door he just walked in and asked where the kids were. Mr [REDACTED] went on to be the night-watchman at Kaimhill the first remand home I was sent to. I saw Mr [REDACTED] assault my mother. He would push her up against a wall in our house, he did that more than once.
18. My grandad died when I was ten and his house was left to my mum and her brother, my Uncle [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. My uncle [REDACTED] stayed in that house and didn't pay anything to my mother, which created conflict between Uncle [REDACTED] and my dad. Eventually my dad forced the sale of that house, so that was him rich for a day again.
19. My uncle [REDACTED] had a huge influence on my mother's problems, his wife committed suicide after they had only been married for six months, that was in 1944. He was a complete narcissist and had far too much to do with our family and the discipline in our family.
20. When my father was in hospital, my uncle [REDACTED] had a small operation and when he came out he stayed with us for a short time. He used to play psychological games with us, he would send us out to buy the best ice cream from the ice cream van then sit and caress it in front of us before eating it. Sometimes he would buy us an ice cream but sometimes he didn't and he knew we had nothing. He would also always say to us that our father was a waster.
21. My uncle was an abuser he would hit us for doing things wrong and my mum was the same. If you broke a cup and pieced it back together my mum would find it and we would get a beating from her. She would regularly hit us with pokers and things and it was just normal to get beat up by my mother. My mother really was a horribly violent person and just liked to inflict pain. I'm not sure how much my dad knew about the violence towards us, he was always out. I remember sitting at the window praying for him to come back.

22. I remember before I started school, when I was about four and a half, I was playing in the hall. The floor was tiled but the stair carpet came down and some of it went on to the hall floor. I was playing with a bit of carpet in the hall, it was like a hoop and I was inside it. My mother came down the stairs and stood on the hoop and fell over. She went absolutely bananas, chased me round the house and when she caught me she started jumping up and down on top of me. My mum kept quiet and left me alone all night but I was close to death in the morning and she had to take me to the hospital. They discovered I had a burst appendix and I was kept in the hospital for many weeks after that. I do think the doctor felt sorry for my mother and covered it up. I remember she said she hadn't meant to do it and that it had been an accident and had happened when I tripped her up. That was it, there were no authorities involved in that at all.
23. As years went on and I grew up and things got worse at home, school got harder and harder for me. I went on to Northfield Secondary School and that was absolutely terrible. I had two older brothers, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], who had gone before me and although they'd left by the time I went there, they caused a lot of trouble at school and the name GQD was known to the teachers. From the very first day when I told the teacher my name I feel I was marked.
24. I stopped going to school when I was fifteen. It was so bad there, I remember once getting sent home to get dressed. I had holes in my clothes and they thought I was doing it on purpose. I just didn't want to be there and I wasn't getting on with many of the teachers.
25. My brother [REDACTED] was killed in [REDACTED] 1970 when I was fifteen and it was after that I started to get involved in trouble with the police, just little scrapes to start with but then I was caught joy-riding when I crashed the car. I was also charged with the theft of some tools which I stole from the school and I ended up in court where I was given probation. That was when I was allocated a social worker for the first time, a Mr Emslie. I never got on with Mr Emslie, I didn't know it at the time but even though I had left school the authorities still treated you as a school child, social work and education were all one.

26. As well as probation I was told to go for these psychiatric reports which I didn't go to, I didn't turn up for them. I was put back to juvenile court and told that if wasn't going to go voluntarily then I would be remanded so I was put to Kaimhill Remand Home.
27. I didn't know at the time but I believe the reason I was to have psychiatric reports was because they wanted to put me to an approved school and they needed those reports to do that. I think it was a standard social work procedure back then but I also think my social worker had my card marked, which would have come from the school reports. I didn't have any representation at juvenile court, I was basically told to plead guilty and that was it.
28. I tried to kill myself when I was fifteen as well. It was after [REDACTED] was killed. I was seen by a psychiatrist and it was basically all put down to jealousy and dismissed. The psychiatrist had been told by my father that I was jealous of my little sister. I didn't have any treatment or any follow up and that was that.

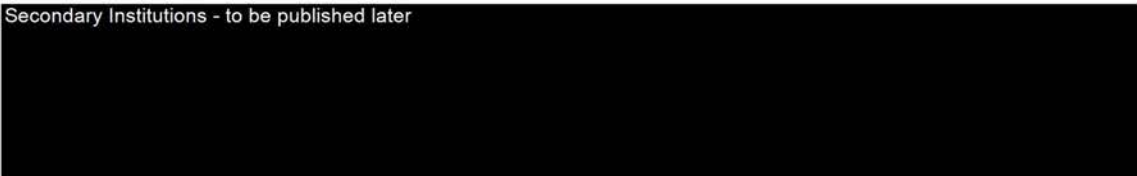
The Kaimhill Project, Aberdeen

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

29.

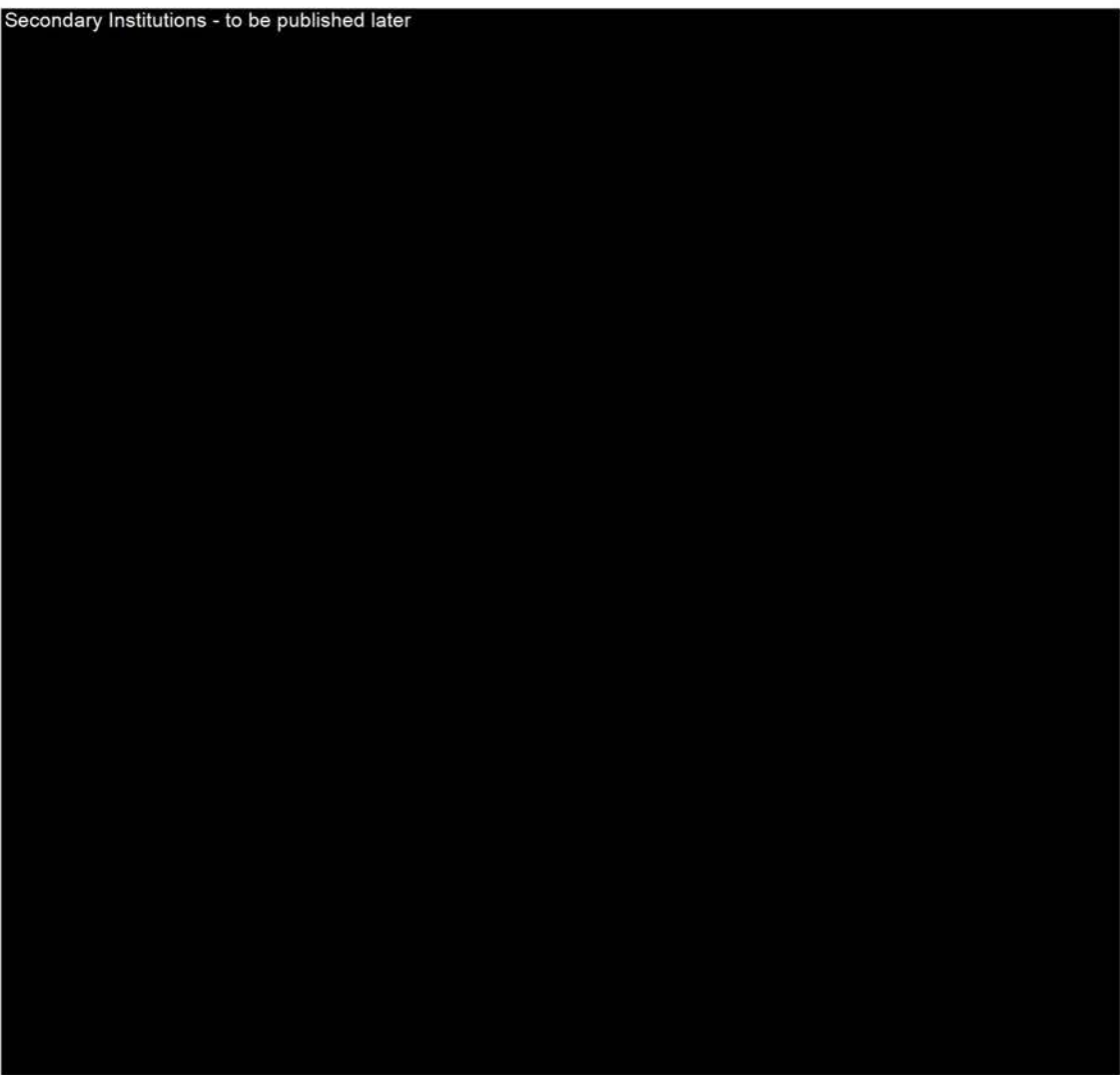
30.

31. Secondary Institutions - to be published later



32. I was taken there by Mr Emslie, my social worker, and I had been told I was being remanded there for two weeks.

33. Secondary Institutions - to be published later



34.

35.

36.

37.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

38.

39.

40.

41.

42.

43.

44.

45.

46.

47.

48.

49.

50.

51.

52.

53.

54.

Leaving Kaimhill

55.

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions | ended up in Craiginches.

Craiginches Prison, Aberdeen

General

56. Craiginches was a prison and I know now that there was a certain protocol they had to follow when dealing with young people. They didn't follow any of that and just put me in with the adult population in the remand block along with all the other prisoners.
57. I was in that block for about four or five days. The whole block was remand prisoners with older or disabled prisoners on the ground floor and everyone else on the first floor.
58. That was absolutely horrible and very intimidating. I was in the same area as a convicted murderer, [REDACTED], I'll never forget him. He was a lifer and was in the remand hall for some reason. He was after sexual favours and that was absolutely terrifying.
59. Somebody then realised that they had messed up, I think either a parent or someone at the prison had said something. I had a visit from my elder brother [REDACTED] in there

and we were in this sealed glass unit, as I was in the normal prison at the time. It was after that visit that I was segregated so my brother maybe said something.

Routine at Craiginches Prison

First day

60. When I first arrived at Craiginches I was with another boy and we went in the door and were put in a small containment box sort of thing, with a door. When we were taken out of there we were asked questions at a desk and behind the desk there was this row of old Victorian baths.
61. We had to strip off our clothes while we were being asked the questions and then we had to get into one of those baths to get detoxed. We were given prison issue clothes, which were like battle fatigues, a sort of horse hair blanket material which was very scratchy.
62. After that we were taken through to the main area and put in a cell. There was three of us in the cell, somebody else was already in it. I actually knew him from school, he was slightly older than me, about sixteen.

Mornings and bedtime

63. We were basically locked in our cells for 23 hours a day. We got out to slop out the pee pot and get our food and some exercise and the rest of the time you were locked up.
64. To start with we exercised with the general population but once they realised the mistake they had made we were segregated. From then on we did our walks on our own but it was still in the same yard, we just walked in circles but we were in a separate circle from the rest of the prisoners in that area.

65. We did have to watch ourselves when we were slopping out in the mornings as the toilet areas weren't very safe. We would stay together and one of us would go into the toilet and slop out our pot while the other stayed at the door and watched for anyone else coming. You would never leave a guy on his own in the toilet.

Mealtimes/Food

66. We would go out of our cell to the canteen and stand in line to get a tray of food. Then we took the tray back to the cell where we would eat our food. That wasn't such a bad time as it was 'en masse' so everybody was there together and there was prison officers observing things.
67. The food was absolutely horrendous but it was food and you just ate what you were given, you couldn't be fussy.

Education / work

68. There was no education or work. There was a regime for young prisoners to scrub floors and things like that but it never came to that for me or any of the boys I was with at Craiginchies. We were all on remand and it's only convicted prisoners that get work.

Family Contact

69. I mentioned my brother [REDACTED] visiting me, that was my only visitor. It was a high security prison and the visits were all closed so he had to book that.

Assessments

70. The only other visitor I had was the psychiatrist that assessed me and did the report for the courts. That took place in an interview room in the prison. His report basically said that I had resigned myself to going to an approved school.

71. I remember him asking me what I thought was going to happen to me and I said as far as I was concerned it was already happening and the decision had been made that I was going to an approved school.
72. It goes back to an incident that happened when I was on probation, just before I went to Kaimhill. I went to the local youth employment centre to get a ticket for a job. That's what you did and it showed you were trying to be good and get yourself a job. There was always jobs and boys would always get a ticket for a job. I went in and was told there was no jobs. I waited on my friend, who was in another cubicle and he came out and he had a ticket for a job. I then demanded to know what was going on and after a row I was told that my social worker, Mr Emslie, had phoned them up and told them I was going to an approved school. That was before I was even in court, he told them not to give me a job, so what chance did I have?
73. I did bring that all up when I went to court from Craiginches when they were speaking about my psychiatric assessment. I told the judge or whatever he was but it was all denied. My mum and Mr Emslie were both there and she backed me up, she knew it had happened. Mr Emslie just called me and my mother liars. Nothing was ever done about that.

Abuse at Craiginches

74. [REDACTED] was a convicted prisoner and he basically had the free range of the remand hall which I was in. He'd been there a long time and he was in the remand block on the ground floor and his cell was open all the time, all day. He was like part of the furniture and had a lot of influence in there.
75. Sometimes when I was in the end cubicle in the toilets [REDACTED] would come in but arrange to have someone watching outside. He would come up to me and try and influence me. He would ask me if I knew what happened to boys like me in a place like that and I don't know if it was just threats to scare me or if it was intentional. It never came to him actually doing anything to me but I did have the feeling that if I was

willing to go along with it he might have done something. That whole experience was very intimidating and frightening and he did it a couple of times, to me and to other boys.

Leaving Craiginches

76. I had only been released from Craiginches for about three weeks before I got into bother again. I was messing about with a mate in and around some old buildings in Aberdeen and we got a hold of some lead pipes. We took them to a scrap merchants across the road and we were caught by two detectives who were in the place for something else. It was just rubbish but it was enough. I was taken to the police station charged and then taken to my mum.
77. That was on a Friday, then the police informed my social worker and on the Tuesday I was in court. It was all very quick and I didn't have any kind of legal representation, there was nothing like that. That was me, I was straight to Rossie Farm from court. It was a stupid thing but it was my own fault but if I hadn't done that I wouldn't have gone to an approved school at that time.
78. I was sentenced under the juvenile court, which was in [REDACTED] 1970, but when I was released that was under the Children's Panel, because the law with Children's Panels came in when I was at Rossie Farm.

Rossie Farm School, Montrose

General

79. At Rossie Farm there was about seventy five boys, all about the same age as me, between twelve and fifteen. It was originally an old huge house then a purpose built school building was built and added on to it. It had classrooms and dormitories on the top. There was about ten boys to each dormitory.

80. The regime at Rossie was in four stages and each could be up to four months long. You had to work through four grades in each stage, four to one, but there was also a punishment grade, grade 5, where you couldn't advance at all. The length of time you spent in each grade depended on your behaviour so the longer you took to get through them, the longer you were in an approved school. I was a grade five from about two weeks in until things changed for me after I started running away.
81. SNR [REDACTED] at Rossie was a Mr LLY [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] was Mr LLZ [REDACTED], we called him LLZ. LLZ was in his fifties, and was a big man, very smartly dressed and very military as he was ex RAF, he smoked a pipe and he was mad.
82. Other staff were LMV [REDACTED] who was the handyman driver guy and drove the truck and bus at Rossie. He was just a big bully and he used to get older boys to beat up the younger ones. There was also the night-watchman, GQE [REDACTED], who was a pervert.

Routine at Rossie Farm

First day

83. I was taken to Rossie by my social worker Mr Emslie, in his car. He was smiling all the way and I remember sitting in the back going along the mile and a half road up to the actual building, it was a long way.
84. That was when I met Mr LLZ [REDACTED] for the first time. Mr LLZ [REDACTED] and Mr Emslie went into a room and I was taken through to another room where I sat and waited for about half an hour, then I saw Mr Emslie leave. I can only think that Emslie was putting him straight about me. I was tarred and that stuck with me.
85. I was then taken through to the cloakroom area, I'm not sure if that's what it was called but it was where everyone would hang out. It was where we went in the mornings to

get counted. I remember it had stone walls, like imitation marble, and there was toilets, two slopping out sinks and a wet area. It was all very territorial in that area with the boys all standing in groups, one corner was the Glaswegian boys, one was the Aberdonians, one was Edinburgh and one was Inverness.

86. I was introduced to the Aberdonian corner who were all skinheads from Aberdeen and there I was, the little brother of [REDACTED], who used to go about Aberdeen fighting the skinheads. I was just meat in there and I was horrendously abused by the other boys from Aberdeen when I was in Rossie Farm. It was even backed up by certain members of staff.

Mornings and bedtime

87. GQE [REDACTED] woke us up in the morning, he would open the door and give us a shout, but by the time we got up and out he was away home, as he only worked through the night. We got dressed and went for breakfast then we all met in the cloakroom area I described and there was a head count. We went from there into the boot room, got our stuff and went out to work.
88. At lunch time we came back in, left our boots in the boot room and changed into plastic sandals to go to lunch. We would then go back to work after lunch.

Mealtimes/Food

89. The boys all ate together in the dining room. There was always four of us at a table, everyone had a number, a kit number, mine was [REDACTED] and the same four always had their meals together. We would walk into the kitchen and get our plate of food then go back to the table. I got on quite well with the other three boys at my table so that was good and it was a respite as well, a chance to get away from some of the arseholes in the place.
90. It was the wife of one of the officers who worked at the school who did all the cooking and she made wonderful meals, she was a gem and could make lovely food out of

nothing, because they didn't have a very big budget. We had wholesome food and it was really nice, I couldn't fault the food at all. I remember she made us soup, and a lovely bean pie, and she would give us flapjacks and custard.

Washing/bathing

91. On the first floor there was a central toilet block with four or five dormitories either side of it. In that toilet block there was a strip of showers and hand basins and there was lots of cabinets with your numbers on them where all your clothes went. We each had a cabinet and you would get undressed fold up your clothes and put them in your cabinet. We all had a cabinet and we all had a number.

Clothing/uniform

92. The clothing was the same type of battle fatigue clothing we wore at Craiginches. The same kind of scratchy RAF type clothes. It was really old fashioned stuff. We also had a shirt, a tank top and a pair of jeans but we weren't allowed to wear the jeans, shirt and tank top if we were Grade 5. We had a sports jacket, shirt and tie and flannels as well and part of the regime was that we would wear them when we went into town. That was all the clothing we had.

Trips and holidays

93. We got to go home for two weeks at Easter, summer and Christmas although I never got home that first time, not in the summer. I remember being home at Christmas, but I don't have many memories about being home and certainly no good memories.
94. The only trips I ever went on was with Mr Stewart, who took the painting classes, when we went out and he gave talks to women's groups about jewellery he made and things like that. I would be his assistant for the evening. It was quite nice just getting out.

Schooling / work

95. There was an education block further down from the main building at Rossie, with one or two small classrooms, but most of the guys worked so very few went to school. I didn't go to school when I was there I was always working.
96. There was a woodwork shop, a carpenter's shop where they made boots and repaired shoes, a painters shop, an engineer's shop and then they had the gardens as well. They had a big garden area.
97. When I first started working I was put to the painters and I liked that I did really well in there. The paint shop was run by Mr Stewart, who was a really good guy, and a keen craftsman. He had us painting staff houses but we would also go down to the shoreline at Montrose and look for precious stones and then cut them and make jewellery. I also learned how to sign write and things like that, he was a proper tradesman and knew how to do things. I learnt a lot from Mr Stewart so it wasn't all bad.
98. Then I was put to the gardens where we would sometimes work for local farmers. They would have us carrot topping in the winter. That was in an old barn and it was bloody freezing. We stood at this thing like an old school desk full of carrots and the place where the ink well would have been had a slot with a blade. We would put the carrots through the blade one at a time cutting off the tops. We would be covered in mud, it was freezing cold in the snow and we would be there all day doing that.

Leisure time

99. We had our rec at night in the recreation room, which looked kind of like a classroom. That was from about half past four when we finished work. We would read magazines and the daily paper, we just had to get on with things there wasn't much. We did have a television but we only got so much.
100. We had an annual sports day and things like that. I remember always winning the sack race and my parents came along to that and watched so that's a good memory.

101. We would sometimes go into Montrose, and we didn't drink but I sometimes sniffed shoe conditioner. We would fight with locals and just do what boys do. If we were ever caught for that you'd get a grade 5 and be banned from the town.

Healthcare / medication

102. I remember being examined by a doctor when I first went in. As an adult I've read about the rules in an approved school, it might actually have been from a transcript for the Hearings on your Inquiry, but wherever it was I remember it said that whenever a child received corporal punishment there should always be a follow up visit to a doctor who should examine the child and then sign it off. That never happened to me, I don't remember anybody ever being seen a doctor after being punished. I'm sure there will be no record of it either.
103. I remember a boy who became very depressed in Rossie, he lost his mind and started hearing voices and things. I only remember his number was [REDACTED] and that he came from Inverness. I remember seeing him in the boot room screaming and kicking the walls and speaking to himself. He was like that for a few days before they eventually took him away to be seen by someone. I really don't think he should have been in there. Once he was taken away I never saw him again.
104. I'm sure I got dental work that I didn't need. I think that was just about the dentist earning money, he was a visiting dentist and I got some fillings that I don't think I needed as I had brilliant teeth. The ones I have missing now are the ones I had work done on when I was at the approved school. I don't remember his name.

Birthdays and Christmas

105. Birthdays were just another day, I probably got a card from my mother, but maybe not, I certainly don't remember getting anything from the staff.
106. I might have been at Rossie Farm over Christmas, but I might have got home, I really can't remember.

Personal possessions

107. We had a bed and an open bedside cabinet and only a few personal possessions. We would earn pennies every week and if you were sixteen you were allowed to smoke. If you were sixteen you would have enough to buy a small pack of tobacco and cigarette papers or you could buy candy bars. We used to get out on a Saturday once you'd been there six months. So if you managed to keep your nose clean you would get out into the town for that day. We would walk the five miles to Montrose and walk back.
108. You would always need a mucker, a friend, who you would share things with and who would keep an eye out for you.

Bed Wetting

109. There was boys who wet their beds but there was no bad regime with that. They were treated well, they got clean sheets and there was no punishments or anything like that.
110. The bedwetters would be ridiculed by other boys though, there was a lot of bullying went on but there's bullying and there's abuse, I don't think any boys were abused when it came to wetting the bed.

Family Contact / Visits

111. My mum did visit me quite often as it wasn't that far from home. You could get visits at the weekends and my mum and dad would come and see me. To start with I was running away so I didn't always get to go out with them a lot but towards the end when the regime improved I got to go out with them for the day. We would go into Montrose for the day and get something to eat in a café or something like that.

112. We had to write letters home every week, I think it was on a Wednesday afternoon. It was a specific time and we were all given a sheet of paper and an envelope. That was with the welfare guy, Mr GZS, who went on SNR after I left.
113. We just wrote absolute rubbish in the letters. We couldn't write anything about what was happening at Rossie because the staff read the letters and they were censored. I did write down that I was getting a hard time from but that was scored out and nothing was ever done about that. I once found a couple of the letters I'd written when I was back home at my mothers and they were all censored with pen marks through anything that the staff obviously didn't want my mother to know about.
114. I never had a lot to say to my mother anyway, what do you say, but she would write to me and tell me what was happening at home. All the letters were opened you never got a sealed letter and you were never allowed to send out a sealed letter.
115. I didn't ever get any visits from social workers or anything like that but I do remember going out to the Children's Panel. That was sometime around 1971 and that's when my release was put back three months. Some people got out that day in but that was when there was the transition from the juvenile courts to the Children's Panel. I then went back in 1972 and that's when I was released.
116. I don't know if that was any kind of inspection I think it was probably just the regime at the time. There was also board meetings held at Rossie, with board members and governors from the approved schools coming together as it was funded by the local authority. No one that came to any of those meetings ever spoke to any of the boys though.

Running away

117. I ran away from Rossie Farm a couple of times during my first few months there. The first time was when all the boys were getting leave and I wasn't so me and another boy took the opportunity when we were out working in the gardens. We just ran off across the moors. We were sleeping in the woods and climbing into the back of lorries.

We got to Perth and then got the train from Perth to Aberdeen. I went home and I told my old man why I was running away. He took me to see a psychiatrist at our local hospital but it was deemed there was nothing wrong with me so my dad just took me back to Rossie Farm.

118. I was asked by LLZ when I got back, why I had run away and I did tell him why but that first time there was no action at all. He listened to what I had to say and he didn't punish me, which I thought was very strange, but the second time he did punish me.
119. The second time I ran away LLZ and Mr LLY did punish me. I didn't even get beyond the woods as a forester saw me and I was captured pretty quickly. I was given the Lochgelly strap, I got locked in a cell, I was given a month in the McDonald wing and I was put on grade 5. Four punishments for running away, when it's only meant to be one. I looked that up and I remember reading somewhere that you're only meant to be punished the once for an offence.
120. It was LLZ that belted me with the leather strap, he did it, cos he was the big guy but they were both there together. They put six in the punishment book but I remember it was a lot more than six. It was on my bare backside and my bare thighs. I've got a copy of that record, it was in the punishment book. The copy has the date 1971, my name and date of birth, my mum and dads name and address and a note of the punishment as 'six on the buttocks'. I wasn't aware it was being recorded at the time, I found that when I went looking for my records and I found out it was SNR SNR that was allowed to give out corporal punishment at that time.
121. My backside and thighs were all swollen from that and I was locked up in the cells until the swelling went down. That was for a few days, I was locked in a cell and I didn't get out at all. I had a piss pot and meals were brought to me, I had no exercise at all
122. Rossie Farm was an approved school and the original approved school building is called the McDonald Wing, it's a big huge old house and was part of Rossie Farm. That wing became a secure unit where persistent offenders went who couldn't be

controlled in the approved school. It was all the really bad boys from the approved schools that were put in there. I was put in there as a punishment for my running away.

123. The McDonald wing was run by a separate headmaster, Mr LOH. I got on extremely well with him. He could see what was going on at Rossie. I remember I'd been there for about a month when Mr LOH told me he had good news for me and that I was going back to the main Rossie Farm building. I begged him not to put me back across and he said I was in the McDonald wing as a punishment for running away, yet in my time there I had thrived, so he must have been wondering what was going on.
124. It was after that, once I went back to Rossie, that things started to change for me and the abuse stopped. A lot of the staff just ignored me so definitely something had been said and something had been done. I do think Mr LOH had asked what was going on, he was obviously a conscientious man.

Discipline

125. The discipline system at Rossie was all on demerit points. You would get minuses and pluses depending on your behaviour. If you did something wrong a member of staff would give you a minus and that would then mean you wouldn't get out on town leave or you wouldn't get cigarettes, things like that.
126. You could also get a plus point but that was very rare. I had once been given a minus for absolutely nothing, and a new young member of staff then gave me a plus. Just after that he came and told me that LMV had threatened to beat him up for giving me a plus point.

Abuse at Rossie Farm

127. As I said I was horrendously abused by the Aberdonian boys at Rossie. I was constantly being hit or kicked or slapped and it got to the point where, after about two

months, I did run away. I was so nervous I would flinch whenever anyone raised a hand near me.

128. The regime with the staff was just as bad as with the boys. They were segregated with good staff and bad staff and it was more that they were bad to the other staff than to the boys staying there.
129. I remember I used to get dragged into the boot room by boys and given a beating and there would be a couple of staff standing at the entrance watching it all. It was very obvious and they didn't do a thing to prevent it. Most of the staff were like that, they would just turn away when boys were bullying other boys or beating them up. I had marks on me, I had clothes torn and I even have a scar that was caused by a razor blade.
130. There were a number of boys abused me, the three worst ones were [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and there was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was brought up in a house above my grandfathers' bicycle shop. He would steal from the shop and torment my grandfather and he used to take great pleasure in telling me all about that during my time at Rossie.
131. All those boys would spit on me, kick me, punch me, destroy my belongings, steal my cigarettes and generally always try to get me in trouble. My only escape was when I got to my bed at night.
132. The razor blade attack was [REDACTED] and that was about eight weeks after I'd arrived at Rossie. He was shouting at me with other boys and suddenly cut me across my chest with a razor blade. I was bleeding and that left a scar. There was no point in reporting it because there would have been reprisals. I just dealt with the cut myself. He was convicted for raping an eighty three year old woman when he came out of an approved school.
133. Mr LLZ [REDACTED] had his own way of disciplining the boys, he had his own ideals. He and Mr LLY [REDACTED] treated some of the boys horrifically at Rossie.

134. If you were Grade 5 you would come out the toilet block at bed time and you'd have to stand in a row while everyone else went to bed. The night-watchman would come and tell you to go and get a bucket and you got a tin bucket filled it with cold water and got a scrubbing brush. You would then start scrubbing the corridor on your hands and knees as a punishment. That could take an hour or so but there were others duties as well like cleaning the sinks and toilets.
135. GQE the night-watchman at Rossie Farm was a pervert. He would stand and stare at the boys with his hands in his pockets, ingratiating himself while watching the boys in the showers. There were no curtains, no privacy, nothing like that. He did that most nights as we had showers every day. He was the only night-watchman I remember there ever being.
136. I do know that a couple of years before I was at Rossie one of the boys tried to escape and they clubbed GQE with a pipe and stole his car. He had a lot of grudges towards the boys to say the least. He would rub up against boys as well, he did that to me and I saw him doing it to a lot of other boys. He was known for that kind of thing. There were rumours going around Rossie that boys would be taken from their rooms at night to go and see GQE but I didn't see that and I don't remember seeing any boys missing from their beds at night.

Reporting of abuse at Rossie Farm

137. I wrote in my letters to my mum that I was having a hard time and I told my parents to their faces about all the abuse. My old man claimed he spoke to the school about it, but he never did. That was when he took me back after the first time I ran away but it never improved if he did.
138. No one ever spoke to me about how I was getting on or how I was being treated, and no one ever asked me why I was doing something if it was wrong, like running away, there was nothing like that because nobody cared.

Leaving Rossie Farm

139. I got a letter when I was at Rossie that told me when my case would be reviewed by the Children's Panel. It told me they would look at my case and make a decision about whether I was getting let out or I was to stay and do extra time. In [REDACTED] 1971 I didn't get out but then I got the letter telling me I was going to the Children's Panel in [REDACTED] of 1972 when I did get out.
140. I remember going to that panel and it was a relief to get out and get back home but it was just part of the cycle, out of the frying pan and into the fire. Mr Emslie had moved on through ill health so I was allocated to another social worker as I was still under their supervision. His name was ^{HYQ} [REDACTED], and he was a little shit. I knew him from Rossie Farm where he'd been doing some of his training. I feel he was after sexual favours, he would say he could be your friend and if you played ball with him, he would play ball with you, I just didn't feel comfortable around the guy. He would try to get on my good side and other boys' good sides and I just feel he was after something. I didn't like him and had nothing to do with him, that's why I ended up not going to see him after Rossie.
141. I was seventeen then and at first I got a job with my brother in his garage, a pound a day, just as a general dogs body, so that was going nowhere. I didn't stay there long. I didn't go to see my social worker either, that was meant to be once a week, and I stopped going so there was a warrant out for me after that as well.
142. I went to Jersey after that and didn't come back to Aberdeen until I was eighteen, when I knew they couldn't touch me. Then I got in trouble again and ended up in borstal at Polmont.

Polmont Young Offenders Institute, Polmont

General

143. I was sent to Polmont borstal for six weeks. It was a hard place and some of the staff in there were real animals. It was a horrible regime. There was also conflict between staff members. The bullying with other boys wasn't as bad but I was a lot longer in the tooth by then, I had been through a lot and I also knew a few of the boys who I'd met at approved school.
144. I remember the first place I was taken was the allocation wing and that was based on army detention which was a very strict regime. It was physically very hard, the last thing you take off at night was your PT shorts and they were the first thing you put on when you got up again in the morning.

Abuse at Polmont YOI

145. It was also very strict at Polmont, your room had to be immaculately presented, your clothes had to all be folded to a certain size, your bed sheets had to be folded correctly and made into a bed block of a perfect size. If it wasn't then you got hit with a stick. The stick was supposed to be used to help you measure the bed block but it was used to hit the boys that got their bed blocks wrong. The staff had the stick, not us boys, so it was impossible to fold the sheets to the exact size and if they weren't the right size you were being hit with it.
146. The bed block would be swept off the bed for you to do again and you'd be hit over head or poked with the stick. If there was any dust anywhere in your bed area you would also get a whack with the stick.
147. **GQJ** was the officer who was the worst for all that, I'll never forget him. I don't know his second name. A lot of people who went to Polmont will remember **GQJ** but in general the rest of the staff were bastards as well.

148. Another thing they had us all do was the bunny hops. It was like a severe form of torture we would get at the gym. The first time I went to the gym the officers made you do a set of exercises, as many as you could, like press ups and sit ups, and you all did as many as you could in a minute or two. That was then written down. We did circuit training nearly every day and after six weeks you had to do the exercises against the clock again. If you hadn't improved or had cheated you stood to the side and once there was enough boys standing aside you all got punished with the bunny hops. You crouched down and did bunny hops round and round the gym and that was so painful.
149. I remember the swimming instructor, I've actually seen photographs of him with Prince Phillip when he was visiting, but the instructor made you put your head under the water whenever you were swimming. He would always shout at any boy who didn't have their face in the water when swimming "*I don't know what kind of shite is in the water in the pool at your place, but get your face in the water you piece of shite*", he was always degrading you and screaming at the boys.
150. We were made to march at double time and then halt. If we didn't all halt together at the same time we would be told to do it again. We had to do it all at the same time or we would have to do it again and again and if we didn't get the timing right we were all sent to your cells and had to put on every bit of kit that you had, your PT kit, your dress kit, your work kit everything and then your battle dress on top of it all. We then had to go back and march again wearing all this kit. Guys were collapsing and everything, beyond tired, sweating and everything. That was the regime, that was expected of all the boys all the time.

Leaving Polmont YOI

151. I was at Polmont for six weeks and then I managed to get myself to Castle Huntly Open Borstal in Dundee which was great.

152. When I was in Polmont in the allocation unit I met a very nice young lady who was one of the social workers there. I told her all about my experiences with the social work and how I had been treated that my social worker Mr **HYQ** had it in for me.
153. I had put in an application to go to Castle Huntly Open Borstal and **HYQ** had put the boot in to try and stop it but that young lady stood up for me and it was because of her I got to the open borstal. I can't remember her name.
154. I was eighteen turning nineteen at Polmont and then I was about eight months at Castle Huntly.

Castle Huntly Borstal, Dundee

General

155. Castle Huntly was brilliant, I picked up a City and Guilds first year engineering certificate there. It had a brand new engineering shop. I did six weeks of turning and six weeks of welding, I did electrical and mechanical training and I went on to use all that later in life. It was the only place I went to where there was any opportunity to prepare myself and educate myself for life after I got out.
156. Castle Huntly was a great place and was run beautifully, I'd put my hands up and say if you wanted to know how an institution should be run then look at Castle Huntly, they absolutely had it right. I think it was a Mr Philips that was the governor and he was absolutely brilliant.
157. It did what they said it would do. You were there for training and you were there for help and that's exactly what you got. The social worker in there was a darling as well and couldn't do enough for you. I forget her name but she was an older foreign lady and she helped so many people in there.

Life after being in care

158. When I got out of borstal I did some engineering work, turning and things like that, but I still had my problems. I didn't go to see my social worker **HYQ** yet again and I ended up getting a borstal recall and going to Barlinnie to serve that time. That was in the young offenders unit so I was in Barlinnie until I was twenty one.
159. I was in and out of trouble after that. My parents didn't want me at home at all then I met a lassie and she got pregnant. I ended up with three children but that's not been without its problems either.
160. My oldest son is forty two and he's a drug addict but I have two daughters who are brand new and I have grandchildren.
161. I was in prison for the last time in 1998 when I was trying to help my son out. I served three years, got out in 2001 and I haven't put a foot wrong since. I worked as a cleaning supervisor for the council after that but I had a bad accident in 2007 and was paid off with capability benefit. I had a heart attack in 2013 so I have two stents from that.

Impact

162. I big part of the impact is that you become that type of person, I see them every day. I did have some positive people in my life, my grandfather was brilliant, a couple of teachers at school were brilliant and one or two people I met in prison were brilliant.
163. I think about what happened to me all the time, every day, I don't think there's ever been a point in my life when I haven't thought about it. It's affected my marriage and all my relationships. It affected the relationship with my son, I was too hard on him because I didn't want him to make the same mistakes as me. That basically drove him away from me.

164. I am pretty anti-authority but not in the same way as I used to be. I believe there are good people and bad people in all aspects of life and you find that in the criminal justice system. The way I was treated by the police was disgusting, they were taking in youngsters like myself and interrogating us like we were terrorists. Threatening eight and nine year old children. Abusing them by having someone shout at them and throw them about. I can't tell you the amount of times I've been convicted for something I hadn't done just by admitting to whatever it was to get the treatment to stop. That was just all wrong.
165. As an adult looking back, when I first went to juvenile court why didn't anyone say "this boy has just lost his brother" and look at what might have been the reason for my behaviour.
166. There has absolutely been an impact on my mental health as well. I have been a fighting person for a long time. I went from a wee pacifist to a fighting person as a result of the way I was treated when I was a boy. When I'm stopped by the police now they take me very warily because of the violence markers I have on me. That's all because I had to learn to fight back, if you didn't you were dead meat, you were gone.
167. It's also affected my physical health. The punishments I was given over that length of time damaged me physically and mentally but the mental scars are the worst. I can become very irrational and then get very annoyed and I can now get over it but I can still go back to that old person.
168. I've hardly had any relationship with my family at all, they wanted rid of me back then and I have very little contact since, that's been eradicated. My mother abused me so badly that she could never have a relationship with me. They do know all about my past experiences but there's still no relationship, there's a lot of trouble in our family. My family have cut my kids off as well.
169. My education was affected as well, I wasn't allowed to sit my leaver's certificate because I didn't have enough attendance.

170. What happened to me when I was younger has basically affected my whole life, it's changed my whole life, it stays with you.

Treatment/support

171. I was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder after my accident when I saw a psychologist because a lot of all this came up then, during my treatment. That was like opening a can of worms. Part of my treatment was to go through EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). That was all in 2008 at Cornhill Hospital. I really gelled with the chap I was doing it with then he moved jobs and it really changed after that. I started with somebody else but we just couldn't communicate in the same way, so that came to an end. It was difficult and it had its pluses and minuses but I learned a lot from that treatment.

Reporting of Abuse

172. A few months ago I got in touch with the police about the abuse from my time in care. It wasn't long after I contacted the Inquiry and I just thought I had to do something about it all. I know most of the people are dead and it won't change anything that way but if what I say ends up being corroborated by somebody else then that would be great. I tried phoning and emailing but I haven't heard back from anyone about it. There's meant to be a police team that's been put together to deal with these things but I've not heard from them yet.

Records

173. About a year ago I went looking for my records for all the places I stayed. I'd contacted Thompsons Solicitors for compensation through redress and they couldn't get anything so I then tried for myself. I got some for Rossie Farm from the lady that runs the Rossie Trust now, she was very willing to help in the beginning but then started to

distance herself for some reason, I don't know why. She got me my admission record and a photocopy of an entry from their punishment book referring to when I was given the belt. That's all I have and I find that very frustrating.

174. Aberdeen Council have told me they don't have any records for me at all, they've lost all my records. They are also trying to tell me they have no prison or borstal records for me which I just can't understand. You see programmes on the television with people going back years and years into their past yet when it comes to that period of time for me all of a sudden everything has been lost.

Lessons to be Learned

175. I think it's a complete disgrace to lock children up in places like Craiginches. I should never have been sent there, and put in the area I was in. I never knew anything about crime until I was sent to places like that. I was misguided and a bit off the rails but I do think I could have been helped and shouldn't have been sent to such places.
176. There should have been some acknowledgement that I was being abused at home. If the social work had behaved or worked as intended instead of having individuals making their own minds up about how to treat people it would have been different. People like Mr Emslie did that and not everybody was treated the same.
177. The guys that were looking after me and other boys in the places I was could do what they liked, they weren't answerable to anybody. There were no cameras or anything like that.
178. Nowadays they have to help people, they have to identify the problems and then help them not punish them. Every place I ever went to I was told categorically that I had no rights. Having a bed was a privilege. When you're in prison, if you do something wrong your bed is taken from you because it was a privilege, it's not a privilege it's a right, you have a right to sleep. To live is a right, to be a human being to exist and be treated with respect and dignity and that just didn't happen.


179. They were taking people and destroying them so they couldn't have a life. They need to listen to people and help them.

Hopes for the Inquiry

180. My hope is that nothing like this ever happens again. Something that really pisses me off is there organisations that are found guilty of abuse still using the same names. Places like Quarrier's and places like that, why are they still using the same names, why are they not being made to change their name? How many people have suffered because of the regimes of those places and they are still using that same name. I know it's not the same people but it's still the same organisations and a lot are still owned by the same people..
181. It's not about money for me it's about the outcome, it's about what happens after all this, after this Inquiry. People admit it but some still deny it, it doesn't matter who you are and it doesn't matter if it's a nun. If they abuse a child they deserve to face it and to be punished, not let off.

Other information

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

Signed..... 

Dated..... 30/08/2022