

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Thomas WILSON

Support person present: No

1. My name is Thomas Stewart Wilson. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1954. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Buckhaven, Fife and originally stayed with my mother, [REDACTED], and my father [REDACTED] in a council house in Leven in Fife. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] when mum and dad separated, but dad stayed as a lodger in the house for a few years..
3. My dad rarely worked but when he did, he had jobs with coal, in a brick works, Merchant Navy and some other labouring jobs. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Later in my life, when I was in the custody system, mum and dad split up and she moved in with [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
4. I was too young to have any memories of my time with my own family but from my records I was placed into care when I was ten months old. I saw from those same records it was stated that some of the reasons for me going into care was a result of neglect from my parents.


Greenbank Children's Home, Leven

5. My time in Greenbank was from when I was about ten months old until I was about four. It was not a constant time there as I returned to the family home where I would spend a few months, maybe as much as a year, until things went wrong again and then when I was about two years old, I would be back into Greenbank.



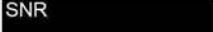

Routine at Greenbank Children's Home, Leven

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later


7. Again, I was too young when I was at Greenbank and have no memories of my time there. The dates and movements involving Greenbank are mostly from my records. I was back at my family home when I was moved to my next placement. At that time, we had moved house and were now living in Wemyss at that time.

St Margaret's Children's Home, Elie, Fife

8. I was four years old when a social worker called at the family house and picked me up to take me to St Margaret's. I do remember that I did not want to leave the family home and the social work had to grab me by the arm to put me into the car.
9. When I arrived at St Margaret's I saw that it was a large Victorian House. I met   who was  for the home. David Murphy  as the headmaster during my time at the home. He would have been in his thirties then, but he has since died. I also met Margaret Finlay who was in charge of the girls. She did not stay at the home as she had her own house nearby. We had to call the people in charge uncle or auntie.

10. I was still upset when I arrived as I was wanting to go home. I did see [REDACTED] that first day, but he had different thoughts from me as he was happy to be there. He ended up staying there until he was old enough to join the army. [REDACTED] the same dormitory.
11. [REDACTED] there were periods where the social work thought things were okay with my family and I would be back staying with them. It never lasted longer than a few months before I was back at St Margaret's. I stayed there for about eight years.

Routine at St Margaret's Children's Home, Elie, Fife

First day

12. I think there would have been fifteen to twenty boys and the same number of girls. They would have been between the ages of four and up to about sixteen. In St Margaret's there were three dormitories for boys and a large room for the girls. In the dormitory I stayed in we had bunk beds and there were eight of us in there. In one of the other boy's dorms there were five or six bunks and the last boy's dorm there were ten sets of bunks. All the dormitories were on the upper floor. The toilets and showers were also on this floor and there was a staircase leading to the attic.
13. On the ground floor there was the dining hall, kitchen, offices for the staff and nurse along with a bedroom for staff for overnight stays. There was a playroom where we could play the bagpipes, violins, and games. There was another bedroom for any students learning to be care workers and who needed to stay there. There was a kit room with a sewing machine. In that room there were lots of large mail type bags which contained clothing that had been handed into the school from charities.
14. There was the boiler house where the laundry was also done. This was in a corridor which led to the rear gardens, where fresh vegetable were grown. There was also an area out the back where we could sometimes play football. The garden had a large

stone wall surrounding it. In the wall there was a gate built into it which led to Elie beach.

15. That first morning [REDACTED] arrived, [REDACTED] given a bath as [REDACTED] still dirty. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] also given a clean set of clothes and shoes. They also checked [REDACTED] hair for nits. [REDACTED] mother and father never kept [REDACTED] clean.

Mornings and bedtime

16. I think we were woken in the mornings by one of the staff giving us a nudge and telling us it was time to get up. I would then be washed, and we would go for breakfast. After breakfast and when I was old enough, I would get ready for school. When we finished school at the end of the day we would get washed and ready for our evening meal. At supper time we might have been given a cake and cocoa before going to bed.

Mealtimes/Food

17. When it came to our meals, we had our set place at the table. The staff would place the meal onto the tables for us to eat. Compared with what I was getting at the family home it was nicer. Other than an incident with rice there were no issues with the food as it was mostly good.

Washing/bathing

18. When it came to washing and bathing at St Margaret's I was always having to get help from Mr ^{KNC} [REDACTED] or Mr Murphy as I had never been shown how to wash myself.

Clothing/uniform

19. All the clothes I wore came from the home as the ones I wore were so dirty and scruffy. Mr Murphy or later Mr ^{KNC} [REDACTED] even had to help me get into my pyjamas as I had never worn them before. When it came to going to school, we had to wear shorts every day, whether it was summer or winter.

Leisure time

20. In the evening time we might be doing some wrestling, boxing, or going out to play. It would be Mr Murphy that would take us for the sports. If I had been bad Mr Murphy would have me fight in the boxing ring with an older boy and he would be told to give me it tight for being bad. When this happened to me, I would have been about six or seven and the boy I had to fight would have been about twelve. I am not sure the older boys wanted to be involved in the fights as we all got on well together.
21. If we were in the games room, there were plenty of board games along with books. I could only look at the pictures in the books as I was still not able to read properly.

Trips and holidays

22. We were taken out a few times from the home. We sometimes went to Craigtown Park near St Andrews. We would travel there and back on a bus. At Christmas time they might take us to the panto. I can remember Mr Murphy took us camping and hiking, sometimes to a bothy in the Highlands.

School

23. I went to the local school, Elie Primary when I was five years old. We always walked to school and for the first three weeks the staff would walk you so far and let you go the rest. After the three weeks we walked all the way on our own.
24. I was given a form of education at the school, this also included a class in learning to knit. I did not take much in but was able to read basic words but was still behind the others in the class.
25. I did not like my time there as I was always having fights with the other kids. As far as the education there was concerned, I was always behind the other pupils as I was still being moved from the home, back to the family home and then back to St Margaret's.

26. We would have our lunch at the school and then back to the home later in the afternoon. I was given a free lunch as neither of my parents were working at that time.

Healthcare

27. For any health care need there was a part time matron available. I think she might have been in for two or three hours a week. Any other time the staff would look after any minor cuts or abrasions. I can remember when I was a bit older, I would be doing pole vaulting in the back and we would land in the sand pit. There was one occasion in particular that when I landed, I had not noticed there was a metal toy in the sand, and I landed my knee right on top of it. I had to go to hospital for that cut and still have the scar.
28. There was Mr Gyan who was the dentist and came to the home. We would go to one of the portacabins which he would use as his treatment room.

Birthdays and Christmas

29. When it came to birthdays the staff would give us a present and a cake which we would share with the other boys. When it came to Christmas the staff would make sure we were given a couple of presents. They would have the decorations up in the home and there would be a nice dinner. The one issue I can remember was we were not allowed to touch the ornaments on the tree. If we did and the staff caught us, we would get a slap on the hand, usually by Mr Murphy.

Visits/Inspections

30. I am sure I did get visits from the social workers, but they were not very often. Most of the times they came they spoke with staff. I think it would only have been once maybe twice they spoke to me.

- [REDACTED]
31. When I was at St Margaret's I did not see much of [REDACTED] as he wanted to play with the boys around his age.

Family contact

32. If I had spent perhaps an entire year at the home, I would only ever see my mum once during that time. She would be allowed to take me out of the home for a certain amount of time. It would have been for a few hours. During one of those visits, I did tell my mum about the incident involving the rice and the sick. Her response was I should just be eating the meals I was given. I got the impression she just didn't care.
33. I can recall one visit the family made and mum arrived along with my dad, and stepdad. They were all visiting me together.

Running away

34. I can remember when I was about ten years old, I had been stealing from the headmaster's desk. Mr Murphy had caught me and took me to the police station in Elie. The police officer locked me in a cell for about an hour.
35. Mr Murphy threatened me that if I was caught stealing again that would be where I would end up. I told him that if he did that then I would tell them about the incident with the rice and sickness and the abuse he was carrying out on me. He just said to me that they would never believe me. I then decided I was running away. I managed to get on a bus from Elie to Leven and then sneaked onto another bus to mum's place in Kirkcaldy.
36. Although I knew the street, she stayed in I did not know which house it was. I bumped into [REDACTED] and she took me to the house. I was not there long before Mr Murphy was phoned. He was on holiday at the time and told mum that Margaret Finlay

would deal with me. She picked me up and when I was back at the home as punishment, I was kept in my room and lost privileges.

Bed Wetting

37. At St Margaret's I did have issues with bed wetting. The staff did try to help by getting me up during the night to try and stop this, but it did not always work. There was a maid at the home, and she would come in to clean and change my bed. The staff understood and I was never punished for wetting the bed. This issue stayed with me until I was about thirteen or fourteen.

Abuse at St Margaret's Children's Home, Elie, Fife

38. I did have an issue with some food at St Margaret's, one of which was rice with my meal. I had never had this before going there. The first time I tried to eat the rice, but it was making me ill and I was sick. Mr Murphy was trying to make me eat the whole meal, rice, and sickness. It took me nearly two hours sitting there as he waited until I had tried to finish it. He was not physically forcing me it was just his manner. I did try to eat it all but eventually he gave up and then gave me a row.
39. I was five years old when there was one night Mr Murphy came into my bedroom. He lifted me from my bed and carried me to his own room. In that room he made me play with him and he was trying to penetrate me. It was so sore I was screaming and that was when he put a pillow over my face, and he raped me anally.
40. The next day when I was at school I could not sit on the hard wooden seats because of the pain. I couldn't tell anyone as I was so scared. Because of this the teacher got annoyed with me for not sitting I was given the belt over the backside, which just made the pain worse.
41. Mr Murphy continued to do this two or three times a week, over the next four or five years. After the first year you just learned to accept it. When this was happening, he

kept telling me I was not to tell anyone and if I tried, I would never be believed. He started to buy me new presents and this included a new bicycle. I was not the only one that he bought a bike for as there were many other boys with new bikes. No one questioned why we were given the new bike.

42. He had a choice of any of the boys in the three bedrooms. Sometimes I was so scared I would go to auntie Margaret's room and sleep in her bed. She was not aware of what was happening and would just try to comfort me. There was also a chalet outside for the girls where I used to try and hide.
43. It was not always at night that Mr Murphy would abuse us. Sometimes he would try and find someone who was on their own during the day. I learned to hide in different places at the house to avoid him. This changed my personality and I was always so sad. Neither myself or any of the other boys ever spoke about it amongst ourselves.
44. Mr Murphy had his favourites. There was a boy whose second name was [REDACTED], and another called [REDACTED]. Mr Murphy would teach them to play instruments such as the violin and the bagpipes. He constantly had them sitting on his knee. If anyone did ask what he was doing, he would just tell them that it was because the boys were being good.
45. I did get a hiding from Mr Murphy on two or three occasions for misbehaving. One of those times was for taking a photograph from the headmaster's desk. This would result in a slap on the bare backside.
46. There was also an Irish student called HWO [REDACTED], who was working and staying at St Margaret's when I was resident there. I can remember we were to call him Uncle HWO and he was in his forties and had the foulest breath. I think he was with the home for anywhere between six months and a year. I was about seven or eight when it happened to me, but I was not the only boy abused.
47. When it happened to me, I was walking along the corridor, when without warning he pulled me into his room, which was next door to Mr Murphy's. He immediately pulled

his trousers down and tried to make me perform oral sex on him. I managed to struggle enough to stop him. He tried this on four or five different occasions. He also tried to penetrate me anally, but again it never happened. I would just be shouting and screaming until he stopped.

Reporting of abuse at St Margaret's Children's Home, Elie, Fife

48. I am aware that one of the residents called [REDACTED], did try to report what HWO [REDACTED] had done to him, but I don't know what happened with that.
49. I am aware that later in my life Mr Murphy was taken to court for abusing some of the boys. It was during his trial that more information came out about HWO [REDACTED] also being involved in abusing some boys.

Leaving St Margaret's Children's Home, Elie, Fife

50. After I had ran away the staff decided that my behaviour had deteriorated so badly that I was told I would have to leave the home. Mr Murphy said that he wanted me sent to a remand home. I had to go in front of a Panel, and they decided that I would be sent to a List D/Approved School. I was about eleven years old at this time. My mum was in the court, but I was not allowed to speak with her.
51. While the social work attempted to find a home for me, I was back at St Margaret's and told that I had to stay in my room and was not allowed to mix with anyone. Mr Murphy told me that if I was to apologise then they would make the case for me to stay at St Margaret's. They even tried to get [REDACTED] to make me apologise, but that was never going to happen.
52. After the Panel had read the social work reports on me it was decided that I should be sent to Dale School in Arbroath. This was an Approved School. I was never told how long I would spend there.

Dale School, Arbroath

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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85. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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94. I was about thirteen when I left Dale School and went home to stay with mum. Dale School also arranged with the social work department that I had to see them every couple of weeks. It was like being on licence or probation. Miss Henderson, my social worker, told me that I had to behave, or I could end up being put back into Dale School or maybe somewhere else.

95. I was only home for three or four weeks before I got myself into trouble again. Mum was at the Panel along with social workers. The Panel were discussing the things I had done wrong. They were then given the social work reports and they told me I was

being sent to Rossie Farm, Montrose. I went straight to Rossie Farm from the Panel and was taken there by the social worker

Rossie Farm School, Montrose

96. I think Rossie Farm was privately run. I think when I was sent there it was a Mr LLY who was SNR. there were different staff for schoolwork, joinery and gardening. I can't remember the names of the other staff.

Routine at Rossie Farm School, Montrose

First day

97. When I first arrived, I saw that it was a really long white coloured building and it was on two levels. It was all boys there and I think there were probably eighty boys there, who were aged between thirteen and sixteen. I was not told how long I was to be there for. The lower level was mainly the offices, dining areas and leisure area. On the upper floor were where the dormitories were, along with the toilet and washing facilities.
98. It was all boys at Rossie Farm and they were aged between thirteen to sixteen. I was not told how long I was to be there for. I was very apprehensive when I went there as I had heard about the place before from others who had been there.

Mornings and bedtime

99. It was the usual routine for the day. We were woken by staff, washed, and dressed and down for breakfast. We would then get ready for any classes, but I don't remember there being much of that.

Mealtimes/Food

100. I never had any issues with the food when I was there. There was plenty to choose from and I don't remember being hungry.

Leisure time

101. On the Saturdays I was allowed to go down to Montrose where I was able to spend the pocket money we were given. From the time I was in the home I was allowed to smoke, but only after my mum had given written permission.

School

102. When I first went into the home there were some classes we had to go to within the home. I don't remember much about them. Once I was fourteen that stopped, and we moved onto doing jobs within the home.

Work

103. When you reached the age of fourteen you were tasked with carrying out some chores in the home. The first one I did was topping the carrots from the fields or you might be asked to pick potatoes. You did get some pay, but I don't remember it being very much.

Family contact

104. Mum did visit me at Rossie Farm on a couple of occasions, but there were no visits from the social work. There was no home leave when I was there.

Discipline

105. There were no beatings or kicking's from any of the staff. They did use corporal punishment, but it was usually ^{SNR} [REDACTED], Mr ^{LLY} [REDACTED] who administered the punishments. This was usually the belt given on the hands. I did not like it on my hands

and preferred it be given on my legs. I think I was given five or six strokes of the belt on maybe three or four occasions, maybe for fighting with other boys there. I did have marks on my legs but preferred that to having the belt over the hand.

Bed Wetting

106. Because the atmosphere with the staff at Rossie Farm was much better all the issues I had with bed wetting went away.

Abuse at Rossie Farm School, Montrose

107. There was bullying but that was from older boys taking it out on the younger ones.
108. There was an older boy called [REDACTED] who would try and get me on my own and told me he wanted to touch me. He cut a hole on my trouser pockets so he could get his hand on my penis. This became a regular thing with him. It was never him asking me to touch him.
109. He did this to me about a dozen times. There were times [REDACTED] would follow me when I was on the football pitch, and he would take me behind some of the trees. I was still about thirteen when this was happening and [REDACTED] was about fifteen.

Reporting of abuse at Rossie Farm School, Montrose

110. I was always afraid to report any of the abuse. If anyone found out that you were reporting, you were classed as a grass and that would get you in more trouble with the residents.

Leaving Rossie Farm School, Montrose

111. It was about a month before I actually left Rossie Farm, that I was told I was being allowed to leave and go home. I was told that I was getting to go home because I had been behaving myself.
112. When I did get home, it was much the same with reporting in. I had to report to the social work offices every couple of weeks, just like I did after Dale School.
113. I think I was home about six weeks before I started getting into trouble again. I was soon back in front of another Panel, but I don't think mum was there that time.

Unknown remand home, Edinburgh

114. I think I might have spent a couple of weeks in the remand home in Edinburgh, but I can't remember the name. I had been on something like a police bail and got into bother again while I was out and was sent to the remand home. I was to stay there until a place could be found for me to go to.

Routine at Unknown remand home, Edinburgh

First day

115. It was the social work department that took me to the remand home in their car. It was only when I was in the car that someone told me where I was going. I can remember it was only about a mile from the shopping area. Although I only spent a couple of weeks there, I was never told how long I was to spend there. I would have been about fourteen when I went there.

116. When I went to the home, I found it was all boys there. I think they were aged between thirteen and seventeen and there were anywhere between eighty and a hundred boys there. I don't know what organisation ran the home.

Discipline

117. Again, there were no beatings when I was in this home, but the strap was still being used as a punishment. By this time, I had buckled down and never got the belt. There was some bullying from the older boys but nothing from the staff.

Leaving Unknown remand home, Edinburgh

118. After being in that home for the two or three weeks I was sent back to the panel. After this hearing I was sent to Oakbank Residential School in Aberdeen. It is about a mile outside of the main shopping area at Union Street. I was still about fourteen when I went there,

Oakbank Residential School, Aberdeen

119. When I arrived at Oakbank I soon found out that most of the boys were from the Dundee area.
120. There was a perimeter wall but it was only about 2 feet in height. I was in Oakbank on two separate occasions. I don't know what organisation ran the home.

Routine at Oakbank Residential School, Aberdeen

121. When I stayed there the first time, I was in a large dormitory with another forty to fifty boys. They were between thirteen and seventeen years old. We slept on metal beds and there were metal lockers between each of the bed areas. It was just like a hospital

ward with the row of beds on both sides of the large room. The second time I went to Oakbank I was housed in a new built block and I had a room to myself.

School

122. At Oakbank there were two classrooms in the main building and a science room at the back of the main building.

Running away

123. I never even thought about running away from there as the staff were much more relaxed.

Discipline

124. You might have some fights in the home with the other boys as there were lots of falling out, dependant on what part of the country you were from. If you were caught fighting you might get a punishment.
125. There was a punishment system in place in which you were given "hours" for anything you had been doing wrong. There was a record card kept within a box in the office of the reasons for being punished and how many hours had been allocated. If you were being particularly bad and had gathered perhaps twelve to fourteen hours punishment then the next level, was you were not allowed to go into Aberdeen town centre at the weekend.
126. They still had corporal punishment there and they used the belt. I had managed to get myself in order and was not getting into trouble, so I never got the belt while I was at Oakbank. I had been through the system and was aware that if I behave myself there was a chance of getting out of there much quicker.
127. Once more I think there was no abuse from the staff and the atmosphere was much better so that made my time there much easier.

Abuse at Oakbank Residential School, Aberdeen

128. There were older pupils there that sexually abused me while I stayed there. One of the boys was a lad called [REDACTED] who was an older boy, maybe about seventeen. To avoid being seen by the night watchman, [REDACTED] would crawl under the beds in the dorm and climb into my bed. He would rub his penis between my legs until he had finished.
129. There was an area behind the boiler house where you could not be seen by anyone. This was where a boy called either [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] made me masturbate him. I can't remember how old he was, but probably a similar age to [REDACTED] seventeen.
130. There was another older boy, who was known as '[REDACTED]' who was about the same age as the others, and he too would make me masturbate him. He also tried to make me perform oral sex on him, but I was able to stop him doing that.
131. I was not the only boy this was happening to as these three were abusing many of the other younger boys in the home.
132. All the abuse I mentioned took place the first time I was in the home. The second time I was there I was not abused by anyone, staff, or pupils. I was only there for three or four weeks. I was then sent on a train to the court. I was told I was being given a good report and would return there. It turned out they gave me a bad report and as a result I was sent to borstal.
133. There was another boy who I thought was a friend, who abused me, but he was younger, nearer my own age. His name was [REDACTED], and he was from the Dundee area. He made me masturbate him.

Reporting of abuse at Oakbank Residential School, Aberdeen

134. I don't think any of the staff were aware of the sexual abuse that was taking place. I know I didn't tell anyone. If you thought about telling anyone while you stayed in those places, then the others would treat you as a grass. Your time in care would then be hellish.

Leaving Oakbank Residential School, Aberdeen

135. The first time I was there I think I spent about a year in Oakbank. Before being released after that first time at Oakbank I was given a new suit and a new pair of shoes. I was then back home, and I think I was only out of there for a few months before I was back in trouble. I was subject of a recall order and back to court. After reading the reports they decided I was to go back to Oakbank.
136. The final time I was released from Oakbank I was once more back with mum. I was only out for a short time before I was back in trouble. I was between sixteen and eighteen and after being at court the Sheriff decided I should be sent to Polmont Borstal. The reason I thought I was nearly eighteen is because I thought that was the legal age you had to have been before being sent to those places. I don't have any records from my time at Polmont.

Polmont Borstal

137. My time at Polmont Borstal was to be an assessment period for eight weeks. At the end of this assessment period, they would decide where I would spend the remainder of any sentence.

Routine at Polmont Borstal

138. Wherever we were moving around within Polmont Borstal we were made to march at double time. Every morning we were made to run a mile in the yard. This was to be done before we had our breakfast. We were made to wear our shorts, t-shirt, and our training shoes. It did not matter what the weather was, it was the same outfit.
139. After our breakfast we stayed in our cells for most of the remainder of the day.

Mealtimes/Food

140. Our breakfast and all the other meals were eaten in our cells. After being in the exercise yard we had to collect our meal from the food hall and take it back to our cells. In the evening we might have been given a cup of tea and a bun in our cells. You probably spent a minimum of twelve hours a day in your cell.

Clothing/uniform

141. The staff at Polmont wore their own civilian clothes. All the inmates wore a borstal type uniform, but I cannot recall the colours.

Leisure time

142. There was an hour of recreation in the evening where we would have access to a snooker table, pool table and table tennis. If we did not like that there was a television which we could all watch.

Education

143. There was no education carried out while I was in Polmont, and you were not allowed anything in the cells.

Healthcare

144. I did manage to see the prison psychologist twice when I was in Polmont. I would tell him that the issues I was having was due to the abuse I was suffering from the staff. I presume he just ignored it because nothing ever happened.

Work

145. There were no chores to be carried out and no education while I was there.

Family contact

146. I did not get any visits from my mum, other family, or any social workers while I was in Polmont.

Abuse at Polmont Borstal

147. Mr ^{HWN} [REDACTED] was one of the staff there. He told us we had to call him "Sir" whenever we addressed him. If he saw us moving around the place and we were not marching in time he would hit you over the head with a stick he carried. I was not the only one he did this to, as many of the other inmates were treated the same. If he did not use the stick, he would just use his hands. He beat me on maybe twelve different times while I was there, for anything he decided I was doing wrong.
148. I never hit any of the officers, but I was aware and saw others who did. They would then be beaten in their cells by a group of officers. Most of the officers were ex-military and knew how to hurt you without marking you.
149. The staff were continually beating us to keep us in our place. After about three weeks of this I could not take it anymore. I used the [REDACTED] in an effort to hang myself. An officer came into the cell and found me. I was cut down and put in front of the governor. He decided he would just give me a row and send me back to my cell. I

tried to tell him that it was because of the abuse I was suffering from the staff. He ignored this and just sent me back to the hall. I know that there have been many suicides in Polmont and most of them are due to the abuse handed out by the officers. Other than Mr ^{HWN} I can't remember any of the other names.

150. If any of the inmates raised their hands to one of the staff he would get a visit in his cell from about six officers and they would give him a beating.

Leaving Polmont Borstal

151. At the end of my assessment period at Polmont it was decided that I would spend the remaining eight months of my sentence at Noranside Borstal in Forfar. The eight months along with the assessment period were part of a two-year sentence I was to serve. I had behaved during my time so was allowed out on good behaviour.

Noranside Borstal

First day

152. I was in a cell on my own. The cell I had gave me a view of the outside and that helped make things a bit easier while I was there.

Clothing/uniform

153. We all wore a brown coloured uniform, and the staff wore their civilian clothes.

Work

154. When I was at Noranside Borstal I was part of a working party and one of the things I did was to work on a farm. Part of the role on the farm I was to ensure the cattle and sheep were fed. The staff who supervised us on the farm were very pleasant.

155. When the older boy on that detail moved on, I was allowed to be the tractor boy. While I was allowed to drive the tractor, I had to plough the fields.
156. We all got a wage for doing those chores and as long as we had behaved, we were allowed to go into town on the Saturday to spend our money. We could also buy some items from the prison shop like sweets, soap, or shampoo etc.

Running away

157. It was good for me with the change in atmosphere as that meant that I never thought about running away.

Discipline

158. I had dreaded going to Noranside but because there was no army style atmosphere and no beatings, I ended up enjoying most of my time there.

Abuse at Noranside Borstal

159. There was no abuse from either the staff or other inmates while I was in Noranside.

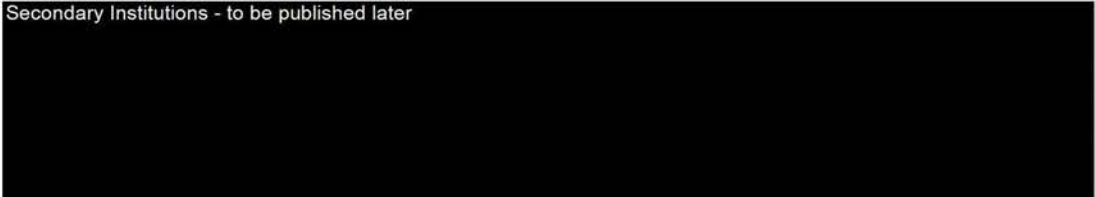
Leaving Noranside Borstal

160. When my sentence was completed, I was released and went back to stay with mum. I think I lasted a couple of months before I was back to being in trouble again.
161. My next time I was in prison was Friarton YOI in Perth where I was sentenced to six months and only served four for good behaviour. After that I spent different short spells in the prison system and was held in a variety of prisons in Scotland.


162. Around 1974 I moved down south to the Ashington area but again I was getting into trouble. I was sentenced to sixteen months but also had some outstanding charges from my time back home. I was brought back to Scotland for those outstanding matters and spent the remainder of my sentence along with another fifteen months for the outstanding matters in Scotland.

Life after being in care

163. Secondary Institutions - to be published later



164. I can remember when I was about 26 or 27 and I was in prison at that time. I had told my family not to write to me. I was still feeling lonely and one day I decided I would write to Mr Murphy. When I was in the jail some of the memories were coming back to me. I wrote the letter and sent it to the social work and asked them to forward it to him. He did reply to my letter and then started sending me the local newspaper. In those letters I sent I would be asking him why he had carried out the abuse on me. He never gave any explanations and on one occasion he asked to come and visit me when I was released from the prison, but that was never going to happen. I understand he may have passed

165. I met my first wife, and we got married while I was in prison. When I was released from jail, I found she had been  and I had the marriage dissolved.

166. Around 1990 I moved to live in the Newcastle area. I got married again around 1992 but she ended up giving me a choice of the marriage or drink. I chose drink but when I got off it, I was able to go back to her. That was three years ago, and I have not touched a drink since.

167. I did work during my times out of the prison system, first as a van boy then in a Fishmongers and I have done many labouring jobs. I even started my own pallet business. When I was out of trouble I always managed to keep working until I was about sixty years old.

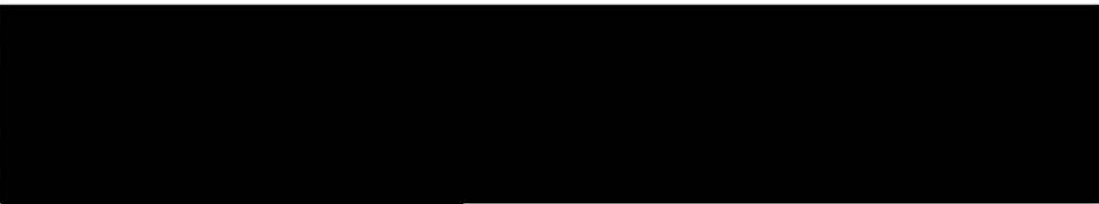
Impact

168. I recall advice from a psychiatrist when I spent a short time in Peterhead. He told me that I would be better off if I stayed away from my family and live on my own. When I was in Saughton prison I can recall I had [REDACTED] and ended up in hospital for five days. Again, I saw a psychiatrist and he too said I should go and live on my own as it would be better for me.

169. I blame my parents more for a lack of education. There was no encouragement from them to learn because they were addicted to alcohol and neither of them were working. They would even keep [REDACTED] off school when it suited them. When I was actually at the schools, I enjoyed my time there and would take things in but with all the interruptions, being moved from home to home it affected me badly.

170. As a result of my time in care I have had issues with alcohol and drug addiction. My psychiatric issues are also as a result of the abuse I received during my time in care at St Margaret's [REDACTED] as well as my parental upbringing. My last time I spent in hospital was for a two-week period and that was to do with my alcohol problems. I think my issues with alcohol began when I was around sixteen or seventeen. I used it to get rid of the memories of my time in care. Most of the crimes I committed were to fund my drinking.

171. I had been prescribed Diconol for pain relief and that was one of the tablets I became addicted to. I was on this drug for thirty years. I have been off those tablets for the last four or five years.

172. From the age of ten years old I have been prescribed medication for my depression. It only stopped when I was in prison and as soon as I was back out my doctor re-issued the prescription and I still take them to this day.
173. I am still having nightmares from the abuse I suffered at **Secondary Institutions -** Polmont Borstal. To this day I still see a psychiatrist to help dealing with those issues.
174. If I was not being abused while I was in care, I would have had a much better life. I would have been able to learn more and would not have resorted to committing crime. I could have done something with my life.
175.  I was not at my mother's funeral, but I did make it to my dad's. I have nothing to do with any of the remaining family.

Reporting of Abuse

176. Around 1990 I was living in England and saw an article in newspapers that the police were looking for people who had resided in St Margaret's during the dates I was there. Up until that time I had not told anyone and had buried all the bad memories. I just burst out crying which was noticed by my wife. I went up to my room and that was when I told her of the abuse I had suffered.
177. I got in touch with the police in Glenrothes and we made an appointment for me to go to them and provide a statement. I think that statement only related to my time in St Margaret's and David Murphy in particular. About eighteen months later I got a citation to go to Perth High Court. He initially pled not guilty, and it was transferred to Glasgow High Court for trial. He eventually pled guilty to many charges and made a deal about

those charges, some of which included having abused me. He was sentenced to fifteen years.

178. About a year ago I took Fife Council to court after I had been given advice from the police about taking a civil action. I contacted my solicitor, and he took on the case against the council. He also helped me get my social work records. I spent three days in the witness box. The council eventually tried to get me to accept £80,000 - £100,000 but I settled for £150,000. I have since wrote a book about my time in care, called Tears of Bedtime, which was published in 2007.
179. I have never given a statement about any of the other abuse. I have been able to talk more about my abuse while giving my statement to the Inquiry.

Records

180. I have some of my records from my time in care. I can see in one of those entries that Mr Murphy was saying that I would be better off if I had no contact with my mother.
181. Another entry in those records show that when I was at St Margaret's, the abuse I was suffering from led me to have mental health issues. It was decided by the medical authorities that I should be sent to Ovenstone Residential School in Pittenweem. I stayed there between [REDACTED] 1959, when I was five years old, until [REDACTED] 1960. They carried out some tests and some of them showed that at that time I had an IQ of 81. I was prescribed medication for childhood depression. During the last six months at Ovenstone the records showed that my behaviour improved and then I was returned to St Margaret's. Although I have read about it, I don't have many memories of being at Ovenstone.
182. Again, in the records, between [REDACTED] 1961 and [REDACTED] 1961 my mother had taken me to see a child psychologist at Barrie Street Clinic, where I saw a Dr Haldane for, I think six different appointments. He carried out an IQ test, Terman-Merrill, which again showed I had an IQ of 81.

183. Some of the report forms for going into Dale School show that they said I had no mental health issues but with an IQ of only 81 they were fully aware of me being backward in comparison to other children. That should have prevented me from being admitted to Dale School.

Lessons to be learned

184. None of the places I was ever in gave me any help or advice about going back into the real world.

185. The places I was abused in as a child should not have had a licence to be involved in the care of children. Only if the social work have more direct involvement should a place be given a licence.

Other information

186. I would like to see that all the homes today are run by the social work and supervised by them. There should not be any private contractor allowed to run homes caring for children. I think there should be more emphasis of homes employing more women as I found that most of the women I had during my time in care were much more understanding and showed more care to the children.

187. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..........

Dated..... 31/01/2023