

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

PTH

Support person present: No.

1. My full name is PTH. My Christian name is PTH but I was called PTH by my sisters when I was growing up, which became PTH so I prefer that. My date of birth is 1964. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My father was and my mother was. I was born in Simpsons Hospital in Edinburgh. I have two older siblings, or, who is ten months older than me and who is seven years older.
3. My dad was a big man, as were all the men in the family and the women were very strong independent clear thinking women that you just didn't mess with. That's one part of my heritage that I really like and hold strong to.
4. My father was a with the Merchant Navy and got his ticket when he was quite young, certainly still in his twenties. He could sail any merchant vessel in the UK or maybe Scotland, so he was. My mother was a teacher and with my dad being away at sea for long periods of time, my mum wanted some support, hence us going to her mother-in-laws house.
5. Our family lived in Linlithgow and was the name of the house. We then moved to my fathers' mother's house in Bathgate. We might have moved from

Bathgate to my auntie [REDACTED]'s house for a while, that was my fathers' sister's house, as I remember it was from there that we were taken to Lagarie.

6. My memories of my early life are like picture snap shots. My earliest is of a posh blue pram and I also remember getting run over. It was before I was seven and happened in Bathgate at my gran's house. Dad gave me money to get some sweets and when I was crossing the road I was hit by a bus. I had actually been told by a man that the road was clear to cross but thankfully I only skinned my knees and the man did come and apologise and give me a bar of chocolate.
7. I do have memories from being at home. My gran was a great jester and she would dress up and give us frights, she had a great sense of humour. I also remember having measles, falling off a wall and skinning my knees, watching my dad shave, which I loved, my grans electric blanket going on fire and getting a Scalextric for Christmas because I wanted to be a boy. They are all just snapshots and there was never anything that was traumatic, just good stable memories.
8. I can't remember going to a primary school before Lagarie, I only remember going to Sunday School. We were Protestant, and my parents did things like Sunday School regularly because it was good for the bairns. I remember that vaguely and it was good.
9. I used to have a memory of my dad telling [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and myself that gran had died but I've since discovered from [REDACTED] that, it was actually my mum that had died. That was when I was four and she died of pleurisy and pneumonia together, when she was only thirty five. What then led to us going to Lagarie was my gran also dying.
10. When my mum died my dad was distraught and I believe he was ill for a while. We were living with my gran, then when she died, I think we lived with my aunt [REDACTED] and my cousins for a while. I'm not exactly sure about that.
11. There must be something on official record but there must have been some meeting or process in place where family, social work and various other organisations to review what choices were available for my dad when it came to looking after his three

daughters, when he was at sea working. My mum had five sisters and not one of them took us in which is a hammer blow. What is upsetting in retrospect.

12. I do want to know the true facts of what happened because, to be honest, I would have great difficulty passing my father's family in the street now. I appreciate there may have been rivalry going on within the families and maybe the two sides didn't get on or didn't like each other, but whatever it was that happened there was a decision made by the authorities or by my dad or other relatives and he was unable to care for us. Nobody else seemed to want to step in, so a decision was made and all three of us ended up going to Lagarie. I am uncomfortable about that now and, as I've said, I would like to know all the facts. All three sisters were affected by that decision process and personally I can't ever remember being involved.
13. My father had to go to sea and work and there was nobody that wanted to take the role of looking after us which is a devastating blow for three children at our ages. My mum's sisters would visit and take us on a holiday but why did no one step in. Why couldn't they look after us for a few years or at least until [REDACTED] was older. We were only at Lagarie for a year, which isn't a long time.
14. I have this idea in my head that my father put forward money for us to go to Lagarie, but I don't actually know if that's true. It was perhaps a lump sum or money off his wages, I don't know, but it's what I was told later in life. I do know that my dad was in the Merchant Navy and that Lagarie House is part of the British Sailors Society, so it could be something to do with that.
15. I do wonder to this day why there wasn't something on the east coast as that's where we grew up. Why did they take us to the west coast? Was it because it was out the way, or because it was the British Sailors Society and my father paid for us to go there?

Routine at Lagarie House, Rhu

First Day

16. I went to Lagarie when I was seven and I stayed there for about a year, I don't know the exact dates. I thought we had all gone by bus but in actual fact, as [REDACTED] has now told me we went by car and all three of us went there together.
17. I remember arriving at the home and looking out the window. We went up a big driveway and there was this big old white turreted building. I have no memory of anyone meeting us but we did go in the main door and we were taken into a dining room where all the kids were sitting having their dinner. I remember there was a top table and other smaller tables with all the kids sitting at them. There were maybe twenty-five or thirty kids, and they were all staring at us. That's the snapshot that I've got of us arriving at Lagarie, all those kids staring at us and me in complete shock and horror wondering who all these children were and why we were there.
18. The place was mostly oak inside with a big staircase that led up to the bedrooms. The staff did sleep on the premises, they were upstairs in different quarters. There was a long corridor to the left that led to the play area and offices. I remember there was a piano in the play area and the walls were all panelled. There was a greenhouse type room with lots of glass and plants as well. There was also a younger kid's area, or nursery to the left as you came in. To the right there were swinging doors that led through to the laundry, the canteen or dining area. I presume the kitchen was off that. There was another staircase beside the laundry that also led up to rooms and dormitories and toilets and baths. Beyond the dining area there was an area at the back of the building, where all the shoes and boots were kept, and that led to the back entrance.
19. The children at Lagarie were aged from about seven to fourteen or thereabouts and there was a nursery, so there were babies as well. [REDACTED] would have been about the oldest there because she was fourteen or fifteen. I don't remember any children of colour, I think they were all Scottish. There were other families at Lagarie. There was the [REDACTED] family, there was seven of them and the [REDACTED] family, I only remember there was boys and girls from that family.

Staff

20. Mr and Mrs Smith were in charge at Lagarie when we first arrived there. From what I now know, the person that was in charge at Lagarie before the Smith's wasn't nice and something happened so the Smiths took over.
21. Mrs Smith was the matron in charge of the whole home and Mr Smith was always looking after their own children. She was a really lovely woman, she was clever and kind and was a good surrogate. I saw no badness at Lagarie when she was in charge and I suppose you could say she made a horrible situation more bearable for the children who were there.
22. Mrs Smith was wonderful, she had thick dark hair, she was kind and we all loved her. When she left, after we had been there for about six months, many of the children in that home were crying. I remember asking an adult member of staff why they weren't crying and they said "we don't all show what we're feeling". I clearly remember the day Mrs Smith left, I was holding on to the stair bannister and crying. I was so upset when she left.
23. The Rev and Mrs Barrie, who was the matron, came to Lagarie after Mrs Smith and were there when we left. I didn't like Mrs Barrie and I don't actually think Rev Barrie was a true reverend. I heard that from Mrs Smith, she told us he had some certificate from the United States that you paid money to get.
24. I remember the day they arrived I had climbed up a tree in the grounds of Lagarie to pick leaves to make perfume. I had this idea that I could make and sell my own perfume then save up enough money to leave the home. I distinctly remember looking down and seeing the Rev and Mrs Barrie skipping along the road, hand in hand. They were in their forties or something and I just didn't like that. It's a snapshot I have of the Barrie's being together and I just had this feeling that didn't like them.

25. 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.
26. 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.
27. Mrs Barrie came up to us and just hit that boy. Everyone was so stunned that we couldn't speak. Another staff member, Heather was also there and she told us to go to our rooms and get ready for school. Mrs Barrie only hit him the once, she used the back of her hand and hit him right across his face. It was awful and it was in front of everyone. 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.
28. I remember Heather working there, she's actually a distant relative, she was quite friendly with my sister. There must have been others working there as well, I just can't remember them now. There was possibly as many as six staff in total.
29. More recently I have done some research into our family background through voting records at the National Library. I discovered the Barrie's and maybe another six names that I knew of, were resident at Lagarie when we were living there.
30. There were cottages in the grounds as well and that's where the Barrie's lived when they came. There was possibly a gardener's cottage as well. I'm not sure who lived in all the cottages but I'm pretty sure the Barrie's lived in one.

Mornings and bedtime

31. I was in a big dormitory first of all and I shared a big four poster type double bed in there with [REDACTED]. There were other kids in there with us. [REDACTED] was separate from us then, because she was older. Later on [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and myself were all in the same room. [REDACTED] had a double bed and [REDACTED] and I had bunkbeds, I slept on the top.
32. I thought the dorms were all mixed, however I have since discovered from my sister [REDACTED], that they weren't. I do have a memory of a boy sleep walking and peeing in the corner of the dorm on some white shelving. I don't remember what happened about that.
33. I did start sleep walking at Lagarie, I'm not sure when that started. I'm not sure Mrs Smith knew about that but she would have been okay. [REDACTED] has told me she did find me once and she stopped me and took me back to my room.
34. I know there was a routine but I don't really remember getting up and washing and going for breakfast. We did get the minibus to and from school every day, I remember that.

Mealtimes/Food

35. I remember the first time we had custard and I asked why my custard had lumps in it. That was in the dining room and there was a very obvious uncomfortable silence, but I wasn't punished for that.
36. I only have vague memories of sitting eating meals. I can't say if it was good or bad. We had all our meals in the dining room and there was a top table, which is where the Smiths, and then the Barrie's sat, it was for top staff members and the matron.
37. I do have a memory of sitting in the play area, not the dining room, and having fish and chips which was in a light yellow batter. I'm fussy about the fish I eat to this day

and that was a disgusting smell, it was the batter not the fish but I wouldn't eat that, I remember that. I don't know why I was in the play room because we didn't eat in there, perhaps it was as a punishment having not eaten it in the dining room. I really can't remember.

Clothing/uniform

38. We did have a grey uniform for the school. It was a yellow and black tie at Rhu Primary and a red and black tie at Hermitage Primary and Hermitage Academy. All I remember from the bedroom is the bunk bed I don't remember having a locker or wardrobe but we must have had something for our clothes. I do remember [REDACTED] had to tie my tie for me.

Leisure time

39. There was a play area within the grounds and when you looked out our bedroom window there was also a square bit of lawn. That was in the room where we were all together, and we could actually climb out the window onto the cast iron fire escape, which was directly outside that window. We have a photograph of me and [REDACTED] in dresses standing on that fire escape.
40. I remember a wooded area and trees that we played on and an old bashed up blue car we played on, there was a rope swing as well. That's the sort of things we did.

Trips and holidays

41. We did go on some trips, I remember going to Faslane in our white minibus and we were taken onto the submarines and hovercrafts and things. I remember there was sweets laid out on all the beds in the submarine for us.
42. I also remember going camping to Arbroath, I remember the smell of the 'smokies', which I quite liked. We were in tents and there were activities going on, but I can't

remember what they were. My sister [REDACTED] would know more about that. I do remember it was cold, I'm not sure how long we stayed there for.

43. We also went to visit the Smiths after they had left Lagarie. I've spoken to [REDACTED] about this recently and she told me we had to get special dispensation to go and visit them in their new home in Aberdeen. We had to travel up by train and I do remember part of that. We stayed at their house and they took us out with their children. I don't know how long we were there it was perhaps just a weekend.

Schooling

44. There was no schooling at Lagarie, it was purely for care. I went to Rhu Primary School which I hated. There was a white mini bus that took us to the school. There was a stigma attached to us going to school because we always arrived in that bus and it had 'Lagarie Children's Home' written on the side of it, so everyone knew where we were from. I'm not sure about how we all got on with local children at school, it's not something we talked about.
45. I remember once I couldn't sleep one night because I had a maths test the next day. I had my first anxiety dream that night and I was taken to see Mrs Smith. In the dream I was naked walking up the steps of the primary school to go in for school. I had that dream for years, it took me that long to work out that it was an anxiety dream because I hated maths and I hated Rhu Primary.
46. I don't know who it was that took me to see Mrs Smith, but I was taken to her office and I remember she had a green desk lamp in her room. I sat in this small seat on the left and I was crying and upset about this maths test the next day. Mrs Smith wrote me a note and then gave me a drink. I'm sure she gave me something to calm me down and help get me to sleep. I was only six years old so I don't know what the teachers were thinking about giving us maths tests at that age.
47. I do remember being given the note she wrote to take to the teacher the next day and I have no idea what was in that letter but the teacher did read it. I presume it was just

telling the teacher to leave me as I couldn't cope, some form of protection I suppose. Mrs Smith could read me, she understood me.

48. I remember a girl, [REDACTED], who I knew and was at Lagarie, who wet herself almost every day at Rhu Primary School. She was traumatised, she was so stressed at being in Lagarie. She just did it all the time and without warning. The teacher once called me and asked me if I could help [REDACTED], but [REDACTED] never said anything to me so I never knew it was coming.

Healthcare

49. I remember getting extractions at the dentists and getting gas for that. I was going hyper when I got back from the dentist, having had the gas, and I was running about the place. I remember that I saw a man in my room that day and he was talking to someone else in the room.
50. I remember he was tall and was talking to someone, and he said "she's (or they've) been through a lot". I can't remember any more but I'm fairly sure that man was the gardener. He might have just helped carry me up the stairs having been to the dentist, I'm just not sure.
51. I remember I was once hit in the back by the handle of the swing door. It was an accident and members of staff were there and checked I was okay, but I don't know how it happened.
52. I don't remember ever having to see a doctor I can't think that I was ever sick. The first doctor I had was after we left Lagarie and that was Doctor Campbell who was at the Helensburgh practice.
53. I have no idea if Mrs Smith or any staff were medically trained, I don't remember any of them wearing any particular matrons or nurses type uniforms

Religious instruction

54. There was a church near Lagarie that we went to twice every Sunday. I didn't like church, no one liked it, but the Barrie's were religious so when they were there, that was what we did. He was a reverend and we had to go to church. I'm not sure if he ever did any preaching.
55. I have a memory of sitting in circles at Sunday School singing songs like 'Kumbaya' and other rancid happy clappy songs like 'Congratulations' by Cliff Richard and 'Chirpy Chirpy Cheep Cheep'. I now hate those songs, it's a trigger for me and I hate all that crap.

Birthdays and Christmas

56. I remember Christmas one day and being in a plain white room with glass doors, I can't place where that room was at Lagarie. It was when Mrs Smith was there and I was given a hobby horse as a present. Actually, that could have been a birthday or Christmas, I don't know.
57. I'm sure I remember a visit from Santa and wrapping paper and opening lots of presents but I can't be definitive about that. I do remember playing with lots of toys at Christmas time.

Family Visits

58. I'm fairly sure my dad came and visited us at Lagarie. I've no actual picture in my head of him coming up to collect us and take us out anywhere, but I'm sure he did. It's the same with my Auntie [REDACTED], we did have a photograph of [REDACTED] and I in these horrible nylon dresses and that was taken when we were at Lagarie and Auntie [REDACTED] had been with us and taken us out to the seafront and bought us chips. That's the only visitors I remember.

Social Work / Inspections

59. I have no memory of anyone ever coming to speak to us from the social work or anywhere official. I really don't think anything like that happened.

Running away

60. I know I wanted to escape from Lagarie, I wanted to get money and go, that's why I was doing my perfume thing, but I never actually ran away.

Discipline

61. I don't remember having any specific discipline explained to us. It was just the fear and the shouting from Mrs Barrie. My sister [REDACTED] remembers Mrs Barrie smacking me for something but I have no memory of that at all.

Abuse at Lagarie House

62. The Barrie's were just cruel, nasty, horrible people. I can't begin to describe how much fear there was at Lagarie when it came to the Barrie's. The Rev Barrie was quite a big fat bloke, he was balding on top and had big blocky teeth. He sweat quite a lot and had shiny skin. I have a memory of him smiling and laughing.
63. I have a strange memory of Rev Barrie from the children's play area. There were a few children, including myself, in the play area, where there was a piano, waiting to go to church one Sunday. Rev Barrie was with us and he was rolling about on the floor, encouraging us to do the same. There was about six or seven children all the same age and we started to roll about on the floor with him. He was tickling us and rolling around beside us and he was wearing a grey suit and had his dog collar on. He always had his dog collar on. At the time it was fun, and was a game but looking back now I feel it was ridiculous and wonder what exactly he was doing, you just don't do that sort of stuff. That's the only snapshot I've got of that incident.

64. At night-time Mrs Barrie would come into our room, where [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and I were sleeping and she would shout at [REDACTED]. She would shout obscenities, swear at her and call her a 'whore' and all kinds of things. I was awoken by the shouting and it caused me no end of stress. I didn't know what the word meant or why she was using that word but she shouted and swore at her on more than one occasion. [REDACTED] also had to explain to me what the word 'whore' meant. I was so scared and remember my heart hammering in my chest, all I remember is having this feeling of fear in my chest.
65. [REDACTED] did get on with Heather, a member of staff there who turned out to be a distant relation of ours, and she would sneak out and back to meet up with her at night. They were just out having a laugh, they weren't breaking the law or anything. I think Mrs Barrie maybe caught her or suspected her and that would have angered her but she certainly didn't like [REDACTED].
66. When Mrs Barrie shouted at [REDACTED] like that I always remember [REDACTED] would speak calmly and softly back to Mrs Barrie and then when Mrs Barrie had left the room, [REDACTED] would cry. I would leave my bunk bed and tell [REDACTED] everything was alright and give her a cuddle.
67. A few years after I had left Lagarie I remember I was in the gym changing room at Hermitage Academy with [REDACTED]. I don't know if she was still at Lagarie then but she was certainly there when I left. I remember seeing this awful burn mark on her neck and I asked what had happened. She said "Mrs Barrie" but didn't say anything else. I found out years later that [REDACTED] had been running about in the dining room, when Mrs Barrie had been ladling out hot soup and there had been an accident. I don't know exactly what happened to cause the burn on [REDACTED]'s neck. We were led to believe it was an accident but of course I didn't know that when [REDACTED] told me and I was thinking Mrs Barrie had done something intentionally to [REDACTED]. There I was thinking she was even more of an evil cow, but to this day I don't know for sure what happened.

68. I just remember being scared all the time at Lagarie. There was a feeling of fear all the time, you were told to stand still and shut up, both in school and out of school and it is that fear that's the most encompassing part of everything.
69. I have a memory of kicking someone when a group of us were playing out the back, it was just kids fighting but it was because of our accents. We were from the east and we were with all these kids from Glasgow who couldn't understand us and thought we were posh. The other kids thought we were snobs and were different and it probably didn't help that we were all put together in a room but we had to be. I feel it made perfect sense and there had to be a reason but I don't know who made that decision.

Reporting of abuse at Lagarie House

70. When we went to visit Mr and Mrs Smith in Aberdeen, [REDACTED] and Mrs Smith talked, [REDACTED] has told me that. [REDACTED] told her about the Barrie's and what was happening and this is why I can't understand certain things weren't done and why protocols weren't followed. People must have known what the Barrie's were like. [REDACTED] discussed what was happening with Mrs Smith and Mrs Smith would have reported it.

Leaving Lagarie House

71. When my sister [REDACTED] turned sixteen, we all left Lagarie. [REDACTED] said she was taking myself and [REDACTED] with her and that's the best decision she's ever made. We were desperate to get out of there and I remember the day we left. The front door was a big oak door and Mrs Barrie was standing in front of me by that door. She asked me what I was looking forward to the most when I leave and move into the town. I said I was looking forward to the sweet shops.
72. All the time I was looking at that front door behind her and thinking 'let me out, let me out, open that door and let me out'. That's such a vivid memory for me.

Life after being in care

73. To start with [REDACTED] rented a flat at [REDACTED] in Helensburgh. She was always going to keep the three of us together and I do remember there were difficult times. I don't know how she set all that up or what assistance [REDACTED] had from the social work or whoever. We didn't have much money and sometimes struggled to buy food and pay the rent and the electricity. I do remember going to bed hungry and eating basic things like rice and Ecco margarine, that kind of stuff.
74. [REDACTED] was quite bright at school and went to university, so we sort of became latchkey kids. [REDACTED] would travel to Glasgow for her university every day and [REDACTED] and I went to school, then played in James Street park until [REDACTED] came home.
75. [REDACTED] couldn't cope financially though, and there wasn't as much help available in those days. There was an aunt or two that came to visit us and I remember we had no money for electricity so we agreed that we had to get the aunts out the house before it got dark, so they didn't see that we were struggling.
76. I also remember getting a visit from a social worker, that might have been because [REDACTED] had to ask for help. I don't remember it but according to [REDACTED], the social worker left the flat in tears. That doesn't surprise me though because we had no electricity and we didn't have enough food in [REDACTED].
77. We ended up having to move to a local housing estate and stayed at [REDACTED] [REDACTED], Kirkmichael. There was no way someone of [REDACTED]'s age could manage a budget, go to university, hold down a job and bring up two siblings, and that's the annoying thing, [REDACTED] didn't have any support. There was nothing in place safeguarding or looking after [REDACTED]. I think, personally, that in today's society it's actually gone too far the other way.

78. Our dad was still working away for six months at a time. He had even been in hospital at one time but still wanted to carry on working. He loved his family but he just wanted to work. I don't know what involvement he had in us leaving Lagarie and renting our flat in Helensburgh and I don't know what kind of influence he had over what was happening. I feel it was [REDACTED] who was insistent on what we were doing and she made it happen and acted in our best interests.
79. Nowadays, [REDACTED] can be an absolute powerhouse when she wants to be, when she wants her own way she gets it done, but she is the only person I respect. She does say now that she feels a bit guilty but there's no one I respect more, there's no one can impress me more than my sister. She gave up on her university career to look after [REDACTED] and myself. It must have been horrendous for her, I remember waking up in the night and seeing her crying in the hallway.
80. Dad did come and visit us at the flat but he lived in Glasgow because that's where the port was and that was his work. One of my mums sisters also visited us at Helensburgh. It was hard for my dad, he must have been trying to contribute and did support us financially up to a point but it was very tough financially for all of us, and we did suffer.
81. I went to Hermitage Primary then Hermitage Academy and I remember studying for O levels by candlelight and not really having enough food or situations just not being that good for us.
82. I remember one occasion when my dad arranged with [REDACTED] to give her a break and take [REDACTED] and myself for a weekend. [REDACTED] went away for the weekend and dad was supposed to pick us up. There was a mix up in communications and he didn't pick us up so we were home alone. As a result a friend called Mags Webber, who was a social worker and whose husband was a policeman, called the social work.
83. I don't feel we were at all at risk and I was about fourteen or fifteen then, but two social workers appeared and came into the house. [REDACTED] was in hysterics as she had this fear that we might end up going back to Lagarie, but I spoke to them and explained that

we were okay and we would go to neighbours, which is what we did. I felt that whole episode was unfair to me and my family, and I hate Mags Webber for doing that. She was our neighbour and [REDACTED] they had many of their own problems, why report us? There were other decisions she could have made, but she put our family under threat. I just wanted to put that out there, and I don't blame my sister at all for it, she deserved a break.

84. I don't like to talk about that because it put us in danger of going back to Lagarie and it was that fear thing, that's what upset [REDACTED] so much. I understand her crying and being distraught but I had to screw the nut and speak to the social workers as an adult, because I knew what we were going to do. Nothing happened as a result of that and I can't remember what we said to the social work. The whole thing was just a miscommunication.
85. We had packed lunches and school meals so the school probably wouldn't have picked up on our situation at home. We were all doing what we could and in those days it wasn't such a rare thing to be poor or have a low standard of living.
86. I left school at sixteen with two 'O' levels. I was already working at a fish and chip shop peeling potatoes which is one thing about all three of us, we have always worked.
87. I left Helensburgh when I was 21. The reason I left was because I was gay and it was like 'Smalltown Boy' so I just had to go. I hid it from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], although I think [REDACTED] knew, but I wanted to go back to Edinburgh, it is my home town and where I was born.
88. I literally packed a rucksack one day, left my job at the [REDACTED] Hotel, said my farewells and went back to Edinburgh on the train. I ended up staying in a dilapidated bedsit in [REDACTED]. I don't know how long I was there but I got another flat after that and it was about then I wrote to [REDACTED] and told her I was gay.
89. Things then went full circle because [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] both ended up moving to Edinburgh as well. I don't know how it all happened but at the moment I'm living in

■■■■s flat in ■■■■■ with her son ■■■■■. We've lived in that flat for twenty five years now. ■■■■■ has her own flat in Edinburgh as well.

90. I've done lots of different things when it comes to work. In Helensburgh I started in catering in a fish and chip shop and then I did kitchen porter work in a hotel. When I came over to Edinburgh I was unemployed for a while then I got a job doing brickwork through the dole office. I worked on building sites and went to Telford College to do brickwork. I then did another course, on plastering, at Telford and I really quite liked that. I did a college course and got my City and Guilds 1 & 2 and I went on to work for West Lothian Council on building sites. I did experience many problems with interviews, and in the workplace, with male chauvinism and sexist attitudes and behaviour but it didn't bother me, I just got on with my work.
91. I did brickwork, blockwork, plastering and limework but I wanted to do more, academically, so I did an HNC in Architectural Conservation and went to Bournemouth University and did my bachelors in Heritage Conservation. I don't drive and I was told I wouldn't be able to do anything in conservation if I couldn't drive so I ended up giving up on that.
92. Since then I've done postal work, I've been a ■■■■■ at John Lewis, I've worked in security with G4S, I was a bike courier, I've been made redundant and I'm currently working in my job at Hillcrest.

Impact

93. I'm in my fifties now and I feel I don't deal with things very well. I have been taught by ■■■■■ and other members of the family to always be polite. I'm very well-mannered and below the radar, well brought up and not 'shouty bawly'. I expect people to behave as I would treat them and when they don't do that I just try to avoid them.
94. There's no point in talking about retribution for family not taking us in. Those that could have been involved in caring for us are all dead now. My cousins are obviously the

only people that are still about but I think it was probably just jealousy. Despite what happened all three of us have turned out really well. We have good ethics, good basic human morality and we are all decent people.

95. I don't remember wetting my bed at Lagarie but I do remember I wet the bed after we had moved out and were living in our rented flat. I would get into bed with [REDACTED] and then wet her bed as well. It was such a constant thing and she would put a towel down. I would also panic and forget how to breath and [REDACTED] would calm me down. That was in the early days when we moved into the flat and I link that to the trauma and fear factor.
96. I did have some trauma to deal with but that was just the cataclysmic change in my life. There was a double shame if you like, because we'd been abandoned by our family, which is literally true, as nobody wanted us and then you get put into a situation that is bad but still okay and that then becomes worse when you realise you have to survive and start from scratch. Much of that was without any help.
97. My home life and schooling was never going to be the same because I had to deal with this massive trauma, when I was so young, of the family structure going and bad people. Hitting kids shouldn't happen and those responsible for our care had no right to do that.
98. The fear was all encompassing and today I still have those fears. If someone blames me for something I have this fear of people staring at me or looking at me for questions that I can't answer or being accused of something that I didn't do. I hate that because I feel I'm a pretty honest and decent person. It's just carried on right through my life.
99. I also have a fear of responsibility. If you're in a good environment when you grow up, your first three or four years are very important and then after that it's things like images that you remember. I know it's done damage to me personally, because I can't cope with certain things. I can't cope with kids being hit, I can't cope with religion, it just doesn't exist for me, I can't cope with cruelty in any form. I tell people not to shout at me, because I walk away and cry. There must have been shouting at some point at

Lagarie. I also have that feeling of fear when it comes to being examined and tested, I hate that and my blood pressure and heart rate go up .

100. There was a woman called Sheila Lawson, who I believe worked at Lagarie, that went on to teach swimming at Hermitage Academy when I was there. She failed me for a swimming test badge and I was so sure that I was a good swimmer. We had to do a length and a breadth and she failed me. I was the only one in the class that failed. I could never understand why she failed me, when I knew I was good. I never swam for about five years after that because I thought I couldn't swim and I hated her for that. Now I have no proof of it, and I don't even remember her from Lagarie, but [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has told me she did work there, and I do wonder if she failed me because I had been at Lagarie.
101. I've had relationships in the past, but I like being on my own. I'm just not a home buddy and I like having my independence. I don't need anything like that, I want to cycle and swim more, and obviously work. I like to be in control of my own environment because for years I was never in control.
102. I've had many jobs, and all three siblings are much the same. We've all had different jobs and done different things, we've never stayed in the one job for 25 years. In any kind of crisis situation you have to keep moving and I think that might be part of the impact. You maybe don't want to put up with certain people so you just move on.
103. [REDACTED] has actually moved back to Helensburgh and has started her own [REDACTED] business. I've never really understood that but I think she wanted the challenge and wanted to go back over there. [REDACTED] works in finance, she's always been good with numbers. All three of us have always been very close.
104. I have visited Lagarie over the last fifteen years or so. It's all private flats now so I went to see it just because it's there. I don't dream about it or anything like that. I have watched the television programme about the abuse there, I knew the families that were involved, the [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED]. I had no idea of the level of abuse that was talked about on that programme, I just wasn't aware of it.

105. The programme made me feel sick and I totally believe the people that were abused because the Barrie's were like that. They could have gone from being slightly bad to really bad because they had total control. Rev Barrie was obviously a touchy feely person towards children and Mrs Barrie was an evil cow.
106. Things did become much worse at Lagarie after we left and we see that as a lucky escape. We have discussed it since with [REDACTED] and she does think we were being groomed and that the Rev Barrie's behaviour was the start of things to come. The Barrie's were predators and things went on and then escalated.

Treatment/support

107. I am getting counselling at work just now for a problem I have with a male colleague. I've never had anyone affect me the way he is, not in my whole life, and I'm finding it all a bit tricky. I have anger issues at the moment and I don't know where that comes from. It could be from when I was little and always had to toe the line and behave, we couldn't defend ourselves and couldn't shout and bawl so we never had the opportunity to display anger.
108. I really didn't know what was going on so I had to go into counselling. Personally I think he's a narcissist and is manipulating me within our work environment. That's all happening just now and I am finding it really difficult.
109. I haven't had any counselling in relation to my childhood and my time at Lagarie.

Reporting of Abuse

110. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and myself remained friends with Mr and Mrs Smith after they left. Something that I cannot understand is why nothing was done about the Barrie's sooner

because the authorities must have known about them and what was going on at Lagarie.

111. My sister [REDACTED] told Mrs Smith about them after we had left the home. Mrs Smith knew and would have done something about that, so other people must have known.
112. I was questioned at Hermitage Primary and again at Hermitage Academy in Helensburgh about being at Lagarie when the Barrie's were running the place. I was taken out of class and questioned about my time there. I remember that, you don't forget things like that and I remember being so scared to talk about it to other adults, so I just kept my mouth shut.
113. I don't know exactly who the people were that were speaking to me, but I do believe some of them were teachers from my schools at the time. They were sitting behind a desk and they were asking me questions about Lagarie. I know that as it would have been a flag to me straight off the bat and I would not talk about it at all with them. My understanding then was that I felt shame and fear and I was automatically suspicious, worried, scared and defensive. I'll never forget that although I just cannot remember the people. They were asking we about Lagarie and what it was like and I didn't understand why, as I was away from there and I was at school.
114. [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and I never spoken about it, it wasn't a weekly conversation but I do now hear stuff from my sisters in recent times that I've never heard from them before. It was all because of that element of fear, so we just didn't talk about it.
115. I've never reported anything to the police. At the time there was the fear thing so there was no way anyone was going to report the Barrie's for anything.

Records

116. There are gaps in my childhood and I would love to be able to fill them. If obtaining records is something that might help with that then I would be very keen to apply for any records that might exist.

Lessons to be Learned

117. There has to be an understanding that safeguards were not there at Lagarie. It should be known that children suffered there, people did horrible things to children there and that has to be known. There should be a plaque or something at Lagarie so people know.
118. There are so many more safeguards now than there was in that day. We were, through no fault of our own, taken from a very stable home life to a place where things were completely different. You cannot quantify that, it's such a shock to the system.
119. Nowadays I hear of children that are taken into care or made to live in a secure environment by their parents, who are maybe working but are able financially to cope with raising a child, but don't want to. That still goes on and there was my sister, who had no such choice, and never gave up and sacrificed her career for her siblings.
120. A lot of people treat children like commodities and if they don't behave they're just something that can be passed on to someone else to look after. If people can't look after children then why have children? I made the decision not to have a child, because I didn't want anything to happen to that child that was in the least bit detrimental, in that it might pass something on.

Hope for the Inquiry

121. People have to realise that children's homes are a place of fear for a lot of folk and bad things happened. That has to be recognised, stood up and addressed. There is no reason for that to happen, children are innocent up to whatever the legal age is. They are baby little bits of putty and you can mould them and unmould them as you

wish. You have control over that and this control in that situation was abuse. It was abuse, manipulation, control and power, and it was wrong.

122. That abuse was by people that were in a position to help and to understand how to bring up these children, who were already probably damaged, and they just didn't do it. It's such a simple thing, you just give them love. You can spend a lifetime trying to undo that kind of damage.
123. I don't know who was responsible for the decisions that were made surrounding us going into care, but there are certain distant relations, on both my mothers and fathers side of the family that I just cannot forgive for it. I also can't forgive the authorities for not stepping in at Lagarie. I never saw an inspector, there was nothing, there was nobody to speak to and nobody did a thing. There was no after care, my sister was left on her own and I cannot forgive that.
124. My sisters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], have both approached the Inquiry and both are giving statements regarding their experiences. We have since spoken to one another about our time in care and openly shared our memories. These have been the first times we have all spoken about Lagarie in such depth and it has been far more intense. It's been extremely difficult for all of us and it has caused us much pain. I still feel so angry about the situation, so far down the line, and my sisters are the same. We all feel Lagarie should be named and shamed and that the British Sailors Society needs to be held accountable.

Other information

125. 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 PTH

Dated 22nd June 2021