

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

**Hugo Rankin KENNEDY**

Support person present: No

1. My name is Hugo Kennedy. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1963. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. My mother and father were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They were hoteliers and owned and ran the [REDACTED] Moray. I have [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] We all stayed in the hotel. My mum kept pretty poor health as she was a chronic asthmatic. My father was a drinker. They are both deceased. My parents were involved in a serious road traffic accident. My mother was killed outright in the accident. My father was seriously damaged and developed early onset dementia. He died in a home near Stirling.
3. In the early part of my life, I was fairly content. [REDACTED] regarded as being quite privileged [REDACTED]. There was a huge garden at the hotel and my friends used to come around and play football. My parents were very busy running the hotel so I was regularly cared for by a nanny. I was never that close to my parents. Most care was actually given to me by the cook in the hotel. She was the main influence to me as a child. I have fond memories of my childhood at the hotel.
4. Because my mum was a staunch Catholic, I was sent to a convent primary school in Elgin. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The only person I really remember at primary was Sister Mary Oliver. She was a lovely lady and I have even gone back with my children and visited her. Post-primary school I worked with her to try and get a scholarship at Fort Augustus, but I didn't get it.

5. After primary school, my parents sent me to Fort Augustus. They did this because they were doing their best for me, and they believed that this was the right thing to do. They wanted to send me to a premium Scottish public school. They paid for me to go there.

### **Fort Augustus Abbey School, Inverness-shire**

6. I went to Fort Augustus Abbey School in 1974 and I was there for two and a half years. [REDACTED] It was run by the Benedictine monks. It was an all-boys' school although when I was there two girls came to the school as day pupils. There were a few hundred boys in the school. Nearly all of them were boarders but a few lived nearby. A few of them were children of the lay teachers. One girl was called [REDACTED] and she was the local [REDACTED] daughter. One was the daughter of [REDACTED] MIH [REDACTED] the [REDACTED]
7. Father [REDACTED] MMF [REDACTED] was in [REDACTED]. My house master was [REDACTED] MEV [REDACTED] who was Father [REDACTED] MEV [REDACTED]. Other house masters included Fathers [REDACTED] MFG [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] MRQ [REDACTED]. They were all monks of the abbey and lived in the monastery. It was their own private area. There was a door which led into the monastery, but the boys weren't allowed through this door. You were in serious, serious bother if you entered or even tried to enter the monastery. It was forbidden to enter there.

## Routine at Fort Augustus

### *First day*

8. I remember being taken to Fort Augustus by my father. We went out for a meal beforehand and it was like the last supper. My dad explained that this was what I had to do. It was over fifty miles away from [REDACTED]. On that first night in Fort Augustus, there were lots of first year children crying because it was their first time away from home. There was a lot of howling and wailing. This was my first time away from home apart from a six week holiday with my aunts in Ireland.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

9. Initially, I was in a dorm with about 40 boys. You were generally in a dorm in first and second year. The dorm was divided up into cubicles and there were two beds in each cubicle. There was no door to this cubicle. The housemaster would come in every morning around 6.00 am to 6.30 am and wake us up. We would all get marched down to the washroom where there were lines of sinks and on the other side, showers. There was a row of baths which the senior boys got to use. I never had a bath at Fort Augustus. We would then go for breakfast. After breakfast, we got changed for prep. This was where we got our stuff ready for school. Bedtime was probably 9pm at the latest. Every morning there was an assembly and everyone had to go to that. Father [REDACTED] MMF would read out the business for the day. The senior boys would make sure we all went.

### *Washing and bathing*

10. The washrooms were miles away from our dorm. When we were in the washroom getting washed, Father [REDACTED] MEV would march up and down watching us. He would regularly be holding a stick which he wasn't afraid to use if there was any mischief.

*Personal possessions*

11. Beside our bed-space there were no drawers, but there was some shelving which was shared between two boys. I stored my worldly possessions on there. We had a uniform that we wore throughout the day and a uniform for the weekend. The uniform for throughout the week was a grey flannel shirt, bright red tie, tweed Harris jacket and black trousers. At the weekend we wore a bright, crimson red jacket with a black and white chequered trim with the Corby emblem on the breast pocket, white shirt and a red tie. We did not have any of our own casual clothes.

*Food*

12. We always had our meals in the refectory. The senior boys maintained the discipline in there, and made sure that we were all in line. The food was rubbish and you just had to take what was given to you. There was no choice. For breakfast we would get porridge, bread and butter with jam and a cup of tea. Sometimes we might get cornflakes. All the boys ate together. Meals were served by the senior boys. The choice at mealtimes was that you either ate it or you didn't.

*School*

13. There were 20-25 boys in each class. There was a set timetable for classes. In the classrooms there was a league table maintained by the teachers, and this table would show who was at the bottom. You would get embarrassed if you were at the bottom. I would say half the teachers were lay teachers and the other half were religious staff. Dave Giveen who taught geography was a lay teacher. **MIH** **MIH** taught us **MIH** as well as **MIH**. Miss Pottage taught us French. Other teachers who were priests were Father **MEV** and Father **MEZ**. Harry Bryce taught us computer studies and Father **MEZ**.
14. School started at 9 am. You didn't move much from class to class. Teachers came in to do lessons, especially in first and second year. After school, you would have two hours of prep time. This was basically when you did your homework. You weren't

allowed to leave before the two hours were up. You couldn't even leave to go to the toilet. This was overseen by the senior boys. The school day finished about 7pm. Although I wasn't particularly academic, I did alright at school.

### *Leisure time*

15. Every afternoon at school was devoted to mandatory sport. The lay teachers were in school during the day, but they came back in when there was sport organised.
16. In the evenings, we would play sport and go to the tuck shop. Some would do some reading and some would do more homework. This was usually in the common room. We didn't have access to the library at this time. In the main assembly room, we would occasionally get access to a black and white television.
17. There was a lot of sport at Fort Augustus. It was always very competitive when we were playing any sport against any other school. [REDACTED] MIH [REDACTED] was the [REDACTED] of the [REDACTED] department. He was assisted by [REDACTED] MZV [REDACTED] who taught [REDACTED] as well. We played a lot of sport at the weekends too. I played and got quite good at hockey.
18. If you were lucky you were invited onto a social list and you got to go to Father [REDACTED] MEV [REDACTED] office. You would have a seat on one of his easy chairs, and might be given toast with butter and jam with a cup of tea. He would play classical music. If you were picked out for a bit of abuse, you would get excluded from being on the social list.

### *Religion*

19. Father [REDACTED] MEV [REDACTED] was my [REDACTED] teacher. Religion was a big part of my life and of the curriculum at Fort Augustus. We had two sessions of religious education every week. Attending mass was mandatory. I can still recite mass in Latin now, I did it so often. There was a choir and I was a member. Father [REDACTED] MEZ [REDACTED] played the [REDACTED]. Father [REDACTED] MFG [REDACTED] was the [REDACTED]. Mass was a big part. Wherever there was a Catholic celebration, there was a mass or there was an extra mass. There

wasn't a mass every day, but there certainly were prayers every day. [REDACTED] MEV [REDACTED] made me his altar boy.

### *Visits/Inspections*

20. I went home for the half term holidays and for the summer holidays. I rarely got any visitors. Miss Duncan, the cook from my parents' hotel, came to see me. She was such a lovely, selfless lady. She got the bus to see me a couple of times. We wrote to each other. She knew I loved [REDACTED] Mechanics, the Sunday Post and the [REDACTED] Gazette, and she used to send me stuff like that. She did this for years and years. Even when I left and joined the merchant navy she continued sending stuff to me weekly. My mum visited a couple of times at Fort Augustus, but I don't remember my dad ever visiting me. I never wrote to my mum and dad. I am not aware of there ever being any school inspections.

### *Healthcare*

21. There was a matron at the school. I can't remember her name. She would tend to your wounds after you got a strapping or a caning. There was a lot of that went on. You didn't often go to see her after the caning because you wouldn't really want the matron to see your bottom.

### *Chores*

22. When you were a first year pupil, you may have been made a "Skiv" for some of the sixth form boys. I was a "Skiv" to the [REDACTED]. His name was [REDACTED] I think. As a "Skiv", my job was to do things like make his bed, clean his room, polish his shoes or run errands for him, things like that. In England, the same term for them was a "fag". These boys were to be feared. Other senior boys I remember at the school who were quite notorious were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Some of the housemasters and senior boys worked as retained firemen at the local fire station.

*Running away*

23. I ran away once from Fort Augustus. It was night time and I just walked out. The doors weren't locked. I didn't have a plan. I got as far as the village, then I just turned about and came back. I was back before anyone missed me.

*Discipline*

24. The teachers just meted out the discipline as and when they saw fit. Some of the teachers were a bit more keen on it than others. The ones I remember that I suffered at the hands of were Father [REDACTED] MEV, [REDACTED] MRQ and [REDACTED] MIH. There was a boy called [REDACTED], who had hands of steel and was quite resilient to the strapping. Any member of staff could give us the strap. [REDACTED] MFG was a teacher in the middle school and he had a reputation that you didn't want the strap from him.

**Abuse at Fort Augustus**

25. There was a definite hierarchy within the school, and this ran from the monks right down to the prefects. [REDACTED] was one of the prefects, and he would beat you up. I saw him actually knock two younger boys out. [REDACTED] went on to become a mercenary. He had a military career. Bullying went on in the school, and it was just accepted and allowed to go on. I saw a lot of the younger boys getting bullied by the older boys. It was a real dog-eat-dog kind of place. You didn't go looking out for lads until you got physically big enough to handle yourself. You just accepted a lot of what was going on, and were happy that it wasn't happening to you on the bullying side. There was no point rocking the boat and you wouldn't grass up anyone because of the consequences. If you did, you would get a serious beating through the night by a clutch of the bullies. Everyone had to man-up quite quickly in there. The senior boys were often the eyes and ears for the staff. You were the shit on their shoes basically.

26. After about a year, [REDACTED] MEV [REDACTED] called me out of the dorm several times to go to his office and he caned me. He told me to take my pants down, and he would hit my bare bum with a bamboo cane. I would be made to bend over a chair, and he would hit me six to eight times. I remember it was bloody sore and I cried. This went on for about six months. I regularly asked him why he was doing this, but he just told me to shut up. He offered no reason.
27. The house master would generally give boys the cane. If you were sent for and told to go to his office, the chances were that you were going to get the cane. One time there was a boy, [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] MEV [REDACTED] office getting caned. I was waiting outside to go in for another unexplained caning. I could hear the commotion, and he was getting a hell of a caning. I could hear furniture getting knocked over. [REDACTED] came out and he was quite proud of himself. He had fought back although I never actually saw it.
28. I am sure that [REDACTED] MEV [REDACTED] picked on me and physically abused me to soften me up. I was being groomed by him. I was getting inexplicable beatings. Another time, I was singled out again by [REDACTED] MEV [REDACTED] and he made me kneel against a wall, in front of all the other boys. I was left there for six hours. He would also exclude me from his social list, so I couldn't go to his office for jam on toast, which was a treat. I was so terrorised by this behaviour then all of a sudden things turned around on a sixpence. I started getting invited to special things. I was made the one to one altar boy. I was put back on the social list. I was invited to his area in the monastery where we did yoga, one to one. I was given [REDACTED] lessons so I could play the [REDACTED]. I was doing all this nice stuff and the abuse had stopped. I was mega relieved but I can see now that it was all just part and parcel of the grooming process. This was all just to get me used to saying yes to anything.
29. One night I was in my bed, and [REDACTED] was in the bunk below me. I was sound asleep in the top bunk when all of a sudden I could smell whisky right next to my face. I felt [REDACTED] MEV [REDACTED] hand on my cock, and he was interfering with me. I was shocked and scared. I sat upright and tried to turn my back on him. I was petrified and my heart was beating ten to the dozen. That was my first experience of



MEV touching me like that. [REDACTED], in the bunk below, subsequently joined the Met Police but can't be traced now. We were hoping to try and find him to see if he could corroborate what happened. By the next day, I think I had convinced myself that it didn't happen.

30. MEV took me and [REDACTED] to a yoga session. I didn't feel unsafe because I wasn't on my own. The next time MEV took me to the monastery to do a yoga session on my own. He was wearing very loose flannelette shorts. He had me in a head stand, and that is when he started interfering with me. It was horrible. He put his penis in my mouth and pulled my head forwards, and it was over for him in seconds. He apologised to me when I left the yoga room, and he promised me it would never happen again. He even had a tear in his eye. I really believed him that he was sorry. He took me back there one more time, but on the way he must have changed his mind and I didn't go. I did not see MEV abuse any other boy.
31. MEV was sent away for a while, allegedly to a retreat. When he came back, he resumed his role as housemaster. He never abused me again after that. I was probably just relieved that he had moved on to other boys.
32. When my mother was killed in a road traffic accident, I got a call to the housemaster's office. I was told to take a call from a friend of my father's. I was told to get myself ready and someone was on their way to pick me up. They said my mother had been killed in the accident and that my dad was in a bad way. Father MMF was there, and he didn't have the heart to do anything to try and console me. He didn't even give me a cuddle. He just watched me drop to the floor and cry.
33. I strongly believe that there was a bit of 'pass the parcel' going on between the abusers. As soon as MEV stopped abusing me, almost instantaneously I started getting abused by MFH the [REDACTED]. MFH is dead now. He was a very keen [REDACTED] and also owned [REDACTED] on the other side from the [REDACTED]. He drove one of those little Renault cars with the shift stick on the front. He took me and [REDACTED] to his cottage which was in a very isolated location just on the edge of [REDACTED].

34. The first time we went there, he was showing us all sorts of pornography, and we both thought it was a bit weird and knew it wasn't right. The next time, he just took me. He photographed me naked in various positions, and also made me perform all sorts of sexual acts on him. He abused me over a period of years. It happened maybe once a month. He showed me some of the photographs he took of me. Invariably, I was in an aroused state in some sort of position and he complimented me on how well I took a photograph. I saw pictures of some other boys, but only one the first few times I went there.
35. Even after I left Fort Augustus, he would arrange to meet me. He would phone me at my mum and dad's hotel and then come and pick me up away from the hotel. He used to take me to the Eight Acres Hotel in Inverness, [REDACTED]. He would usually buy me a nice meal beforehand, something like a nice steak, then he would expect me to perform for him. He would insist that I come into the hotel by a different door and up a side stair and meet him at his room so we weren't seen together. This happened every few months for about a year or two. I eventually realised that it was wrong, and I told him that if he contacted me again I would tell the police. It stopped then.
36. I have heard that [REDACTED] MFH [REDACTED] even made a porn movie called [REDACTED] Boys from the school featured in this movie. One of them was a boy called [REDACTED]. I have never seen this movie.
37. [REDACTED] MIH [REDACTED] was the [REDACTED] I found him to be a bully and got quite a few proper strappings from him. He hit me on the hands, usually about six times with his leather belt. One time I answered a maths question wrong. He held a golf club against my throat and tried to strangle me.
38. If the housemaster had been drinking and was pissed off about something he would wake you up. You would be told to get out your bed and get your sports kit on, and he would send you off on a five or six mile run.

39. There was one boy called [REDACTED] who was called [REDACTED]. He was incredibly academic, and had a big head of curly hair and glasses. He was incredibly frail and was picked on mercilessly by some boys, and I felt so sorry for him. He had flat feet and walked with a bounce and he was chastised because of that. He was the brunt of some awful bullying. He is dead now.
40. One time, I remember doing a 25 mile hike barefoot from Fort Augustus. The housemaster, Father [REDACTED] MEV told us when we were doing it to think of all the sins that we had purged. Father [REDACTED] MEV was with us but he was only in his bare feet some of the way.
41. I was very confused when [REDACTED] MEV and [REDACTED] MFH abused me. They were both very tender and gentle and didn't hurt me. I didn't know if it was normal or not at the time. I almost thought that they were trying to be nice to me. They were using me for their own sexual gratification and did it in such a way that I wouldn't mind doing it again.

### **Leaving Fort Augustus**

42. When I was at Fort Augustus, my mother and father were involved in a serious road traffic accident. My mother was killed, and my father was in a coma for three months and was seriously damaged. This meant that the money ran out for me to stay at Fort Augustus, so I ended up leaving and going back to live in the hotel.

### **Reporting of abuse at Fort Augustus**

43. Bullying went on but you just accepted it. You wouldn't tell anyone. If you did, a clutch of bullies would turn up through the night and give you a real beating. I didn't even tell any of my peers.

44. Both [REDACTED] MEV and [REDACTED] MFH told me separately that this was a special thing just between the two of us. No-one else needed to know about it. They said that if I told anyone, no-one would ever believe me anyway.
45. I was getting more and more scared about [REDACTED] MEV abusing me, so I decided I would tell my mother. There was a big fear about reporting it and what may happen, but this was balanced by the fear of the abuse continuing if I didn't report it. I was very confused. My mother came to visit me, and I was going to tell her but I just couldn't. My last memory of this was running down the long driveway chasing her car to try and catch her and tell her. That was the last I saw of my mother because she was killed shortly after that in a car accident and I never saw her again. In a way, I am glad I never told her because it would have shattered her illusions of the church. She would have been mortified.
46. Before [REDACTED] MFH started abusing me, I decided to report that [REDACTED] MEV was interfering with me, to Father [REDACTED] MMF. I told him about [REDACTED] MEV but absolutely nothing happened. [REDACTED] MMF said he was dealing with it and I wasn't to worry about it. [REDACTED] MEV was removed from the school, apparently to go on a retreat for a while. I have since heard that this was due to another boy who reported things to Father [REDACTED] MMF. This boy features in the film, "The Sins of Our Fathers" under the name [REDACTED] MLL to protect his anonymity. At some point after this, [REDACTED] MEV came to the hotel and spoke to my step-mum. By that time, I had told my step-mum about the abuse. I remember sitting outside that room for half an hour hoping that he was going to confess to her. He came out and just gave me a knowing look and left. My step-mum just said I had a lot of nonsense going on in my head. I was sent back to the school.
47. I know now that Father [REDACTED] MMF went on to have a glittering ecclesiastical career at [REDACTED]. Strangely, he resigned just last year the moment he was confronted with the revelation that he had been told about what I had told him. "Why would he resign from a life's work in his position at [REDACTED]?" He has gone from perfect health and now claims that he has poor health. It always follows the same pattern for abusers like this and their protectors.

48. Around four years ago, I was in touch with the police and I gave them a statement. This was about the same time that I was in contact with the makers of the programme, "The Sins of Our Fathers". An English female police officer who took my statement came back to see me several times and my statement bounced back and forwards to Inverness. In my statement, I talked about MEV and MFH
49. I tried to talk about what happened to me with my partner at the time, the mother of our children. She wasn't up for hearing about it. I have discussed it in more detail with my current partner. She was quite keen to hear about it which I thought was unusual. She was going to come with me to my private session to give this statement, but I told her she wasn't coming. I felt this was something I must deal with on my own and, as I do, I pushed her away. I was isolating myself again because I tend to push people away when I am not at the top of my game.

### **Life after being in care**

50. After my parents were involved in the car accident, I left Fort Augustus and moved back into the hotel. None of my uncles, or in fact anyone else, were interested in taking over the running of the hotel. Out of the blue, an ex-girlfriend of my father appeared on the scene and ultimately married my father within six months. I don't actually think he had capacity by that point because of his dementia, but he did. My [REDACTED] and uncle tried to prevent it happening but they couldn't stop it.
51. I was fifteen, so I was told that I had to get a job. My step mother told me that she wasn't going to support me. The hotel was sold. [REDACTED] moved with my father and step mother to Dunoon. My mother's house was sold and my dad was put in care. I ended up joining the merchant navy at fifteen, and was in the navy for eleven years. I had gone from the fairly privileged position of having meals served to me on a linen table cloth, to serving other people on a linen table cloth. I had to shape up very quickly in life, and I just had to get on with things.

52. [REDACTED] had a house in Edinburgh, and I ended up living with her when I was home from the navy. She shared the house with two other girls, who were older, so when I was home they used to mother me. I fell in love with a trainee nurse and got married at 19 but we divorced by 23. It turned out she was equally as damaged as me, but she was abused by her father. She was so damaged that I couldn't cope with that.
53. I moved to Kent and I had several jobs. I was successful in business but I worked long, long hours, every day. I met a wonderful woman and I was with her for twenty years. She gave me two beautiful daughters. In 2004 and then in 2007, I had nervous breakdowns. In 2007, because of what happened I split up from her but we are still good friends today.
54. I now have a great understanding of mental health. I have worked for three years with people with mental health issues both on the street and some not on the street. I have studied a lot about mental health. I do health liaison work for Alcoholics Anonymous. I talk to professionals all around the country about the benefits of recovery from both mental health and from substance abuse. I have had a very useful life for the past six years.
55. I returned to work in financial services last year. I am currently a mortgage broker and a landlord. I currently have a partner. I have two daughters, [REDACTED] who is 24 and [REDACTED] is 18. My girls are to a previous partner of twenty years. I am incredibly close to my children. My previous partner lives very close to me and we still get on.

### **Impact**

56. Fort Augustus has had a massive impact on my life. My way of dealing with it was to stay busy. I stayed busy building businesses. Another coping strategy was I put it all to the back of my head and tried to forget about it. I rarely talked about it to my partner [REDACTED], who is the mother of our two girls. I saw it was too distasteful for her

to hear about it, and she was really troubled when I spoke about it so I never talked about it.

57. In 2000, everything on the surface seemed to be perfect for me. I had a beautiful partner, a lovely first child and a big house in the country. I had a great job. I was a regional manager in charge of twenty people. I had been there for eleven years and we were very successful. One day I was in Dover and I collapsed. I found myself back in my house, but I have no idea how I got there. Apparently, I spent three months in my bedroom in the dark and refused to come out. A psychologist came out to see me and told me that I had had a nervous breakdown. I asked what caused it but he said he had no idea. At the time, I thought I had a mechanical breakdown but I know differently now. I now understand that I had an unprocessed trauma which just decided to kick in. I had a moment of quiet and didn't have any distractions and it hit me. I had gone from being a workaholic and never having a day off in my life, to being off sick for a whole year.
58. I was placed in a private hospital because I was regarded as a valuable member of staff and had executive health cover. I went through every conceivable treatment. They called it a severe depressive disorder. They tried every medication under the sun but nothing would move it. I had given up hope and had wanted to commit suicide a few times. I ultimately asked them to give me Electro Convulsive Therapy (ECT) because nothing else was working. ECT would not normally be administered to someone as young as me. I forced the issue due to desperation. It is not efficacious in people of my age but I was desperate.
59. People shouldn't end up dead just because they went to school. I nearly killed myself both through drink and wanting to commit suicide. I had an inability to connect as a human being with other people. I felt that I was different and a bit of a freak. Previously I was a fairly normal drinker but when I couldn't shift my depression, I started drinking to excess on my own. One day I [REDACTED] [REDACTED] with the intent of ending it all. The coastguard and the police [REDACTED] and I was picked up by a helicopter. I got a real roasting from them for wasting their time. I think in the back of my mind

there was a tiny glimmer that my children didn't deserve it, so that is what stopped me. It was a close thing.

60. After being off sick, I went back to work far too quickly. I was faking it at work. I was void of any imagination and willingness, so I packed in my job. Almost as soon as I left, I set up my own business, recruited half of my old team and I was busy. Busy again with another series of distractions which works for me. I was buying properties, refurbishing them and building up my business. There was a meteoric rise of this business. I now see that when I get involved in things, I get completely focussed and it is just really a diversionary tactic.
61. In 2004, I was in Dover and boom, I had another breakdown and I was found shaking behind the boat shed. I was off work for another year. They couldn't cure me, or turn it round again. I turned to alcohol to numb the depression. I was taking my medication with a serious amount of alcohol. I was in a dreadful way. I was living in a ramshackle house on my own and one day I was lying on the beach and I had a brief lucid moment. I went to Alcoholics Anonymous, and I applied myself to their suggested programme of recovery. It was the best thing I have ever done in my life. I met a man who almost became the father that I never had. He was a huge influence on me. This has given me the capacity to live a very normal balanced life of usefulness.
62. Because of what happened to me, it has prevented me from being able to trust anyone. I spent twenty years with a lovely woman who gave me two wonderful children. All she ever wanted was to get married and be my wife and look after our children. I never married her through fear of not being able to trust her properly. I have nothing but an unconditional loving relationship with my children. I can't form enduring, loving relationships with adults. There is always a barrier with people and it always centres around trust. It is hard for people who want to get to know me. This can't be dismissed or trivialised. What has happened to me has damaged me, and I am a product of the environment I was in.



63. The mother of my children, who has had to put up with my depression, has been left with a scar. She finds it difficult to trust men again. We still get on well together, and I have told her that nothing of what happened was her fault. I love her and I love my children, and I loved being part of a family. I had hoped that we could have got back together again after we split up. I think it would have happened if she hadn't been so fearful of me getting ill again. She told me she was scared what I was like and that it might happen again and she couldn't go through it again. She worried about nothing, so to see me going from being a dynamic individual to a virtual zombie really took it out of her. She didn't deserve that.
64. It is interesting how I select partners now. They have to be able to stand on their own two feet and financially capable of looking after themselves. I look for all of the things so that I can abdicate all responsibility for them. If they have any needs from me, I am emotionally expended because I am completely devoted to my children. I am still trying to make up on lost time with my children and their mother. They didn't deserve what I did to them.
65. I probably attribute the breakdown of my relationship with my daughters' mother down to what happened to me in care. I developed mental health issues and she had difficulty living with that. I am the by-product of serious serial abuse with a bit of major life tragedy thrown in. It is not nice to have all of this hanging over me.
66. I fell out with [REDACTED] a few years ago. I had gone from being a high functioning individual to a zombie. He had great difficulty supporting me through this period. We have still not repaired our relationship.
67. I am very poor at working for other people, absolutely rubbish. I can't take orders from people, and this might be a throwback to my time in care. I prefer my own space and doing things myself.
68. I used to think about my time at Fort Augustus a lot. I now have coping strategies to help me. I sometimes go to the beach and relax and go for a swim in the sea. I have learned how to meditate, which I find really helpful. I have an "app" on my phone

called Headspace which is very relaxing. I go and see a counsellor, which is funded by Future Pathways and has been invaluable to me, if I feel at all vulnerable or if others around me notice me getting irritable or unusually quiet or withdrawn. Certain things can trigger that. I try not to focus on things I can't do anything about.

### **Treatment / Support**

69. I think after my second bout of depression in 2007, I started psychological therapy with the NHS and I talked at length about it with the mental health workers and psychiatrists. I was very apprehensive about getting involved in the process of psychotherapy. I had a big fear about this because I was warned that I might actually feel worse to begin with. I went with them for a while but dropped out. I now know that if you have a severe depressive disorder you are predisposed to having further bouts of depression. Depression comes with a series of symptoms which you have to watch out for. If you see any of these symptoms, you need to act quickly. I have to try and manage my life around these moments.
70. I am currently still receiving counselling which as I said was being funded by Future Pathways. This I feel should be offered to victims as soon as they make contact with the Inquiry. Occasionally I can feel down because that is what it does to you. It hasn't been put to bed and probably never will be.
71. In the last four years I have come across two movies which really taught me how to deal with this stuff. One was Philomena and the other Calgarry. They are both Roman Catholic based movies. It demonstrably shows the power of forgiveness. I have to forgive MEV, otherwise he will eat up my life.
72. I worked a lot for Alcoholics Anonymous, and I find that all the work that I did for them to be very therapeutic and helpful to me. I have got lots of experience and am happy to share it with others. There is nothing that gives me a greater lift than spending half an hour talking to someone who is in distress. It leaves me with a great feeling to have helped someone. I try to help others who are damaged, who don't

have any criminal cases on the go because their perpetrators are dead. They are massively damaged, and I try to encourage them not to feel so hateful.

### **Lessons to be learned**

73. I was not aware of the availability of counselling. Whenever anyone contacts the Inquiry, they should be asked if they have had any help and they should then be referred to a service where they can get appropriate counselling like Future Pathways. The best peer support network in the world, with millions of people recovered, with a high success rate, is Alcoholics Anonymous. Lessons could be learned by looking at how they operate.
74. It was a very bad time back in the early 1970's and this sort of behaviour was very much the norm, and it wasn't that big a deal to the authorities, nor is it regarded as news even today.
75. There is another charity set up here in Canterbury called "Take Off". It is run entirely by people who have recovered from mental ill health. The feedback is that it works. If you get people who have suffered from mental ill health talking to people who are in a bad way about how they have recovered, you will get results. It is a local charity at the moment but it is spreading across Kent. They also work with the police.
76. When people like myself are having to repeat over and over again their experiences and reliving a horror story, it almost becomes voyeuristic. It makes me think how many times I have to tell people about this nightmare before someone actually believes me. I am embarrassed and appalled at the fact that I went along with what MFH did just because he was being nice to me.

**Hopes for the Inquiry**

77. The Catholic Church have to get rid of these priests and not just move them to somewhere else. They export what I call their waste, to other places, other countries where their abuse continues. Instead of hanging them out to dry, they look after them.
78. I hope that the head of the Benedictine order will be questioned by the Inquiry about the destruction of records from Fort Augustus.
79. I hope that out of the Inquiry will be better training for everyone involved at schools and boarding schools. I also hope that they learn how to handle people's expectations, how to handle information for victims in the court process and map the journey for them. They need to learn to be empathetic and willing to help and not hinder the individual. If it wasn't for a lot of extra encouragement, I think I would have given up by now but I am too far into the process to back down now. The journey through the courts must be made easier for others because inevitably there will be others.
80. I don't think the punishment that was going on in Fort Augustus is legal any more. I would imagine that in schools today, there is a way to whistle-blow safely to someone who would take you seriously, believe you and act on what you have said.

**Records**

81. I have never tried to get my records from Fort Augustus and believe the BBC may have asked for them. They supplied me with one page of class names only with everything redacted except my name. This is not acceptable.

### Other action taken

82. About four years ago, I was on holiday in Spain with my partner at the time, [REDACTED], when [REDACTED] emailed me. She sent me a link to this programme, "The Sins of Our Fathers" which Mark Daly had released. Apparently they had been looking for me but hadn't found me in time to be included. After I contacted them, they came down to see me in Kent very quickly. I broke down with it all and said that it was about time we nailed these bastards.
83. It was around this time, I gave a statement to the police and as a result I was in contact with Isma Mukhtar from the Fiscal's office in Dundee. I was invited to the Procurator Fiscal's office in Edinburgh to give a precognition to test my evidence. I thought then that the court case was imminent. Isma Mukhtar kept in email contact with me and she was a really nice lady. I did not have a victim liaison officer and I was dealing directly with the Fiscal's office. Apparently, they decided just to circumnavigate the need for a Victim Information and Advice (VIA) officer and they just dealt with me directly. We had a good relationship and I regularly challenged her about small points. The main thing I kept telling her was to treat me as if she was in my shoes and I would treat her as if I was in her shoes. She subsequently went off sick and was eventually replaced by Alison McKenzie. She started asking me the same questions I had already been asked like someone who has just picked up but not read the file. I have tried and still have a positive line of communication with her.
84. There were long periods of time when I was told that consultation was going to be had with a senior fiscal who was going to decide whether any action was going to be taken. I asked who this person was and if I could speak to this senior fiscal but I was told that I couldn't. I was told it was all in hand but months passed and I heard nothing. I spoke to the BBC and Mark Daly said he would put a rocket up their arse. Mark Daly did a small piece on BBC Scotland and the next day lo and behold [REDACTED] [REDACTED] MEV [REDACTED] Mark Daly did this every six months just to keep things ticking over. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

85. I learned during the precognition with Esmā Mukhtar, that [REDACTED] MFH had died so there will be no court case in relation to him. As part of the case preparation, the defence questioned the mental stability of the witnesses. This is a common tactic used by the Catholic Church. I was asked to go back to Scotland where I saw a Gary Macpherson, a clinical psychologist in Glasgow. The Crown arranged it I think, knowing that the defence were going to ask for it. This was to establish if I was of sound mind to give evidence. Gary Macpherson clearly hadn't read any of my notes that were sent to him. At the end he said I was of perfectly sound mind and in good shape to give evidence. He hadn't read my notes otherwise he would have seen that I had Electro Convulsive Therapy.
86. I have been working with the BBC and they have been tracking my experiences. We have found that a lot of people who I have offered up as people they may wish to contact who were at school with me, are all dead. Some have just disappeared and some have succumbed to alcohol and drug abuse. Others have serious mental health issues. They all have very sad stories. I visited one of the boys in my class who was a really bright boy at school. He was at his house and he was living the life of a hermit in Shotts. He was so anti-establishment. [REDACTED] is another boy who is dead now. He died of alcoholism.
87. Other boys who I am still in touch with are highly supportive of what I have done. They are not willing to come forward to give evidence because they are worried it may offend their parents.
88. I am still in the process trying to get Father [REDACTED] MEV to court. It has been a five year process for me. The Catholic Church know it is going to be a long process and they play on that. They use the same tactic every time, divide and rule, isolate and pick off the vulnerable. Eventually some way down the line, experience tells the Catholic Church that people get fed up and quit. They put children through the wringer and send them to psychologists to get assessed.
89. Father [REDACTED] MEV was defending himself. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



90. 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.....19-10-2018.....