

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

QYH

Support person present: No

- 1 My full name is QYH. My name at birth and whilst at school was QYH. My date of birth is 1954. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Early life in Germany

- 2 My Father was a weapons expert in the Armed Forces and was posted to Rotenburg in Germany. It was a former Luftwaffe base and was taken over by the British after World War 2. I believe he was a Corporal in the army at that time. By the time he finished his 22 year service, he was medically discharged and I believe his rank was a Sergeant at that time.
- 3 I was born in Hamburg, which is near Rotenburg, in a British Military Hospital. I lived at home in Rotenburg with my mother, and my father, . My sister, came along when I was three years old. She was born while we were in Catterick in Yorkshire.
- 4 We moved around to other parts of Germany, as well as other countries, and were also back and forth to England. Most of my early memories are from being in Germany. We ended up in a little town in Germany called Wetter, which was in the Ruhr Valley and was home to an army base workshop.

- 5 My first memories are from aged seven, living in Wetter, which was an idyllic little town. I went to a school, which was just for the British Army service children and they taught in English. It was a two classroom school, run by an English husband and wife who were the teachers there, but they were not in the army.
- 6 We used to be picked up every day by an army coach and taken to and from the school. This was for our safety as there was still a little resentment from certain German people towards the British being there.
- 7 It was realised that education was going to be difficult if we were moving around all the time. My parents decided that my secondary education would be done at a boarding school in the UK, which taught the sons of servicemen working abroad.
- 8 From documents that I have received, my father applied for me to join Queen Victoria School in Dunblane, Scotland. They picked one in Scotland because it was for service personnel from Scotland and my parents were both from Edinburgh.
- 9 I had to sit an entrance exam, which I initially failed it and it was realised that they had sent me the wrong one, which was for eleven years old and I was only nine years old at the time, so was not accepted the first time. They sent me the correct entrance exam, which I passed and got accepted the next year to the school.
- 10 When I was due to start school, my father drove us to Belgium where we stayed the night in a small hotel, and the next morning we boarded a ferry across to Dover, before driving to Edinburgh. We stayed the night with my maternal grandmother who lived in Granton in Edinburgh the night before I was due to start school.

#### **Queen Victoria Boarding School, Dunblane**

- 11 I started at the school in [REDACTED] 1965, three months before my eleventh birthday.

- 12 There were about 250 boys in the school. The age group of boys there was from eleven years old right up to eighteen. I was one of the youngest and smallest boys at the school when I started.
- 13 As you went up the drive way, there was a big, old building, which looked quite daunting. There was a big square to the side of the building, which was where we used to parade.
- 14 There was a new building called the new block, which is where the classrooms were. At the end of that block was where the junior dormitories for the first and second years were. There was also a church within the grounds.
- 15 The school was split in two. In the first two years, you were in the junior part, and then you moved to the senior school.
- 16 I was in a dormitory called Lyndoch In Wavell House when I was in junior school.
- 17 There were three sets of houses when you got to the senior school. They were called Trenchard House, Hague House and Cunningham House and there were two large dormitories in each house. I can't remember which dormitory or house I was in when I was in secondary. I think I was in Trenchard House.

*First day*

- 18 My father took me to school on my first day. I imagine I would have met the matron and headmaster and gone through the process of getting processed.
- 19 I got my uniform given to me when I arrived. It was like checking into the army. We were treated like army recruits and it was all very disciplined.
- 20 I was very excited and couldn't wait for my dad to leave. My dad departed sometime in the afternoon and I didn't see my family again until Christmas time. I didn't find it

difficult but some children were homesick. The school tried to stop children phoning home when they first started to get them used to being away from their parents.

21 I was introduced to a guy called [REDACTED]. He was a second year who was assigned to look after me during my first year.

22 All first years were paired up with a second year. When I was in second year, I was paired with a first year who I had to look after.

### *Daily routine*

23 The dormitories were quite small. I can't remember how many boys were in each one, but there were no more than twenty. Each boy had a single bed and a locker.

24 The junior dormitory was a mix of first and second years because you shared a dormitory with the second year you were paired up with. [REDACTED]'s bed was next to mine in the dormitory in first year.

25 In senior school, you were assigned to one of the three boarding houses and that's where you slept.

26 Your bedding would be at the bottom or the top of your bed in a neat pile, you would make your bed at night before getting into bed.

27 We got woken up at 7 am with a reveille, if I remember correctly. This was an army thing where a bugler would come and play a bugle to wake us up. I don't know if that carried on throughout school time, but it was definitely the case at the beginning.

28 We would get up and go to the washroom to get washed and clean our teeth in the morning. The washroom was a large room with two baths, a long, open shower block, and a big long area in the middle with many sinks for hand washing. There were also urinals at the top of the room and sitting toilets down the left hand side. I am not sure if matron would be there to watch over us.



- 29 We got dressed and then ran across the square to have breakfast in the main building. After that, we went back to the dormitory to make our beds by stripping them and folding the bedding neatly at the bottom or the top of the bed, like they do in the army. We also had dust pans and brushes and had to sweep our own area. We had to keep our dormitory clean.
- 30 Our beds would be inspected to make sure they were neat and that our dormitory was clean. We also got checked to see that we looked clean and tidy. I can't remember who inspected us, but it was probably the matrons. Some of the matrons seemed like tyrants at the time, but they were lovely really.
- 31 Then we went off to classes. We stopped to have lunch at midday, which was in the main building, then back to classes in the afternoon.
- 32 We had a little bit of free time after school when we could play games in an area in our dormitory or outside.
- 33 We had tea time, which was at about 5:15 pm. There was a bit of free time after tea time, where we could clean our shoes or the brass on our uniforms.
- 34 We had prep from 7 pm to 8.30 pm, to do homework in the classrooms. This would be supervised by the teacher or housemaster.
- 35 We went back to the dining room for supper, and then got ready for bed. Lights out were at 10 pm. We would carry on chatting even after lights out.
- 36 It was the matron who would be around at night in case there was a problem. We never saw housemasters at night very often, but they were probably around in stealth mode.

- 37 We were able to go to the toilet if we needed to at night. There were a few bed wetters but I don't really know how it was dealt with so it must have been done very sensitively by the matron.
- 38 The matrons were really good, overall. They were strict, but generally kindly, and like mother figures. I like to think that we possibly could have told them anything, but looking back I am not sure if we would have or if they would have believed us.
- 39 I think it helped that there were matrons rather than housemasters around in the dormitories, because the housemasters were all ex-military or still in the military, so were much sterner and would have been less likely to believe you if you were reporting any abuse to them.

#### *Weekends*

- 40 If you were good at sport, you played rugby or cricket at the weekends against other schools.
- 41 On a Saturday afternoon, if you weren't doing sports, you were allowed to go out into Dunblane. You were allowed to do this from second year onwards, but you would have to wear your brown jacket and kilt uniform.
- 42 We had to go to church on a Sunday at 11 am, which was within the grounds. I imagine it was the Church of England. Technically, I was a Methodist Church goer. There were a few different denominations of students who attended the school, but everybody just went and sang hymns.
- 43 The housemaster who ran the junior dormitory, played the organ and was very instrumental in the choir. The juniors were press ganged into singing for him, and if you were good enough, you were in the choir.
- 44 The rest of Sunday, we could just do what we wanted.

### *Mealtimes / Food*

- 45 Meals were in the main building. We lined up in rows, normally outside your dormitory and school house to go to the dining room, which was a big hall. There were boards full of achievements of previous head boys on the walls. All 250 boys and the duty teachers ate their meals together.
- 46 We went up to collect our food, one table at a time. We all had our own seat, which changed every year.
- 47 I think we had porridge for breakfast, with tea and nice bread and butter.
- 48 The food was absolutely excellent. There were some things I didn't enjoy, like tapioca pudding, but nobody liked that. Other than that, I had no cause to complain.
- 49 I was never hungry in there. I remember getting rock cakes for supper which I loved.

### *Washing / bathing*

- 50 The shower room was a block of showers. There were no partitions or privacy, but we were all boys and looked the same.
- 51 We showered every day, but I don't remember when in the day. The matron would monitor to make sure that we were clean behind the ears. We also showered after sports.
- 52 There was a drying room next to the washroom, where we could hang our clothes when he came back from rugby or football, before going for a shower.

### *Clothing / uniform*

- 53 There were several parts to the uniform. There was a day uniform, which was a blue chord jacket, blue shorts, blue shirt, socks and brogues. Then there was a brown high

neck jacket, a green Hunting Stewart tartan kilt, together with socks and a sporran, which was to be worn when we out in Dunblane. We ended up with a blue blazer that we could go out in when we got to third year.

- 54 We also had what we called a “ceremonial uniform,” which was a red tunic jacket with a black collar, and kilt, which was for doing marches and parades in. I even paraded in front of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on Grand Day, where we changed the school colours by changing the flags.
- 55 We would leave our clothes in the drying room, next to the washroom before showering and the matron would get them washed and returned to us. All your clothes had your name on it and the number assigned to you, so you got your own things back. I can’t remember what my number was.

### *School*

- 56 I don’t know how the school graded what class you went into, but I was put in ■ when I went in, which was a class for the less academically challenged. I wasn’t very bright at that time, but I don’t know how they worked it out.
- 57 In the first two years, which was junior class, I was just being taught in one classroom all day as you would in a junior school. Then as I went into the secondary school, we had different classrooms for different subjects.
- 58 Because of the group I had been put into, I didn’t do Latin, French or even English Grammar. I got some form of English. Other children in the school had those subjects but not my group.
- 59 I wasn’t very good at mathematics or English. I also got chucked out of art class because I was rubbish at it, which was not my fault.
- 60 One of the maths teachers in the secondary school was a very tall man who we all called “Lurch.” He lived on the ground floor of the corridor towards the main hall. He

invited a few boys in to his flat and his wife had made us a special cake. I think it was near Christmas time. Sadly, however, he failed in teaching me maths.

- 61 Most of the teachers at my school were army Colonels and Majors from the teaching part of the army. I would think they all had teaching qualifications.
- 62 Some of the civilian teachers walked around wearing the long, black cloaks and the board hats. It was all very old school.
- 63 I ended up doing metal work, wood work, which I was good at. I also did technical drawing, which I excelled in.
- 64 I think I sat prelim exams but I didn't sit any O levels. I left the school with no qualifications.
- 65 As an adult, I have seen documents from my time at the school, which were signed before I started, stating that I was only going to be there for a total of five years. Maybe this was because of my father's rank in the army, so on reflection, I was never going to be getting any O or A Levels while I was there.

### *Discipline*

- 66 Mr CXK was our [REDACTED] teacher. He had a nasty habit of throwing blackboard dusters at children. He didn't mean to hit you, and quite often he didn't. He intended for you to move to get out of the way of it, so that you would fall off the high stools we all sat on.
- 67 Mr QRV was the [REDACTED] teacher who we called QRV because he was [REDACTED]. He had fought in the war and had quite a reputation for being a fierce young man. He had a leather belt, which he called [REDACTED] and he gave it to us in class quite a lot for misdemeanours.

- 68 I didn't have classes with Mr QRV but he gave me the belt if he saw me standing by the radiator. That was the discipline in there.
- 69 All of the teachers used corporal punishment in class. They used the belt, or the cane for something more serious. You never saw anybody get the cane. It would happen in the housemaster or the headmaster's office, depending on the severity of it. I can't actually remember the name of the headmaster, but I am sure he was alright.
- 70 I never got the cane myself or saw anybody getting it. I would say the use of discipline at the school was fair. It never did me any harm. I don't remember having any gripes with any of the masters or the staff at school. We had a laugh with some of the masters.
- 71 In secondary, the dormitories were joined with corridors. The housemaster's room was at one end of adjoining dormitories and the matron's room at the other.
- 72 We had dormitory rivalries and would have inter dormitory battles, which usually took place at 4 am on a Sunday morning. We would also play rugby in the dormitory sometimes. We got caught a few times and would get in trouble. We would usually get lights out half an hour early as a punishment.

*Leisure time*

- 73 We had some free time after classes during the week and at weekends.
- 74 We had a games area in our junior dormitory where we had games that we could play, such as Scrabble, Monopoly, or there were model railways we could play with. There was also a table tennis table we could play on.
- 75 On a Saturday, if you weren't involved in sports, you could go into Dunblane, or stay in and play games or sports. You could do the same on Sunday, after church.

- 76 As I got older, I got into photography. The school had a dark room that I was allowed to use in my free time to develop photographs. You had to be trusted to use it alone as there were some highly dangerous chemicals in it. I passed an exam to use it.
- 77 The school encouraged hobbies in your free time. There was also a model railway club that boys could join, as well as other activities.
- 78 As you got older, you had more freedom at weekends to go out. I wrote to my uncle who was a goal keeper for a football team, and arranged to go and see a match and took pictures and then developed and printed them.

*Trips and visits*

- 79 The school took us on some trips. These were mainly to historical places.
- 80 When I was in senior school, the cadets started an air force section, which I joined. I was one of the founding members and I had a big interest in aeroplanes.
- 81 We went to different air force bases with the cadets, including RAF Cranwell, which was where officers went to be trained as pilots and other trades. We were able to have Air Experience Flights (AEF) on different aircraft, but mainly on Chipmunks.
- 82 We also went camping there. They would drive us five miles out of the base at night, dump us somewhere we did not know, and we had to get back to the base without getting caught by the RAF regiment who protected the airfields. They used to use thunder flashes to scare us .
- 83 We also went to RAF Turnhouse every two weeks or so to go AEF Chipmunk flying.
- 84 Parents could visit if they wanted to and take their Children out, but most lived quite far away. My parents didn't visit, but I spent summer, Easter and Christmas holidays with them. I would be home for my birthday too. I spent half terms with my granny in Edinburgh because it would have been too far to go abroad.

- 85 I don't recall any external inspectors coming to the school, but I am sure they did. It was a military school, so it would have been Colonel or a Major in uniform, but I don't remember it happening.

*Running away*

- 86 Quite a few children ran away. One time, a bunch of us made a bet to run away on the same night, just to see who could get the furthest away. I was told that one of the boys managed to get on a plane at Heathrow.
- 87 There were playing fields at the back of the school, and there was a farmers field on the other side of the A9 road, which had a big hill on it. We called the hill "lady's tit" and on moonlit nights, we would sneak out down the backstairs and out. We would run across the fields, across the road, into the farmer's field and onto the hill, then run back. We would be covered in cow dung by the time we got back.
- 88 We would sometimes get caught but I don't remember being severely punished for something like that.
- 89 I ran away when I was in secondary and tried to get to Edinburgh but I got caught. I ended up getting caught by the police in Cumbernauld. I can't remember how old I was but it was after the abuse had started and I wanted to get away from what was happening at the school.
- 90 The police took me to the police station and got the name of the school out of me. They contacted the school and the housemaster had to come and collect me. I can't remember who the housemaster was but he was not very pleased.
- 91 I got a severe talking to when I got back. I was lectured about how dangerous it was. Nobody asked why I had ran away and I didn't tell anyone. I just said I was fed up.



- 92 As a punishment, I was gated for the rest of the term, which meant that I wasn't allowed out. I was also fined 10 shillings for the cost of the petrol for the master to pick me up, which was given to charity.

### **Abuse at Queen Victoria School**

- 93 It was when I was in third year that things got really bad for me. I started getting targeted in third year by one individual and his friends. This carried on until I left the school.
- 94 The boy who targeted me the most was about my age or maybe a bit older, but he was quite a big boy. He was a real bully. His name was [REDACTED]
- 95 He was the school [REDACTED] at the school from 1967 to 1968. There is a picture of him on the Old Victorian website, in one of the old magazines. He is sitting in the picture [REDACTED]
- 96 I can't remember how the abuse started. I do not think he was in my dormitory when he started bullying me, but he was in my dormitory from 1968 to 1969, so it started before then.
- 97 There were other boys involved in bullying me, who were possibly part of his gang but I cannot remember their names.
- 98 I remember doing a three mile cross country run. [REDACTED] and myself were quite good at running. When we were on the last mile, running down the hill, he started kicking and punching me for no reason. That was the kind of things he would do.
- 99 Nobody was there to see it. The teachers would stand at the finish line about a mile away. Bullies and abusers like [REDACTED] knew how to avoid the teachers. They are very devious and you can never prove it.

- 100 One of the boys in my dormitory told me that there was a plot by some boys, and they had hatched a plan to bury me in a grave in the woods, or tie me to a wooden cross there. That was quite shocking and distressing to hear.
- 101 There were woods behind the dancing hut. [REDACTED] had made a den there, which he used to take me to. Once in there, he would touch my genitals and get me to touch his. I wasn't happy about it but he forced me to have sexual contact with him. He sexually abused me.
- 102 The sexual abuse happened quite often over a period of maybe two years. It would normally happen in the afternoon, between school and dinner time. Nobody else was there when that happened.
- 103 He used the bullying and intimidation to get what he wanted. It got so bad, that I started self-harming myself in my genitalia area. I used to harm myself in the toilets adjoined to the new teaching block, which was near the woodwork and metalwork class, and sometimes in the toilets on the top floor of the new teaching block, next to the technical drawing classroom. I would try to pull my willy off and cut it with my fingernails to make it very sore and bleed, in the hope that it would stop the abuse. I ended up bleeding quite badly. I was sore down below, but nobody would have seen it as I would clean myself up before leaving the toilets.
- 104 On one occasion, when I was about thirteen or fourteen years old, we went to the RAF Turnhouse to have AEF. While I was there, I am was sure that I was pushed down the stairs but I didn't see who by. They were concrete steps and I went tumbling down. It was frightening and I was very shaken afterwards. Nobody helped me or even questioned me to ask if I was ok, or tried to find out who the perpetrators were.
- 105 The abuse did affect me mentally. I can see this from looking back at what the masters had written about me in the school reports during the time the abuse was taking place. My schoolwork had deteriorated in the time the abuse was going on and there had been a difference in my demeanour, but nobody was unduly bothered, nor bothered to find out why.

- 106 One Sunday night in the dormitory, [REDACTED] came to my bed under the cover of darkness and punched me in the face and ran back to his bed. I was semi awake and saw him scramble back to his bed. I ended up with a very black eye and bruising round the socket. It was very painful. That was the last straw for me and I knew I had to get out of the school.
- 107 I remember standing outside the [REDACTED] class and I could not stop crying because my eye was so sore. Mr <sup>QSD</sup> [REDACTED] the teacher, saw me crying but did not show any concern I don't think he liked me anyway. None of the teachers said anything or asked me about it, and nobody got me medically checked in case there was severe damage.
- 108 I couldn't stop crying and asked to speak to my parents. They tried to stop me from phoning but I was so upset and kept asking, so they had to let me. The housemaster was standing next to me when I made the call. I could say what I wanted and I demanded that my father come and remove me from the school straight away. I was crying and was in such a state. I didn't say why I wanted to leave and neither my parents nor the housemaster asked me why.
- 109 I didn't tell any of the teachers about it. Although the staff made out that their door was always open and you could talk to the housemaster whenever you wanted, you didn't know if that was true or whether they would believe you. You also worried that you would be targeted by the bullies for telling on them.

### **Leaving Queen Victoria School**

- 110 I have since found out there was correspondence between the school and my father after the first phone call I made. I phoned my parents several times over that week. My mum and dad came to collect me about a week later and took me away. I left the school on [REDACTED] 1970.

111 I was very distressed leading up to when I called my parents, during the call and when I left. I didn't tell anybody why I wanted to leave and nobody sat me down to ask me why I wanted to leave and what was going on. Not the matron, the housemaster, the form master or even my parents. I don't even know if the school had an exit interview with my parents.

112 My memories of the school are largely good. Things only got bad in later years because of what this boy was doing to me, but I can't blame the school for that.

### **Life after boarding school**

113 After leaving the boarding school, I lived in Edinburgh with my family. My parents were living in a council flat in Sighthill in Edinburgh by that time. My dad had been medically discharged from the army after 22 years of service, following a car accident that had been caused by his drink driving.

114 I had to go to a day school, which was Forrester High School in Broomhouse, Edinburgh. I only went there for just under 2 months, because the earliest age you could leave school was aged fifteen and three months.

115 I ran into [REDACTED] of the now famed [REDACTED] at school, who was also a student. He tried to provoke me several times into fighting him. The first time he kicked me between the legs into my groin from behind, but I didn't retaliate and walked away. I seemed to be everybody's punch bag.

116 My parents were big drinkers and smokers so home wasn't a pleasant place to be, so I spent most of my time out.

117 I ended up doing something wrong, which my dad had to sort out. I think that was probably a cry for help.

- 118 One day, on my way to my gran's house in Granton, I saw an old lady get robbed by a man who then pushed her into a doorway and ran away. Myself and another man chased the robber and caught him. I called the police, who arrested the guy and took us to the station to give statements. It was late by the time it was all over, so the police dropped me back home to my parents.
- 119 My dad saw the police drop me off and assumed I had been in trouble, so as soon as I got in the front door, he absolutely pummelled me to the point that I lost all bowel control. I got up and hit him harder than I have ever hit anyone in my life, and he went down. I then got some things from my room and ran away. I was fifteen years old at the time.
- 120 I spent the next eight or nine months on the streets, sleeping in doorways. Some people would take pity on me and take me back to their homes, and then they would use me for their own sexual gratification.
- 121 On one occasion this involved two men. One was called James or Jimmy, who would go round picking up younger children, and the other was an older man who would abuse me. They lived in the Haymarket area of Edinburgh in tenements, on the left hand side as you went towards Gorgie Road. I was very desperate for a hot meal and a bed so I let it happen. I also thought these things were normal because people were doing it to me at school.
- 122 I ended up at my second cousins, house in Glasgow, whose step-dad was a prison officer. We painted the town red for a few months. We were always out. I got beaten up by a gang after being out for new year returning from the shows in the Kelvin Halls. I ended up with a very badly broken nose and lost a lot of blood, but as usual you could never find a policeman when you needed one.
- 123 When we got home, my uncle kicked us out because he thought we had been fighting each other. He never realised that it was us who had been attacked. My broken nose had a big effect for many years. He told us to come back when we'd come to our senses.

- 124 Glasgow was a nightmare in those days, so after a few months I thought it was time to leave as life had to be better than that. My cousin and I got a train to London in April 1971. We stayed in Centrepont for the homeless for a few days when we arrived.
- 125 I registered with a recruitment company, and got a job as a junior in the data processing department of a company called Smiths Industries Ltd. My cousin and I found a room to live in, on Melrose Avenue, Willesden Green, which is the street that the now infamous killer Dennis Nielsen also lived on. Luckily I didn't cross paths with him.
- 126 The cost of my room took most of my money, but I worked hard at Smiths Industries Ltd from 1971 onwards. I wanted to learn to fly so I went around the flying clubs near me, but they were expensive. I took home £8.60 a week from my job, of which £5 was for rent, £3 was for food and 60 pence was for the launderette.
- 127 My cousin left to join the army so I moved around a few different places. I stayed at Smiths Industries Ltd and worked my way up in the Computer Department, while learning new things. I did the company payroll and the pensions payroll for them and for other companies. I also helped Green Shield Stamps turn into Argos.
- 128 I started to earn more at Smiths and started to take flying lessons at a flying club in Kent. I met my wife in 1974, who was also learning to fly.
- 129 I learned to fly and then started learning to become a flying instructor. I was still working at Smiths, as well as in a pub and in Marks and Spencer's to pay for it because it wasn't cheap. I begged and borrowed rich peoples' aeroplanes to build up my flying hours.
- 130 I did my flying instructors course in 1977, which I passed first time. I then taught people to fly for a couple of years on a part time basis. In 1979, after I gained enough flying hours, I left Smiths and started a full time commercial flying licence course in City of

London Polytechnic. There was a lot of maths involved, which I wasn't good at, so it was hard.

- 131 The Civil Aviation Authority required you to have five O Levels and two A levels to start the course, which I didn't have. [REDACTED] who was the course principal polytechnic said he would sort it. He had been the head boy at Queen Victoria School some years before I was at the school, so he looked after me. He made sure I had all the tuition I needed to pass my commercial licence exams, which I passed first time.
- 132 I then had six months to pass the four flight tests, which I did. I then had to do what is called the Instrument Rating, which allowed me to fly in any weather in any air space and in any aeroplane. It was very expensive and I failed it twice, but passed it on the third and final attempt.
- 133 I was living with [REDACTED] and her parents during this time as all my money was going towards my commercial licence.
- 134 After passing my Instrument Rating, I applied for a few jobs, and got a job with Dan Air as an airline pilot. I worked with them for twelve years until they went bust. In the middle of that, in 1989 or 1990, I came out as wanting to change gender. The reaction I got from management and colleagues was awful. It got really nasty and I had to wind my neck in. The law had only just changed to help people like myself from losing their jobs in this situation.
- 135 I had so many nasty comments made to me. It was abuse of the biggest order. Colleagues would mock me about what I was wearing. These were supposed to be intelligent people, but in my opinion so called intelligent people are the biggest bigots.
- 136 Dan Air collapsed in 1992. There were then 450 pilots looking for a job, and my name was blackened because it was known who I was and that I had come out, and they didn't want me working for them.

- 137 My mental health was in a very poor state during this time. I was suffering abuse due to coming out, I had lost my job and the income that came with it. My wife stayed with me throughout it all.
- 138 Luckily, I had started a business, which I started as a woman because I had to live and work as a woman for two years before getting the authority to have transition surgery by two psychiatrists.
- 139 Two years into the business, I had also started manufacturing and selling what we made, wholesale. I did that work for twelve years.
- 140 I took on a partner to expand the business. They had a 20% percent shareholding and it was supposed to be no strings attached. The partner got someone involved to have a look at the accounts. After a small period of time, I found some irregularities going on by this person and found out that this person was not even a qualified accountant, as he claimed to be.
- 141 I got help from the Enterprise organisation and through them, I used professional organisations and insolvency practitioners to wind up the company. After winding up the business and was left with £17,000 debt to pay off.
- 142 I then worked at Royal Mail for a while, as well as doing other jobs, including for the Mobile Library Service in our area and care work. I took disabled people to day care centres and schools with their carers. I was driving mini buses and picking up very disabled people to take them to school. It was so upsetting to see. I thought I had problems and then realised that they were nothing compared to these children and young adults.
- 143 I also worked with young adults who had Downs Syndrome and took them from their homes to day care centres for a while. I stopped doing that work when I developed arthritis because it became difficult for me to do the physical work with strapping disabled peoples' wheelchairs into the minibus, and each wheelchair is different. It was



also heart wrenching for me to see them every day and it made me think that my problems were very small indeed

144 In terms of my transition, I had to put the surgery on the back burner until I had the money to do it as it was £10000 in the UK even through the NHS.

145 I decided to go to Bangkok for the operation because I didn't feel that the UK system was good from my previous experience with them, of the Gender Identity Clinic at Charring Cross hospital back in the seventies. My partner gave me her blessing the day before I went to Bangkok for the operation. Our relationship has always been strong. I have been very blessed that way.

146 I was in the Bangkok Clinic for a week and then stayed in the Hotel that the Surgeon and his staff used to visit every day to check on me. They made sure the wound was clean and healing well. I was there for roughly two months, and they looked after me physically and mentally. I went there knowing nobody and came back with 26 sisters from all over the world, who were in the same boat as I was.

### **Impact**

147 The abuse affected my performance at school, and school reports show that my work deteriorated over the time that I was getting abused.

148 Looking back, I also think that some of the teachers failed to teach properly. I think if a child isn't getting something in class, it is because the teacher isn't putting it across properly. I know this because I taught people to fly as a qualified flying instructor later in life and I would adapt my teaching if someone wasn't understanding. My teachers at school didn't do that.

149 I was so messed up after the abuse I suffered at school, that it made home life difficult for me. This resulted in my getting beaten up by my own Father because he assumed

the worst when the police brought me home. I then ran away and ended up homeless for months and was sexually abused by people who took advantage of my situation.

150 I was having brushes with the police, but nothing serious. It was just teenager stuff. I was living on the streets and hiding in different places so I could not be found.

151 The period of my behaving badly lasted for a while but not for very long. The discipline that the school had put in me helped me sort myself out.

152 I only ever had two girlfriends, and one of them became my wife, who I am still with 45 years on. I never got too close to anybody or had many friends either. I think that is to do with what happened to me at school. My need to transition to be a woman wasn't sexually motivated, but I needed to feel complete and in sound mind and body and have them both in tune with each other.

153 The abuse has impacted my life a lot and the way I have lived my life. I think about it on most days. I do think back to the fact that there was a boy at school who was trying to have sexual relations with me, and then we were also made to wear kilts, which are like skirts, and I wonder what longer term impact that had on me.

154 I will never know the scale of the impact because I didn't get the help I needed at the right time.

### **Health and treatment**

155 I got some counselling and psychological help when I was transitioning but not for any of the childhood stuff.

156 I am a strong minded person. Sometimes I think it would be easier if I was just able to sit in a corner and cry, but I don't. That is maybe just me being defensive.

- 157 We have found out after many years that I was very malnourished from living on the streets and being homeless and later on through my job as an Airline Pilot living away from home for extended periods of time. I was living in hotels and eating crew food that we found by accident. That is probably why I have some of the issues I have today.
- 158 I have diverticular disease of all the colon and have frequent bouts of diverticulitis. This means that healthy things are bad for me to eat, such as strawberries, tomatoes, seeded bread and so on. It is very dangerous and painful and I understand you can bleed to death with it. It is like somebody is sticking a knife in me all the time, and it comes with fever. Although I manage it well, it comes with frequent bowel and vomiting movements, I will probably have to have my colon removed at some stage.
- 159 I also had a B12 deficiency that went undetected for a long time. I now have nerve damage in my feet, arms, fingers, neck and back. I have arthritis in my knees, hips, fingers, jaw and rheumatoid arthritis of the eyes. I also have a fatty liver.
- 160 I think I got these conditions as a result of the bad diet when I had been living on the streets as well as extended time away from home when I was an airline pilot living in hotels, and not being able to get very nutritious food and eating on the hoof while doing the actual job.
- 161 I live with a lot of pain on a daily basis. I was on sleeping tablets for ten years but came off them recently. I was on so much medication that they were all interacting with each other and causing other problems. I have come off a lot of medication and am now on a pain management course. I see a psychologist to manage the pain.

### **Reporting Abuse**

- 162 I regret not telling anybody about the abuse at Queen Victoria School. I should have told anybody and everybody about what was going on but I do not think I would have been believed in those days That is difficult to think about.

- 163 I never reported my abuse to the police, and maybe I should have, but yet again nobody would have believed me then.
- 164 I tried to track [REDACTED] down on the internet, but he doesn't come up anywhere. He had links to Newcastle Upon Tyne. I know he had an inkling to go into the army, which would have suited him perfectly, the brutal bastard that he was.
- 165 The only reference I have to him is on the old Victorian's website, where this a photograph of him [REDACTED] in one of the annual magazines, and he is mentioned as [REDACTED]. There is no other mention of him anywhere.
- 166 I read on the Old Victorian website, that a man called [REDACTED] said he was my friend at school, and that he started school in 1963 and left in 1966 after being stabbed. I joined in 1965 so I don't know how I would have been friends with him, unless it was through the model railway club or through photography.
- 167 I don't remember the stabbing or remember him leaving, but it must have happened if he said it did. He also said that he was pushed down the stairs at school. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] now goes by the name of [REDACTED]
- 168 I now believe I was pushed down the stairs in RAF Turnhouse when I was a member of the Air cadet section of the Combined Cadet Force. This would have been in 1967 or 1968.
- 169 There was a post put on Facebook about the school being investigated by the Inquiry. A boy from the school, who is now an adult, called [REDACTED], wrote on the forum saying that there had not been any abuse while he was at the school because he did not see any of it. I think he had been in my year. There was such a furore of people denying any abuse took place. [REDACTED] has now removed his comments from Facebook, but some of the replies to his post still remain in the thread about abuse happening at the school.

- 170 This man was really critical and said that the abuse didn't happen and he didn't see it. He was an ex police officer and had been quite senior so it was quite appalling for him to react like that.
- 171 At the top of the post, a man called [REDACTED] who I believe was at the school at the same time as me as well, wrote a message drawing peoples' attention to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. It then goes on to ask people who would be willing to give a positive and factual statement of the school between 1930 and 2014 to contact the headmaster, who in turn would put them in touch with the school's legal team to take a statement.
- 172 I was disgusted to see the way people reacted to any suggestion that abuse had taken place at the school just because they hadn't seen it. Of course they didn't see it, because abuse happens behind closed doors. I didn't see the boy [REDACTED] being stabbed, but that does not mean it did not happen. It clearly did happen.
- 173 I didn't say anything or reply, because I can't go on there as QYH [REDACTED] I have legally changed my name by deed poll to QYH [REDACTED], but I don't want to go on with that name because I don't want people to know about what has happened to me in my life. I have worked hard to keep it out of the press, so I have kept quiet. This has caused other mental problems along the way. It is never simple.
- 174 I wrote to the school four years ago and told them what had happened to me at the school. It wasn't to blacken the school's name, but to make the school aware that abuse does go on. The headmaster wrote back to me acknowledging that the school had failed me. He invited me to go to the school to speak to him and see how the school is now, but I didn't as it is was too painful at that moment in time.

### **Lessons to be Learned**

- 175 It would be useful for children to know for sure that there is an adult in the school or in boarding house that they can talk to if something is bothering them. It is not enough to say that their door is open.
- 176 Schools need to have better, more robust reporting systems and protocols in place so children know for sure what to do if anything happens to them. They could do this with better communication.
- 177 I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..........  
Dated.....05 December 2020.....