

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HGG
[REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is HGG [REDACTED]. I'm known as HGG [REDACTED]. My contact details are known to the inquiry. I am semi-retired having formerly been a grounds work foreman working on wind farms, roads and stuff like that.
2. I have a partner called [REDACTED] and we have been together for 38 years. We have one daughter and 3 grandchildren.
3. My mum is 86 years of age. She has dementia and is blind. My dad died of cancer when he was 44.
4. I have two brothers and two sisters. [REDACTED] is 54, [REDACTED] is 53, [REDACTED] is 50 and [REDACTED] is 49. They are all still alive.

Background

5. The institutions I went to were Darvel in Ayrshire, St Ninian's in Gartmore, St Joseph's in Tranent, East Lothian, and Merkland in Moffat.
6. I was the eldest of five when my dad was diagnosed with cancer in 1967. He was in and out of hospital and was bedridden. He had always been the breadwinner of the family and, with Dad being the way he was, things were very difficult for my mum.


7. I started to get into a wee bit of trouble with petty thieving but all I was doing was trying to put food on the table. I'd break into the bakery and steal bread and cakes or steal from the butchers simply to help feed the family. The electricity even got cut off. My mother had to cook on the fire in the house.

8. I got caught stealing and got sent to the panel in 1969. I was eight years old. The Panel in Dumfries decided that things were too hard for my mum and that she would be best helped if they sent me away, which they did. They said I was to be sent away for between three to six months till they decided how best to deal with me. I think they thought I was trying to be the father of the family and put food on the table by doing these mistakes. They sent me to Darvel Remand Home in Ayrshire in 1969. My siblings remained at home at that time though later they were also taken into care.

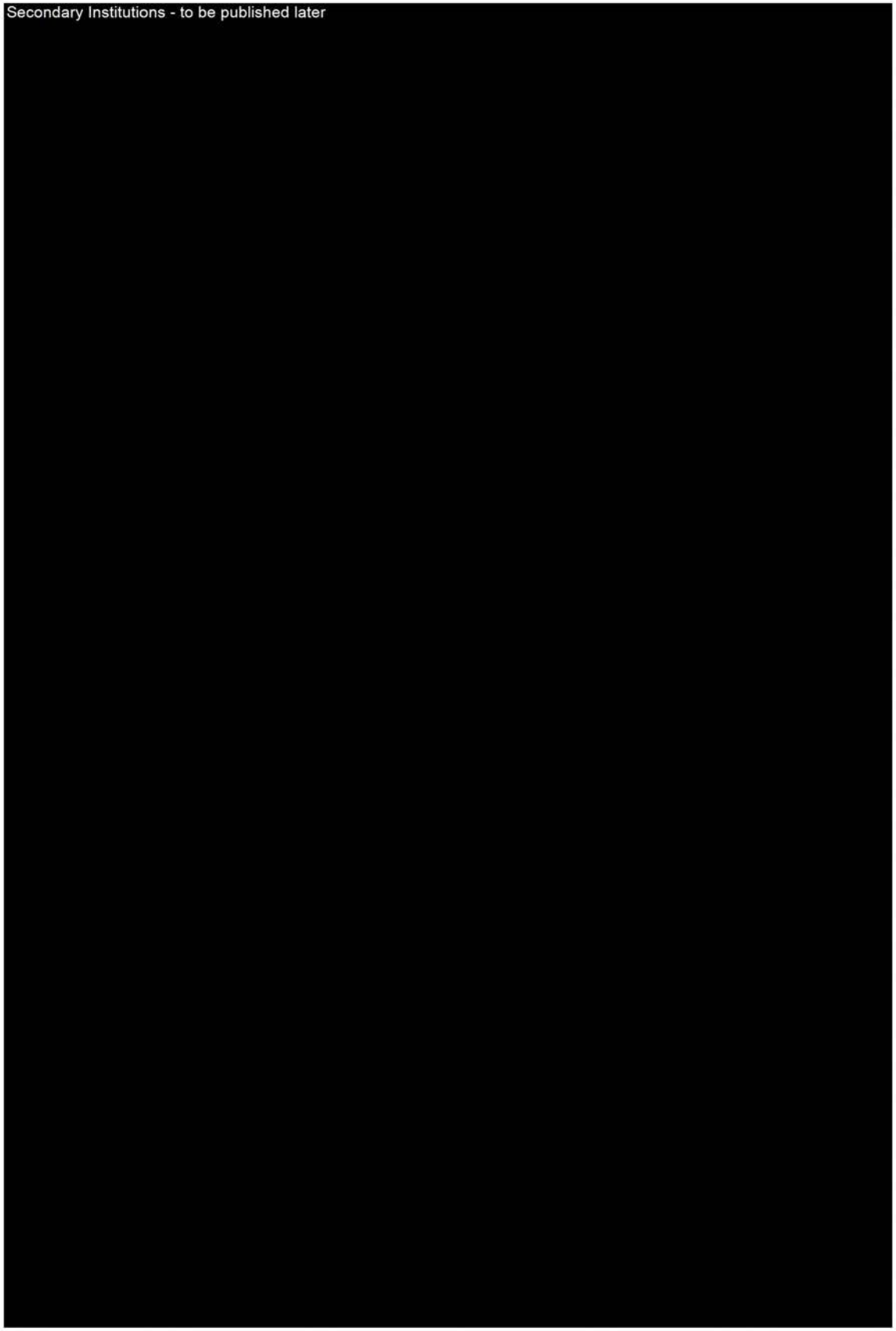
Darvel Remand Home, Ayrshire

9. I was taken to Darvel by two Social Workers named PMO [REDACTED] and Lou Green.


Secondary Institutions - to be published later



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St Ninian's Gartmore near Aberfoyle

23. Secondary Institutions - to be published later the Social Worker Stewart Sinclair came to see me and said that The Panel had decided I should be sent to St Ninian's in Aberfoyle. I wasn't told why I was being sent there. I was only eight and wasn't involved in any of the decisions that were being made about my life. I remember being told it was a wonderful place where I would even be able to ride ponies and go swimming. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

24. Mr Sinclair and Mr Green came to pick up me and another boy up. They dropped him off at St John Bosco's which was somewhere in Glasgow. I remember we had lunch there and then they took me to St Ninian's.

25. I remember arriving and seeing how big the place was. It was massive. I could see ponies and big gardens and, while I was apprehensive, Secondary I

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

26. I was told it was run by The De La Selle Brothers of the Catholic Church. They took me round the place and showed me school, showed me where I

would be taught, the bedrooms, where we could play table tennis and games, the showers and so on.

27. St Ninian's was split into four houses which were St Patrick (Green), St Andrew (Blue), St George (Red) and De La Selle (Yellow). I was put into St Patrick House. Brother **GZQ** was our housemaster, Charles McKenna was connected with St George's house and Brother **MJO** was connected to St Andrew's house. The teachers were allocated to each house as were the brothers.

28. There were ten boys in each house. Our Housemaster was Mr **GXC** **GXC**. He played the drums and taught me how to play them. It sticks in my mind that he told me he played the drums for **██████████**.

29. My first impression as a kid was that the place was OK. I had this horrible feeling of being far away from home but it seemed OK. I just thought "just get on with it and see what happens". I hadn't been told how long I could expect to be there.

Routine

30. We had five classes which were run by Brothers **HJS**, Benedict, **GZQ** and two others whose names I can't recall. You were put in classes based on ability rather than age. I went from class 2 straight to class 4. We were taught geography in class 4, Brother **HJS** taught us music in class 1 and we also did SRA. The school was separate from the house. The brothers stayed in the same house as us while some of the civilian teachers stayed in Gartmore.

31. We wore shorts, there was no uniform as such, maybe polo neck shirts, which were supplied by the school. They did the laundry for us.

32. We had chores which the houses rotated cleaning the dining room, dorms, class rooms etc. The chores were done between 3.pm and 5.pm before we

had tea. There was a gardener who came in to do the garden. I can't remember if it was civilians or not that worked in the kitchen.

33. You would get up at 6.am, say prayers and then go down for breakfast. You had to tidy your bed and the dorms after breakfast. Sometimes the beds would be inspected and then you would have school at 9.am.

34. You went to bed about 9.pm after having got washed and ready for bed. There may have been more prayers before bed.

35. Mass was heard every day though it was voluntary and you had to put your name down to say you were going. Mass on a Sunday was mandatory.

36. I think there were five beds in my dorm though other dorms may have had three or four beds. There were two or three dorms in each house. Each room had a shower room as you came out the dorm. You would have a shower after football, hill walking or other things like that. Basically you could have a shower whenever you wanted to.

37. We all had homework in the evening.

38. The school day was between 9.am and 3.pm. In St Ninian's the schooling was all educational.

39. There were organised sports like cricket, football, pony riding, swimming in Callander, pictures in Stirling and lots of walks. You could also help out in the wall garden which had an orchard.

40. There was an old ruin there that, as a project, a group of us would remove the ivy from.

41. All the boys were between eight and eleven though most were ten or eleven.

42. At night there would be recreation like playing table-tennis or watching TV. There was a music room and some cubicles where we could make things. We also had access to books in the library though not many used it. There were also board games but I don't recall any toys.
43. In summer we would go to Summer Camp in Kirkoswald where we stayed in the Town Hall there. The beach below Culzean Castle was our holiday.
44. I'm sure there was health care at St Ninian's but I don't remember it. I remember getting hurt at football and was taken to the doctor in Stirling. I seem to remember being weighed and having my height measured by a nurse in Stirling. Dental care was also done in Stirling.
45. Religious Education was big in as much that religion was always there. It seemed to get brought up in every class. The home was strongly run by Catholic thinking. Prayers were regular in the morning and at night and we would have to say grace before every meal.
46. We would be asked to do other jobs like weeding the garden.
47. At Christmas they would get a magician or a comedian to come in and there would be a Christmas party. At the party trophies would be handed out for the winners of the competitions in table tennis and five-a-side and such things. People would donate presents for us to be given at the party. We were usually given one present each. I'm sure I was in St Ninian's for each of the Christmases I was there. There were usually two or three who didn't get home. I think we had Christmas dinner and I seem to recall it was something we looked forward to.
48. There were no birthday celebrations though I know some boys got presents delivered from home.

49. One of my brothers, [REDACTED], was also in St Ninian's for at least part of the time I was there and I was in touch with them
50. There was no set day for visitors and I think people phoned ahead to make such arrangements. My mum only visited me once while I was there.
51. The two occasions I got home I got the bus, driven by one of the brothers, to Glasgow then would walk down to Central Station to get the train to Dumfries. If I was late back and had missed the bus I would stay at St John's in Glasgow which was run by the same brothers. If that happened I had to phone St Ninian's to let them know.
52. I think people from the Social Work visited me on two occasions. I think inspectors did come to the school but we wouldn't have known anything about it. We would know somebody was coming because we would have to clean the place up though we wouldn't know who it was who was coming.
53. The main disciplinarian was Brother ^{MJJ} [REDACTED] though Brother ^{MJO} [REDACTED] handed it out as well.

Abuse

54. During the first few weeks I was subjected to a lot of bullying by the older boys who were mainly from Glasgow. They would batter me and call me a Teuchtar because I came from Dumfries.
55. After only a few days I was beaten up pretty badly and taken to ^{SNR} [REDACTED] ^{SNR} [REDACTED] who was called Brother ^{MJJ} [REDACTED].
56. I was nine years old and this was to be the first time I recall that I was to be sexually abused.

57. I was in Brother ^{MJJ} [REDACTED]'s office and he asked me to sit on his knee and he grabbed my penis. He then grabbed my hand and put it through his cloak and told me to stroke his penis. He then pulled my shorts down and started to put his finger up my bum.
58. The whole thing lasted about fifteen minutes and he then told me if I did what he said then he would sort out the other boy who had beat me.
59. I think that, in a way, I knew what he was doing was wrong but I felt helpless. After all, he was ^{SNR} [REDACTED] I felt that if I said anything I would be punished so I just did my best to forget it, which was easier said than done.
60. This abuse by Brother ^{MJJ} [REDACTED] became a regular thing. I can't remember how often, it was quite sporadic but he would call me to his office for this sexual abuse. He would give me sweets and tell me how I was his favourite and that he would look after me.
61. Most of the Brothers were in their fifties and sixties. The youngest was, I think, Brother ^{HJS} [REDACTED] who I believe is still alive.
62. This next bit is the hardest part for me. It's the thing that hurts me most. I've only ever told one person about this.
63. The most horrific memory I have of Brother ^{MJJ} [REDACTED] was when my father died. We were at the summer holiday camp in Kirkoswald when he took me aside to tell me that my father had passed away. He told me he would take me back to St Ninian's where I could get changed, that he would then take me to the funeral and that I would be able to spend some time with my mum and my family.
64. The funeral was very bad for me as it left me very emotional and crying when they laid my father to rest. I remember at the end of the funeral when we

returned to the car Brother ^{MJJ} spoke to my mum and insisted, that it would be better if he took me back to St Ninian's and then he would take me back to the Summer Camp in Kirkoswald.

65. By the time we got back to St Ninian's it was late. He gave me some supper and told me to go to bed. I was lying in my bed crying when Brother ^{MJJ} came into my bed and cuddled me. He told me everything would be alright. He started playing with my penis and then raped me. The reason I don't talk about this is that it hurts me so much inside. He used the fact that I was upset by the death of my father to pretend to comfort me but instead he raped me.

66. He and I were the only people in the home as everybody else was at Kirkoswald. I cried a lot and thought about running away.

67. The next day he said he would take me to the Summer Camp but he didn't for two or three days. During that time I have no recollection of him further abusing me. We would have meals, go for walks, play table tennis and go to bed. If anything else did happen then it's not there in my recollections.

68. I was nine years old and would have been an emotional wreck thinking about my family, my father and what had happened with Brother ^{MJJ}. I hate to think how hard it must have been for me to cope with everything that was going on.

69. We did then go to the Summer Camp in Kirkoswald but after a day I saw a chance to run away and I took it. However, I was only away a matter of hours when I got picked up by the police, somewhere in Ayrshire, who took me back to St Ninian's.

70. Once I was back there, Brothers ^{MJJ} and ^{MJO} pulled my trousers down, put me over the back of a chair then both of them strapped and belted me over the bare buttocks.

71. They just hated the fact that I had run away and told me I was being punished by God.
72. For the next four or five days I was locked in the dorm, the rest of the boys still being at Summer Camp. The only time I saw anybody was when one of the Brothers would bring me food.
73. My recollection is that, after I had run away, the sexual abuse from Brother MJJ stopped. He would still dish out physical punishment to me as one of those who dished out the belt quite a lot but the sexual abuse stopped. I used to think it was because I had run away that made him stop. In fact I ran away on a number occasions after that because that's what I thought.
74. You never knew how much physical abuse you were going to receive, it was up to the brother or brothers punishing you. Sometimes it could last an hour and sometimes it would only be ten or fifteen minutes. Being punished for a short period was considered a good punishment while an hour would be considered bad. That's the way I thought of it and you never knew when you went in what sort of punishment you were going to get.
75. Stewart Sinclair, the Social Worker came to see me and asked why I had run away. I told him about the sexual and physical abuse and he said he would get it sorted. Whether he did anything about it or not I don't know. He was the only person I told. I don't remember the exact detail I told him.
76. The next person who sexually abused me was a civilian worker named Charles McKenna. He was a woodwork teacher at St Ninian's. He was known as lurch because he was so tall.
77. McKenna sexually abused me many times and the reason he got the opportunity to do so was that, unlike most of the other boys, I didn't get home at the weekend. Apparently, because I lived so far away, it was too expensive

to send me home and what with my family circumstances, I didn't get home. In fact during my time there I only recollect getting home twice.

78. McKenna was allocated the job of looking after me at the weekends while the others went home. At first he befriended me and would get me to light his cigars. But then he would get me to sit on his knee, put his hand down my trousers, play with my penis and put his finger up my bum.

79. McKenna worked in St George's House and I would have to stay there at the weekends. The abuse happened mainly in the TV room.

80. When other boys were about McKenna would punish me harshly for trivial things but when alone he would sit me on his knee, say sorry for having punished me and would then sexually abuse me again.

81. I grew to hate McKenna but there was nothing I could do about it. It's difficult for me to remember how long each period of abuse went for because there was so much going on in my mind but I can say the abuse from McKenna went on for months.

82. It's hard for me to remember exact dates but I'm sure the abuse from McKenna happened after I had been abused by Brother MJJ

83. I was one of the youngest there and I always thought these people were looking after me because I was so young and I couldn't get home.

84. I've always tried to distinguish between the good ones who worked there and the bad ones. Brother GZQ was in Class 5. He never abused me and, in fact, I would say he looked after me. Brother MJO was another. He physically abused me but never sexually abused me.

85. James McKinstry was another civilian who worked at St Ninian's. He lived in Gartmore. He was a night watchman and was one dirty old bastard. He would

come round the dorm at night and put his hand under your covers saying he was checking if anybody had wet their bed.

86. I remember one night he put his hand under my cover and fondled my penis. He then told me to go to the urinal and watched as I did a pee. He then took his penis out and made me masturbate him while he slapped me. He said he would claim that I had threatened to run away if I said anything about it. That could get me twelve of the strap. He was an evil bastard and this went on to happen several times with him.
87. All the kids were shit scared of him and many of the boys who wet their beds got abused by him.
88. I was never a bed wetter but the abuse he must have handed out to those who were must have been awful.
89. I ran away three or four times in the space of a month because I was being abused so much, both physically and sexually. I think after the last time I ran away the sexual abuse stopped but the physical abuse got worse. I think they hated me because I kept running away.
90. I used to lie in bed and wonder "Why me?" and used to wonder if I was abused just because I was so young. When the sexual abuse stopped I couldn't work out if it was because I kept running away or because I was getting older.
91. Brother MJO looked after the nine ponies and a horse. He asked me to be a pony lad though I don't know if I was just picked or recommended but it was Brother MJO who came and asked me to do it.
92. Brother MJO was horrendously evil. He would take you into the boot room and severely batter you with his fists. Then he would grab you; give you a

cuddle and say sorry. You just accepted it. I was a pony lad for months before being moved to the Wall Garden.

93. Brother MBZ looked after the garden and I always thought of him as one of the nice brothers. The garden had chickens, donkeys and they grew vegetables there. He took me under his wing and would show me how to feed the animals, take me for walks, to the cinema, take me swimming and show me how to do things.

94. However, after a short period of time he also started to sexually abuse me. I had always thought he was alright and then he started that. He didn't rape me but would fondle me and get me to fondle him. It was all touching stuff. It would happen when we were out on walks, in the shed, at the picture house. Just different places.

95. He ran the tuck shop and would give me extra sweets saying that what he was doing should stay our wee secret or I would be punished by God.

96. So I ran away again. As usual I got caught. The place was too rural for you to get far and the police always seemed to know where you would head. When you got caught there were always consequences in that you received a severe beating. I think the longest I managed to stay away was a day until they caught me sleeping in a barn.

97. After the last time I ran away it was decided that I was getting too old for St Ninian's and I got told I was being moved to St Joseph's in Tranent East Lothian which was from Junior to Intermediate.

98. I was delighted to be getting away from St Ninian's, thinking that at last I would be getting away from all the abuse. However, something was to happen at St Joe's which would scar me for the rest of my life.

99. I think I was in St Ninian's for a total of two and a half years. It's possible that there was more abuse that I suffered but the ones I've mentioned are the ones that stick in my mind.

Bedwetting

100. I was never a bed wetter but I know it was frowned on in St Ninian's and those that did wet the bed got punished, especially by James McKinstry. If you wet the bed you had to gather all the wet bedclothes in the morning and take it to the laundry. They also had to put their mattresses in the big square outside the dorm beside the radiators. This regime made sure everybody knew you were a bed wetter.

101. I had two or three in my dorm and I think two of them were bed wetters but I don't know what was happening in the other dorms.

St Joseph's Tranent

102. I was in St Joseph's through 1972 and 1973. It was totally different from St Ninian's. It was more open and the boys were older. It was, however, run by the same Order of Brothers. It was a much different regime and was school orientated.

103. The place was split into four houses these being Ogilvy, Benildus, Sinclair and another whose name I can't remember. I was allocated to Benildus.

104. There were more boys at St Joseph's than had been at St Ninian's. They had a points system whereby your schoolwork and chores were marked and if you accumulated enough points every week you got to go home at the weekend. This was totally new to me.

105. It was good at first at St Joseph's and I liked school and enjoyed learning. There was a civilian teacher called Mr GZI who had also been at St Ninian's. I remember he played the guitar and he looked after me when I first went to St Joseph's.

106. However, one occasion sent the whole thing into turmoil.

Routine

107. To my way of thinking Catholicism didn't really come into it as much as at St Ninian's. There was a lot of P.E. in the mornings like running up bings. There was a full size football pitch and a lot of music.

108. There were about fifteen in each house with four in each dorm. Bedwetting was not a problem in St Joseph's.

109. There was a metal work shop and the education seemed to be aimed at the older boys.

110. It was all regimented inasmuch as you would get up, have breakfast, do your chores, go to school, have tea, homework, recreation then bed.

111. Again, we had TV and books.

112. I seem to recall that Christmases and birthdays were dealt with more or less that same as at St Ninian's though I remember playing the drums with a band at the Christmas party. After the party we would get to go home.

113. There were no visits from family at St Joseph's but, because I was getting home often enough and because I knew my mum couldn't afford the travel, I never imposed on her to visit me.

114. I'm sure it was the same Social Worker in St Joseph's that I had in St Ninian's. I think there was a condition that whenever I went home I had to report to the Social Worker to let him know that all was OK. Sometimes when I was at home the Social Worker would visit to make sure everything was OK at home.
115. Every year at St Joseph's they would take us berry picking and would even give us money for it. I remember at the end of the berry picking we would go home for two weeks. I can't quite remember how they gauged how much you earned but, say you made ten pounds, you would get a fiver and the rest would go to the school.

Abuse

116. I think the brother who looked after us in Benildus was called Brother HGW. One weekend I didn't get home and I was the only boy in the house. Brother HGW came into my room where I was in the top bunk. He put his hand under my cover to fondle me. I woke up, kicked him in the head then jumped out of bed and ran away from the home because I was so frightened and scared.
117. By that time I knew how to get to the train station at Waverley via the back roads so I headed there. It took me about six hours. It was dark when I got there and I went into the shop.
118. This guy then started nodding to me. I was near the book stand and I thought he was wanting me to steal a book. He then started to talk to me and took me into the café there and bought me chips and eggs. He asked me where I came from and how I was getting home and offered me the money for a train ticket.

119. He then asked me if I had ever had a sexual experience. It never clicked with me that he was doing anything other than trying to help me. He told me to come to his car where he said he would give me the money for the ticket.
120. As we walked towards his car two men suddenly jumped on him. It turned out he was a paedophile and the police had been watching him.
121. I got taken to a Police Office where I got told he had probably been responsible for the disappearance of several boys who hadn't been found for days and that a police officer had been watching him when he began talking to me.
122. What could have happened to me that night has been a nightmare I have lived with all my life and is one of the things I remember most about St Joseph's.
123. The police took me back to St Joseph's and I got belted again. I was treated as a bad boy for having kicked Brother HGW in the head. I was punished by being put over a chair and battered with a cane and a belt on my bare buttocks. It wasn't Brother HGW who punished me but I can't remember the names of those who did it.
124. Thereafter I was given severe physical punishments for any trivial wee thing and I could never work out if it was because I had kicked Brother HGW or because I had run away. I would have been twelve and had been at St Joseph's for about a year.
125. I was never sexually abused in St Joseph's, probably because I was older, but the physical abuse went on and got worse. The method of punishment was always the same. As I say it was usually for something trivial and, quite often, I just didn't think I deserved it.

126. There was talk amongst the boys that some boys got punished with electric shocks but I never saw any of that.
127. The regime at St Joseph's was different, it was easier and more open. Looking back, I think the sexual abuse happened because I was so young and that it stopped when I was able to look after myself that bit better.
128. I don't remember many of the names of the staff from St Joseph's other than the ones I've mentioned and also Brother Ben.
129. I also remember that we were in a band in St Joseph's and we were supposed to be appearing on Opportunity Knocks but the lead singer didn't come back from leave and it all fell through.
130. Another memory I have, from St Ninian's, was that Brothers came from Rome and they took a picture I drew away with them. I got sent two bibles from Rome though I don't know where they are now.

Merkland House, Moffat

131. I went to Merkland House in 1974 and was there till 1977. I was told by the panel that they were moving me there because it was nearer my home and I'd get to see my mum. While there I went to Moffat Academy and did third and fourth year there. I was quite intelligent and enjoyed learning there.
132. For the first eighteen months there it was a Mr RGD that was SNR and things were fine. However, for the last six months I was there the man in charge was Peter Harley and he used to physically abuse me.

Routine

133. Merkland was mainly a collection of families i.e. brothers and sisters from the same families. There was the [REDACTED] family, The [REDACTED], me and my brother [REDACTED]. It was SNR [REDACTED] a guy called Mr RGD [REDACTED] who wore a kilt every day. He had his wife and son living there with him. It was run by Dumfries Council.
134. There were four dorms with five people in each, the boys and girls sleeping in separate dorms.
135. After school you would have chores followed by tea but after that you could go to the local youth clubs till about 9.30pm. You didn't get to go home.
136. There were outside staff who would come in. There was an older woman, maybe called Liz. There was a cook and an older guy who came in on a motorbike who might have been called Jim. I think these were care workers.
137. You certainly had a lot of leeway to do your own thing and you went to the local school. When Mr RGD [REDACTED] SNR [REDACTED] the home it was comfortable and almost felt like living in a proper family home. However, Peter Harley changed the whole structure of the place when he arrived [REDACTED]. He changed the whole structure of the place and would take the kids swimming and would do things like take kids camping to Wales where he came from. It was as if he was trying to impress us though he mainly left us older ones alone.

Abuse

138. When Mr RGD [REDACTED] was SNR [REDACTED] we would get the cane but it would be for things like skipping school or things you would expect to be punished for.

139. Peter Harley picked on me because I was one of the older boys. He would take me into his office and give me serious beatings for trivial things. Those of us in the home had an inclination that Peter Harley was abusing some of the other kids and, while I later found out he got a prison sentence for abusing children, he only physically abused me. He never sexually abused me.
140. On one occasion something had happened in the school that I had been involved in. Harley called me into his office, grabbed me and threw me to the ground. I banged my head on the wall and he then started kicking into me. I felt him kick me in the mouth. Blood started pouring from my mouth and it was only then that he stopped. He told me to go upstairs and get washed and not to come down until I was told to. I lost a tooth and was taken to the dentist the next day. I told the dentist I had fallen because I was scared if I told the truth and it got back to Harley I would get more beatings.
141. I got numerous beatings from Harley but would say that there were at least four or five beatings I would describe as serious.
142. I eventually left Merkland in 1977 when I at last went home.

Impact

Secondary Institutions - to be published later



144. I look back and wonder how I survived. I suppose it made me who I am. It probably made me a stronger person.

145. It was the same feeling in all of these places though St Ninian's was the worst. Looking back I was probably depressed a lot though I probably didn't realise it at the time because I was so young. There was a lot of crying and a lot of desire to run away.
146. I think the only lasting physical injury I suffered was the loss of my tooth after the kicking I got from Peter Harley but over the years I had serious bruising from the numerous beatings. Otherwise I was always in good health though I have had my gall bladder removed and once got several stitches in my head. I've got bad psoriasis which the doctor says may be related to the way I was treated as a child.
147. What happened to me has definitely had an impact on my life. My life isn't all doom and gloom which I put down to my strong will and the ability I had and have to put it to the back of my mind and just get on with my life, my work and my family. It's still there and it hurts when things are brought up but I've got on with my life.
148. But every now and again something happens like the journalist contacting me out of the blue or The First Minister saying they were going to look after the victims and, when things like that happens, everything comes back to me.
149. I've heard about the forums like Time To Be Heard and Survivor Scotland but I've e-mailed them and it seemed a load of baloney. Every year you would hear about something else coming out about a place where abuse had been happening but still nothing was done about it. As far as I was concerned, I wasn't getting any help. You get disheartened when nothing happens and you want to pull out of the whole thing but then I think that I must keep going.
150. My early life has affected how I interact with people. I'm not caring or cuddly with my grandchildren because of what happened to me. I've never

been the sort of papa who would have the kids on my knee. Not after what happened to me. I would never want anybody to think something could happen to them. I've only ever hit my daughter once and one of my grandchildren once, both occasions with good reason. Because of my early life I don't believe in physical chastisement. My shouting normally gets my point over. I suppose in that regard it maybe made me a better parent.

151. My early life has definitely given me a lack of ability of touch with my wife and daughter. They don't know the extent to which I was abused. Nobody does, including my friends.
152. I have a big issue with trusting people. I don't trust anybody. That goes back to the trust I put in Brother **MBZ** before he abused me. I doubt if I've ever given my trust to anybody, including my family, since I was a kid. My wife sometimes throws it in my face that I don't trust her but we've been together for 38 years.
153. I was an altar boy at St Ninian's and Brother **GZQ** was actually trying to talk me into going into the priesthood or joining the Brothers and I always felt they were heavy handed in trying to force my future.
154. I had faith when I was younger but not now.
155. While I've gone through the things that happened to me in care as well as the normal turmoil in life, I wouldn't say I've suffered from depression in my later life.
156. It has affected my confidence, especially in being able to trust people. It affects the way I feel when I go into public toilets and have people around me. I used to blame gay people for it because I used to think the people who abused me must have been gay but I now realise that that is nonsense and have met many gay people who are sound.

157. I've never self-harmed or tried to commit suicide. I've had the odd flash back but not so much in my later life. It was triggered in 2002 when I received the phone call from that journalist and I found myself going to bed struggling to get to sleep as I tried to piece together what had happened to me when I was young.
158. I don't think about it constantly but I have thought about it more since the Public Inquiry was announced. I can go weeks or months without thinking about it but then a phone call or something on the TV can trigger the memories.
159. I want to be able to tell you everything that went on and sometimes I feel that I beat myself up because I can't remember everything.
160. For instance, yesterday I was at an aunt's funeral and I was in the car with my brother. I couldn't remember Stewart Sinclair's second name. I wouldn't normally ask my brother such things but I wanted to remember his name to help with the Inquiry. I didn't tell my brother I was going to be giving a statement but I did ask him what Sinclair's second name was.
161. I took a lot of drink and some drugs when I was younger but that was just me being a lad. I got into trouble many a time but I think that was just down to the crowd I ran about with. I had a few scrapes with the Law for assaults and breach of the peace and I just think if I had had a simple life with my family I would have grown up a different person.
162. I know I've got intelligence and did well in my studies. I tend to do well in whatever I do and have been promoted wherever I went and in whatever I did.
163. My father used to beat me seriously when I was younger. I would always be the one that got battered because I was the eldest. My two

younger brothers would just be sent to bed. My mum used to have to stop my dad battering me at times.

164. When I was getting arrested there was an anger in me. I used to get in to fights a lot because I had spent a childhood having to stick up for myself and it continued when I got out.
165. I just feel that if I hadn't went through everything I did as a child in those homes I would have been a totally different person though I have to acknowledge that there were other factors in my life, like my dad dying so young, that could have affected my life.
166. I've never had any form of treatment or support. I've dealt with it myself in a way that has suited me. I'm wary of going through any sort of counselling as I wouldn't want triggers released or take the chance of reliving it all. I don't really know if it would help me.

Disclosure

167. There was so much that went on in my life Secondary Institutions - to be published Secondary until I left Merkland, the physical abuse, the sexual abuse. It was only in 2002 that I started telling people about the abuse after I received a telephone call from a journalist called Marion Scott who said my name had been given to her as somebody who had possibly been abused in St Ninian's.
168. I didn't come forward just because the Inquiry was announced. It was because I was approached by the journalist. She was doing a report on abuse at List D schools in the sixties and seventies. We got talking and I told her that yes I had been there and yes I had been abused and that just kicked everything off for me. From the age of seventeen up till I was forty all of it had

been put away at the back of my head. It was always there but I kept it at the back of my mind.

169. I told my girlfriend I had been abused but it was only the physical abuse I told her about, none of the sexual abuse. I was scared to tell her more in case it caused so much carry on in our relationship.
170. After I spoke to the journalist I tried a few times to write it all down but I'd get so far and have to stop.
171. The first person I told about the abuse was Stewart Sinclair my social worker. This was after I had been abused by Brother MJJ [REDACTED]. I only told him I had been beaten and battered by the brothers. I can't say that I went into specific detail with him about the sexual abuse because it would affect me as a person. He said he would sort it out. I don't know if he ever did but after that, while there was still abuse, it wasn't to the extent that Brother MJJ [REDACTED] had done.
172. I've no knowledge of anybody ever being punished for what happened to me.
173. We didn't often see anybody from the Social Work. It was only on a rare occasion we did. I think this was partially because of the distance they would have to have come and the cost involved.
174. I also told my mum about the physical abuse but not about the sexual abuse. I think I told her on one of the few occasions I got home. When I told her she said she would speak to the Social Workers about it. I don't know if she ever did and I can't ask her now as she is 86 and has dementia.
175. Whether my mum said something to anybody or not I certainly wasn't aware of any changes in the treatment I received.

176. About 2009/2010 I attended at Dumfries Police Station where I spoke to a female police officer and gave a statement in relation to an inquiry into the goings on in Merkland. While there I told her I had endured horrendous abuse from the brothers at St Ninian's and St Joseph's. I called them beasts.

177. However, she was only interested in Merkland and wouldn't let me go into any detail even though I told her about the sexual abuse I had endured. I was probably interviewed for a few hours.

178. As far as I'm aware the abuse I spoke of to the female police officer was never followed up.

179. I sent a statement to the police in Stirling and to Crown Office. This was when I decided that I was going to tell people about what had happened to me. I was only sent one reply which was from the police who said they couldn't do anything about it because it had happened back in the 1970s.

180. I contacted a lawyer called Cameron Fyffe in November 2010 who said that it was a matter for Parliament because of the time-bar rules. He said I could take out a personal action against the Catholic Church so I sent an e-mail to LUF and who arranged a meeting for me in my local church with Brother Tom Campbell. He was the only person, other than in this statement, who I told in detail what happened to me. Brother Tom told me he would have to contact the police but he didn't. He also told me that all the Brothers involved were now dead.

181. The reason I contacted Cameron Fyffe was because the journalist who contacted me in 2002, Marion Scott, said that he was the solicitor she would be passing details on to.

182. I thought that with Brother Tom contacting the police it would bring them to my door to take a statement but they never did since he never informed them. He never really gave me an explanation why he didn't. A

problem I have is that the computer I had all these e-mails on crashed and I lost them all. I try to keep all the correspondence I have in relation to this but I lost a lot of what I had between 2002 and 2010 because the computer crashed.

183. Whoever I tried to contact would send me to somebody else. I've tried to contact various people like The Catholic Church in Scotland, The Pope, a woman who was to do with Help for Survivors. I must have contacted them on numerous occasions without response which annoyed me. I started writing to MPs and, in my initial letter to this Inquiry; I called it "The Forgotten Children" because that's what it felt like.

184. After everything that had happened to me, people still weren't listening. You had the Scottish Secretary standing up and saying "we won't leave the victims. We will sort this out". Nothing ever seemed to be getting done and I felt that if, what's happening now in the way of investigating what happened, had been done ten years ago then maybe I would have got justice. But those that abused me are all dead now or so I've been told.

185. The thing about the various homes I was in was that there was nobody I could speak to about what was happening. I certainly couldn't speak to the Brothers and I felt I couldn't speak to any of the other boys because I felt like an outsider due to the fact that I stayed so far away compared to most of them. You just didn't want to speak out because you knew of the consequences if you did.

186. I didn't even tell my brother [REDACTED] although he was in the homes with me at times. [REDACTED] has never suggested that he suffered the same abuse that I did. [REDACTED] was with me at St Ninian's, though not through the whole time I was there, and Merkland while my brother [REDACTED] was with us at Merkland. My two sisters were in care at Newton Stewart.

187. There were stories about Brother MJJ [REDACTED] having abused another boy but that might just have been gossip.
188. Any sexual and physical abuse was always done in private so there would have been no witnesses to any of it.
189. When I left the homes at seventeen I contacted Brother GZQ [REDACTED] and told him I had got a job as a commis chef at Castle Douglas. I worked there for six months and stayed at mums. He was the only one from the schools I contacted when I left because he was the only one I had trusted. Then I worked in [REDACTED] swimming pool as a life guard. Then it was a local independent record shop and I started doing DJ work at night.
190. At the age of seventeen or eighteen I ended up getting Borstal in Polmont. I had got involved with some boys who had stolen a car and I got nine months. There was bullying and punishments that went on in there but nothing worth mentioning. It was when I went back home after Borstal that I started in the record shop and as a DJ.
191. I worked in factories for years as a supervisor then worked on ground works on the M6 motorway in 2007 which I did till 2015.
192. Brother Thomas is the only other person I ever told about the abuse I suffered in such detail.

Records

193. I phoned the Social Work Department about my records. They told me I would have to ask permission from somebody to get my records and I'd have to pay for them. Some people were telling me I could just ask for them and they would have to give me them while others were saying I would have to pay for them and that you had to go through certain people to get them.

194. I remember when I phoned them they said I would have to come in to get the records and I would have to bring means of identification and other things. I decided not to go which means I've never had my records.

Lessons for the Inquiry

195. We live in a different time. I think that back in the sixties and seventies the Brothers and staff I encountered knew they could get away with what they were doing and that the child would say nothing. Kids of today have more people they can turn to and would be shouting from the rooftops. It was a period in time when these vile people thought they could get away with it, and they did.

196. I don't think there are the institutions today like there was in that period and I would be shocked if the same sort of thing could happen on the same scale today. I know there are still children's homes though I don't think you have List D schools. I know St Ninian's was closed down round about 1983 and I know St Joseph's is closed.

197. I know I'll never get the justice I wanted, to see the faces of those who abused me standing in a court of law.

198. I just want people to know what went on. It's time they knew what kind of abuse and torment kids of our age went through. I look at my grandsons now and wonder how they would have coped with things like that because I don't know how I coped.

199. These things have to be brought to light because you'll never learn lessons if they aren't. If that happened they would always be locked away and the same things could happen all over again.

200. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry and I would be willing to give evidence at the Inquiry if asked. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

HGG


Signed.....

9-2-17.

Dated.....