

## **aScottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

JZR

Support person present: No

1. My name is JZR. My date of birth is 1953. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### **Life before boarding school**

2. I was born in Calcutta, India where my parents moved to from Edinburgh after the war in 1949. My dad had been working for the British Indian Rubber Company in Edinburgh and not earning a great deal but applied for a job with ICI in India which changed their lives. My parents were . My sister was born in 1949 and I was born four years later in 1953.
3. Life in India was idyllic, it was a privileged life, though I would point out that my parents came from a humble Scottish background. In the 50's it was the height of the days of the Raj and we had everything we needed or wanted but our parents always ensured we remembered their humble backgrounds and nothing was taken for granted. However, the education system in India was pretty awful and my sister and I always knew we would be going to Scotland to be educated.
4. In India I started at Miss Grimshaw's Academy which was a very strait laced and strict school with an English curriculum but it was only ever going to be a stepping stone for me going back to Scotland for a proper education. My grandparents stayed in , about fifteen minutes from Berwick upon Tweed, and it was decided I would stay with them when I wasn't at school in Scotland or with my parents.

5. My sister went back to Scotland first and then, when I was 7 ½ years old, I went to Loretto School. I think the alternative was to send me to Fettes but my parents thought that to be a rather pompous place. I think they liked the ethos of Loretto which took boys and gave them a good wholesome lifestyle, taught them values and were very much into sport.
6. Most British people living in India and the Far East in the 50's sent their kids back to Britain for schooling though I was the only one of my friends group that went to Loretto. The flights going back to Britain at the end of summer were known as "The Lollipop Flights" as there were so many children going back to Britain for school.

### **Loretto School, Musselburgh**

7. I went to Loretto in 1961 or 62. I don't recall what month I first went to Scotland though it would likely have been at least some weeks before the start of term. My mother came over with me on that first occasion and we stayed at my grandparents. My parents had ordered my uniform from Aitken and Niven and it was all ready for me when I arrived at the school.
8. When I started I went to the junior school which was called "The Nippers". It was quite a distance, about a fifteen minute walk, from the senior school and ran alongside the river Esk. Next door was another house. School House was an intimidating building, very dark looking. There were about 100-120 boys in the junior school, a number that stayed fairly constant.
9. The main building was the oldest part of the school and had dorms at the back of it. To the left was another building with classrooms and more dorms where the older boys slept. Loretto had a lot of grounds around it. When I was there it was an all boys' school though I believe girls now go to the senior school.
10. The Headmaster for the junior school was Hamish Galbraith who was a nice guy. Another teacher was called Buchanan who was nicknamed Beaky due to his nose. The French teacher was Guy Ray Hills who was the main problem and the reason I

contacted the Inquiry. There was a nice English teacher called Ishbel White who we always called Miss White.. The fees were astronomical and, while there might have been one or two scholarships, the vast majority of the parents paid the full fees

11. The junior school was split into two houses those being the Main School House and the separate house. The Senior school was split in to four houses but the junior school was relatively small with boys aged from 7 or 8 to 12 or 13 years of age which was when you moved to the senior school.

#### *First Day*

12. On my first day my mum dropped me off but didn't come in to the school with me, the headmaster didn't want parents coming in to the school at that point. We were basically thrown in to things. We were allocated a dorm and told to keep it tidy, make your bed in the morning and show up for breakfast. We were also given a class roster.
13. All the boys in my year were newbies and we were all in the same boat. This meant that, while it was quite overwhelming, we knew we just had to get on with it. The first few days were a bit of a daze and you just followed others who had been there before until you picked up the routine.
14. Each dorm had between six and eight boys though, as you got older in the junior school, you would be in dorms with about sixteen to eighteen other boys. You dormed according to age. Some of the boys there had older siblings at the school but most of us were there on our own. We were nearly all from overseas.

#### **Routine at Loretto School, Musselburgh**

15. We got up at 6:30 am being woken by a bell then the first thing you had to do was strip off your pyjamas and go naked as a group to the bath. There we would stand in line, naked, until it was your turn to sit in a cold bath for thirty seconds. The timing was supervised by a master or prefect and you couldn't get out till they told you. Although

we all stood in the queue, you went into the bath on your own. This happened every morning.

16. After the bath you would put your uniform on then go to breakfast where you were assigned to a table. After breakfast we would go to classes and would have a break mid-morning. After lunch, which was again in the dining-hall, we would generally do sports in the afternoon which could be rugby, cricket, hockey depending on what time of year it was or perhaps do Cadet Corps which involved running and sailing. I always preferred sports to the academic work.
17. We had tea at 5:30 pm and we would have some prep time in the evening which, in the Nippers, wasn't excessive. Bedtime in the junior school was between 8:30 and 8:45 pm and I remember that one of the masters would open all the windows, regardless of the weather, before turning off the lights. You could probably read for a while once you were in bed during the summer when it was light. Most of us just went straight to sleep as we were tired after doing so much during the day though the odd one or two would read with a torch.

#### *Mealtimes/Food*

18. The food was awful but you ate what you could as it was all there was. For instance, breakfast was lumpy porridge or greasy eggs and bits of toast with jams and honey and plenty of tea. There was always a reasonable amount of food and if you didn't eat something there was always somebody else who would as we were always hungry. There were no problems or punishments if you didn't eat something.
19. We all ate in the dining-room and sat six to a table. Meal times were relaxed and we sat at the same place every day which was done in a sort of pecking order according to age. Verbal bullying was not uncommon at the table and you learned to stick up for yourself. The teachers sat at the top table.



### *Washing/bathing*

20. There were shower rooms and the baths were big old ones though they were really only used for the cold bath in the morning. It was really the showers we used to clean ourselves which were occasionally supervised by staff. You often saw welts on other boys from the cane when you were in the showers.

### *Clothing/uniform*

21. The uniform was blue shorts, long socks, brogues, white shirt and tweed blazers. You wore a jumper when it was cold though that wasn't encouraged. For Kirk on a Sunday we wore full dress kilt and studded collar which nearly strangled you and we had various sports clothing. All of this was paid for by our parents.

### *Leisure time*

22. Leisure time was usually spent hanging out with your friends in the common room or library or we would play outside in the grounds.

### *Trips and holidays*

23. When we were in the junior school we weren't allowed out though some of us would sneak out to the local café to get rolls and bacon or Forfar Bridies which I still remember fondly to this day.

### *School*

24. I wouldn't have said I was the brightest pupil but I think the academic education was acceptable though I would question where some of the teacher's qualifications came from, especially Guy Ray-Hills. As well as the usual academic classes we also did woodwork and had various Religious Studies. You would be in class with boys of your own age.

### *Healthcare*

25. There was a doctor who held a surgery in the school once a month. Depending on your age he would check your glands which, for some reason, involved you dropping your trousers. You would be alone in the room with him and I found that sort of behaviour very bizarre. The first matron we had was very strict and you couldn't really talk to her but she was replaced by a younger lady who was very caring but didn't stay long. The matron knew we got caned but wouldn't have commented on it.

### *Religious instruction*

26. Loretto had a Church of Scotland ethos. We would go to church and had to do choir practice on a Tuesday and a Thursday. We also went to chapel on Sunday morning and Sunday evening. We also had Religious Instruction, or Religious Interruption as we used to call it, in our weekly classes. However, Loretto was not overly religious and the chaplain was quite a nice chap.

### *Work*

27. Loretto wasn't like Fettes where you had a lot of fagging. That didn't happen in Loretto. There was a very strict pecking order and, for example, if a prefect was standing in a doorway you couldn't ask him to move if you wanted to get in that doorway. We didn't have to do things like wash the dishes, clean the dining room, clean the gym or anything like that.

### *Birthdays and Christmas*

28. I spent Christmas with my Granny and also usually went there at Easter depending on where my parents were. I think when it was somebody's birthday, the fact that it was read out but I don't recall anybody receiving a cake or anything special being made of a birthday.

*Visits/Inspections*

29. My granny would come up on a Sunday and I would go out with her though I had to be back in the evening. I always had a close relationship with my granny and she used to make the most amazing cakes which I would take back to the school. That certainly raised my status amongst my peers.
30. If there were any official inspectors who came to the school then I wasn't aware of it. I don't recall anybody else but the teachers in the classrooms.

*Sibling contact*

31. My sister was at St George's in Edinburgh but the only times we would communicate is when we met up at the end of term to travel together to go see our parents.

*Family contact*

32. I would write letters to my parents and once a year would go back to India or perhaps went to Europe meet with them. It depended on where they were. My sister had more or less the same holidays as me but often went to stay with a friend in Fife. The letters were checked by the masters but I think that was really just to check the grammar and spelling. We didn't have access to a telephone to call our parents. I assume if something serious happened to a student then the school had a way of contacting our parents.

*Personal possessions*

33. Any possessions you had had to be kept in your cupboard, tall-boy as it was called, next to your bed and this had to be kept tidy. We could keep stuff in our desks but as often as not such things could go missing.

### *Running away*

34. I never did run away. Once I got over the initial homesick feeling there was nowhere I could run to.

### *Discipline*

35. The cane was used frequently and you would get four or six strokes at a time depending on what the master or prefect decided to give you. In the junior school the cane was administered by the masters in private and it would be on your backside over your trousers. In senior school it was also administered by the prefects. You would also be sent on long runs which I did often. Getting lines was considered a mild punishment and not often handed out.
36. We had prefects at the junior school though they weren't called prefects. I don't now recall what they were called. Once in a blue moon they used to sit at the top table with the teachers during mealtimes. Looking back I find it strange that such responsibility was put on such young children. They would report you for things like walking on the grass, not keeping your cupboard tidy, having dirty shoes and other such trivial things.

### *Bed Wetting*

37. I used to wet the bed and wondered why I was doing so as I was not aware of having wet the bed before I went to Loretto's. If you wet the bed the matron put your mattress outside the dorm which was embarrassing. If I had wet the bed I would be called to matron's office at the morning break and she would ask me why I had wet the bed. I'm sure it was because of what was happening to me from Guy Ray-Hills though I didn't say so at the time.

### **Abuse at Loretto School, Musselburgh**

38. There was no official fagging system at the school but the older boys certainly got the younger boys to do things for them and it could be quite intimidating for the very young boys. The masters were probably aware of this and I recall some older boys got into trouble for the way they behaved towards the younger boys.
39. In the junior school some of the older boys were bullies and I would describe there as being several gangs in the junior school. You learned to make friends quickly as you needed them.
40. The French teacher in the Nippers was called Guy Ray-Hills who was in his late 30's or 40's. He was suave, swarthy, quite arrogant and domineering though his classes were always full of fun though I think there was an alternative motive behind it all. He gave us all French names and I was called 'le canard' which is French for duck. He always had his favourites which depended on how well you spoke French. I had an ear for languages having grown up in India.
41. Most of the class was carried out in French and if you made a mistake he would exaggerate being very upset. He would then tell you to see him in his study afterwards which was a large study on the ground floor. We all knew what that meant. Sometimes there would be two of you but as often as not you would be on your own.
42. His classes tended to be the last of the day. You would go into the study and he would shut the door. He would lecture you on the importance of language then grab you, fondle you and stick his knee in your groin holding you quite strongly. This was very uncomfortable, both for the boy it was happening to and for the other boy present if there was one. This would go on repeatedly and the more of a favourite of his that you were the more you would be ordered to his study. I witnessed other boys being fondled.
43. I was one of the lucky ones that never went to his bedroom, only his study. I know from those who went to his bedroom that it was awful in there as they told me. I never had to remove my clothes in his study and it was very uncomfortable but others who

went to his bedroom told me at the time that he would remove their clothes. To this day I don't feel comfortable in a room where the door is closed. He also had a big heavy curtain in front of the door which you would have to fight your way through if you wanted to get out of the door.

44. When I was in his study it would be hard on physical fondling and he would force me to fondle his genitals through his clothing but not under it. I know there were other children who were making allegations against Ray-Hills but he used to tell me, and others, that what was happening was a secret just between us i.e. we weren't to tell anybody else. We knew what was happening wasn't right. It made you feel sick. Boys were never the same afterwards.
45. Ray-Hills was at the school when I started and also took sports. Afterwards he would come in to the showers and shove you further in to the cubicle and fondle and grope your genitals. He would then go outside and have a cigar. The other boys who were in the showers at the time were aware of what was going on. This happened to several of the boys.
46. Ray-Hills didn't pick on you immediately, he bided his time before deciding who had matured enough for his taste. His show of being annoyed at you was all a pretence, a performance. We got our French nicknames from him in our first class and that was how he always referred to us, never by our own names. We even had to sign our homework with these nicknames.
47. There was a boy called [REDACTED]. I don't know what the [REDACTED] stood for as he was a lot older than me, about three or four years older, and we would only refer to boys of that age by their initials. The gossip at the time was that this boy had made an allegation against Ray-Hills though I don't know the exact details of the allegation. [REDACTED] was a big lad and I think he simply stood up to Ray-Hills.
48. As boys we discussed amongst ourselves the behaviour of Ray-Hills though basically this just amounted to what a creep he was. I always felt that somebody in charge must have known what he was up to. I never reported Ray-Hills for his treatment of me and

to this day I don't know why I didn't. I don't think any action was ever taken against him.

49. I suppose the only person I could have told was my granny but she wouldn't have understood it. I didn't tell anybody until I told my wife when I was 45. I wouldn't have told a teacher at the time out of fear of not being believed and getting the cane because we were making allegations we couldn't substantiate. We didn't have teachers or anyone who we could speak to on a one to one basis.
50. When I was about seven or eight I was at my granny's and my mum and dad were there. When I got in to the bath she saw welt marks on my backside that had been made by a caning. She screamed and told my dad that I wasn't going back to the school but I made up some story about what had happened and she got over it. I didn't really discuss what happened at the school with my parents. I think when you boarded it made you more distant from your parents.
51. I don't know if it was what was happening with Ray-Hills but I became a bit of a rebel to the extent that, when I got to the senior school, I was nearly kicked out. I did every possible thing I could think of to break the rules. I smoked, drank, turned up late for class, anything that could get me into trouble.

### **Leaving Loretto School, Musselburgh**

52. I left Loretto's in 1972 when I was eighteen. I had been in the senior school from the age of thirteen to eighteen and during that time never had any trouble with Ray-Hill as he was still at the school but was in the Nippers so I had no dealings with him during my time in the senior school. I heard that he later left under a cloud though I don't know the details.

### **Life after being in Loretto's**

53. I became a management trainee with Trust House Forte and worked my way up the business in hotels then met a lovely girl from New Zealand in Edinburgh. We got married in New Zealand which is why I live there now.
54. We now have four lovely kids and eight grandchildren. I worked in Brown's Hotel in London, then Grosvenor House then back [REDACTED] as assistant manager which is when I met my wife and moved to New Zealand after that. There I bought my own business which I then sold and worked for various companies and ended up as a Vice President of [REDACTED].

### **Impact**

55. I've spoken to my wife about the impact that having been at Loretto had on me and I could never understand how love and sex connected. That was a big stumbling block in our relationship because I never thought you could love somebody and have sex with them, or make love to them, I always thought that that was dirty. It affected our relationship for a long time but she's a patient woman and we got through it. So I think that is my biggest obstacle, that contradiction of loving somebody and wanting to make love to them, it wasn't right, it was dirty.
56. Getting the cane impacted on me. I can't handle conflict. I don't like conflict and avoid it at all costs and if people start to argue I just walk away. Whether I can blame that on Loretto I'm not sure but that's how it is.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

57. I had some counselling in Auckland when I was in New Zealand and when I spoke to my GP, about 25 years ago, I talked about my time in Loretto and he gave the name of a counsellor and that was when things started to improve. Up until then I had always



thought that I had this horrible dark secret but I didn't know who to tell or how to tell anybody and thought if I told somebody I loved it would end everything.

58. I did not report any of this to the police and I actually felt that I had been one of the lucky ones and wouldn't have been justified in going to the police.

### **Records**

59. I have never tried to seek my records. I have thought about it but growing up in India I had a sort of Buddhist philosophy on life that says you need to let all that go and whilst it does come back to me from time to time you just learn to put it to the back of your mind and I just don't think I would want to go there,

### **Lessons to be Learned**

60. We have to remember that life has changed so much since the days when I attended Loretto. Transparency is now a part of life but it wasn't then. Then you didn't question your elders. I could remember the local bobby coming into my granny's kitchen and we would all stand up then he would get the head chair at the table, poured a cup of tea and would stay as long as he liked.
61. That was the way that we looked at authority and you never questioned it. However, now everybody questions everything. And I think in a way that's good. What I regret is that nobody asked you if everything was okay. I have run businesses with thousands of staff and the first thing I ask them is "Are you okay? Have you got all you need to do your job? And don't just tell me yes because I want to know and I can fix whatever is wrong". You have to do that repeatedly to earn people's trust.
62. We didn't have anything like HR in Loretto's. You couldn't go to the matron because she dished out your medicine and put your mattress out when you wet the bed so there was nobody to go to when you are in a position like that where there is a hierarchical structure. I'm not saying all the masters were bad but there has to be a

system where pupils can be asked if they're okay and checks made on the staff. A person like Ray-Hills, how on earth did he ever get the job?

63. When I worked in hotels, rather than sit in an office I would wander round the hotel reassuring staff and checking that things were alright for them. Maybe headmasters should take a similar approach to their schools. There has to be somebody for children to speak to in confidence but, of course, boys at school are not great talkers.
64. 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..... JZR .....

Dated..... 29 April 2021 .....