

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

PZF

Support person present: No.

1. My name is PZF, but I've always been known as PZF. My date of birth is 1955. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Background / Qualifications

2. I had no training before I went to Lagarie and it was my first proper job. I worked there from 1972 until I left in 1978 when I went to hospital, Glasgow, working as an auxiliary nurse. I then worked at the Hospital, Dumbarton for about twelve years before I had to leave due to my ill health aged thirty-seven. I haven't worked since then.

### Experiences at Lagarie

#### *The Institution*

3. Lagarie is in Rhu and its purpose was a care home for children. The home was run by the Sailors Society who had headquarters in Glasgow. The building itself didn't have a reception area. When you walked in the main door it was just into a hallway. Off the hall, Mr Barrie, the superintendent, had an office and there was a sitting room. The bedrooms were all upstairs apart from the older girl's room. There used to be a nursery on the ground floor before I was there but that became the older girl's bedrooms.

4. It was my first proper job and I wasn't very keen to go. Mr and Mrs Barrie were in charge. Mr Barrie was twenty-one years older than Mrs Barrie. She was about forty when I was there, so he was in his sixties. Mrs Barrie was frightening and she was a bully. The Barries lived within the grounds in a cottage up the back of Lagarie.
5. My direct manager was a deputy, and I answered to them. During my time there they went through quite a few deputies. Miss Stuart was there when I started. She had worked with Mr and Mrs Barrie at Barnardo's in Edinburgh and came to Lagarie with them. She left during my time there and [GAA] was Mr and Mrs [GAD-SPO]. The Barrie's were friends with [GAD-SPO] and then something happened, I'm not sure what, but [GAD-SPO] took them to a tribunal and left. [ ] Mr & Mrs Russell [ ]. Mrs Russell was Mrs Barrie's sister and they weren't trained as far as I know. [ ], [GAA] s uncle Mr [GAF] took on [SNR] and his wife and family moved in too.
6. The deputies were easier to speak to than Mrs Barrie. Miss Stuart, who was there when I started, was nice and I liked her. I hadn't been there long before she left.
7. I couldn't really complain about the other houseparents, they were alright. As housemothers, we all had our own group of kids that we were responsible for. I had five young girls in my group and had no problems. I can't really talk about the relationships between the other staff and their groups, they were fine as far as I was aware.

#### *My role and recruitment at Lagarie*

8. I was only seventeen when I started working at Lagarie and was there until I was twenty-three. I got the job because somebody had told me that there was a vacancy there. I think I contacted them by phone to apply and I got an interview and then was given the job. It was either Mr or Mrs Barrie that interviewed me. I can't remember if they asked me for references.

9. My role when I was there was housemother. I was looking after the five girls who were in my allocated group. I had to make sure they were washed and dressed. One of the housemothers would take some of the children to school and pick them up again at the end of the day. We would get them ready for bed and put them to bed.
  
10. We worked ten-hour days. Some days we had to do a split-shift, 7am to 12pm and then 5pm to 10pm. Once or twice, I ended up being on duty ten days in a row which was a long slog. We didn't get proper breaks on our shifts, we would eat our lunch or dinner with the kids and were expected to be around the whole of our shift. After I had been there for a wee while the shifts did eventually change to 7am to 3pm and 2pm to 10pm. There also wasn't any nightshift staff. You finished your shift at 10pm and that was you until the next day. We were technically on call through the night, and you got up if you heard anything or any of the children were up. There was no rota to cover the nights.

### *Training*

11. There was no formal training given, none of us had any training. When I started there was a girl who was going to college once a week for training, so I asked the Barrie's for the same. In 1977, having had to ask for it, I went on a training course at Langside College, Glasgow. The course was one day a week for a year, and I came out of that with a qualification in childcare. I enjoyed the course. I was aware of another housemother who went on the same training I did in the same year, but her college day was different. Other than that, I wasn't aware of any staff going for training.
  
12. Not many of the staff had any training. Miss Stuart was trained but she left after an incident where a child had her up against a wall. She went off sick not long after that. Mr GAD had some training as he came from a List D school. I didn't like Mr GAF he was a horror, and I don't think he was trained. He was GAA's uncle. Mrs Barrie's sister, Mrs Russell, who came down to Lagarie with her husband and two kids wasn't trained either. I think it was a bit unfair on both staff and the children.

### *Staff structure*

13. Mr and Mrs Barrie were in charge and below them was a deputy. Mrs Barrie put a 'third in charge' person in role and that was [REDACTED]. She had no qualifications. The majority of staff didn't have any training or qualifications. From [REDACTED], the next level was then the houseparents. When I was there, there were six houseparents. Each houseparent had responsibility for four or five children.

### *Recruitment of staff*

14. I wasn't ever involved in the recruitment of other staff and I'm not sure of the recruitment process. There weren't any volunteers that worked there but there were college students who would come to Lagarie for a month at a time. The students would help out with day-to-day duties and played with the kids.

### *Supervision / appraisal / training*

15. I didn't ever have any appraisal or supervision whilst I was there, and I wasn't aware of anybody else having any. I wasn't ever responsible for or had any supervision of staff. I wasn't ever involved in training others either.

### *Policy / Strategic Planning*

16. I wasn't ever involved in any policy development or strategic planning.

### **Children / Routine at Lagarie**

17. I don't know how the children came to be placed at Lagarie. We weren't told anything by the Barrie's.
18. There were about twenty-five children in total at Lagarie ranging in age from three to sixteen. The children had to leave when they were sixteen. The children would

generally stay for a few years. I do remember one girl only being there a year, but most stayed longer.

19. I can't remember how many staff would be on at a time. If a houseparent was on a day off, you might be given a couple of extra children to look after in your group to cover their group.
20. I had five girls in my group that I was responsible for and their ages ranged from three to seven. I didn't have the same girls for the whole time I was there as some would leave and others would come in. I didn't ever know why the children came in or why they left. The Barrie's didn't tell you anything. I know one of my girls went home as her dad came up to get her and took her away, but I can't remember ever being told that someone was leaving.
21. I was live-in at Lagarie, all the staff were. You weren't allowed to go home, you had to live-in. We were always on-call because if any of the kids needed you overnight you would have to help them.
22. All of the staff had bedrooms in the home but some of us had to share. I shared a room with Janice, she was a year younger than me at the time but didn't start until she was nineteen or twenty. She was a housemother too. My bedroom was just next door to my girls that I looked after. I did eventually get my own bedroom when somebody left, it was just across the hall from the one I was sharing.

#### *Mealtimes / Food*

23. There was a cook at Lagarie and the children all ate together in the dining room. We ate with the children and had the same meals. The food was ok, it was just normal food that you'd have at home. It was cereal for breakfast, pilchard salads for dinner, things like that. There was no choice over food, the children ate what was put in front of them.

24. One day Mrs Barrie brought in a big pot of soup. There was a trolley in the kitchen for bringing it in on, but she carried it instead and spilt the boiling hot soup all over a poor girl, [REDACTED]. She was only seven or eight at the time. I wasn't on duty that day but heard about it from others. She ended up in Canniesburn Hospital, Glasgow because of the burns. Her chest, all down her front, is still a mess to this day.
25. The Barries didn't always eat the same food as us. They wouldn't eat gammon as they said that it was in the Bible that it caused cancer. However, it was alright for the rest of us to eat it.

#### *Sleeping Arrangements*

26. The children were in bedrooms with four or five beds in each. My five girls were all in the same room. I think the kids got up at about 7am in the morning. There wasn't a set bedtime as they went to bed at different times, depending on their age. I would make sure they were bathed and would read them a story and get them settled in bed each night I was on.
27. All members of staff had access to the children's sleeping area. The front door was always unlocked so anybody could have walked in.

#### *Washing and Bathing*

28. In the girls' bathroom there were two baths and in the boys' bathroom they had showers. I would bath the wee ones as they were too little to go in on their own. When I was on shift, I would give them a bath every night before bed, and they would go into their bed after that.

#### *Leisure / Trips / Holidays*

29. There wasn't much for the children to do. There was a playroom with toys and they could watch television on three or four nights of the week. The home was set within

large grounds and there were swings and a doll's house out the front. Up the back of the house there were woods they could play in.

30. I don't remember any of the children going to things like Brownie's or Guides. I also don't remember being aware of any trips out.
31. We did go to Arbroath every year for the Glasgow Fayre fortnight. The Barries were always there but I didn't see much of them. I went twice, once in 1973 and again in 1978. We stayed in the YMCA, and the kids were all split up in bedrooms and the staff had to share.
32. I used to take some of the children to the big boating pond in the park there or I'd take them for a walk along the cliffs. At nighttime I'd take them down to the seafront. That was the only holidays that I was aware of.
33. I wasn't aware of any staff taking children out of Lagarie and I don't know if that was allowed. You were scared to ask Mrs Barrie anything, she was frightening.

#### *Healthcare*

34. I don't know if there were any staff working there who were medically trained. There was a local doctor, Dr Brown, who used to come to the home.

#### *Religious Instruction*

35. There was a lot of religion in the home. The children were only allowed the television on three or four nights a week. One of the kids came to me as there was something they really wanted to see, so I put the television on. Mr Barrie came in and gave me a terrible row because I'd put the television on. It wasn't a normal household at all.

### *Schooling*

36. Children of school age went out to the local primary school, Rhu Primary or Hermitage Academy, the local secondary school.
37. We would walk the kids to and from school. You wouldn't just take your group as generally there would be a crowd and we took it in turns to do the school run.

### *Chores*

38. Everyday the children had to clear the tables and do the dishes. There were cleaners in Lagarie who did the general cleaning, the bedrooms and bathrooms etc.
39. Sometimes the children were asked to do some cleaning. I know of a girl, one of the [REDACTED] girls, who had her appendix out when she was about fifteen or sixteen. She was out of hospital and was back at Lagarie a few weeks later, when Mrs Barrie caught her mopping the back corridor and went off her head, bawling and shouting at her. The girl must've been told to do it as she wouldn't have done it off her own back, but Mrs Barrie went right through her because she had a mop and bucket. Mrs Barrie said it was because she'd had her appendix out that she shouldn't be mopping the floor, but she must've been told to do it by someone.

### *Visitors*

40. I don't remember there being many visitors. There was one girl [REDACTED], whose brother [REDACTED] was also in Lagarie, and their dad came every so often and took them home for the weekend. I don't remember any other kids being taken home for the weekend.
41. I don't remember seeing any social workers or psychologists there either.

### *Review of Care/placement*

42. I wasn't aware of any review of the children's care, however, there was no communication between the Barrie's and staff. We didn't know anything. Other than [REDACTED] who was a bit older than the rest of the houseparents, we were all quite young. It was all female staff and we didn't have the confidence to question the Barrie's or ask them what was going on.
43. I can only remember one of my girls leaving, [REDACTED], and her father took her away. I don't know the reason for that, or how it was decided.
44. I did have a wee turnover of girls, but I couldn't tell you anything about why they were going or why they were coming in. Mrs Barrie wouldn't explain anything. Even the deputies didn't tell you anything. They surely knew but again, that information wasn't passed onto us.

### *Discipline and Punishment*

45. Mrs Barrie would shout at the children, and I saw her taking her hand across their face. I don't remember any children being sent to their room. She would rather just hit them. I never saw Mr Barrie lifting his hand to any of the children.
46. There weren't any sanctions like not getting out to play or anything like that. I certainly didn't see anything like that.
47. Apart from telling children off now and again, I never disciplined them.
48. I doubt that there would have been a record kept of any punishment given out to the children. The Barries did have a logbook they kept for day-to-day things. I don't know what was recorded in the book. The staff didn't put anything in it. We didn't even get to read it. The only reason I knew there was a logbook was because the phone rang

one day, in Mr Barrie's office, and there was a large book lying on his desk, which had 'Logbook' written on the cover.

49. I think we should have been able to write things in the logbook, but it was very dictatorial. If Mrs Barrie hit a child, she was never going to record it in the logbook.

#### *Restraint*

50. Restraint was never used in Lagarie. Medication was never used as a means of restraining or sedating any of the children. I never had to restrain any of my girls while I was there.
51. I don't think any of the staff had training in restraint. Mr GAD, who wasn't a very nice man, may have had that sort of training as he had been at a List D school previously but I'm not sure. I never saw any member of staff excessively restraining a child while I was at Lagarie.

#### *Concerns about the institution*

52. I don't know about any concerns raised about Lagarie from out with.
53. In 1977 or 1978 a couple from the head office in Glasgow came down for two weeks because the Barries' went on holiday. I'm sure it was a Mr and Mrs Wallace. They were quite well on in their years. They were a lovely couple and they were great with the kids. The kids and staff thought him and his wife were great. I'm sure they stayed in the Barrie's cottage while they were there.
54. Myself and another member of staff, Elizabeth Hefferman, told the Wallace's about the Barries. I told them everything about the verbal abuse and the physical abuse. Mr Wallace did take it back to head office, because later, after their holiday, Mr Barrie pulled me into the sitting room and told me I had no right to say anything about them to Mr Wallace. As far as I was aware, nothing else was done about it because the Barries were there until Lagarie closed.

55. Nothing changed, Mrs Barrie still shouted at kids and she still hit them on their backsides and regularly slapped kids across the face. I didn't ever see her using anything to hit kids with, it was always her hands. She was very quick tempered and she took no nonsense. She looked quite severe too.

*Reporting of complaints/concerns*

56. I never heard any of the kids saying that they wanted to complain. Mrs Barrie wouldn't have listened anyway. Even when I raised the issues with Mr Wallace, nothing was done.

*Trusted adult/confidante*

57. I don't think there was anyone that the kids could speak to about any concerns that they had. Not to my knowledge anyway.

*Definition of abuse*

58. I was never given a definition of what abuse was by the Barries or anyone else at Lagarie. We weren't given anything of that nature. Mrs Barrie was the one abusing the children, nobody else.

**Allegations of Abuse**

59. No child ever reported to me that they had been abused. I don't think a child would've come to staff to report anything for fear of the Barries and the consequences. More abuse, other than that I saw, could have gone on at Lagarie and gone undetected.

## **Abuse at Lagarie**

### *Mrs Barrie*

60. She was in charge and was a bully. If you did anything wrong at work she would come right up to you, point her finger in your face and bawl and shout at you. She did that in front of the kids too. I honestly can't remember why that was, but I'd have obviously done something that wasn't to her satisfaction. That behaviour was unacceptable, especially when you are as young as I was then. I had only turned seventeen in the [REDACTED] and started there in the December of the same year.
61. Mrs Barrie wasn't a nice person. She shouted at both staff and children and was very much, "I'm the boss and you'll do what I say." Mrs Barrie was good with her hands and didn't think twice about slapping the children. The staff weren't allowed to hit the children, it was only Mrs Barrie that hit them.
62. I remember one particular incident involving one of the little girls I cared for who was only three years old, [REDACTED], and Mrs Barrie battered that wee girl. She leathered her four or five times in the one day because she had wet herself. I knew that she wasn't a bedwetter as I didn't have any bedwetters in my group so I said to Mrs Barrie that she must have a wee chill because it wasn't like her. Mrs Barrie didn't care and battered her anyway.
63. I never saw another member of staff hitting a child. We would give them a row if we saw them doing something they shouldn't have been doing but that was it.

### *Mr Barrie*

64. When I was there, I never saw Mr Barrie lifting his hands to a child, he was alright. I know that the kids have said some things about Mr Barrie, but I never saw it. On two or three occasions, and I'm not the only staff member he did it to, he grabbed me round the waist. I was trying to prize his hands off me, but he wouldn't let go. He would be

laughing but I didn't find it funny at all. He did that two or three times to me. There are a few members of staff that still live near me now and I mentioned it to them just two or three years ago and they said he'd done the same to them.

### **Child protection arrangements**

65. I was never given any training in child protection. As I have said, I wasn't told anything. There was no autonomy or discretion given to members of staff on how to deal with the children. You just got on with it. You looked after the kids that you had, and that was it. There was nobody, not even the deputy, who told you what to do in relation to looking after the children.

### **External monitoring**

66. I am not aware of any external inspections of Lagarie while I was working there.

### **Record-keeping**

67. There were no records kept, apart from the big logbook that I saw in Mr Barrie's office. I assume that it was only Mr and Mrs Barrie that wrote anything in it. I didn't see them writing anything in it, we never had access to it. I wouldn't say the Barries had that much day-to-day involvement with the children, so I don't know what they would have put in the logbook. They didn't ask the staff for any information.

### **Investigations into abuse – personal involvement**

68. Until I was contacted by the Inquiry, I have never been the subject of allegations or investigations into the abuse of children. I have never been involved in any investigations on behalf of Lagarie into the abuse of children.

### **Reports of abuse and civil claims**

69. I have never had any involvement in reports of abuse or historical abuse, nor have I been involved in any civil claims in relation to abuse at Lagarie.

### **Police investigations/ criminal proceedings**

70. I have never been made aware of any police investigation or criminal proceedings in relation to abuse at Lagarie and I have never given a statement to the police. I am not aware of anyone who was convicted of abusing children at Lagarie.

### **Other Staff**

#### *Mr and Mrs Smith*

71. I wasn't at Lagarie when Mr and Mrs Smith were in charge there. They were there before the Barries. The Barries were in charge when I started working there.

#### *Mr and Mrs Barrie*

72. Mr and Mrs Barrie were in charge of Lagarie for the whole time I worked there. I think they were there until it closed in 1982. Mr Barrie was about sixty years old, and his wife was around forty years old. There looked to be about twenty years or so of an age difference. He was classed as the Superintendent, and she was classed as the matron. They didn't have a great deal of involvement with the children, but they were in and out a lot. She sat in the sitting room quite often.
73. I was at Lagarie for six years and I don't think they changed much over that time. I didn't really have any general conversations with either of the Barries. He was very

much the boss. I don't think I ever saw him interacting with any of the children. I didn't see Mrs Barrie ever interacting with the children socially, during their leisure time, or just generally talking to them.

74. I saw Mrs Barrie physically abusing children a few times, although I couldn't say how many times. She either smacked their backside or slapped them across the face. I did not see or hear of Mr Barrie physically abusing any children.

*Heather Le Sommer*

75. I know a Heather, but I don't know her surname. When I started at Lagarie a girl called Heather was working there, but I wouldn't know if it is the same one I have been asked about. She was around nineteen or twenty years old. She was a housemother. She wasn't there very long after I started, maybe a few months. She looked after the older boys, but I can't remember ever seeing her with them.

██████████

76. I knew ██████████. She was a housemother and third in charge at Lagarie. I think she would have been in her thirties when I started. She is dead now. She lived-in at Lagarie all the time because she wasn't from Helensburgh. She was ok but I think she was very much 'in with' the Barries. I can't remember what group she looked after but she was nice with the children. I didn't see ██████████ disciplining or abusing any children. I didn't hear of her abusing any children either.

*Norman* ██████████ PXX ██████████

77. Norman Skelton was the gardener. PXX ██████████ was his ██████████, but he wasn't a gardener at Lagarie. There was another gardener there, called ██████████ but he left. PXX ██████████ PXX ██████████ didn't work there while I was there. Norman must have been in his sixties at the time. I didn't have anything to do with him. He would come into the home for a coffee or cup of tea, but I never saw him in the company of the children and therefore never saw him disciplining or abusing any children.

*Jean Russell*

78. I don't know the name Jean Russell. It has been shared with me that she was the sister of Mrs Barrie, but I knew that person as Patsy Russell. She was in her thirties and was Mrs Barrie's younger sister. She had two kids of her own, and her husband was at Lagarie too. They were the deputies, but none of them were trained to work with children. I don't understand how you could get that position without training. She was ok, she was nothing like her sister, Mrs Barrie. She was a lot nicer. I can't remember ever seeing her working with the kids.

*Mr Russell*

79. Mr Russell was Patsy's husband. He was ok, he was nice to the kids. He used to play around with them. They stayed within Lagarie, in the tower that the Barries made into a flat. There was originally one big bedroom there, and I think they made it into two for the Russells and their kids.
80. I didn't see either of the Russells disciplining or abusing any of the children at Lagarie.

Mr GAD

81. I think Mr GAD and his wife were SNR the Russells. I'm sure the Russells were still there when I left. I didn't like Mr GAD. His wife was ok. I would say Mr GAD was in his forties or fifties. There was something about him, but I don't know what it was. He was quite strict, but what I didn't like about him was that when he was giving one of the kids a row, his finger was right in their face. I did not see him abusing any children.

GAA

82. I worked with GAA. She was SNR. When Miss Stewart GAA became SNR SNR. She was alright. I would say she was in her thirties at the time. She was a

housemother before she got promoted into that post. She did do a course at college so had some training. She was fine with the children. I didn't ever see her disciplining or abusing any of the children.

PZH

83. I remember PZH I worked with her. She worked as a housemother when I was at Lagarie. I'm not sure of her age, maybe late twenties, early thirties. She was fine with the children, and I never saw her disciplining or abusing any of them.

MLV

84. I do not know anyone called the MLV

*Mr and Mrs* GAF-SPO

85. Mr and Mrs GAF-SPO were also SNR at Lagarie. Mr GAF was GAA's uncle. They had two small boys of their own. Mrs was ok. I didn't like Mr GAF though, there was something about him. They were in their late thirties, maybe forty at the time. I didn't see either of them disciplining or abusing any of the children.

GAH

86. I cannot remember anyone working at Lagarie by the name of GAH.

*Anne Miller or Millar*

87. I don't know anyone by the name of Anne Miller.

RDM

88. RDM was a housemother when I was at Lagarie. I think she was about thirty years old then. She seemed to be alright with the kids. She looked after the older girls, who were about nine or ten years old. I didn't see her disciplining or abusing any of the children.

PVS

89. I don't know anyone called PVS that worked at Lagarie while I was there.

### **Allegations that have been made to the Inquiry about me**

PTH

90. PTH has given a statement to the Inquiry. At paragraph 25 of her statement she has said, *"Another member of staff I remember was PZF who was from Helensburgh. She was connected to something that happened to a boy at Lagarie that I wasn't particularly happy about, in fact I still hate her for it. She caused the boy to get hit"*.
91. PTH goes on to say the following at paragraph 26 of her statement, *"It was when the Barrie's were at Lagarie and we were all getting ready for school one morning. One of the younger boys was all excited because he had won a coconut at the circus the weekend before. He was outside our room hitting the coconut off a cast iron radiator to try and break it open. There was a crowd of us watching him and laughing but he ended up breaking the radiator and water started coming out of it. PZF was there and had been laughing at him with everyone else but then she disappeared and didn't come back up. Mrs Barrie came back up though and we knew instantly that we were all in trouble"*.

92. She goes on to say the following at paragraph 27 of her statement. "*Mrs Barrie came up to us and just hit that boy. Everyone was so stunned that we couldn't speak*". PTH then says, "*That was the first time I saw Mrs Barrie hit anyone. She was so full of rage and anger and hate and that was towards a boy who was only about six or seven years old. I don't remember the boy's name. I blame PZF, she told Mrs Barrie and she caused the poor boy to get hit*".
93. That is a lie. I know who did that. I wasn't there, it was another member of staff. I was told that the boy had a coconut and he was bashing it at the top of the stairs and seemingly water came out. This member of staff told me that Mrs Barrie came up and slapped the boy right across the face. The member of staff that was there was Heather and she only told me about this incident five, or six months ago. I wasn't there when it happened and knew nothing about it.
94. I remember PTH, but I didn't have anything to do with her or her sisters. There were three of them in the home. They weren't in my group. So, I don't know how she can say that. PTH would have been about nine or ten years old at the time. I never sanctioned or punished PTH while she was at Lagarie. I had no dealings with her at all. She had an older sister called, who was about fifteen or sixteen and another sister called. The three of them shared a room.
95. I have no idea why PTH would say such a thing as I have never had any dealings with her and she wasn't in my group. If it happened, I agree that it would be abuse, but I'm not going to be accused of something that I've never done.

MPM

96. MPM has given a statement to the Inquiry. At paragraph 80 of her statement she has said, "*One time I saw her (Mrs Barrie) hit one of the children. He was one of two black brothers who were in there*". She goes on to say "*She did it after he spat his food out because he didn't like it. She had the spoon in her hand and tried to force feed him*". MPM then says "*His older brother came over and tried to stop her and hit her but Mrs Barrie just grabbed him and dragged him out by the hair into*

*the hall. Mr Barrie appeared and joined in. I couldn't see what was going on but one was obviously holding him down and the other was hitting him. The slap Mrs Barrie gave this child was crazy. Other members of staff who were there and would have seen the slap or the immediate aftermath were PZF [REDACTED] and ..."*

97. MPM [REDACTED] goes on to say the following at paragraph 89 of her statement. "A few months after that Mrs Barrie lined all the boys up in the main hall and forced them to strip naked. She did this because there was a game we used to play called 'kiss, cuddle or torture'. Mrs Barrie found out about it and told us that she would show us what torture was. That is when she insisted that the boys strip naked and got the girls to look at them. I refused but Mrs Barrie grabbed me by the hair, and pulled me into the hall. The boys were made to stand there for hours. This was obviously really embarrassing for the older boys. They weren't allowed to cover themselves. The older boys would sometimes hold themselves and ... would just slap them on the fingers with a ruler and tell them to get their hands away. My brother ... was there and he would have been ten. He just thought it was funny. I was fourteen and was embarrassed. She made some other girls come and watch too."
98. At paragraph 90 of her statement, MPM [REDACTED] goes on to say the following. "There were several members of staff who would have seen the boys lined up, naked. They were PZF [REDACTED] and ..."
99. I don't know where MPM [REDACTED] is getting all this from. These are false accusations that she is making against me and I'm not accepting it. I don't even remember these things, and I don't believe they happened. That's the first I've heard of that. I never had any dealings with MPM [REDACTED]. She wasn't in my group. I never punished or sanctioned MPM [REDACTED]. We have never had an issue, MPM [REDACTED] and me, so I don't know why she has it in for me, telling all these lies. If it was true I agree that it is abuse, but it's not true. I wasn't even there.

RJF

100. I have seen an extract from a statement given by RJF [REDACTED] which states, "There was also a lady called PZF [REDACTED] who lived in Helensburgh and was a housemother. She held me under the water when I was a kid and would only let me up when I was gasping. She is still in Helensburgh today".
101. That's a lie. I have been getting harassed in the street by RJF [REDACTED]'s daughter and now I know why. She has been filling her head with a lot of nonsense. I'm not accepting that. I remember RJF [REDACTED], she is [REDACTED]'s sister. I don't know how old she was. She was younger than [REDACTED], but I didn't have any involvement with the [REDACTED]s. RJF [REDACTED] was always crying at Lagarie. Every time you looked at her she was crying.
102. I have met RJF [REDACTED] in Helensburgh a few times with her daughter and her daughter 'came at me' in the street. RJF [REDACTED] kept on walking, but her daughter just came for me. She didn't assault me, but RJF [REDACTED] was there. That was seven or eight years ago. I didn't know what I was meant to have done as I didn't know about any of this until I got all this information from the Inquiry through the post. But it's a lie and I wasn't there. That's why her daughter has been doing this to me in the street. I was told that RJF [REDACTED] used to stay in Rhu then she moved to Helensburgh. I have no idea why RJF [REDACTED] would say anything to her daughter about me or tell those lies. I actually heard from someone else, I don't want to say who, that originally [REDACTED] had made the same accusation but later admitted it wasn't me. I didn't look after RJF [REDACTED] at Lagarie, or [REDACTED].
103. If what RJF [REDACTED] is saying had happened, then of course that would be abuse. I am really hurt and upset that these things have been said about me.

### **Convictions**

104. I have no previous convictions.

**Leaving Lagarie**

105. I left Lagarie because I wanted out of it and I went up to [REDACTED] Hospital. When I handed in my notice to Mr Barrie, he tried to get me to stay. I don't know why. He wouldn't accept my resignation. I told him I was going because I wanted a change. I went up to Glasgow to work. I can't remember if the Sailor Society provided references.

**Other information**

106. 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..... PZF [REDACTED] .....

Dated..... 14-1-26 .....