

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

MIT

Support person present: No

1. My name is MIT I'm known as MIT My date of birth is 1937.
My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Milton in Glasgow. I was the oldest out of my sister, and brother, There was a couple of years between us all. I found out that I had a half-brother too. He was called and he lived in Edinburgh. He was a lot younger than me. My dad was called he was a cobbler and bookmaker. He was from Belfast and had been sent away to live with relatives after his mother died. He had a little shop in Street. He knocked a hole in the wall and put a door in so that he could keep an eye on us.
3. My mother took off when I was four. She was called She moved to Street, it was a fifteen minute walk away but my dad forbade me from going to visit her. I defied him. I used to go along Grove Street, up to Braid Street and then down the Maryhill Road to get there. He used to say "I know where you've been, you've been up to see your mother". My Auntie and Uncle lived across the road from her so they would tell my dad they'd seen me. They'd say that they saw my brother and me visiting her. They didn't tell my dad out of spite, I think it was just came up during conversation.
4. I went to St Joseph's Primary School in Braid Street and then St Columbus. It was near to where my mum lived. If I'd stayed in Glasgow I'd have gone to St Mungo's

Academy. My sister went to the girl's school across the road. The headmaster of the school was called Mr Savage. There was a Mr Ward who had a twin brother. He used to trick us sometimes.

5. Life was okay. My dad looked after us very well. He was very good to us. I lived with him from the age of four until twelve. We were regular church goers. My dad was approached by someone in the church hierarchy in Edinburgh who suggested that he send his children to Australia. They told him that he could follow after us. They said it would be a better life.
6. Apparently my mother didn't have any say in it because she had left the family home. She had to sign the paperwork but my dad told her that it didn't matter if she signed it or not because we were going anyway. My grandmother, [REDACTED] my mother's mother, said "do you realise you're signing your children away and you'll never see them again?" My grandmother was in charge, she ruled the roost like the Godfather.
7. The Commonwealth government and the Catholic Church worked together to send children away. The church had no authority to send us without the government official becoming involved. I was only young so I didn't have any say in it. My brother, [REDACTED] and I sneaked out the door and got the tram into the city because we didn't want to go. My dad sent the police out to look for us.
8. My sister, [REDACTED] was sent a month before us. She thought she was going on holiday. A lot of the kids thought that. I met my dad's relations years later and they couldn't understand why my dad sent us to Australia when he had been sent away himself.

Migration

Selection/information

9. We got the train from Glasgow to Edinburgh then we got another train from Edinburgh to London. There was a big group, about twenty or thirty, from different places. I never knew any of the other boys but I got to know them. I met a boy called

██████████ There were a couple of boys who came from Edinburgh and Aberdeen. As far as I know, ██████████ and I were the only ones from Glasgow.

10. There were two or three married couples who looked after us on the journey. One was called Raymond. I can't remember the lady's name. I met a woman years and years later when I was in Tasmania who told me she had looked after me on the journey. I couldn't believe it.
11. We had a meal in a big restaurant in London which had huge glass windows with red painted woodwork. After that, we sailed from Tilbury Docks on the SS Otranto bound for Fremantle, Australia. I was twelve.

Leaving Scotland

12. The journey took nearly a month. I thought it was alright. We weren't allowed to wander about on the ship. We had to stay in one area of the ship. I didn't have any documents with me. The food was good on board. There was no religious instruction. I made some friends, two of them were ██████████ and ██████████ from Edinburgh.
13. We were met off the ship by two Christian Brothers, MDY ██████████ and MIU ██████████. They normally separated brothers into different orphanages but ██████████ and me were kept together. ██████████ and ██████████ were also kept together. They used to separate the boys because they didn't want them to get too involved or to know anything about one another. I thought I would be meeting up with my sister when I got there. They sent my sister to a convent in New South Wales but when ██████████ and I went to Australia they put us on the other side of the country, thousands of miles away from her. She was sent to Sisters of Mercy orphanage in Albury, New South Wales. It was years before I met up with her.
14. The two Brothers took us to Castledare, another orphanage, for four or five hours. We had a cold drink and a bit of cake. After that we were taken sixty miles to Bindoon on the back of a big blue dodge truck like cattle or sheep.

Life in care – receiving country

Bindoon Boys Town, Western Australia

General

15. Bindoon was about sixty miles away from Perth. When we arrived, I looked and thought “geez, what’s this place?” After a while I thought “why has my father done this to me?” I couldn’t understand it all. It was seventeen thousand acres out in the bush. It was like walking into a prison camp. In fact, it was worse than a prison camp. It was three miles from the main road, down a dirty, dusty road and then you arrived at utopia.
16. There were twelve Christian Brothers and four nuns. There were three aboriginal girls who worked seven days a week. They were allowed to go for a walk on a Sunday afternoon. They didn’t get any time off. They were only thirteen or fourteen. They stayed up with the nuns in a convent which was a bit further away.

First day at institution

17. We arrived with our suitcases and took them up to the laundry. We lined up and the Brothers took our clothes from us. They took all my clothes off me. My dad had bought [REDACTED] and me a beautiful blue checked lumber jacket each. They took it all and gave us two pairs of shorts and two shirts. We had no shoes or socks. We were bare foot. Sometimes we had old army boots. It might be two left boots or two right boots, and they never had any laces. A lot of the kids had bare feet. All of our stuff ended up in a Saint Vincent De Paul shop in Perth. They might as well have given you a prison uniform. We were given numbers and they were stamped into our clothes. I was number 88, and [REDACTED] was 64. It was a shock to the system.
18. They took us down to the dormitory and showed us our beds. There were at least twenty boys in each dorm. [REDACTED] was in another one. It depended on your age. You were supposed to leave there at sixteen but it didn’t always work out that way. The youngest boys were eight, nine and ten. There were two or three hundred boys

there at one time. The British and Australian Government gave them money for keep.

19. I had a single, wire framed bed, with horsehair and kapok mattress. I only had one very thin blanket and I was always cold at night. The beds were next to each other. There were passageways which led to where the Brothers slept and some of the other dormitories. The beds had different coloured bedspreads in each dorm.
20. Sister **MJA** was a Benedictine nun from New Norcia. I didn't like her, she was known as "blackberry eyes" because she had very beady eyes like a witch. A couple of days later, I saw her polishing the floor with my jacket. It had been ripped in half. She was polishing the floor with my beautiful lumber jacket.

Brothers

21. There were twelve Christian Brothers at Bindoon at any one time. When Brother **MDJ** was in the charge, Brothers **MIU** **MDY** Conlon, **MIW** and **MBC** were the bad ones. After **MDJ** died Brother **MIY** took over and he, Brothers **MIZ** and **MDV** were the bad ones then. Brothers Dyer, **zMYK** and **ALR** were alright. Brother **MIW** used to poke a stick up your backside and say "you haven't cleaned that well enough". I used to see kids with black socks and knew that they had been in Brother **MIY** room. None of us had socks, and it meant they had been rewarded for services rendered in **MIY** bedroom. **MDJ** used to have kids in his bed warming up his sheets. Brother **MBC** used to grab you by the hair and say "no wonder your mother didn't want you." Brother Conlon, the one who went to Ireland, was a big shot in his younger days.
22. The nuns were Sisters Benita, Scholastica, Josephine, Mary, Elizabeth, **MJA** and Yama. Sister Benita was the Mother Superior. Sister Mary was Mother Superior after Sister Benita left. Sister **MJA** was the one with the blackberry eyes. There was also Sister **MJB** she did all the cooking. There were a couple of civilian staff, Mr John Kramer, he ran the orchard.

Mornings

23. They rang the bell at six and told us to get up and washed and dressed. Then we had to go to chapel. After we had finished at chapel, we had breakfast then we got changed and started our jobs. Everyone had to work. Before we went to school we swept the verandas. After school we worked on the building site with bare feet and carried bricks. We also had to clear the paddocks; picking up big boulders and Mallee roots, putting them on the truck.

Mealtimes

24. Breakfast consisted of two pieces of bread and dripping or a plate of porridge which was so gluggy you could stand up a stick in it. They made tea with a black stocking from the nuns, cut the bottom off it, put the tea in it, and boiled it up in an urn. The tea was purple from the dye, it was putrid. Another time the nuns dragged a bag of hide salt, which was used for curing the cows' hides and not for human consumption. It was kept around the back of the building and put it into the dinner. The dinner consisted of boiled sheep flaps. It was also putrid. I couldn't eat it so I hid it in my handkerchief. MDJ was walking around telling us to eat up because the good Sisters had spent all day cooking it. We told him to taste so he did. He blamed the kid in the kitchen, He pulled him through the servery hatch and belted him. It wasn't him, it was the nuns.
25. One of the brothers, Brother MDY punched me in the nose one morning. My nose was bleeding into my porridge and he made me eat it. He was very cruel.
26. At night time we got bread and milk or watery soup. We got boiled sheep flaps for lunch. On Fridays you might get an egg or a couple of eggs. You weren't allowed to eat meat on a Friday. It was the same food every day. The food was rotten, the meat had gone off. Sometimes there were maggots in the sheep flaps or weevils in the porridge.
27. There were two dining rooms with a scullery in between them. One for the bigger boys and one for the smaller boys. There were four of us to a table. One time I saw

MDJ sitting in the corner. I was looking over at him eating eggs, bacon, sausage, tomato, toast and a pot of tea. I wondered why we were eating rubbish and he was getting that. I remember thinking it didn't seem right.

28. The Brothers ate in a separate dining room. The nuns had a dining room too. At one time, I worked in the kitchen. I worked out there was more than one way to skin a cat so I used to sneak into the kitchen sometimes. There was a plate rack with plates on it with lids on for the Brothers who were late. We would lift the lids, eat the food and put the lid back. Their food was much nicer.
29. One time brother MIZ was having a big birthday party. It was all set up in the dining room. I told some of the boys we were going to have a party that night. I said "leave it to me". The Brothers were going to come in at eight o'clock so we went into the dining room at seven. There was a long table and a smaller table, I told the boys to grab it all and to take it down behind the dam to eat it. I told them to take it all and leave nothing. The next morning the Brothers lined us all up, they knew we'd done it but they couldn't prove it.
30. One time, four of us had to go out fencing. I went to ask the nuns for food to take. Sister MJA gave me half a loaf of bread and a tin of sardines. I told her it wasn't enough. The pigs were being better fed. It was the art of survival. We are survivors.

Bedtime

31. Bedtime was at nine o'clock. The power went off for the boys and one of the Brothers would check we were in bed. It would be whichever Brother was on duty. There were Brothers sneaking about in the dorm at night, taking kids from their beds and taking back to the Brothers' rooms.
32. Midnight was the best time because you used to get out of bed and go down to the orchard to get grapes. Otherwise you got nothing. The Brothers would have what they wanted but we didn't get anything. Most of it would go down to their mates in Perth.

Bed-wetting

33. There were quite a lot of the boys who had a problem with bed-wetting. Brother MIZ would get them up, strip them and make them put the wet sheet over their heads to humiliate them. They would have to stand there, while the Brothers pointed at them and ridiculed them. Then they would give them a cold shower. They put a rubber sheet on beds out on the veranda and they'd have to sleep there. There were quite a few of them in my dorm. Brother MIZ used to do that. He was very cruel. There was a little Australian chap called he came from a little town called Toodyay who used to wet the bed. It used to upset me to see the Brothers being so cruel to him.

Washing/bathing

34. We had a shower every day at five o'clock. The showers didn't have doors. There were half a dozen on each side. MIZ used to get in the shower with you, naked, and he would soap up the boys and fondle us. He was a sex abuser. The Brothers would stand there perving on you. Brother MDY used to do the laundry and would whack you if you mislaid any items of clothing. You got belted badly and he would take away the few privileges we had, like Saturday night movies.

Leisure time

35. A lot of time I stayed down at the piggery. At seven o'clock I would tell whoever I was working with to take a sugar bag and to nip into the Brother's dining room when they were at chapel to see what they could get. One time Brother MDY whacked me across the legs with a wire because I was making too much noise. He got a wire and folded it over and then "whoosh". He took a piece out of my leg.
36. I would sit around or go into the hall. At weekends, there might a movie on. Brother MBC would bring games in and comics. He would sit with his feet up on the desk. If the kids got out of hand, he would shout at them and tell them to put them away. We called him MBC

37. We lined up on a Sunday at the tuck shop. We would get some boiled lollies. One of the kids, [REDACTED] was a Maltese boy and when Brother MDY asked him what he wanted, he called him a racist name and said "nothing for you".

Trips and holidays

38. On Religious Feast days we would go for a picnics close by out in the bush somewhere. We would have ice cream and boiled lollies. At Christmas time we went to the Moore River camping in big army tents for two weeks. Some of the boys used to go out for holidays. Visitors used to come up and take so and so away for Christmas holidays. It would only happen a couple of times a year, at Christmas and Easter. Sometimes visitors would come and speak to some of the boys. The boys would show them around the place. They would ask to take a boy out for the holiday. If you weren't a good worker, you would be allowed to go. There was no chance of you going out if you were a good worker because MDJ wanted the work done. MDJ controlled everyone.
39. I went on a holiday once. I was too busy. I worked with Clem Naughton on the olive grove for a while. His father had passed away. He was in his thirties. He had had a nervous breakdown and had gone to Bindoon to recuperate. Imagine going to Bindoon to recuperate? He invited my brother [REDACTED] and me to his mum's one year for Christmas. She used to be a school teacher. I told him that would be nice, I thought "you beauty" so I went down there for a couple of weeks. I was seventeen or eighteen at the time. He was a very nice person.

Schooling

40. We had hardly been in school for long when MDJ would walk into the classroom and ask for volunteers, no one would put their hands up so he would pick boys. He told us to get changed into our work clothes and to get down to the building site. It was a case of forget your education, just get over there and work. You didn't have time to be a boy.

41. MDJ was in charge of the work. He would sit in his chair and drink tea while we worked. There were builders there too. There was an Italian family who were the builders. They were beautiful people. He had sponsored them to come over so that he could use them as cheap labour. Their wages were very poor. They stayed in a hostel nearby the water tank. I can remember MDJ telling them to show the boys what to do.
42. I learnt more in Glasgow than I did in Australia. They taught us things I'd already done back home. I was learning things like geometry back home. They were way behind, it was hopeless. They weren't really interested. MDJ used to say "you don't need an education, just get over there and work". I was working most of the time. If you were a good worker, they knew who to pick.
43. I was working nearly all of the time. There was no education. Brother MIZ and MIW weren't teachers and there weren't any teachers from outside. I was deprived of an education but taught myself in later years as an adult.

Healthcare

44. They gave us cascara which is a bit like olive oil and coffee mixed together. They told us to drink it and it would fix you. Sometimes they gave you Epsom salts. You didn't have time to be sick because you had to get back to work. Some of the kids had cement burns on their feet. They told them to wash it with water.
45. The doctor didn't come to do any checks. He didn't come to do any work or look after anybody, he just came to have a drink with MDJ. He was an old drunk. One of the nuns, Sister Mary, looked after the kids if they were sick. There was a little room called the surgery. If kids were sick they went in there for a few days. She was okay.
46. There was a dentist, O'Keefe, who was another drunk. He came when he felt thirsty. They were all MDJ mates. He had them eating out of his hand. None of these professional people ever did anything to protect the children, or blew the whistle on the abuse. They must have seen the children working like slaves at Bindoon.

Religious instruction

47. I hated church. The priest was called Father MJC [REDACTED] He was from New Norcia. In the chapel, the Brothers used to whisper in your ear "have you been to confession?" I used to think I've been too busy working to do anything wrong. We went to chapel morning and night, seven days a week. We went to chapel before breakfast and at seven in the evening. We had to pray before meals, thanking God for the Gift he'd given us and down on our knees before bed. We had Benediction and the rosary in the evening. They forced religion down your throat. We all had our own prayer book and had to learn it all. They would say "read that bible, it'll do you good".
48. The only time we missed midnight mass was one Christmas Eve, I was fourteen. [REDACTED] and I had been promoted to the rooms in one of the towers. There were two rooms up there. The door to the fridge outside the nun's dining room was ajar and I could see a cardboard box. I told him that we were going to have a good Christmas. I told him to keep a look out while I grabbed a bottle of altar wine and hid it in my jacket. We took it back to the dorm and drank it. It was Benedictine wine and was absolutely delicious. Brother MIY [REDACTED] came into the dorm to get everybody up for midnight mass. He got us and shook us. He said "look at you you're disgusting". He just walked out and left us so there was no midnight mass for us.

Running Away

49. I never tried to run away but a few of the other boys did. If they ran to Perth they were caught by the police so they would go the other way to country towns like Mullewa, Victoria Plains or Geraldton. It was better to go that way. One of the boys, [REDACTED] who we called [REDACTED] ran away. He was wearing a suit with no shoes. He reminded me of the big guy, Lennie, in Of Mice and Men. He squared up to MDJ [REDACTED] one day and MDJ [REDACTED] backed down. [REDACTED] was solid.
50. Another time, MDJ [REDACTED] told another boy, [REDACTED] to get into the office to give him a flogging. [REDACTED] waited outside the office and gave MDJ [REDACTED] the eyeball. MDJ [REDACTED] knew not to try it. [REDACTED] told him "I'm not a little boy now, I've grown up a

bit". MDJ told Brother MBC to get [REDACTED] out of Bindoon. He told the taxi driver to take him and throw him in the Swan River. One of the other boys, [REDACTED] took off and they never got him again. [REDACTED] ran away too.

51. The only time we got shoes and socks was if we went somewhere in public, like going to the dentist in Perth.

Work

52. We had to work and put the buildings up. The main building itself had to be finished. They had a big bell hanging up at the side of the building and when that rang you had to either do work, stop work, have a shower or go for dinner. Everything was done to the bell. They had us on the building site, in the piggery with the chickens and pigs, out in the bush, putting fences up or cleaning the paddocks. There were two or three hundred chickens. There were heaps of eggs and we used to get double yokers. I found out the right recipe for them and they loved it. They didn't stop laying. We had to fight fires too. There were two to three hundred chickens and pigs. There were geese and turkeys too. There were plenty of animals.
53. MDJ supervised the building site. Brother Conlon supervised the fencing. The working day depended on MDJ. He even had us working at night time sometimes. If you were a good worker, you were given the harder work. The young kids had to work too. There was a retired farmer called Mr Pergandy. I learned a lot about farming from him. [REDACTED] turned up and he was with me at the piggery.
54. One day I was wheeling the wheel barrows filled with concrete up the ramp before the main building was finished. I was wheeling the full ones up the ramp and bringing the empty ones down. I stopped to have a rest and I got a kick up the backside off MDJ. I told him that I was wheeling the heavy, full barrows while the other kids were only wheeling the lighter, empty ones. He said he was sorry, he thought I was one of the slackers. It was the only time he ever apologised. I told him that he knew I was good worker so why was he kicking me.

Christmas and Birthdays

55. They woke you up for midnight mass on Christmas Eve. After mass, we went into the dining room for a cold drink and a bit of cake and then back to bed. There wasn't a Christmas tree. We went to church on Christmas morning. I was asked by an organisation called Christian Brothers Ex-Residents and Student Services (CBERSS) if I would like to do an article on Christmas at Bindoon. I told them that we never had Christmas at Bindoon. We went to the old swimming pool and sat there all day. We got a day off work but you'd have been better off working. I detested that man, MDJ [REDACTED] the so-called "[REDACTED]".
56. My dad used to send me a card with ten shillings in it for my birthday. They would call out your number to give it to you. You were a number or they would say "hey you". They changed a lot of the dates of birth around for the kids, they even changed some of the names. They addressed us by our numbers. They seldom said your name.

Visitors

57. MDJ [REDACTED] had the government officials fooled. He made sure that they rang up in advance before they came out. He would tell them not to come when he wasn't there. People from the welfare department would also come to visit. The Brothers used to send you out of the way. They would often come on a day when we were out on a picnic or something. They wouldn't let us near them. MDJ [REDACTED] even ordered them off the property if they starting asking questions. They only came every six months. They didn't come often enough.
58. MDJ [REDACTED] used to run Clontarf. When he ran that, Inspector Doyle used to pick him up and they would go drinking in a hotel. He was drinking on the job. Doyle would come to Bindoon regularly and sit watching the boys working. He kept everything under wraps. They got away with murder. MDJ [REDACTED] was very powerful. He had connections everywhere, police department, politicians. He controlled everything and if he didn't, he had people who could help him control things. The whole system was corrupt.

Review of care/detention

59. A woman from the Catholic Welfare called Margaret Sanderson used to come up to Bindoon. She would interview me in the office. She'd ask "what do you want to do when you leave?" I would reply "anything at all" because I just wanted to get out the bloody place. She would report back to MDJ [REDACTED] and the Child Welfare Department and say that I wasn't ready to leave. He would tell her that they needed me there. He wanted to keep the good workers there, it was free labour. They had me down as a slow learner and not capable of doing things. Miss Sanderson used to stay overnight and you would see her wandering about boozed up, naked. MDJ [REDACTED] was supposed to be a man of the cloth but he allowed that.

Family

60. [REDACTED] left when he was sixteen. He took off one time with a chap called [REDACTED] [REDACTED] He hid down by a big tree at the dairy. They caught him, flogged him and cut all his hair off. He was eleven or twelve. After [REDACTED] left, I had very little contact with him. He got in a bit of trouble in Perth and ended up in a receiving home in North Perth. I told him I couldn't go to visit because I was still at Bindoon and I couldn't get out the place. I think he was in there for two to three months.
61. They didn't encourage us to have contact with each other. There were kids who didn't even know they were brothers. I never saw my sister for many years. I didn't even know where she was, they didn't tell me. They told us to stop asking questions and to get to work. I found out a month after I left Bindoon when I was 21.
62. My father used to write to me. I have copies of some of the letters he wrote to the government and to Bindoon. My father was prevented from coming to Australia. I discovered in later life that he had been rejected on medical grounds. He stated in one of the letters that he had failed a medical. He was told he should get a second one so he got one but by then he was 45 and they said he was too old. He was stopped from coming. He wrote to Bindoon and told them that they just wanted children to use them as free labour. After that, that was the end of it. He was spot on and they knew it.

63. The letters we wrote to our families were read by the Brothers before they were sent. I couldn't tell my father what was happening to me. It was like being in a prison camp. We had to copy the words off the board. There was a Maltese boy who even had to send his letters in English. If he spoke Maltese he got a flogging. Another boy was whacked because he said he wanted to be an engineer. When I was seventeen or eighteen I stopped getting my father's letters. I thought he had stopped writing to me but he hadn't.

Personal Possessions

64. I only had two pairs of trousers given to me by Clem Naughton. I saved up and bought a pair of shoes with my ten shillings. They were brown with crepe soles. They were beautiful shoes. If my dad sent me money I would hide it in my shoe because if they found out they would give you a bashing and take it off you.

Discipline

Brother MDY

65. Brother MDY used to walk past you and hit you with his hand on the side of your face and your ear. He would hit you across the backs of your legs with a wire. It would be if he was in a foul mood or if you were making too much noise. He just loved hitting you. He must have got a kick out of it. It would be all the time. He was very well known for it. I saw him doing that to other boys too.

Brother MDJ

66. On a Sunday after church MDJ read out a list of names of kids who had to be punished. He would shout the kid's names out and tell them to drop their pants. He'd strike them across their bare bottoms. It was to put fear into you. They ruled by fear. They were control freaks. This was a regular thing. MDJ used to call us "sons of whores". He would say I would end up in prison and that I wouldn't make it when I got out. They were putting you down all the time.

67. MDJ used his black thorn walking stick or a piece of wood to hit us. He would get you to pick his weapon. If a kid came back with a thin bit of branch, he would tell them it wasn't thick enough and told them to get a bigger one. I thought he was a mad man. One day, he hit me all over with a strap in his office. The strap had hack saw blades sewn into it. I managed to get under the settee. He was kicking me out from underneath it. I was cut all over my body.
68. If anyone, such as, another Brother or one of the "pets" reported to him that you had done something you would cop it. He was evil and vicious. I was hit all the time for no reason. It was any excuse. I refused to answer one day and he whacked me. You don't treat people like that. When MDJ was about you got out of the way. You would hear him clear his throat and everyone would scatter. I told Sister MJA at the Catholic Migrant Centre in Perth that MDJ was worse than Hitler. She said that was a terrible thing to say and I said, "Don't you want to know the truth?"

Brother MIU

69. Brother MIU took a strap out of his sleeve for the least little thing. They ruled by fear. It was constant.
70. Brother MDV and Brother MIZ were terrible too. Brother MIW used to set his dog on you. It looked a bit like a wolf. One day I was playing football down at the dairy. I grabbed his legs and pulled him down and he fell face first in a cow pat. I knew he would get me back for it and he did a few days later. The physical abuse stopped when I was sixteen or seventeen.

Abuse at Bindoon

71. MDJ used to get the smaller kids to warm his sheets. Anyone with common sense would know what happened. Very few talked about it because they thought they were the only one that it happened to. The younger boys had to wash MDJ back for him in the bath. They would be nine or ten. It could have happened to [REDACTED] but he never told me. I know he wasn't happy a lot of the time.

72. The priest, Father **MJC** got to me and Brother **MIU** got to me. You think you're the only one that it happened to but you weren't. They picked you out. You think they're befriending you. They would get you on your own. The priest used to give you altar wine to drink. That was when I acquired a taste for wine.
73. Brother **MIU** used to sneak around at night time. He would take me out the room or molest me in my bed. His room was at the far end. I was taken there once. I used to lie in bed watching him as he would go down the far end of the dormitory and take another kid out.

Father **MJC**

74. I was moved upstairs up to the attic room. The priest was in the other attic room. He would teach us things and give us lollies. He started molesting me when I was about fourteen or fifteen. He would pick certain kids and befriend them. He would get stuff out of the dining room and give it to you. You would think he was a nice person. He molested me during confession. I found it very embarrassing. It put me off confession. I had had enough. **MDJ** used to ask if I'd been to confession and I'd think how could I go to someone who does that to you. It happened quite a few times until I refused to go. The priest would tell different Brothers who was available, it was like a paedophile ring. I used to think "wait until my father gets here, he'll sort you out, and he'll get me out of this hell hole".
75. Brother **MIW** used to bend you over and put a stick up your backside. That happened to me.
76. Brother **MIZ** used to get in the shower with you. He would be naked and would start rubbing soap all over you. I used to think "this isn't right". It was very embarrassing. He was a mongrel of a thing.
77. You'd see them with their hands on the shoulders of another boy and you'd think "there's another victim". I saw it happening all the time. You were on watch all the time, watching their movements.

78. When I was working out in the piggery, I'd sleep with the pigs rather than go to the room. I felt safer with the pigs than I did in the dormitory so I slept there quite a lot. When the pigs used to give birth I would stay there to make sure they were alright and didn't roll on their young ones.

Leaving Bindoon

79. You couldn't just leave Bindoon. You had to wait until they decided you were ready to go. You were under the care of the state until you were 21. A lot of kids left at sixteen but the good workers were held back. Every time I asked to leave, they would say that I wasn't ready to go. They had me down as having a job at the piggery. I spoke to Miss Sanderson in the office about leaving. She told me that I wouldn't be able to cope outside, that I wouldn't manage and that I wouldn't get wages equal to my age.
80. Brother ^{MDY} told me I was leaving in ^{MDJ} 1957. I was 21. ^{MDJ} must have told him to get rid of me. When I was leaving Bindoon, Clem Naughton gave me two pairs of strides. That was all I had. I had no money, nothing. Brother ^{MDY} dropped me off in the blue dodge at the corner of Wellington Street and King Street. He told me to get out and get myself a job. I had a suitcase and no money. I was lost. I didn't know what to do. He drove away and left me all alone outside the job centre.
81. The welfare were supposed to provide you with clothes, a job and accommodation. I went to see the welfare department. It was on St George's Terrace opposite Mill Street. They told me they had been worried about me. I told them that they hadn't. I asked if they had anything for me and they said they had a letter from my dad, that was it. A couple of the officers there had the authority to withdraw my money and had gambled it.

Reporting of abuse

82. I spoke to the police in the Eighties and Nineties about the abuse. It started coming out when ^{MDY} got his book published. I had told my friend about it as it

was all starting to come out. I rang the police and gave a statement to Detective O'Reilly. One particular time he contacted to me to tell me that he had been taken off my case. Nothing came of it for a long time until the Australian Royal Commission.

Life after the institution

83. I got myself a job at a dairy farm in Keysbrook. I got the train there, it was 32 miles from Perth. I missed the stop on the train so the farmer had to come and pick me up. The farmer was called Ivan Gray, we called him "boomer Gray". He was a nutter. His mother owned the farm, Mrs Blanche Gray. I had to get up at half past three in the morning to milk the four hundred cows. I slept in a hut with a dirt floor. It had potato bags hanging for a wardrobe and potato bags on the bed for blankets. I told him that I wanted to leave but he threatened to send me back to Bindoon. So I stayed a little bit longer.
84. I left after about six months. I had to get out of there. I got my stuff together and got on the milk truck to Pinjarra. I met a man on the train to Perth. He got up and left his matches and cigars so I went after him to tell him. I told him I was going to look for work. He told me that he wanted someone to look after his farm. I told him I was interested. It was over one hundred miles away in Dardunup. It was a god send. He and his wife used to come out at the weekend with boxes of tucker. I used to think him and his wife were wonderful people. We would do the sheep shearing. He had two sons, one lived in Donnybrook and one lived in Manjmur. I was happy down there for the first time in years. I couldn't believe it. I went to church a couple of times after I left Bindoon but I had had enough of religion. I didn't believe in priests anymore. I couldn't after the way I had been treated at Bindoon.
85. In 1958, I bought two tickets to Scotland. I gave [REDACTED] his ticket and told him I had changed my mind. I was scared that I would like it and wouldn't come back here. It cost me £132 for his ticket. [REDACTED] left on the SS Iberia on the eleventh of November. He was nineteen. I didn't see him again for years. He turned up when I lived in Fremantle.

86. I went to visit him in Scotland in 1983 when he lived in [REDACTED]. I found my sister [REDACTED] in 1963. She came looking for me. We kept in touch and I used to visit her quite a lot.
87. I used to write to my father. I went over to the UK to see him in 1983. I surprised him by sending him a telegram from Glasgow then I knocked on his door. When I first saw him I looked at him and thought he hadn't changed much. He explained what happened. I couldn't turn round and point the finger at him for all that took place. It wasn't his fault. I told him not to worry about it. He had been through enough. He asked if I would like a cup of tea and wouldn't let me do a thing. He spoiled me. It was as if we hadn't been apart. He was still the same. He gave me an insurance policy and told me to give it to my mother.
88. My mother apologised to me too. I went to see her when she lived in Possilpark. She said "I'm sorry son". She had lived with it all those years. They had both been through enough so I said let it go. I stayed for a month. It was the first time I'd seen them since I was twelve years old.
89. I went back for my mother's funeral in 1993. It was ten years after I had met her again. My sister and brother didn't go to Scotland for the funeral. My father still loved my mother.
90. I went back in 2013 to visit my dad's grave. I didn't know he had been cremated. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have both passed away.
91. I've been married but it didn't work out. I was too young and wasn't trained for it. I had no education or ability to deal with it. It's a pity. My wife and I had a son, [REDACTED]. He's about fifty now. He is a 'born again Christian'. He came to visit once when I lived in Fremantle. He put a bible on the table and I told him that I didn't want it there. I didn't like it. I haven't seen him for about five years now.
92. I had other relationships with women but I just couldn't handle relationships. I got around a bit. I have other children. I think I have six roughly. I never see any of them. It's been a long time since I saw any of them.

93. I've moved around and had a number of jobs. I've done a lot of travelling around Australia. I lived in Tasmania and Sydney. I loved Tasmania. I met a woman there who had looked after me on the SS Otranto. I met up with my friend from Bindoon, [REDACTED] in Sydney. He took me to the Catholic Club there. No one spoke to us. I hadn't seen him for 45 years.
94. I've lived in my current place since 2003 which is unusual because I'm always on the move. I've done everything. I worked in a textile printers in Tasmania. I used to paint houses too. I stopped working in my late sixties.
95. I looked after a friend in 2015 for twelve months without a break. It took its toll on my health. I put him in a nursing home for some respite. One night, I blacked out, hit my head off the CD player and landed on the floor. I was taken to hospital. The doctors told me I needed a pacemaker. They did a hell of a good job of fixing me up. I couldn't thank them enough. I met a chap in the hospital who told me he had been at Bindoon too. We got talking and he was a very nice person.

Other action taken

96. I went to see Mr McClelland at the Royal Commission and spoke to him one to one. I told him that we should have shot the abusers and fed them to the pigs. I told him that they were so rotten they would poison the pigs. I'm so angry about it. I used to respect a man of the cloth. I received an apology from the Christian Brothers for what happened to me. They tried to blame the government officials in Edinburgh instead of taking responsibility.

Treatment/support

97. They sent me to see a psychologist, Mr Jones, in King Street when I was still at Bindoon. I was nineteen. I have it all written down in my records. I think they wanted an excuse to keep me there so they said I had problems. I tried to explain to him what was happening there but he wasn't interested. A lot of people didn't want to know about it then. The psychologist asked if I had been coached by a harsh father

but I hadn't. The only harsh father I knew was MDJ and MDY. The church was very powerful.

98. I've seen psychiatrists and psychologists but it was too late, the damage was done. The Christian Brothers Ex Residence Service paid for my first trip back home. They opened an organisation in Subiaco. I called in there and spoke to an Irish lady. I talked to the psychologist there. It helped me a bit.

Records and family tracing

99. When I went to the Child Welfare Department when I was 21, they gave me a letter from my dad. That was all I got. I have some records relating to my dad's application to go to Australia.

Other matters relating to migration

100. I have an Australian passport now. I lost my British one. I'm an Australian citizen now. I receive a state pension. I have a solicitor in Canberra. I am the process of taking civil action against the Commonwealth Government. There are a few others involved. I met the lawyer at the Child Migrants Trust in Perth a few months ago.
101. I received some compensation from the West Australian Government's redress scheme around 2011. I got 45,000 Australian Dollars. Some people didn't get much at all.

Impact

102. Some people think I'm a bit crazy. I suppose I'm very mixed up and I'm very bitter. I'm very angry about how my father was treated. I'm angry at the British Government and the Church who let it happen. He was tricked by both parties. We were used as cheap labour.
103. When you think about it, you find it hard to hug someone. Some of the boys couldn't even tell their wife or children what happened to them. If people got too close to me I

used to move on. If things got on top of me, I would move on too. I lived with a woman in Fremantle and I sat there feeling like I didn't belong.

104. Through the years in Bindoon there was a lot of damage done. It was like a lifetime. I used to get very moody. I would go from job to job because I hated being told what to do. I'm surprised I'm still alive. I used to drink a lot to blank everything out. I don't drink anymore.

105. I get flashbacks all the time.

Final thoughts

106. They've left it a bit late because most of the perpetrators are dead. They can't be punished. **MDJ** died in 1954. Even Brother **MDV** was out of prison in about a year. I met him by accident a few years ago at a funeral and he was as large as life. It could have been a wonderful place if the people running it had been good.

107. 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..... **MIT**
 Dated..... **14/03/2019**