

**Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

MLW

Support person present: No

1. My name is MLW. My maiden name is MLW. My date of birth is 1964. My contact details are known to the Inquiry. I am providing a statement in respect of my brother's experiences at Fort Augustus Abbey School. My brother's name is MLL.

**Life before Fort Augustus**

2. My mum's name is [REDACTED] but she gets called [REDACTED]. She is 84. My dad's name is [REDACTED] and he is 83. They now live at [REDACTED] in Edinburgh. I have sisters, [REDACTED] who was born on [REDACTED] 1961, and [REDACTED] who was born [REDACTED] 1960. MLL was born on [REDACTED] 1963. I am the youngest sibling. We were all born in Edinburgh. We moved out to Penicuik when I was eight months old.
3. We were brought up in the Catholic faith. My mum's father, my grandad, was very involved in Lauriston Church in Edinburgh. That was LRM parish at that time. My grandad was there every day. My mum's side of the family was very Catholic and family life revolved around Lauriston Church when she was growing up. I think there were five siblings.
4. My mum's younger sister, MLK, who we call MLK, became a nun at the age of fifteen or sixteen. She is known as Sister MLK. She entered a closed order at that time. I think it was very prestigious to have a family member go to the

Church as a nun. My mum's older brother, my Uncle [REDACTED] wanted to become a priest. My grandfather forbade it. I think because one child had already gone into the Church. That caused an huge rift in the family. My Uncle [REDACTED] was estranged from the family for most of his life.

5. My grandmother lost a child to appendicitis when he was seven years old. I think the Church helped the family a great deal through that, so the Church's influence was very strong. My mum carried that on into her life and was very strong in the Catholic religion. When we got older, MLK [REDACTED] came out of the closed order. She went to work as a nursing nun as part of a convent in Morningside, the Little Company of Mary. The hospital was called St. Raphael's. She operated from there as a nursing nun when we were growing up in Penicuik. We knew the place well as kids. We went there every Sunday and we knew all the nun and priests.
6. My father was brought up a Catholic as well, but he has never liked the Church. He was brought up in the Sighthill area of Edinburgh. He had a hard life. He was one of five or six children. His father was a prisoner of war for five years. He was captured at Dunkirk in 1940 and was in a gulag until the end of the War. My dad went into care for a part of that time, maybe for six months, because my grandmother couldn't feed them all. He won't talk about his time in care at all. I think he was in the care of one of the Catholic orders, but I don't know which one. My grandad came back from the War damaged. He didn't come out of his bedroom. He died when he was 66. When I was growing up in Penicuik, we would go Lauriston Church every Sunday then to my gran and grandad in Tollcross. We would then go and see MLK [REDACTED] up at Marchmont before going to see our other grandparents out at Sighthill.

#### *Penicuik*

7. MLL [REDACTED] was two years old when we moved to Penicuik. We lived in [REDACTED] at the back end of Penicuik. It was a Protestant estate and there was a Protestant school next to our house. We used to have to walk about a mile and a half to go to the Sacred Heart School in Penicuik. It was very sectarian. There used to be a lot of aggro between the Catholic and Protestant families and between the school kids. I used to

be called a dirty Catholic and things like that. I probably gave back as much as I got. The school just ignored it.

8. When MLL started school, he went to the Sacred Heart Primary School in Penicuik. It was a state Catholic school, very much attached to the parish church. The parish priest was Father Jackson and we all did our first communion as a class in his church. MLL never took to school. From the minute he went to school at the age of five, he would end up back at home. He would walk home after an hour at school. My mum used to have to take him back constantly. MLL obviously had needs at that time. My mum told me recently that she did speak to the head teacher of the primary school and asked whether MLL should get referred for additional support. He told her that she didn't want to go down that route. We know that he's very dyslexic, but I suspect he had autism at that stage. He was so difficult to school. He would go, but he would never settle. We had a horrendous Mr [REDACTED]. He was nasty and vicious. He used the belt constantly. I got it once at the age of five or six. I got the belt once on each hand. MLL must've got it a lot, but I don't know how many times. I'm not sure whether he complained about it to my mum, but we did talk about it to each other at the time. My parents kept on taking him back to the school.
9. I got to know [REDACTED], who is LRM [REDACTED] brother's son. He was in the same class as me at school. We were good friends and kept in touch for a long time. There was a connection between my mum's family and the [REDACTED] family.
10. They built a new school, which was at the back of our area. I went there when I was about eight years old. They closed the old building when the new one opened. I was there for about a year before we moved. My sisters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], had started at high school in Dalkeith.

### *Brussels*

11. We all moved to Brussels when MLL was about eleven, in 1974. My dad got into the civil service really low down and worked his way up. He had very little schooling and no qualifications, having left school when he was fourteen. He got an opportunity to sit

exams with the civil service and the European Economic Community. If you passed the exams, you could go and work abroad. It wasn't dependent on your qualifications. He passed the exams in 1973 and got into work in Fisheries in the European Economic Community in Brussels. It was a constant three year rolling contract, so we knew we were going for at least three years.

12. By that time, MLL behaviour in Penicuik was not good. He was constantly in trouble with other boys. My mum and dad were really struggling with his behaviour. He was very difficult and he was a very unhappy little boy. He certainly had needs. Being his younger sibling wasn't easy. I think he felt very isolated in the family, in terms of being the only boy. We all shared a room and he had a room of his own. He made very few friends. He was not very adept, socially.
13. When we moved to Brussels, we lived in an area called Woluwe. My mum made very big links with the Catholic Church in Brussels. We attended an English speaking Catholic church. It was an Irish based order and the priest there was called Father Bailey. My mum was not good in Brussels. She didn't like it at all. I remember my mum being very depressed. The Church was a massive part of her life in Brussels.
14. We went to a European school in an area called Uccle, which was about an hour away on the bus. It was a massive secondary school with about a thousand pupils. They were all different nationalities. It was a non-denominational school. There was Catholic religion class, but people could also choose to go to the Protestant classes or the ethnic classes. MLL and I went to the primary school there. MLL was in his last year of primary school by that time. Half the subjects were in French and half were in your own language. There were so many different nationalities. I took to it. I think I was young enough to adapt. MLL didn't. For him, it was a disaster. He was very behind, academically. He wasn't succeeding at school at all and he didn't want to be at school. He ran away from that school and got the public bus home nearly every day. That became a very big worry for my parents.
15. My parents decided that MLL would go to a French Jesuit school, St. Michael, [REDACTED]. He went there for a period of time, but that wasn't



successful. It wasn't working for [REDACTED] at the European school either. She went to a Catholic French nuns' school for a while. My sister [REDACTED] and I stayed in the European school system. I know [REDACTED] was desperately unhappy at the Jesuit school and it didn't work there.

16. [REDACTED] wasn't receiving any help at that time. I don't think any investigations were carried out. I can't remember it all. There were lots of conversations with the Catholic Church in Edinburgh. My mum was very friendly with people in the Church through her sister, [REDACTED]. We used to have missionaries staying at our house in Brussels, on their way to Africa. My mother told me that she took advice from people she knew in the Church and they recommended that my parents send [REDACTED] to Fort Augustus.
17. I knew at the time why he was going to Fort Augustus. Nothing was working for him in school. His behaviour at home was really bad. He wouldn't sleep. He was a loner and just wanted to stay in his bedroom. He was very destructive to our toys. My dad and [REDACTED] did not have a good relationship. My dad was quite a scary person. He was a strict disciplinarian. My dad was just dreadful with him. It was very sad.
18. I stayed in Brussels until I left to go to boarding school at Kilgraston when I was fifteen. My parents stayed until 1997.

#### **Fort Augustus Abbey School, Inverness-shire**

19. [REDACTED] went to boarding school at Fort Augustus in 1976, when he was thirteen. I remember we all went with him in the car. My dad had the idea that he would do these massive long journeys with us all as kids. There were four of us in the back of the car, with the dog. We would go down to Spain and Greece. He had this whole idea we were going to see the world from the car. The journeys were days long. [REDACTED] never coped with these journeys. I remember we all traipsed to get his uniform at Aitken and Niven in Edinburgh. [REDACTED] was a very good looking boy, incredibly handsome.
20. [REDACTED] was at Fort Augustus for about four years. He was there from 1976 right the way through until 1980. It was a Benedictine school. I don't know how many pupils were

there, but it was maybe about two hundred. They were all called by their surnames. When MLL was a bit older, he told me all about the school. I was about seventeen and he was about twenty.

### *First impressions*

21. We all went up to the school with him. We went to see where his bed would be. It was in a huge dormitory. It had brown sections, like wooden horse boxes, to afford some privacy. He had a huge trunk. I think he had a dressing table and a bed.
22. We went up to Fort Augustus in the car. We met the Abbot. He was a bald headed man, but I can't remember his name. He was to do with the overall Benedictine order and Father CIPHER WIT was the SNR of the school. I remember him as well. The monks wore brown robes with tassels. There were lots of boys. It was a huge, old building, like a castle. It didn't look very homely at all. I just remember walking through very long, dark corridors. I don't remember anything else about the layout of the school. Then we left him and that was it. We all drove down to Edinburgh. MLL didn't make a scene or anything.

### **Routine at Fort Augustus**

#### *Other pupils and staff*

23. When I was seventeen and MLL told me about Fort Augustus, he didn't say much about other boys who were there at the same time as him. He made no friends. I remember MLL talked about a guy whose surname was [REDACTED], who he said was a nice guy. His sister was at school with me, in Kilgraston. There were quite a lot of links between the girls at Kilgraston and Fort Augustus. He told me about an art teacher that he really liked, but who was really odd. The art teacher was a lay person. He told me that the monks were all horrible.

24. MLL didn't talk a lot about the monks. It seemed that the Brothers were the main carers. I think there was only one female member of staff, the matron. Father CIPHER WIT was the SNR and he was a monk. He mentioned Father MEV who MLL just called MEV. As far as I could understand it from MLL MEV had a pastoral role. He wasn't a teacher. He was the Brother in charge of MLL dorm. It seemed that he would be around after school in the evenings and when they had free time on a Saturday. My mum also told me recently that MEV had a room as part of the dorm, where he slept.

*Mornings and bedtime*

25. MLL told me that the boys had to get up at six in the morning. MLL did used to say that the boys were shouted up in the morning. He said that if they didn't get up, they got a good belting or kicked or hit. The bed got kicked and you got a slap. He said the prefects got the younger boys up and they were quite brutal. After you got up, you had to have a cold shower and then go to chapel. They would then have breakfast.

*Mealtimes/Food*

26. MLL didn't describe the food. He said it was disgusting and he didn't like it. He used to take a trunk full of goodies when he came back from the holidays, because the food was so disgusting. I remember him telling me that there was a tuck shop.

*Washing/bathing*

27. MLL described the showers as open. The showers were cold. The boys were all naked, together. He said there was no privacy. From what I understand, the monks would come in and watch them have a shower. He said there would be beatings in the showers, from the monks and the boys.

*Leisure time*

28. MLL used to talk about the sailing on the loch. He enjoyed that. I think there were houses, although I can't remember which house MLL was in. They had inter-house competitions. There was rugby, which MLL was part of. I don't think MLL really liked that, but he certainly took part in that. I think they did play against other schools. I think they played against Strathallan, because there was a time when I was at Kilgraston and MLL was nearby, but I never managed to see him.
29. The boys would go on sailing days. MLL was also part of a cadet force. I know they would do things at weekends. I think they all travelled together in a group, along with the Brothers.

*School holidays and family life*

30. By the time MLL was at Fort Augustus, my dad had bought a flat in Edinburgh, near Marchmont. We would go there for the Easter and Christmas holidays and MLL would come from Fort Augustus to the flat. Eventually, my dad bought a house at [REDACTED] in Liberton. MLL came home to Brussels for the summer holidays. There was always a car journey back after every holiday. MLL wouldn't have gone back to school on his own. We dropped him off at Fort Augustus quite a few times.
31. When he was at home, MLL behaviour was not good. He wouldn't come out of his room. He would irritate my dad no end. At mealtimes, he might throw a piece of food at my dad. My dad would chase him round the table. It was a mad house. MLL would try to get to the toilet and lock the door before my dad took his hand to him. MLL was never aggressive. He was difficult and he would torment me but he was never aggressive. He was the type of kid that was so vulnerable. He would torment people and then they would react to him. He was bullied. He was just always in trouble.
32. After his first year in Fort Augustus, MLL started stealing. I was always protective of him. He was so stupid in how he would do things. He would get caught all the time. He was so vulnerable. He would steal things from our room. I then caught him stealing



money from my father's pocket. He would take the notes and get caught all the time. I told him not to take the notes because our father would know. I told him to take the coins. I had been doing it for ages.

33. When he came home from school to Brussels, my mum would ask me to take him out with my friends. He hardly left his room. He would lie in his bed all day. He didn't have any friends of his own. I wasn't really enamoured about it, but I did it. It wasn't easy. He met a friend of mine called [REDACTED], who was French. She hit it off with MLL [REDACTED] and she was really good with him. They went out for a while. He was just so awkward though.
34. When he was fifteen or sixteen, it was very difficult to be in the house with MLL [REDACTED] because of sexual things. There was a window at the top of the bathroom. He was always threatening to look through it at me and my sisters. It was almost as if he was trying to prove that he liked girls. We would scream at him to stop. He did it to torment us. He used to get into so much trouble from my father.
35. [REDACTED] education hadn't been working in Brussels. She went to boarding school at Kilgraston in Bridge of Earn, with the nuns, when she was about fifteen. She excelled there. She would have liked to have joined an order of nuns, but my mum wouldn't let her. My sister, [REDACTED], was instrumental in saying that wasn't okay. She went to do nursing instead. She became very mentally unwell after a year. It's really sad because she had been okay up until that point. She had always been very a sensitive human being and would get more hysterical than the rest of us growing up, but she was a beautiful woman. She just never recovered from her mental breakdown. Instead of getting help for her, my parents took her to live with them in Brussels and she stayed in the flat.
36. I was expelled from the European School in Brussels when I was fourteen or fifteen. I organised a strike because a boy was unfairly expelled. The strike went well, but drink got involved and some primary school children got hold of the drink. Five of the strike ring leaders got expelled for this. No other school would look at me in Brussels and I was refusing to go to a French school. Kilgraston agreed to take me because [REDACTED]

had done so well there. That was not a good idea for me. I was a very free child from a European school with no school uniform going to a Catholic, all-girls boarding school with nuns. By then, MLL was still at Fort Augustus. We used to write to each other. He was there for one year whilst I was at Kilgraston.

#### *School*

37. As far as I understand, classes were in year groups. MLL had science, maths, art and English. I don't think he got much more. It was mostly the brothers who did the teaching, although I think there were a few lay teachers, like the art teacher. Despite the fact that it was a fee-paying school, I don't think the brothers were qualified to teach.
38. MLL didn't come out with any qualifications at all. I think he sat his O'Grades, but he didn't get them.

#### *Healthcare*

39. MLL did say that there was a female matron at the school, but I can't remember what her name was. I think there was a sick-wing that the boys went to if they were sick.

#### *Religious instruction*

40. I know that MLL did act as an altar boy, but I don't know much about that.

#### *Personal possessions*

41. The boys didn't get pocket money directly. My parents sent it to the school, alongside extra money for laundry and sailing.

*Running away*

42. I know MLL tried to run away all the time. I remember my mum getting phone calls at the time. I know he was desperately homesick. As far as I'm aware, he got into the town at Fort Augustus. He didn't get very far. He was found by the Brothers and my mum would get a phone call. He wouldn't have had the money to get a train or a bus.
43. When MLL started to tell me all about Fort Augustus when I was seventeen, he told me that he ran away during his first year. He said that the Brothers were nice to him. They thought he was very homesick and that he might have to go home. He said that Father MEV befriended him and took him under his wing. He became like a mentor to MLL. MLL could go to him if he was upset. MLL told me Father MEV was really nice to him. He used to give MLL a hug and sit by the sailing boats with him and talk to him. MLL said he prayed a lot with him. They developed a good relationship. MLL felt that he had somebody he could go to. That's what MLL told me.

**Abuse at Fort Augustus**

44. When I was fourteen or fifteen, MLL told me that Fort Augustus was a dreadful place and that he had been beaten and bullied. He didn't tell me about the sexual abuse at that time.
45. When I was in my first year at Moray House, studying teaching, MLL and I lived together in my parents' house at Edinburgh. It was in the course of that year that he told me all about Fort Augustus. I was about seventeen. MLL told me that the monks would beat the boys with a cane and with a slipper or shoe.
46. MLL said there was a lot of bullying by other boys. Some of it took place at night. MLL described a lot of punching by the other boys. The older boys would beat younger boys up. MLL told me of one occasion when he was really beaten up by three or four older boys in the shower. He didn't say what that was for. He said he saw

one vicious beating on a boy who was younger than him. He didn't say who that boy was, but he was beaten by other boys. I don't know whether MLL was ever injured as a result of beatings. We wouldn't see him for months and he never mentioned any injuries.

47. One night, I came home from university and MLL was behind the front door with an axe. I think he thought I was a burglar. I asked him what he was doing. He burst into tears and we sat down. MLL said he couldn't go on and that he needed to kill himself. I asked him if mum knew and he said she didn't. I asked him what had happened and he said he would tell me everything that happened to him at school.
48. He started to tell me how homesick he had been when he first went to Fort Augustus. He said that he tried to run away, but that he couldn't get back. He said that he just wanted to go home but mum and dad wouldn't let him come home. He said it was dreadful and that he got beaten up by the boys and bullied by the boys. He said they put things in his food to make it horrible and disgusting. He said he was woken up in the middle of the night and hit. He said he had a terrible time and he just wanted to come home.
49. MLL said that Father MEV knew that he was really homesick. He spent a lot of time with MLL and was really nice to him. Then he started to swear profusely about Father MEV and saying things like, "I should have known, I should have known." MLL told me that MEV had started to sexually assault him. He said that it started with MEV hugging him because he was so homesick. From what I remember, MEV got MLL to touch his penis or MEV would touch his. He said that MEV made him perform oral sex on him. I don't think it was a one off thing. I think it went on for a long time. MLL was thirteen or fourteen when it happened. MLL told me about the oral sex and the touching, but he didn't tell me anything more. I don't know whether any intercourse took place. He said he was sick a lot and he didn't know what to do. He said that he was scared.
50. MLL said it happened in a place near the sailing boats. I remember MLL really enjoyed the boats and MEV came down to join him because he had been upset.



Some of the abuse happened there, but I don't know where else it happened. That was the only place where he told me it had happened.

51. MLL said that the abuse happened all the time, but he didn't tell me how often. I think he felt comforted. He was so homesick. I think he locked on to this man, who gave him a lot of comfort to begin with and was there for him. MLL didn't know what grooming was. I probably didn't at the age of seventeen either. MLL felt very guilty about it all. He was really questioning whether he was gay and then saying that he hadn't wanted it to happen.
52. MLL didn't tell me that MEV abused any other boys. I don't think he looked out beyond to see whether it was happening to other boys. At that time, I don't think he thought other boys were being abused. He always implied that he was alone in this and that he had been picked out. He did say that the art teacher was a pervert. I asked him if he had done something and he said that the art teacher hadn't done anything to him. He knew that something had happened to another boy with the art teacher.

#### **Reporting of abuse at Fort Augustus**

53. I remember MLL came back to Brussels for the Christmas holidays when I was twelve or thirteen. It was after the first term that he had gone to Fort Augustus. I knew something had happened. Mum and dad were really upset. We all went over to Edinburgh. I remember my parents had to go up to Fort Augustus to have a conversation with the SNR Father CIPHER WIT. We were all left with their friends, and in Edinburgh. I didn't know what it was about then. My mum told me recently that she had known that something was wrong with MLL. He had been too embarrassed to tell her what had happened, but he wrote it down.
54. There was a lot of talk about whether he would go back to Fort Augustus. MLL never wanted to be there. The decision was taken that he would go back. I didn't know the story of what had occurred at that point.

55. I know that a GP, who was a friend of the family, [MLL] [MEV] Her name was Dr Jessica Hamilton. She worked with [MLK] at St. Raphael's as an anaesthetist and also worked as a GP. She had been my grandmother's GP and we used to see her if we were ill when we were on holiday in Scotland. [MLL] Mum also said that she discouraged my parents from reporting the abuse to the police, advising them that it wouldn't help [MLL]
56. A few years later, when I was seventeen, [MLL] told me that he had written down what happened for our mum when he was home for the holidays. He said it was during that holiday when he was upset and mum was upset. He said he couldn't tell her what had happened because he was too upset and embarrassed, so he wrote it down in a letter. It was all about the sexual abuse by [MEV] rather than the bullying from other boys. My mother was shocked. I think [MLL] just told my mother bits. My mother still feels she hasn't heard the whole story yet.
57. [MLL] said that they sent him back to the school. He spoke about the time that we all had to stay in the house and our parents went up to Fort Augustus. He said that our parents had gone to see Father [CIPHER WIT] and that [MEV] had admitted it. As far as I understood it from [MLL] he was present for some of the meeting with Father [CIPHER WIT] and some of it took place without him. I know that because my mother told me that later on as well. [MLL] said that it was agreed that he would go back to school and [MEV] would go back to Australia. My mother told me later on that the meeting was with Father [CIPHER WIT] but although the Abbot wasn't present he also knew what had happened. My understanding from my mother is that it was the Abbot's decision to send [MEV] back to Australia.
58. [MLL] account of the meeting at Fort Augustus was that [MEV] had admitted the abuse and that it was agreed with my parents that they wouldn't go to the police because they would have [MLL] back at the school. I think the idea was to show him that he was not to blame. My mum recalls that it was a condition of [MLL] return that they allowed it to be dealt with internally and did not go to the police. I think my mum

agreed to that because of the power the Church had over her. I don't think my mum wanted to go to the police anyway because of the scandal. My mum said recently that there was an agreement that the school would get rid of the priest, MLL could go back to the school, which would give him normality, and the police wouldn't be involved. I don't know whether there was any fee reduction or anything like that, but my mum denies that. From MLL point of view, he said that was the worst thing that could have happened to him. He said that all the boys knew. I don't know how the other boys knew, but I suspect MLL would have trusted some of them and told them. He was so literal and he was trusting and naïve.

59.

MLL

MEV

### Leaving Fort Augustus

60. My dad bought a house at [REDACTED] in Liberton, Edinburgh, for all of us. My sister, [REDACTED] came back to Edinburgh to go to Stephenson's college and study business. She was working in the reception of St. Raphael's, where MLK was at the same time. [REDACTED] was doing her nursing. MLL and I would come down from boarding school for the holidays and my mum and dad would come over from Brussels. When MLL left Fort Augustus, he went down to the house in Edinburgh. I think he did labouring work for a while. He then got in to do a foundation art course in Wolverhampton. MLL is very good at art, very artistic. He did a portfolio and got in through that. He went down, but it didn't work and he couldn't manage it. He moved back to the house at [REDACTED] and he was unemployed.



### Life after Fort Augustus

61. When MLL first left Fort Augustus, I was still going to my parents' house in Liberton for the holidays. It wasn't really working for me at Kilgraston. I'd been suspended for smoking and everything else. I wangled that I would only stay at Kilgraston four nights a week. I would go down to Edinburgh on a Friday and get the train back up on a Monday morning. I knew I had to get my exams so I could get out of there and I left when I was seventeen. I got into Edinburgh University to study teaching. MLL was nineteen and back from Wolverhampton. By that time, he was quite mentally ill. His mental state had deteriorated as he went along at Fort Augustus.
62. Around that time, I know that mum and dad took MLL to see a psychiatrist. I think it might have been a private one because my dad's insurance in Brussels covered us all for healthcare. She was based at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital. I think that was the beginning of the diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia. The psychiatrist told my parents to put MLL in an institution and forget about him. MLL would have been eighteen or nineteen. My mum and dad didn't do anything about it. They just ignored it. They went back to Brussels. I don't know whether MLL was prescribed any medication.
63. I was in my first year at Moray House. MLL had met a French man and went to France to live there. MLL had had her nervous breakdown and went to live with mum and dad in Brussels. MLL and I were alone in the house at MLL. It became very difficult. MLL was very ill. He was very paranoid. I was a bit scared of him. His behaviour was so erratic by then. If you opened a bottle milk, he thought you'd poisoned it. He was constantly throwing out food. I was a student, so I would get angry at him for throwing out the food. I told him to buy his own food, but that didn't work because he thought I was changing the food. He was a loner. He wasn't working, he wasn't doing anything. The police were involved a few times, not because he was in trouble but because he'd gone to them with paranoid stories. It was during that year that he told me all about Fort Augustus.
64. MLL trusted me. In one way, we were quite close, but in another way, we weren't. I was younger, so I think I was less threatening to him. I was probably closer to MLL



than the others in the family. When we were younger, we used to get into a lot of trouble together. We did have that relationship. However, the situation in the house at [REDACTED] was becoming too much for me. He was so paranoid and he was so ill. I was only eighteen. I was trying to study and have my life and whatever was going on for me. He was in the house all the time. He was unemployed. He'd tried a few labouring jobs every now and again, but they didn't work out. He was very paranoid, so it was a bit scary. My dad gave us both an allowance. My fees were paid, but because dad had quite a good wage I didn't get a grant. My parents had to pay everything else. I worked in a bar and I was a postie in the holidays, all the student things to make money. [REDACTED] had signed on and he was getting benefits.

65. There was no social work involvement with [REDACTED]. My parents didn't get him any help. I don't know why, but they just didn't do anything. They lived in Brussels and we lived in the house at [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was very much a recluse. I was probably the only person he would see during the day. He would spend all his time in his room, painting and things like that. Some of his paintings were very dark. He was getting more and more mentally ill as it went along.
66. I was a bit frightened. [REDACTED] was a bit unpredictable. I knew that he would never harm me deliberately, but his fantasies might. He had this idea that I was hiding poison in his food or holding an axe behind the door because he thought I was a burglar. After he disclosed to me about the sexual abuse at Fort Augustus, I tried to get him a counsellor. I knew a counsellor through the university, whom I approached. He said he would see [REDACTED] but he wouldn't go. I couldn't make him go. By then, I was in my second year at university. Things were really deteriorating between me and [REDACTED]. I was not coping with him the way he was. He was coming into my room at night. If I was asleep, he would scream in my ear and say, "That's what used to happen to me." He was referring to Fort Augustus, as that wouldn't have happened anywhere else.
67. I kept phoning my mum and dad. I told them it couldn't go on and that [REDACTED] was really ill. I told them I couldn't keep doing it anymore and that they needed to come home. They said they couldn't come home because my dad was working. My mum wasn't prepared to come home. Eventually, we all sat down and dad said he wouldn't throw

MLL out. I said I wasn't staying and that I wasn't doing it any longer. I went and found a flat with some flatmates. My dad agreed to help me pay for it. MLL was in [REDACTED], on his own. He kept coming over to the flat I was staying in. I wasn't very nice to him at that time. I was trying to lead my life. It was very difficult circumstances. Within about three months, he went home to Brussels. Mum and dad had a flat in Brussels with [REDACTED] and MLL in it. That happened in 1983 or 1984 when MLL was about 20 or 21. He stayed in the flat in Brussels right through until 1997, with [REDACTED] and my parents.

68. I don't think MLL got any treatment in Brussels. I think he got some medication from a psychiatrist. I know he was on Haloperidol. He didn't go out of the flat. I would go to Brussels in the summer holidays. There wasn't a bedroom for me anymore, as they were living in the flat. I was sleeping on the couch. With MLL and [REDACTED] there, you just didn't want to be there. They were both really mentally ill by then. I feel really sorry for [REDACTED]. She had had a nervous breakdown and just never got the treatment that she needed. She's been on medication, but her diagnosis has never been clear. I know she was sectioned once in Brussels.
69. In 1997, my parents came back to Scotland and lived at [REDACTED] in Edinburgh. MLL and [REDACTED] came with them. I was living in the Newhaven area of the city at the time. It was awful at [REDACTED] MLL and dad's relationship was awful. I went up to the flat one day and I thought they were going to kill each other. My father was so angry with MLL. He couldn't tolerate him at all and I thought MLL was at risk. I had studied social work at post-graduate level and I was a social worker at that time. I managed to get MLL a flat in 1998, about a year after they moved back from Brussels.
70. MLL has been in that flat ever since. He currently lives alone in the [REDACTED] area of Edinburgh. He has his own flat, but it is supported accommodation through a mental health organisation, Penumbra. I think he's guaranteed that flat for as long as he needs it. He is under a psychiatrist at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital. He has a community psychiatric nurse. He goes to a lot of the mental health drop-in centres in Edinburgh. He is on different medication. His blood is monitored regularly because it can be toxic to the blood. He's recently had cancer.

## Impact

MLL

71. I don't think MLL had much of a faith. He just did what my mum said. All of us did. There was a lot of religion at Fort Augustus. He now hates the Catholic Church. He's never had anything to do with it since he left school.
72. Because the abuse happened during his adolescence, its impacted upon his whole identity in terms of his sexuality. He's never been in a relationship, except for a short time when he went out with my friend, [REDACTED] in Brussels. I think he questions why it happened and I think he still blames himself.
73. MLL had needs before he went to Fort Augustus rather than mental health issues. I would've said he was autistic and his learning was never going to be straightforward, but he wasn't paranoid before he went to Fort Augustus. Before Fort Augustus it was more that he just didn't want to go to school. He couldn't do school. He was completely dyslexic. I think he had learning needs which weren't acknowledged and I don't think my family reacted well to those needs. When he went to Fort Augustus, his mental health deteriorated very much. If he had come away when the abuse had taken place, he may have had a chance of recovery with the right help. Ultimately, having to go back into that situation where the boys knew what had occurred and bullied him and teased him, shattered him.
74. I attribute his paranoid schizophrenia to the abuse at Fort Augustus. I think his psychiatrist at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital recognises that his illness is linked to the abuse. MLL has been sectioned a couple of times. That was in Edinburgh, after my parents moved back in 1997. There's a difference between mental illness and learning needs. I think the trauma of the abuse has caused the mental illness. He talks about flashbacks and says it's as if the abuse was yesterday.
75. After the *Sins of Our Fathers*, a BBC documentary about abuse at Fort Augustus, came out in 2013, MLL mental health got worse. It obviously brought things up and



triggered things. His psychiatrist was aware of that and was going to attend any interview with him. The psychiatrist really wants him to look at the abuse because he thinks it's the root of all MLL problems, but how do you make somebody do that in his fifties? I don't know if he really wants to.

76. Before he was sectioned for the first time, he stole my dad's credit card and went to New York. They realised he was mentally ill and got him back. He has been committed to the Royal Edinburgh Hospital on two occasions. On one occasion, mum and dad went on holiday. He phoned me at my house in [REDACTED]. He told me he had taken pills and was committing suicide. I phoned the police and the ambulance and got them to his house. I managed to persuade him to open his door. He'd taken a lot of paracetamol. He was pumped out and then he was sectioned.
77. MLL depends on my mum and dad so much. He has his flat, but he goes to my mum and dad's every day for either his lunch or his dinner. I think the medication has helped him with his paranoia around food. Over the years, MLL has told me a lot about the abuse. He's always told me how much it destroyed him. It's always been a live thing for me. I've never attributed his schizophrenia just to mental illness, I've always looked at it as part of the unresolved trauma of abuse. I suppose having worked in social work and the route that I took in life, I could see the damage that it did to him. I've always wanted him to do more about it but he's just not able to. Sometimes, he comes off his medication because I think it dulls him a lot. Things start to surface and he has to go back on it. I think he has quite a good relationship with his psychiatrist, but he doesn't do any counselling or therapeutic work.
78. MLL has his flat in [REDACTED] but he barely functions. Without being able to go and see my mum every day, he'd probably be sectioned in hospital. I don't know how well he'll function when my mum dies. I don't know if he'll survive on the flat in his own. My mum is everything to him. He hardly goes out at all, except to see my mum and to the [REDACTED] which is a mental health drop-in centre in Edinburgh. I think he has a few friends there. He still paints a lot. He gambles on all those slot machines. I think my mum's always bailing him out with money. He won't answer the phone to anybody, so I only get to speak to him when he's at my mum's. He barely survives. To be quite



honest, I'm really surprised that MLL alive. If you saw him, you'd understand why I think that. He's such a mess, both physically and mentally. His life is a mess and it's been like that since he was nineteen.

### *Family*

79. In many ways, the abuse at Fort Augustus has destroyed the family. I think there were already vulnerabilities in our family to MLL needs, but I think the fact that the abuse was a secret for so long made things worse. My parents never told anybody out with the close family. Extended family didn't know, nobody knew. It's been a massive secret for my mum and dad. I think that was due to my mum's relationship with the Catholic Church. I think there was also an awful lot of guilt about having put him back. I think MLL going back to Fort Augustus destroyed him. I think it also shattered my dad in terms of the Catholic Church.
80. My mum and dad went out to work when they were fourteen or fifteen. They were out in the big, wide world, having to care for themselves at that age. I think my mum and dad really struggled with the fact that MLL was thirteen or fourteen when this happened, in terms of him not being to blame. At one point, my mum said to me, "Well, he was fourteen. He could have said no." She thought he should have been able to look after himself at that age. She would ask why he let it happen and whether he wanted it to happen.
81. Since MLL was abused, my dad has hated the Catholic Church and has never gone near it. I never quite understood that for a long time. He stopped going to the church on a Sunday. He would drive my mum there, but he wouldn't go in. He never told me why at the time, but I suspect my mum knew the reason. If I think of the timings, it was all related to what happened to MLL. He rejected the Church at that time, but my mum didn't. I think my mum's relationship with the Catholic Church predominantly took first place. I think she needed that so much that MLL was second to that. I do find it very difficult that my mum still goes to the church and has always gone to the church through all of this, despite not just the perpetrators but also the cover-up and extent of

people that knew about it. I don't understand how she can do it, but she does. That means everything to her.

82. I think that because my parents felt so guilty about what happened to MLL they didn't get him help. Instead, they tried to look after him themselves. They took him to Brussels. They didn't really get him the care that he needed. He did see a psychiatrist to obtain medication, but there was no other intervention. My parents just mistrusted the world and decided to look after him themselves. I don't think they knew what to do with him. They didn't know anything about trauma. I don't think they fully understood the impact on MLL of the abuse.
83. When I was seventeen and MLL told me what had happened to him, I told my mum and dad. They were very angry. They didn't think he should be telling me about it. I don't think they wanted me to know about it. I suggested we go for family therapy, but nobody wanted to talk about it. I couldn't understand why they wouldn't do something about it. It caused a rift for me when it came to my parents and has always been an issue.
84. Gradually, we drifted apart as a family. It became MLL and my mum and dad in Brussels. Primarily, my parents saw their role as looking after MLL and MLL has a supportive relationship with my mum. He doesn't have a good relationship with my dad and never has. My dad has never come to terms with any of it, I don't think.
85. Because of his mental health, MLL still needs my mum and dad a lot. He can't survive on his own so he goes up to their flat every day. He's very dependent on my mother. My father tolerates him coming every day. I still feel my father blames him an awful lot for what happened. I couldn't live with that. I couldn't be party to that. When I started to say that we needed to do something about it and that MLL needed help, it caused a huge rift between my parents and me. I was really angry that they hadn't gone to the police. I wish they would do more for him.
86. It's very difficult for me to go near my parents. MLL a big man and he can be quite scary looking because he's mentally ill. He asks a lot of literal questions. I have to be

careful what I expose my son to, which then causes problems. I don't have a good relationship with my parents at all because of what happened. I suppose I can't just sit back and not do anything and I think my parents would like me to. I told my mum she should speak to the Inquiry. She asked me what good it would do and I told her it might help her to feel less guilty.

87. I did go and get therapy myself, otherwise I wouldn't have got my head around it all. I've always protected MLL, but the abuse has robbed me of a big brother.

### Reporting of Abuse

#### *Police investigation*

88. I don't know why, but the police approached MLL. I don't know which year it was, but it was before 2013 when the BBC TV programme, *Sins of our Fathers*, was released. Mum didn't tell me the whole story about the police investigation. It might have been because of the other investigation about MEV but I don't know how it came about. My mum and MLL were asked what they knew. My sister told me recently that she also asked what she knew. I've never met with the police to provide a statement about what happened to MLL.
89. I didn't know about the police had approached my mum and MLL at the time. I only found out about it when I got in touch with MLL about *Sins of Our Fathers*. MLL said that the police had been involved years ago.
- |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|
| MEV | MLL | MLL |
|-----|-----|-----|
- The police asked whether MLL wanted to prosecute MEV. I think he met with the police and gave a statement about the abuse. The next step was for MLL to go and see the Procurator Fiscal, but he wouldn't do it.
90. MLL won't go to the court. He's refusing to do it. There is another man who is pursuing the case against MEV, Hugh Kennedy. I don't think he was at Fort Augustus at



the same time as MLL but I know that MLL was in contact with Hugh Kennedy at one point. Hugh Kennedy is pursuing the extradition of MEV from Australia and he is prepared to go to the court. MLL is not prepared to go to court. I don't think he would cope. I don't think it would give him what he needs. His mental health is so poor.

*Sins of Our Fathers*

91. In 2013, I was working at the university. I was working on children's rights. I was part of the Centre for Rural Childhood, which was about children's rights, international work and child soldiers. I was designing a post-graduate course about children's rights, for non-governmental workers in war zones to do online. I came across an article by a journalist looking at abuse in Fort Augustus. I just contacted him and asked him what he was looking in to. That's how I found out about *Sins of Our Fathers*. I got in touch with the BBC journalist, Murdoch Rodgers. I told him I had some information. I met with him quite a few times and told him what information I had. He asked whether MLL would be prepared to speak to him. I also met with BBC journalist Mark Daly on one occasion, shortly before he travelled to Australia to confront MEV about MLL abuse.
92. It took me months to persuade MLL to talk to Murdoch Rodgers. I think they developed quite a good relationship. MLL agreed to be part of the film, but anonymously. If I remember rightly, he was [REDACTED]. He did disclose what had happened to him with MEV on the film. That was the first time this had all come out to our family. Even now, it's only mum and dad that know. The extended family don't know. They haven't told my dad's siblings anything. They knew that MLL attended Fort Augustus, but nobody says anything.
93. After the programme went out, I phoned my cousin, [REDACTED] who is my dad's sister's son. He's the same age as me. He went to Carlekemp Preparatory School in East Lothian, which was also a Benedictine school. I asked what it had been like. He told me that there was a pervert music teacher and you knew not to go into the room with him on your own. I asked if anything had happened to him and he said it hadn't. I don't know how true that is. He was supposed to go to Fort Augustus, but he didn't in



the end. He went to a local school. He knows something happened to [MLL], but I don't know whether he knows the extent of it.

94. I don't think my mum would have told her sister, [MLK] much about what had happened to [MLL]. She's close to my mum. They would go to Lourdes together every year for a week. I don't think she knew much until *Sins of Our Fathers* came out.
95. It was a real risk, putting [MLL] in touch with the programme. My mum was furious with me for doing it. She didn't support [MLL] in it. It was really hard to get him to do it, but I just wanted it for him and for his voice to be heard. I think it did do some good for him, on some level. I think it gave [MLL] an understanding that he wasn't the only one that it actually happened to. I think the programme made him realise how widespread the abuse at Fort Augustus was. I think it helped him, to a certain degree, to see that he wasn't to blame and that it wasn't his fault. Ultimately, I think it gave my mum that as well. I think my parents thought [MLL] was partly responsible for abuse.

#### *To the Catholic Church*

96. Around 2011, I got in touch with Dom Yeo of the Benedictines and was told that [MEV] had gone back to Australia. I started sending emails, to find out whether he was still working in a parish. I wanted to tell them that he had abused. I went to the Catholic Church in Australia and asked where he was based. I was given a number for the professional standards organisation, which they use in Australia for the Catholic Church. Somebody there found out where [MEV] was. He was working as a substitute priest in a parish. He has just been moved on. He would have had access to children. It's shocking. How can they move somebody who has done what he did back into a parish?
97. I told them that he was an alleged accused. I asked if he was still working with children. Due to all of that, I think he was stopped from working in the parish. In the course of *Sins of Our Fathers*, Mark Daly, the journalist, went out to Australia. He confronted [MEV] on [MLL] behalf and he denied the abuse. [MEV] is now [ ] in

Australia, awaiting extradition. [REDACTED] I think that learning [MEV] was [REDACTED] helped [MLL] a lot.

98. I found out a lot about [MEV] around that time. He was from Australia. He went into an order when he was fourteen or fifteen, where he met up with [MES/MEY] [REDACTED]. They came across to Scotland in the 1950s after something happened in that abbey. A lot of them left and came over to Edinburgh. They would have met up with [LRM] [REDACTED] because he was involved in Edinburgh at that time. They were then sent to Fort Augustus as a group. When he was returned to Australia, he had gone into a parish.
99. I wrote to Cardinal O'Brien in 2011 and told him about the abuse. I asked him to look into it. I was trying to find evidence. [MLL] was so ill and I was so fed up with nobody doing anything for him. I also contacted Father [CIPHER WIT] who was at Ampleforth by that time. I think he was quite high up, but I'm not sure what his position was. He never replied to any of my emails when I told him what I was investigating. I've provided copies of my email correspondence to the Inquiry.

## Records

100. From 2011 up until 2013, I tried to get some records from Dom Yeo. I don't know what his position was at the time, but I know if he was quite high up in the Benedictine order. I wrote to him and asked him for information. I then spoke to him on the phone. He was really nasty. He was just making out that it was nothing to do with the Benedictines and it wasn't their problem. I wish I'd recorded the phone call. He told me that there was an archive of the incident with [MEV] [REDACTED]. He knew that [MEV] [REDACTED] had gone back to Australia. He said there was documentation about his return to Australia. I asked for a copy of it. Dom Yeo then followed the conversation up with a letter and said that there was no record of the incident. He denied even knowing about the archive. He did know about it because he told me that he did. I have provided a copy of that letter to the Inquiry.

**Lessons to be learned**

101. I do think that the way that the Catholic Church hid the abuse has destroyed our family. If it the abuse had been dealt with and reported to the police and the responsibility for the abuse had been allocated to the person responsible, I don't think it would have done so much damage. The cover-up forms part of my anger towards it.

**Hopes for the Inquiry**

102. I hope that the abuse **MLL** experienced at Fort Augustus never happens again and that somehow we protect children in the future. I came forward because I want the Inquiry to give **MLL** a voice. I would love **MLL** to provide a statement. It's almost second best, me doing it. It's his story.
103. 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.

MLW

Signed..

Dated.....

2/4/19