

## **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

ITY

Support person present: No

1. My name is ITY. I have always been known by that name. My date of birth is 1976. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### **Life before going to Boarding School**

2. Prior to attending Keil School, I lived at home with my mother, father and two siblings. I have an older brother and a younger sister.
3. My father is Scottish and my mother is English. I was born in Irvine and spent most of my early childhood in Scotland. As a family, we moved around quite a bit due to my dad's job. I went to primary school mainly in the West Coast of Scotland. When I was about to start secondary school, we moved to America. That was quite a big jump for me, given my friends were leaving primary school to go on to secondary school, but I was leaving to go to a school in the United States.
4. The move was supposed to be for a year and a half to two years, but it got extended. As a result, my brother was sent back to Scotland to attend Keil Boarding School. My parents discussed my options with me and they listened to my views. I could either stay with them in the US, where I was quite settled and enjoyed life, or move back to Scotland to do my third year standard grade exams. There was a sense that if I didn't come back for third year and waited to return with my parents for fourth year, when I should be doing my second year of standard grade exams, I would have to repeat a

year. I didn't want to do that. So it was between potentially repeating a year of school or going to boarding school. I chose to go to boarding school.

### **Entrance procedure / visiting Keil School for the first time**

5. I can't remember exactly what communication we had with Keil School prior to me attending. I visited on various occasions as my brother was already there. I do remember specifically going with my parents to see **SNR** His name was Mr **CGC**. I remember playing cricket with his kids while he chatted with my parents. There were no other kids around so it must have been out with term time, perhaps the summer before I started. My parents still had a house in Scotland, so my best guess is that we stayed in Scotland during the summer before I attended Keil. I don't recall sitting any entrance exam or having a formal entrance interview.
6. Going to boarding school had never been something I had wanted to do, but there was an element of excitement before I attended. Being a boy of that age, going off on my own, away from home, was an exciting prospect. That said, there was no attempt by the school to prepare me for what boarding school life would be like. The only insight I had was from my brother telling me a little bit about what to expect.

### **Keil School, Dumbarton**

7. I understand that Keil School was run by a trusteeship, but I don't know how that was organised or financed. It had a prestigious history and was formed so that boys from the highlands could get a good education. I believe it was originally based in Campbeltown, somewhere in the Mull of Kintyre. I think there was a fire and the school was relocated to a house that became available in Dumbarton.
8. There were roughly two hundred pupils in total and that was made up of both day pupils and boarders. If I were to guess, I would say that the day pupils made up roughly 25% of the total. It was a first to sixth year secondary school, although I believe in later

years, the school introduced primary classes. Keil was originally an all-boys' school, but in the couple of years before I attended, the intake included girls. Girls were always in the absolute minority.

9. It was a private fee paying school and my parents paid my fees. Private school wasn't something that was popular where I grew up as the local state schools were excellent. Even the rich would send their kids to the local state schools. We certainly weren't rich and certainly weren't poor. We were very middle class. I imagine that because my dad worked for a company that sent him overseas, there would have been some kind of relocation package which helped pay for my education and boarding, but I can't be sure. I don't believe there was any financial contribution from the school.
10. A large portion of the parents, of the kids who attended Keil, were in the forces. The rumour was that if one or both of your parents were in the forces, they would pay 70% of your boarding fees. Presumably, it was because the parents were being moved around a lot. Of course, the naval base at Faslane really wasn't far from Dumbarton. A lot of the kids I knew had a parent working in the submarines, the Navy or the Air force.
11. I was aware of their being quite a mixed bag in terms of the kids who attended Keil. Some kids were clearly on some sort of scholarship. Some came from posh backgrounds, but I think if you really were the elite of Scotland you were sent to Gordonstoun or Fettes. I never really sensed that there were people at Keil who were hugely rich. It was more middle class well off people and then those who were on scholarships or assisted by the forces. There were a lot of guys from remote communities which I think is what the school was originally set up for. There were guys from Argyle, the Highlands and the Shetland Islands. It made sense to me that they were at a boarding school.

#### *Layout of Keil School*

12. Keil School campus was reasonably large. I remember there being a substantial driveway and large gardens. To walk around the campus would have taken fifteen to

twenty minutes and you could walk right down to the river Clyde. The main building was beautiful, but perhaps not entirely fit for purpose. There was an Assembly Hall which was bolted on, probably sometime just after World War II, and it felt like it was about to fall down. There was also a 1960s brutalist extension that felt completely out of place. We used that as our cafeteria.

13. The main building housed the classrooms, teacher's common rooms and the girls' dormitory. The building itself was beautiful. Inside, it looked like a typical, very old fashioned, boarding school. I remember the old wooden desks which folded up with the little holes for the ink pots. Obviously we didn't use them as we had biros by then. It all felt very old, but there was a nice sense of history.

#### *Divisions and houses*

14. The school was divided into four accommodation houses. There were two male accommodation houses for years 3 to 6. I was in one called McKinnon House, and I believe the other was called Isla Kerr House. There was another house for year one and two boarders which may have been called Mason House. There was an accommodation house for first to sixth year girls, located in the main building of the school. There was also a day house for the day pupils.
15. There was really a dual use for the term 'house'. The pupils were physically divided into one of the four accommodation houses, but there were also two sporting houses for the purpose of competing. The whole school, including day pupils, were assigned to one of the two sporting houses. The sporting houses functioned like something out of Harry Potter and Hogwarts. Your sporting house was your sporting life, social life and community.
16. My boarding, or accommodation house, was McKinnon House. It was the third to sixth year boarding house. I was assigned to the same house, for better or worse, as my older brother. I don't know if that was a deliberate choice. There may have been some effort to keep siblings together, but I don't remember any discussion about that. I do remember another couple of boys in my house who also had a brother in the same



house. It meant, just like any other pupil, I could see my brother whenever I wanted. There were no special measures put in place for us to spend time with one another, but there were also no restrictions on us having contact with one another.

17. I believe the school building was the former home of a shipping magnate. My boarding house felt like it used to be the old stables which had been converted. It was old, but it didn't feel dangerous. The stairwell was modern, there were emergency exit signs, the wiring was modern and the shower rooms felt modern. It felt like it had been well renovated.
18. The dorms were assigned according to age and were very spartan. We were quite packed in. I remember a room with maybe eight of us in it. There were also some double bedrooms for fifth year prefects and the single bedrooms were reserved for sixth year prefects. The older you were, the more privacy and room you were afforded.

#### **Staff/Staff Structure at Keil School**

19. SNR [REDACTED] who I believe has now passed away, was called Mr CGC [REDACTED]. Our nickname for him was CGC [REDACTED]. I've no idea where that came from to this day, but that's what everyone called him. I think he was a [REDACTED] teacher, but I have no recollection of him ever taking a class I was in. I think Mr CGC [REDACTED] was English. He always wore a robe and looked like someone from a past time. He didn't really say much to the students or interact with us. There was an assistant head teacher called Mr Smith who, I believe lived on the campus. I seem to remember being tutored in French by his wife. He was a bit more hands on and actually taught at the school. I remember seeing him around a lot more.
20. In terms of the structure of the boarding houses, there were specific house teachers. Each boarding house had a head teacher and an assistant teacher. Our boarding head teacher was Mr OPR [REDACTED]. He was supposed to be the guy in charge of all of our boarding. He lived in his own property, on the grounds, adjacent to ours. It was freestanding, but within a thirty metre walk. I believe he lived there with his wife and son who attended

the school. Within the boarding house, there was an apartment with its own front door. That is where the assistant teacher lived. I believe he was called Mr <sup>KPC</sup> and he was an [REDACTED] teacher. I'm sure the other boarding houses had similar arrangements, but I didn't see them personally.

21. There was a guy who ran the canteen and there was a matron who managed the sick bay. I can't remember how often the matron was there. There was also a whole load of teachers who taught classes during the day, but didn't live at the school, and left at night. I recall there being a long running joke about the biology teacher. Before my time, the biology teacher, who was also a top rugby player, left. It sounds crazy for a fee paying school, but he was replaced, with another top rugby player, who wasn't actually qualified to teach biology. The new teacher didn't even have O'level or A'Level biology and he was trying to teach a class. We all found it highly amusing that, while we were paying all this money for our education, we were being taught biology by a rugby professional.
22. I don't know the qualifications of the rest of the teaching staff. For a fee paying school which prided itself on academic excellence, the state schools I went to were miles better. My results might have been impacted by the fact that I was away from home and not particularly happy, but they were dramatically better before and after Keil. I have a very vivid memory that the quality of teaching at Keil was particularly poor. There were a lot of older gentlemen teachers and I got the impression that they were there because of their prestige, rather than their academic excellence.
23. Out of all the teachers there, some were ok and others weren't. I remember being bad at chemistry, but that wasn't the chemistry teacher's fault. He was a well-meaning guy. I remember a technical drawing teacher who was slightly eccentric, but I got a lot out of his classes. There were French teachers who were just appalling and there were maths teachers who were totally uninterested.
24. Where I think the school had a really big problem was with the teachers in charge of the boarding houses. Particularly, Mr <sup>KPC</sup>, who was my [REDACTED] teacher and assistant house teacher and Mr <sup>IPT</sup> who was house master in one of the other

boarding houses. I can't remember which boarding house he was attached to, probably Isla Kerr. I believe Mr IPT was a teacher, but I don't personally remember him teaching me. I also believe that Mr OPR had very little interest in the well-being of the students in his boarding house.

#### *General description of staff*

25. Mr KPC was a middle aged man, a bit portly with a receding black hairline. He was very thespian in demeanour, very flamboyant. He came across as a gay thespian, but the rumours were that one of the female teachers would go to stay in his apartment after hours and they would have drinks together. Despite that, he was clearly gay. Mr IPT was a very average middle aged guy with a short beard. What is of note, is that they were both single males, living in a boarding school with lots of vulnerable boys and no oversight. Mr OPR was a very angry, miserable old guy who didn't want to be disturbed under any circumstances.

#### **Routine at Keil School**

##### *First Day/ Early memories*

26. I remember being dropped off by my parents on my first day at Keil and I was super excited. So much so, I didn't sleep that night. The first day was all the niceties and then, while the following day is a bit hazy, I imagine it was straight into the school routine. There was no induction and no attempt to introduce me to boarding school life. I remember feeling, by the second day, that I was very unprepared for what I was getting into.

##### *Daily routine*

27. We were expected to get up reasonably early. I think the prefects woke us up. We then got ourselves cleaned and dressed into our uniform. We did our morning chores and then breakfast was served. There was an assembly every morning followed by

classes, lunch, afternoon classes, compulsory sport every afternoon, dinner and then prep. After prep, we returned to our boarding house and there would have been very limited free time in the common room. After that, it would have been bed and mandatory lights out after fifteen minutes, all of which was the responsibility of the prefects.

28. During the week you had such little time to yourself. I appreciate routine is important when young boys are becoming young men, but I do remember having a sense of very little time to do anything. Prep, which was homework, was done in a classroom and overshadowed by a prefect. Depending on the prefect who was supervising, it could actually be a bit of fun because you could all be chatting. Other prefects would tell you to shut up and not let there be a whisper. To find the motivation to actually sit there and study was very hard. Very few people actually did homework during prep, or if they did, they'd spend ten minutes giving it a cursory glance. Having to sit in a classroom for one and a half to two hours in the evening, after spending most of the day in a classroom, was no mean feat. I think during the week, we only had around fifteen minutes to ourselves before we had to go to bed.

### *Weekends*

29. The weekends were really long and boring. I just remember being desperately bored. Some of the kids went home at the weekend, especially those who had parents in the forces and lived close by. The school felt very empty and there weren't a lot of teachers around. The kids that were there, just tried to find different ways to occupy their time.
30. Our meals were served over the weekend and I don't think there were as many chores to do. The school did say they organised activities. There was orienteering, but it seemed to be limited to six people and it seemed to be the same six people every week. There were a few teachers that tried to organise things like the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. I do remember going on a camping trip once.
31. There was compulsory rugby on a Saturday. It involved either a home or away match and sometimes we could be driving to the other end of the country. Even if you weren't



selected to play, they would often find a reason for you to have to go. That could take up a lot of your Saturday.

- 32. I think, if you had permission from a teacher, you could go off by yourself into Dumbarton or get the train to Glasgow. You could also request permission to get away for the occasional overnight weekend visit to a friend's house.
- 33. I remember mentioning to my parents that I was bored at the weekends. My parents actually phoned up the school because the prospectus talked about so many different activities being available. The school told my parents that there was orienteering, but I chose not to do it. The response I got from my dad was 'why didn't you do orienteering?', but there were never any available spots.

#### *Sleeping arrangements*

- 34. In our dormitory, there was a single bed for each of us and a bedside cabinet. There was a wardrobe which was shared between the boys. I remember the room being very sparse. The dorm was completely open and there was no privacy whatsoever.
- 35. I imagine we all got up at the same time, but going to bed was staggered. It was all very hierarchical. If you were in third year, of the third to sixth year boarding house, you were the lowest of the low. The higher the year, the more privileges you got. I think the fourth years got to stay up an extra fifteen minutes and the fifth years an extra fifteen minutes after that. I think the sixth years could probably do whatever they wanted.
- 36. I don't really remember there being staff available during the night. It was the prefect's duty to ensure that we were all in bed and quiet.

#### *Staff supervision/Pastoral care*

- 37. One of the main issues for me was that staff supervision was almost non-existent and pastoral care was totally non-existent. That's certainly my view and my memory of it.

If I think of any interaction I had, before or after Keil, with any institution that looked after children, there is a noticeable difference in the level of adult supervision. At Keil, the whole place was run by prefects or older children. Prefects were supposed to have the power of disciplining, but really anyone that was older could do it. The second years could discipline the first years, the third years could discipline the second years and so on. That said, the prefects could always pull rank. They were expected to keep everyone in line because the worst thing you could possibly do was disturb a teacher.

38. There was such a lack of interest in our wellbeing. For example, I remember getting injured playing rugby. I didn't want to tell anyone and went to the shower block to get cleaned up. One of the prefects came in and said that my injury was going to need stitches. There was then genuine concern about who was going to tell the teacher that I needed stitches. Eventually, we did go to our house teacher and he was very upset that he was going to miss his dinner to have to drive me to hospital. To be fair to him, he did take me, but when I say he was less than empathetic, it's an understatement. His attitude to me can only be described as hostile. That was the sense I got of the place. The children were to run it and we were not to annoy or disturb the adults in any way.
39. In terms of our boarding house, we would very rarely see our boarding head teacher, Mr OPR. In fact, if you did see him, there was a panic among the kids. The assistant teacher, Mr KPC, was around a bit more, but it wouldn't be a surprise if you went a whole night without seeing a single teacher. At the weekend, it wouldn't be a surprise to go a whole day and night without seeing a teacher.

#### *Mealtimes / food*

40. There was a dinner hall located at the back of the main building. Everyone sat and ate according to the school hierarchy. Most mealtimes were not supervised by teachers. I think they probably only joined us for lunch. They would have sat at a separate teachers table which was either on the stage or off to the side. The majority of mealtimes were supervised solely by prefects.

41. Prefects were at the top and bottom of the table with the oldest boys closest to them. It then moved down towards the youngest boys in the middle of the table. Pick of the food started on the outside with the prefects and the morsels that were left, were for those in the middle of the table.
42. I remember reading the statement of someone who had attended a different boarding school. He painted a picture of mealtimes resembling something out of Lord of the Flies. I don't think it was ever that bad for me, but it was close. If I got food, it was very much because a prefect had allowed me to. There were times where food I should have had, was given to a younger boy just to upset me. There were also times I wasn't given food at all. There wasn't a massive attempt to starve us because eventually that would have warranted a teacher's attention. A teacher having to do something never worked out well for anyone.
43. At mealtimes, boys were traded to other dinner tables by prefects. I remember being traded and then very quickly being sent back to my table because the person I was being traded for was Pakistani. The prefects at my table refused to have the Pakistani boy sit with them. There was a lot of that kind of emotional turmoil. I really don't know what else the school expected to happen, when boys of sixteen or seventeen years old, were the ones left in total control of our welfare.
44. I think the food at the school was maybe featured in a review that took place, as half way through the year, it seemed to improve slightly. There were little changes, like the butter. Previously, when it came out of the kitchen it was rock hard and unusable. After the review, they made a pseudo-effort to let it warm before they brought it out. At the time, everyone thought it was a big win.

#### *Washing / bathing*

45. The shower blocks were communal. I don't remember anyone being forced to shower, but there was a general expectation that you would keep yourself clean and shower after playing sports. Most people kept themselves pretty clean, most of the time. There

was no privacy and no supervision in the shower blocks. The lack of privacy meant that some boys were teased more than others, for obvious reasons.

*Clothing / uniform*

46. There were a few different uniforms worn at Keil. There was the standard uniform for the school day. That consisted of grey flannels, a shirt, green pullover and black shoes. If we were going to church or an event, we had to put on our blazer and tie. There were also two different rugby uniforms. We got to wear our casual clothes on Saturday afternoons and Sunday after church.

47. I don't remember ever doing laundry myself. Each dorm had a laundry bag and someone came and picked up the bag. Our clothes were washed for us and returned to our dorm.

*Personal possessions*

48. I remember having to arrive at Keil with all my personal possessions in a truck. I can't remember what happened to the trunk. It maybe went into a boot room somewhere for storage.

*Pocket money*

49. My mum and dad used to send pocket money regularly. I imagine it was a couple of pounds per week. The house teacher kept all pocket money on behalf of the kids. We had to ask permission to get our money signed out and justify why we needed it, for example, for sweeties or something like that. The house teacher could refuse your request, which he did on many occasions. He had total control of your money and how you spent it.

### *Sexual education*

50. I don't personally remember being taught anything about sexual education, but it must have been something that was included in the curriculum. I say that because, there was a running joke within the school, that came from one of the fifth years. It was something to do with a comment a teacher made about copulation during a sexual education class. It may have been something the school covered with the older kids.

### *Religious instruction*

51. Keil didn't feel like an overly religious school. Most of us trooped off to a Presbyterian Church of Scotland on a Sunday. It was just a short walk down the hill. I seem to remember going around 6pm on a Sunday evening. I think there was a monastery that the Catholic children attended in the morning, rather than at night. If you were away from the school at the weekend, I'm sure you had to come back in time for church.
52. Attending church was just something we had to do, but I don't remember anyone particularly forcing any religious beliefs on us. There was no reading bibles in the morning or at night and no prayers. In fact, I don't think I remember seeing a bible while I was at Keil. The school had a lot of history and prestige and I guess the right thing for a prestigious historical school to do, was to send the pupils to church on a Sunday.

### *Trips / holidays*

53. Trips out of the school were very few and far between. I remember going on a trip with a chemistry teacher and his wife. He was a teacher who was really trying to make a difference and stood out a bit. I remember thinking it was a little strange, given I was terrible at chemistry, and I don't think I paid him back by trying harder. They took a small group of us on a Duke of Edinburgh Award camping expedition over a weekend. It was fantastic and I have very fond memories of it. I think we all had a great time. I remember that the teacher's wife was positively lovely to us.



54. Some of the boys would go on trips though to Murrayfield to see the rugby. It would be billed to your parents and obviously it was quite expensive. There would be a coach put on by the school. I don't think I ever got to go. I was signed up to go at some point, but I was withdrawn as a punishment. I not sure if the punishment was fair or not. I had been staying with a friend for the weekend and their mum didn't understand what time I had to be back at school. I came back two hours late and got punished as a result. It was a bit of a misunderstanding rather than anything else, but it fell on my shoulders.
55. I do remember Mr <sup>KPC</sup> taking us to a theatre in Glasgow. I can't remember the name of it, but it was a very arty theatre. Probably borderline inappropriate for a bunch of kids. It wasn't in any way lurid, but it was very thespian and whatever the message was, went way over my head. I remember Mr <sup>KPC</sup> commenting afterwards that maybe he had picked the wrong thing. The highlight of that trip, was getting to stop for fish and chips on the way home.

#### *Birthdays / Christmas*

56. I always went home during the holidays so I didn't spend Christmas at the school, but I was there over my birthday. It wasn't marked or celebrated in any nice way and I remember bribing my brother to make sure he didn't tell anyone my birthday was coming up.
57. Birthdays at Keil were celebrated with the mother of all kickings. During the assembly, when there were no teachers present, someone would start singing 'happy birthday to you'. Everyone would start to move away from the person they were singing about. That person would be stuck in the middle of the assembly hall, on their own, with the other boys standing around them. By the end of the song, there would just be a massive run in of boys, who would start kicking lumps out of the poor guy in the middle.
58. I remember seeing boys getting pretty upset as a result of the birthday kicking. They would be crying and really downtrodden from being beaten. It's not like anyone went off to hospital, but they would have bruises all over them. I think it actually happened

to some of the bigger and stronger boys more. Almost like it was a test of manhood. I wouldn't have survived it. I would have really struggled. I remember Mr KPC actually came up to me on my birthday and said 'happy birthday, ITY'. He ran my boarding house so would have known it was my birthday. Luckily, he didn't tell anyone else as I think he must have known what was going on. My brother certainly didn't tell anyone as he definitely knew what would have happened to me if he did. My brother's birthday was during the summer holidays, so it was never a problem for him.

### *Contact with parents*

59. During term time, I remember phoning my parents most weeks. There was a payphone and people would queue to use it on a Sunday evening after church. There were also letters sent to and from my parents. I remember flying back to America to see my mum and dad at Christmas and Easter. My mum visited me during the mid-term holiday.
60. I seem to remember the Christmas and Easter holidays being long. The mid-term holiday was shorter and I think it was sometime between August and December. My mum flew back on her own for the mid-term holiday. I remember spending a lot of time with her and I remember crying when she took me back to Keil. This would have been after my first five or six weeks at the school and there was all of a sudden this realisation that, after spending time with my mum, I was going to have to go back. I remember the car broke down when we were driving back to the school and the two of us just sat there crying. I have a very vivid memory of that.

### *Inspections*

61. There was an independent review or assessment of Keil carried out while I was there. I don't know if this was something sanctioned by a government authority or whether the schooled paid for a third party to carry out the review. Apparently, there was a report provided. The main change, which came about as a result of the report, was to our daily domestic duties. We still had to get up and do some chores, because discipline and routine had to be included in our day. However, those vital hygiene cleaning duties were no longer outsourced to thirteen year old boys. There was a

whole team of cleaning ladies came in every morning and did that for us. I very much remember that happening in the year I was there.

### *Healthcare*

62. There were some general medical checks carried out within the school. I remember there being a running joke about getting your balls felt during a medical. Obviously, no one was keen to have that done so all the little boys got pushed to the front of the queue and the bigger boys stayed at the back. On one occasion, one of the little boys came out and said 'the doctor's a woman', so all the bigger boys were pushing to get to the front of the line.
63. I also remember there being jags as well. Whether or not they were compulsory, I don't know. I don't remember there being anything overly invasive and I don't think the medicals happened regularly enough for it to be routine. I think they were carried out by a third party who came into the school.

### *Running away*

64. I personally didn't run away from Keil, but I remember there were definitely some girls who did. I think they probably got suspended as a result. It was something that probably crossed my mind at various points, but I never went through with it. It was treated very seriously. It very much got the teachers attention and that was unthinkable.

### **Communication between parents and the school**

65. I imagine there must have been some level of communication between the school and my parents, but other than a report card being sent home, I'm not aware of the nature of it. I certainly didn't get the sense that there was regular communication.

66. I remember a report card going home which said I needed to respect my elders more. That was essentially written by sixth year prefects about what I must do for them not to bully me so much. I remember thinking at the time that it was crazy. The teachers would not have been in a position to write any statement to my parents on how I was doing. They simply wouldn't know. To be really honest, they simply didn't want to know. They relied on the prefects telling them.

## **Discipline**

### *Prefects*

67. Discipline was primarily administered by prefects. They had such power to discipline us, they could do it for any reason whatsoever. One of the common sanctions, was a thing we called a 'copy'. It was essentially a punishment exercise. They would have you write two pages of lines, for example, two pages of 'I must not run down the stairs'.
68. To some extent, it made some sense to me that the older children had a level of responsibility. They should keep an eye on the younger children to make sure they didn't fight, run down the stairs or hurt themselves. If the younger kids did the wrong thing, they should be asked to do something to make up for their behaviour. That wasn't the problem. The problem was, discipline by prefects wasn't policed in any way. The prefects could pick on us as much and as often as they wanted. When you wrote a copy for a prefect, you had to get a teacher to sign it. I remember getting Mr KPC to sign one I was given. He commented it was the sixth one he had signed for the same prefect that day. He said he might have a word with him to tell him to pull his head in a little bit, but that was it.
69. On one specific occasion, I remember a group of us being chucked in cold showers by the prefects. To be honest, it didn't feel as terrifying as it might sound.



### *Teachers*

70. The main form of discipline used by teachers was the imposition of what was called 'natural history' (NH). As far as I remember, NH meant some sort of gardening activity which was done over the weekend. The highest form of punishment was six plus six. That was six hours of NH on Saturday and six hours of NH on Sunday. I remember doing my time. I think part of me was a bit cocky and cheeky. Part of me was also a bit rebellious, but I'm sure that had a lot to do with me being so unhappy and having no one care for me. What do you expect is going to happen? I did get in trouble a bit and I probably deserved it a few times, but sometimes, I hadn't actually done anything wrong.
71. The other thing the teachers liked to make you do for punishment was a morning run or white washing rocks. There was a driveway into the school lined with large white rocks. I remember having to white wash rocks in the rain. The rain was washing the paint off as fast as I could put it on, but I don't think the purpose was to get them white. It was simply to get us doing manual labour.
72. The teachers could confiscate any of our personal possessions. That said, we didn't have many personal possessions at the school. My mum once sent me a care package and it was gone within forty-eight hours of it arriving. Someone just helped themselves to it. We had absolutely no privacy.
73. The discipline used by teachers wasn't that bad, but the teachers weren't around a lot. Discipline was mainly carried out by the prefects.

### *Corporal punishment*

74. I don't remember there being corporal punishment imposed at Keil. I'm not sure, but it may have been banned by the time I went there.



## **Abuse at Keil School**

### *Bullying*

75. What kept you in check was a jolly good kicking. All boys got it at some age. It was carried out by the prefects and was never done in front of the teachers, unless by mistake. It would involve punching, kicking, slapping, pushing, strangling, twisting arms, torture positions or suffocation. These would all be pretty normal. Physically, I would be bruised, but what there wouldn't be was lasting obvious injuries like broken bones or black eyes. I don't think there were too many cases of anyone getting so badly hurt that they ended up in hospital.
76. If you tried to stand up for yourself, for example, if a third year stood up to a fourth year, the other fourth years would have the right to give you a kicking to discipline you. Occasionally, some young fourth year might get beaten up by a bigger third year. That would be shame on them for getting beaten up by a younger kid. It also wouldn't be unknown for older boys to encourage friends to start fighting each other.
77. Emotionally, the physical abuse did have a big impact on me. I found the constant need to look over my shoulder difficult. Any boy older than me had the right to come and physically beat me up. That could be for a bit of hazing or a perceived slight that never existed in the first place. You could not question an older boy's judgement. If a prefect said it happened, it happened. That's your defence over.
78. There was a sense of silence because you could not take this to a teacher. The teacher would be upset with everyone for being disturbed. Not to mention, as any institution would have, the idea is you don't grass. We definitely had that. Also, it wouldn't have done you any good to tell a teacher. It wasn't as if they were going to save you. They would just get upset with you because they had been disturbed.
79. I don't in any way blame the children who bullied me or hold any grudges against them. They were put in very difficult circumstances, and were ever encouraged to do the right thing. I'm sure many of them feel like victims themselves. I have a very vivid

sense of my childhood. I was small and skinny. An easy target for bullies. At the other schools I went to, I wasn't actually very bullied as a child. Thinking back, I probably bullied some kids, at some point, in other schools. I wasn't strong enough to physically bully anyone, but I probably teased them to the point of emotional bullying. If I could change anything, I'd change that. I do feel guilty about that, and would change the way I treated some people much sooner than changing the behaviours of those who bullied me.

### *Teachers*

80. I understand that both Mr IPT and Mr KPC [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]. I find it interesting that both of them were house masters. I think that is key to this. When I think back to my time at Keil, I think to myself, there were never any teachers around. It's easy to see how the potential for sexual abuse of a minor could occur. I'm aware that seems somewhat contradictory. If there were no teachers around, then who was there to actually cause the abuse? The reason in my mind is clear. Mr IPT and Mr KPC lived there alone and there were no other teachers around.
81. The boarding house set up was the perfect environment for someone to be a predator. The lack of adult supervision meant that children could take advantage of other children and teachers, who were living there, could take advantage of children. If something comes out of this, it should be an understanding of that. All the danger signs were there. It was pretty clear that Mr IPT and Mr KPC were gay men, living on their own, with young boys who were vulnerable. For no one to ask questions as to why that was allowed to happen is remarkable, even then. You often hear comments like 'it was a different time'. It wasn't really. This was the 1990s. It was modern history. It was an utter failing. We knew all about sexual abuse and predators at this time, yet nothing was done about it.
82. I don't have much to say about Mr KPC. He was a good teacher and well-meaning. I didn't personally see him abuse anyone, or hear of him abusing anyone at

Keil, but he was most definitely in a position to abuse. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

put in a position at Keil where he could have done a lot of damage.

83. I do recall one specific incident involving Mr IPT the [REDACTED] teacher. My friend and I were in Mr IPT [REDACTED] classroom one evening. I can't remember exactly why we were there. He was actually letting us do something to break the monotony and routine. He would do this a lot. He would either play with boys, give them treats or give them something to do in the classroom after school hours. Something happened where Mr IPT and my friend went off together. They ended up in a room at the back of the classroom. It was a storage room or a dark room or something like that. Something happened in that room. They came back out and I could see that my friend was pretty ruffled. It was clear something had gone on, but I didn't see what.
84. My friend and I didn't run out of the classroom. There were no tears or anything, but we left and it was clear that my friend wasn't quite right. Eventually he mentioned to me and another couple of boys that something untoward had happened with Mr IPT. Maybe inappropriate touching more than anything else, but I don't know to what extent. It absolutely shouldn't have happened.

### **Reporting of abuse whilst at Keil School**

85. My friend actually didn't want to report it. One of the other boys, made an issue out of it. He said at the time that he was just looking out for a friend, but I never felt like he had anyone else's best interests at heart. I think it was probably reported to a prefect who felt he had to pass it to Mr OPR. It was taken out of my friend's hands. I didn't think he wanted any of this. He was put in that position by somebody else.
86. There was then some official process chaired by Mr CGC. I had to go to speak to him because I was there when it happened, although I didn't see exactly what happened. I didn't speak to Mr IPT before any of this. He wasn't given any access to



me. Mr OPR my house teacher, did speak to me before I met with Mr CGC. He gave me a lecture about telling the truth, quite aggressively, but I don't remember him trying to influence what I said or telling me what to say.

87. I remember speaking to Mr CGC quite vividly. He never asked what I thought had happened, only what I saw. I remember thinking that was quite strange. During the interview, it was just me and Mr CGC. There was nobody there witnessing what questions I was asked or what my answers were. I do remember Mr CGC writing notes. I felt very out of my depth. It was all very formalised. I had no opportunity to speak to my parents before the formal investigation and I don't believe the school contacted them to let them know I would be interviewed.
88. After I was interviewed, I remember going to speak with my friend. I told him that I had reported to Mr CGC that I saw him go off with Mr IPT but I didn't actually see what happened. It was at this point that I knew something really had happened. I could see the utter pain in my friend's eyes. That image will stick with me forever. It was this look of fear, like he knew nobody would believe him. The whole thing was eventually brushed over. I think my friend got persecuted by some of the other teachers and Mr OPR Mr OPR also seemed to have it in for me and the one or two friends I had. We only had to walk past him to get in trouble. I think he was very upset that a teacher's position had been challenged. That was the overall sense I got.
89. I remember reading the transcript of an interview with one of the trustees of Keil School. I believe I read the transcript of The Inquiry website. It really got to me. It said that they found out, after Mr IPT left the school, that he had abused boys. It said there was no record of anything like that happening while Mr IPT was at the school. I remember giving a formal statement that was recorded in notes by Mr CGC. What Mr CGC did with those notes afterwards, I have no idea. I would have thought there would have been some formal process to record that information. Even if it was just to clear his teacher's name.
90. My understanding is that, after the incident involving my friend was reported, Mr IPT went on to abuse another male pupil at the school. I believe that abuse was severe

and terrible. You can imagine how awful my friend must have felt. Having not been believed, having been stood out to be a liar, he may have felt it perhaps emboldened this predator to go on and commit such heinous acts. I know I've often thought that; perhaps if I had said or did something differently to Mr CGC the future abuse might not have occurred.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### **Leaving Keil School**

91. When my parents and I made the decision for me to attend Keil, the deal was I would continue to attend even after they moved back from America. They were prepared to make that financial commitment because I had previously been moved around quite a lot.
92. I left Keil School at the end of third year with the full intention of going back after the summer. During the summer holiday, my parents moved back to Scotland from America. As the end of the summer approached, I was filled with more and more dread at the prospect of returning to Kiel. My mum and dad could see I was unhappy and they gave me the choice to stay or leave. I actually thought it through. It did mean moving again and being the new guy again, but I pretty quickly decided that going back to Keil would be a really bad decision. I made the decision to leave and never look back. That was absolutely the right decision. I was then enrolled in the local academy school for fourth year.

### **Life after Keil School**

93. After I left Keil School, everything improved for me. The improvement was pretty much instantaneous. I did really well in my standard grade exams and got top marks in all my subjects. Even the subjects I had previously performed poorly in. I became so much more tuned in at school and the quality of education was noticeably better at the



local school. The simple things, like being able to come in from school to your own bedroom and put the TV on, were amazing. I just felt so much happier and free. I still faced bullies in my life, but I could avoid them. I could get away from them. That wasn't an option at Keil.

94. I went on to university and become a middle class professional. I worked in Glasgow after leaving university. I then left Scotland as a backpacker, went to Australia, and never moved back. I've formed enduring friendships throughout my life and I'm now happily married with kids.

### **Impact**

95. If there is anything I really look back at, it's that I feel that Keil robbed a year of my life. I've never really talked to anyone about it. I didn't even talk to my brother about it as he was still going to Keil. To this day, I don't really discuss Keil with my brother as I only have negative memories of it and I don't want to upset what, for him, was a big part of his childhood. Until the Inquiry came up, I had never spoken to anyone about my experience. I had just closed it off altogether as it was that bad.
96. Over the years, I've often thought about why I wasn't targeted by Mr **IPT** or Mr **KPC**. I was a soft target back then. I was small, skinny, emotional and vulnerable. I've always found that quite strange. I'm lead to believe it was because I had a big brother at the school. I don't know if there is some psychology behind that. Perhaps predators tend to avoid those who have siblings in the same setting. Presumably, because they are more likely to tell their brother, who will in turn tell their parents. In the case of my friend, he had a younger brother, but he didn't go to Keil School.

### **Contact with Keil School and former pupils since leaving**

97. I have never revisited Keil and I understand it closed down sometime after I left. I do feel guilty that I never went back to try to catch up with my one or two real friends from

Keil. One of them, I found out, died of cancer. The other, was the friend who was abused. I am a member of the old boys Facebook group, but it's not very active. I did Facebook message my friend to let him know I was asking after him and he did respond, but we are not in contact now. I do somehow feel like I abandoned them a little bit.

### **Records**

98. I have never recovered any records from my time at Keil. I do have a photo of my boarding house somewhere here in Australia. I don't know how it got here. Perhaps my parents sent it out. That is the only memento I have of my time there.

### **Lessons to be Learned**

99. I think if you ask a lot of young boys 'would you like to be in an environment where there are no adults?', their answer would be yes. It sounds amazing, but the reality of it is entirely negative. That has to be the biggest lesson to be learnt. Everything that happened at Keil School, whether it was emotional abuse, physical abuse or sexual abuse, stemmed from the lack of adult supervision and lack of adult concern for our wellbeing.

### **Hopes for the Inquiry**

100. I'm not familiar with the governance process of boarding schools, but there needs to be adequate oversight in place. As a result of my experience, I am very anti boarding school. If it was up to me, I would ban them outright, but I understand that wouldn't be a good outcome for everyone. I understand for some people, home life isn't great, and maybe boarding school is a better option. I think if you are going to make these institutions available, there has to be considerable thought put into what they are there to achieve. It was clear that what Keil wanted to achieve was a sense of entitlement.

A sense of prestige. For the parents and teachers. That was what everything was built on. Not a sense of child welfare or wellbeing. There were no metrics to measure that. There were no metrics to measure the educational results of Keil against other schools. That is something that has to be monitored and an area where you could implement measurable change.

### **Other Information**

101. There are a number of reasons which lead me to come forward to speak to the Inquiry. I read about the work the Inquiry is undertaking in the press and I genuinely want to help. During my time at Keil School, I was aware of things going on that I consider to be abuse. I'm very conscious of the fact that I was only there for one year, while others were there the majority, if not all, of their secondary school lives. As a result, some of my fellow pupils, might just consider that I had a bad year and want to talk badly of the school. That's not my intention at all.
102. I feel I am able to offer a unique perspective given I had experience of several different schools, both before and after Keil. I found the contrast to be quite stark. The environment within Keil was simply not normal by any stretch of the imagination. I believe this is something the boys, who didn't know any other secondary schooling, might not have been aware of.
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.

Signed.....  
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Dated..... 04 August 2022