

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

EGW

Support present: No.

1. My name is EGW. My date of birth is 1953. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Duke Street Hospital in Glasgow and our family lived in the area of Glasgow when I was very young. My mother was and my father was
3. I am one of seven siblings, from oldest to youngest they are who was born in 1947, who is now deceased, who was born in 1950 and now lives in New Zealand, we call her, who was born in 1952, and who was with me on Tiree, then there's me, then, who is also deceased, and then who was born in 1959.
4. My mum was a typical fifties housewife, a stay at home mum although she did have occasional jobs in the evenings, working as a cleaner and things like that. My father was ex-military, he and my grandfather were both in the Cameron Highlanders during the war.
5. I believe my father absconded quite a lot but he did do his business. I think the problem was that when he came home for any length of time, he would have to be taken back. Another thing to look at is our second name, because EGW is a

German name and although he was third generation UK born he did have a German name. He had a German name and was fighting Germans so he found it difficult for people to trust him. I've experienced that myself, but it's not an excuse, it's just something that was there for my father.

6. After my father had finished with the military he waited for seven years to get on the housing list with Glasgow Corporation. We think that could only have been because he had a German name. There was no other obvious reason and I remember that when my father decided to take the story up with a Glasgow newspaper, he had a house within weeks.
7. That was when we moved from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] in Bridgeton, Glasgow. I actually have no memory of living in [REDACTED], my earliest memories are from living in [REDACTED].
8. My father went on to work as a bookmaker and mathematically he was probably one of the brightest people I've ever met. He did all the tic-tac stuff with his hands at the races and he was so quick with numbers. Unfortunately he had a bit of a drink problem and the more he worked, the more money he made and the more money he made, the more he drank. As a result of that he lost his job and this was repetitive for him, it was a circuit of self-destruction really.
9. He was potentially a great money maker and could have provided well for us had it not been for the demon drink. Who knows what the reasons were for that, or what drove him to it, but it is an illness. He ended up putting the family in a spiral of destruction to the point where we never knew where the money was coming from for our next meal. It was famine or feast with us. If he got a good job and fulfilled his promise to stay on the straight, then we were pretty comfortable, but that didn't last, it never lasted.
10. My father had his issues, he had demons that were difficult to control. These are the in-roads that people choose to go down, nobody is born a drug addict or alcoholic, it's all the turnings and in-roads they choose to take that lead them there. I don't

know what my father was suppressing with the alcohol, it could have been the horrors of war, who knows.

11. Yet, when I was first born I was in hospital in Glasgow for months and months because I had meningitis. It was not that survivable back then and I was seriously ill. So much so that my parents were actually advised to stop visiting because the stress of seeing me slip away would be too much for them. My mother was distraught and heeded the doctors but my father stayed with me. He since told me of how he sat by my cot for hours, shaking a matchbox with a thruppenny bit inside, like a rattle. On one occasion I turned and looked at him and he then continued to get my attention by shaking it on either side of my head. He says he knew then that I was going to survive.
12. My dad also spent some time in prison. We were never told that as children, we were told he had a job in London, and he did labour as an electrician's mate, so sometime the jobs did take him away from home. I just think we were being protected from the truth with the economics of a lie. There were times he would have been working away on location and times where he would be incarcerated.
13. Back then, the male was so dominant in the house and the mother was so subservient to it all. My mother just rolled with it and tried to pick up the pieces where she could, to make things work. We did have a good neighbourhood though, people from the east end of Glasgow are special and will rally round and help. However, that could only last for so long and eventually something had to be done.

Castlemilk House, Glasgow (1957)

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Life at home between times at Castlemilk (1957 – 1962)

18. That was a time of poverty, to the extreme, and I remember, back in the early days, I was always a bit of an entrepreneur and a survivor. I built myself a guidey or bogey and used it to collect ginger bottles to make myself some money. I was only six or seven and I was going round collecting empty bottles and buying fresh ginger for the people who gave me bottles. I would get a cut and I could then feed myself daily. That's what I had to do quite often just to feed myself.
19. We were living in a three bedroom house, our parents and seven children and there wasn't a lot of income. I started my primary education at Strathclyde Primary School which was only a short walk from [REDACTED]. My brothers and sister were all there as well and it wasn't too bad actually. I think I did reasonably well.

20. I'm not aware of any social work involvement at that time. We did have occasional times when my mother had to go to the authorities to try and get money, when my dad went a bit wayward. I remember he once absconded with his work takings and disappeared for two or three weeks to London. That was around 1961, before we went to Tiree.
21. We survived on a daily basis, just doing whatever we had to, to survive. The income was sometimes from ill-gotten gains, but we weren't a family of scallies who were out robbing people, it was just that sometimes things were done that perhaps shouldn't have been. Basically the family did what they had to do, and sometimes we got fed, others we didn't.
22. I remember being out on the street playing one day when someone called me and told me something was happening at my home. I was absolutely mortified when I got home to see that the bailiffs had turned up and turfed us out onto the street. Everything we owned had been dumped out the front of the house and that was us, locked out.
23. I found out it was because my parents hadn't kept up with their rent and it was only for a small amount of money. My parents may have had notice of that, I don't know, but they couldn't find the money to clear that debt.
24. That brought about such embarrassment and shame but the people at Bridgeton were good and they did look after us. We went to a neighbour's house, where we were given sandwiches and tea and my dad had the opportunity to come up with a plan.
25. That plan was to go to John Street in Glasgow and plead a case to be rehoused with the Welfare Offices of Glasgow Corporation. My dad was told there was nothing they could do and his response was to tell them he would need to leave his seven children with them because he couldn't look after us. The corporation couldn't help us, so that's what happened, he and my mother left the seven of us to be looked

after by the state. His lifelong story was that it cost the corporation more to look after all the children than it would have been to pay the outstanding rent.

26. We were all at the Welfare Offices while this was going on, then my parents left and all seven of us were shipped out to Eversley Children's Home. I do remember having a feeling of being frail and embarrassed but, as a young boy, I probably had some excitement of the adventure, that was coming. There was also a feeling of having been betrayed, but I don't know who by. There was all these emotions and that was a sign of all these things that were to come. The start of the catalogue of betrayal and disappointment that was going to come along.
27. I don't even think we were given a drink of water while we were all waiting at the Welfare Offices. We were herded into a room with a bench in it and told to keep the noise down. There was certainly no assistance or support and no one spoke to us. We were just abandoned for hours and hours before we were eventually taken away in a big minibus type thing.
28. I still remember very clearly, being taken out the back of the building and up a ramp that led to the road where the minibus was. I remember looking out the minibus window and seeing my parents hanging about outside the front of the building. I think they had a possible belief, that having called the bluff of the corporation, they might just reconsider things.
29. That's what I remember about getting taken away and there were no hugs or kisses goodbye, nothing like that. We were in one room, we could hear my parents arguing, and then it went quiet. That was it they were gone.
30. It was social workers of some sort that took us away in the minibus. Faceless, emotionless, people, who were dressed in green and didn't have any contact with us. I'm tempted to say horrible people, but they were only doing their job.

Eversley Children's Home, Pollokshields (1962)

General

31. I have discovered from my sister that all seven of us went to Eversley Children's Home. I think we were only there for a day or two prior to going to Castlemilk for the third time. I did think we were at another place but I couldn't come up with a name. I wouldn't have remembered it if had it not been for my sister.
32. It was quite soon after that that my two older brothers went on to be repatriated with our parents. I'm not sure exactly when that was but it was certainly before the rest of us went to Dunclutha.
33. I have no idea where Eversley is and I have no recollection of the place or how we were treated. It was just a staging post, a place where they could quickly put up seven children. I have absolutely no memories of the place.

Castlemilk House, Glasgow (1962)

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Castlemilk Children's Home

64. I have great concerns over the way we were taken from Castlemilk to Dunclutha. Once again, we were marginalised or not included in anything, other than our physical movement from one place to another.
65. My memory of leaving is that I was sitting at my desk in class in my school, which was outside of Castlemilk home. I had my school blazer on my chair and all my things around me, particularly, a wooden pencil case which I had been given as a gift, it was lovely and I treasured it having never been given anything like that before.
66. A teacher entered the room and spoke to our teacher who beckoned me forward and I left the room with the other teacher. Everything I owned was on that desk, and I wasn't thinking I'd not be returning, but we walked down the corridor, went outside into the car park and suddenly I was in a car and I was gone. I was taken back to Castlemilk where my two older sisters and my younger brother and sister were waiting and we were all then shipped off to Dunclutha.
67. My older brothers, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], were not there and there was no explanation about where they were or what they were doing. No one told us anything about them, they just weren't there.
68. There was no opportunity to say goodbye to my classmates and no opportunity to collect my personal possessions together. Everything was just gone, I lost everything. It was very callous. No one sat me down and explained a thing, we were in a minibus and told we were going somewhere else, that was it.

Dunclutha Children's Home, Dunoon (1963)

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Dunclutha

113. I do think Dunclutha was a clearing ground for onward movement to the Boarded Out system for some of the children. However, I have learnt from speaking to others on Facebook and stuff, that some spent their entire childhood there, until they were taken to Glasgow around the age of fifteen, to the next stage of hostels and places like that.

114. The actual move to Tiree, in my memory was literary, *"you're not going to school today, you're going off to somewhere else"*. That was it and we were gone on another adventure. I'm sure that it was on the day we left.
115. In fairness we may have been told but it didn't register as a kid. I just seem to remember not going to school and then being on a journey to Oban to get on a ferry to Tiree. My older sister may have been advised but I only remember being told on the morning we went. I have no memory of being pre-empted.
116. It was another minibus drive with a driver and a green lady and we went up to Oban then got a ferry. There was [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and myself and we were told by the green lady, on the journey over to Tiree, that we were all going to the same house. We were told it was a nice big house with lambs and chickens and all the nice things a croft would have. We didn't know it was an island and we didn't know where it was. I remember when we got there, the people were speaking Gaelic, which might as well have been Norwegian as far as we were concerned, because we didn't understand a word.
117. We went to a hotel, the Scarinish Hotel, and it was while we were there that my sister was actually told we were going to three different houses. My sister only told me that very recently, and that she kicked up a fuss over it. The green lady then slapped my sister across the face and told to wind her neck in. I didn't witness that but my sister told me that's what happened. I didn't really catch on to the fact that we were all going to three different places.
118. That green lady was a scary lady, her name was Miss ^{EGX}[REDACTED], she was chubby and was in her late thirties perhaps. Nothing really stands out about her, but she didn't take any nonsense and as far as child welfare was concerned she was definitely a square peg in a round hole. I don't think she was deliberately brutal, perhaps she just saw it as a job and was desensitised to any warmth or comfort.
119. We then drove to [REDACTED], which is a little hamlet of houses where we stopped. A woman came out to meet us and [REDACTED] and I were beckoned out of the car. I

remember asking what was going on as I thought we were all going to be kept together but then we were told that wasn't happening. I was very apprehensive at that point because I didn't know when or if we would see the others again. We had been lied to so often that we didn't know who to trust anymore. It was all such an unnecessary trauma that we were subjected to and should have been handled better. It was perhaps a sign of the times and was probably the same for every boarded out kid. That is how they were, children were to be seen and not heard.

120. We were then taken into the house by the woman who came out to meet us and the rest of our siblings disappeared. At first I thought she was an old woman but that was EGY who was to be looking after us. EGY was known as EGY and she was a widow, her husband had been killed in an accident involving a horse, and she was in her forties. We were the third family she had looked after.
121. I have actually had contact with one of the boys who was boarded out to EGY as the first family she took on. Her husband was there at that time as well and this chap has told me that when he and his brother turned up at her house the green lady or social worker that brought them literally knocked on the EGY-SPO door and asked them if they wanted some children. EGY and came out to look at the two boys and EGY said they would take one but not the other as the younger one didn't look strong enough to do any work. persuaded EGY to take both boys so one boy went in there completely unwanted and EGY was quite happy, in a heartbeat, to separate them. That shows how callous the system was.
122. EGY then set the rules quite clearly and let us know that from then on she was our new mum. We called her auntie and generally she was okay, so much so that every time I go back to Tiree I visit her grave and put flowers on it. She wasn't without fault but she was pretty comfortable with me. Not quite so much with , but was older and was more verbal. did take quite a few slaps from EGY over our time there. probably invited the attention because she was quite militant but it's obviously never justified to slap a child.

Boarded Out – EGY [REDACTED], [REDACTED] Tiree (1963 – 1966)

General

123. I believe there would have been around 60 to 75 boarded out children on Tiree during my time on the island. I certainly know of one house that had eighteen children staying there at one time, we were five and I know of other families of four or five.
124. I was boarded out to EGY [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] on Tiree from 1963 until [REDACTED] 1966, which was the day we were all repatriated back to Glasgow. We stayed there on the island throughout that entire period of time.
125. Being boarded-out was never really explained to us but we were told we would be expected to do certain chores and that we would be there to help to run the croft. That was it really, we were there as workers, it wasn't a free lunch in any way, we had to earn our keep which was reminded to us, and we certainly did that.
126. The croft we stayed in was a two storey building with a porch at the front. There was two big thatched cottage type building alongside, one was a cattle byer and the other was where they stored the hay for the winter. Between those buildings was a big doocot type thing and in there was our toilet. There was also a small paddock field across from the house where the cattle would graze.
127. There was no running water and we used to get the water from two different places. There was a well on the main road that had the drinking water. My sister and I went out to that well almost every day with two big silver pails to collect the water for the house. Then there was another deep well closer to the house, with a bucket on a rope, that was water for the toilet and washing.
128. Inside the croft there was a few bedrooms upstairs and a kitchen, a small bedroom and posh living room downstairs. We spent most of our time in the kitchen area where there was a big fire and cooking going on, or in our bedroom. I had the small downstairs bedroom, which looked out to [REDACTED] lighthouse. At night, depending

on conditions, that lighthouse would flash in my room every fourteen seconds, unless I closed the curtains.

129. My sister [REDACTED] was in a bedroom upstairs but if there were ever any visitors she would be moved in with EGY [REDACTED] and the visitor would take her room. There was a hawker guy who travelled around the islands selling clothes and stuff, he would lodge with us occasionally, and use [REDACTED] bedroom.

Routine

First day

130. I have little memory of the first day, but we would have been settling in. My sister was particularly distraught about the sibling separation so I was comforting her.
131. We had no idea where they'd gone. We were told they were a mile and a half to two miles away but we had been lied to before so they could have gone anywhere. No matter what we were being told we weren't going to believe it. We didn't even know we were on an island and that it was a small island so they couldn't have been too far away. As it turned out we were being told the truth but we only discovered that a couple of days later when we saw them at school.
132. I do remember EGY [REDACTED] explaining the rules to us and telling us that if we didn't behave we would be sent back to the home and wouldn't get to see our siblings. We weren't allowed to go and visit our sister and brother without her consent and that was very rare. If we did she told us there would be consequences, those being that we would be taken off the island and sent back to the children's home. That was the stick she used to beat us. We knew she wasn't one to take prisoners and realised that as long as we complied, things would be okay. That was true, as if there was deviation from the rules you would be reminded quite clearly that you'd stepped out of line. She was a strong lady and not one to be messed with but she wasn't all bad.

Mornings and bedtime

133. I was about nine or ten when we were on Tiree and I had to get up every morning around 7:00 am and take the cattle, six or seven cows, up to the grazing field, which was about a mile away. I would then walk back to the croft and have my breakfast before dressing and going to school, which was also about a mile away, very near to where the cattle were grazing.
134. Depending on the cattle, that could take quite a while and sometimes I would miss the 9:00 am bell at school and be late. Sometimes I wouldn't even have time for breakfast and I remember on three or four occasions I fainted in class from malnourishment. Some of the other kids, who had sandwiches, would then feed me. There were days that it could be lunchtime before I had any food at all.
135. I had lunch at school, I remember a lady who drove around the island in a wee yellow van, would turn up with silver boxes of food.
136. Every Saturday, after I had done my morning chores, which were the same as throughout the week, I was dispatched over to a farm called [REDACTED] which belonged to EGY [REDACTED] brother, EHB [REDACTED]. We called him Uncle EHB [REDACTED] and he lived on that farm with his sister, Auntie [REDACTED].
137. That was a three mile walk across fields and I would go and work there for Uncle EHB [REDACTED] every week. I would do any chores he had for me, anything from mucking out byres to getting cattle in or out or moving hay. I was only ever brought into their house to get fed, then I was back out for more work and sent home.

Mealtimes/Food

138. My sister [REDACTED] would help EGY [REDACTED] in the kitchen with cooking. They made clootie dumpling, butter and when we went out to collect the seaweed my sister would help her make carrageen with cinnamon or butterscotch.

139. Generally speaking the food was good, other than when things went wrong and I missed out on my breakfast. There was always something on the go at mealtimes and EGY would buy her supplies at a van that went round. and I would also go to the village shop in to get shopping. That was about three miles away but Tiree being as it was, we would usually start walking, then get picked up from someone, so we didn't always walk the entire distance.
140. If we had chicken it would usually be from our yard and that was my job, I was shown how to dispatch them. It's quite a horrendous thing to do at the age of eleven, I would ring their necks and pluck them and the night before I was feeding them.

Washing/bathing

141. We brought water in from the well outside and warmed it up on the cooker. We were then allowed to use that to put in the tin bath. We would each bath on our own, but we only did that about once a week as our daily cleanliness was kept to a hand wash with a flannel.

Healthcare

142. There was an incident when I had a big boil on the back of my head. They thought it was ringworm or something and the doctor came to see me and lanced it. I was off school for a couple of days and to this day if I have a short haircut you can see the scar.
143. My younger sister also picked up a burn mark to her neck and we were told by her guardians, at the time, that it was a skipping rope accident but I have since discovered, having spoken to the son of that family, that she allegedly accidentally ran into a hot poker he was holding having stoked the fire. She was taken off to Glasgow to receive treatment for that and she still has a scar on her neck. I'm not convinced his story is as accurate as he says and I just don't believe it was accidental, but that can't be proved. She was only about two and doesn't remember the incident.

144. I did faint in class a couple of times and I had a couple of visits from the doctor for that as they thought I may have been anaemic but that was because I wasn't eating and hadn't had a breakfast before going to school.
145. I've no recollection of getting any kind of medical examination but we possibly had one at Dunclutha before leaving there.

Work

146. As I have already said, we had to earn our keep, but it wasn't just that, we were also rented out to other crofts. EGY had about ten cattle, twenty sheep and some chickens. She also grew hay as a crop, to feed the cattle. There wasn't tractor to cut the hay and bring it in so another farmer or crofter would come and cut the hay and help get it in and then in return EGY would send us to go and help him with his hay or pick potatoes or whatever.
147. I do remember potato picking time, in October, when I would spend hours collecting potatoes on another croft, the one my younger sister was boarded out to, which was the biggest croft on the island. The crofter would pick up children from the crofts in a tractor and trailer and take them to one of his fields to work. Most of those children were boarded out children and would spend many backbreaking hours collecting potatoes and stuff.
148. We would then all get a meal at the crofters house then get dropped off back at our own crofts, about eight or nine at night, with a couple of bags of spuds as payment for the work we had done. We were rented out for that, and that was the payment. Personally we didn't get a penny and that's how it was, that's what was expected of us.
149. Another thing we used to have to do was to help out during the sheep shearing and sheep dipping. We would go up onto the hills and round up all the sheep and bring them in to be sheared. We were given a big hessian sack and we could collect any loose wool and put it in the sack. We had our names on the sacks and they were taken

away and weighed. Weeks later we would then get sent a fiver or so from the Scottish Wool Board, so it was good to get some money for doing a job.

150. The work we did was back breaking but it wasn't that bad because we were young and mixing with other kids and it was a bit of an adventure. We also used to pitch and rake the hay during the harvest season. As I mentioned earlier I also went to my Uncle EHB farm every Saturday and worked there as well. Most of the work we did was at weekends, we didn't miss school to go out and work, but there was work I had to do every day I was on Tiree.
151. People will say that all children had to have a work ethic but it wasn't right, the work ethic was a lot heavier for the boarded out and in some cases the boarded out were only there so that the children of the guardians didn't have to do any work. A lot of people will make the excuse that it was a different era and things were done differently back then but the fact that we were made to work, the way we were made to work and were expected to work when other children were having leisure time was quite obvious. There was no consideration for us as boarded out kids. The day to day routine on a croft was a harsh existence which we had to adapt to and overcome, but it was extremely harsh for the boarded out children.
152. Looking back at the work, as an adult, I have now seen the 'Instructions to Guardians' that were written down by the Corporation of Glasgow. I have a copy of the booklet they were contained in, that was given to people who were boarding out children. It was produced by the Public Assistance Department. The director of Public Assistance in the book is Mr R. P. Ramsay.
153. The rules were written down, the do's and don'ts, but they were never complied with or adhered to. It clearly said we were to be fed, educated, churched and clothed, all that sort of stuff, but it also clearly said we were not to be used as labour, and we were. There is no doubt about it, you can call it what you want but being boarded out was slave labour and I don't remember many local children being in the back of the tractor and picking spuds with us.

154. We had a couple of cats, and another thing I had to do whenever any of the cats had kittens, was to put the kittens in a canvas sack with a couple of stones and throw them in the loch. That was because we couldn't take on the kittens and I had to do that about a dozen times during my time there. As a kid that was tough, I can still hear the kittens meowing and screaming away so I took absolutely no pleasure from that. It just shows the callous brutal way that we were introduced to things.

Clothing/uniform

155. All the clothing we had was provided for us but as boarded out children we were always identifiable. We had plenty and it was all clean, and we regularly changed underwear and the like. There was two sources for the clothing, one was the Glasgow Corporation uniform type stuff, which went a way to identifying us from islanders. I do believe that was a deliberate thing, so that we could be identifiable. That clothing consisted of brown corduroy short trousers that really did stand out. I only used to wear them around the croft. If you ever look at the old photographs of the boarded out children you'll see the clothes and you can spot the boarded out kids. Going back to the later forties, the boarded outs had no shoes on, whereas the islanders did. That was a common thing and was more or less a standard uniform for the boarded out kids.
156. The second source was through some funds paid to our guardian. The hawker guy I mentioned earlier, came to the island and went around it in a big van selling stuff. There was the occasional purchase there. The guy was Indian or Pakistani and, as I said, he stayed at our croft for a couple of nights when he was there.
157. There was definitely segregation, because another thing they used to do on the island to differentiate between boarded out and islanders is that they referred to you by your second name. I was never [REDACTED] I was always [REDACTED].
158. There is actually a guy on the island now, [REDACTED] who was boarded out there in 1940 as a baby and he's lived there most of his life. He's a typical crofter and islander, and is married to a girl on the island who was also boarded out and to this day he is referred to as [REDACTED] never [REDACTED].

Schooling

159. When we first arrived at Tiree my oldest sister [REDACTED] was made to go to primary school. I don't know why that was because she had been in secondary school at Dunclutha. My school of thought surrounding that is that she was living with my younger brother [REDACTED] on Tiree and he was going to primary school for the first time, so I think she was basically being used to babysit [REDACTED]. She did start secondary after the Easter break after he had acclimatised but that also meant I could see [REDACTED] at primary school.
160. There was only about twelve to fourteen children in the primary school we went to and about nine of them were boarded out kids. We were all in the one classroom, all day. So there were some children learning their A,B,C's and other getting ready to go on to secondary school.
161. Our teacher was Dolly Cameron and she deserved a medal. She taught all the different levels, kept us all right and she fed us, watered us, bought us presents and put on Christmas parties for us. She bought much if it all out her own pocket.
162. School was a positive experience, I had a comfortable time and got on with most of the other children. I was never disciplined or given the belt. I went to secondary school for a short time in [REDACTED] 1966, but we left Tiree in [REDACTED] 1966, and I was brought back home.
163. When they stopped sending children over to Tiree, around the mid-seventies, they closed a lot of the primary schools down on the island because so many of the children had been boarded out and had attended the primary schools on the island.

Religion

164. I think the guardians had this view that they always had to be doing the right thing, image was important and we did go to the local church. I think EGY [REDACTED] was perhaps a different order, as I can't remember her going to church with us. She wasn't

Catholic as there no Catholic's on the island. It's been documented that there was once a Catholic child boarded out on the island and within three days the child was booted off.

165. I know my younger sister [REDACTED], was boarded out to a very religious lady, who was the [REDACTED] and her husband was a [REDACTED]. Unfortunately their religion didn't teach them how to look after children properly.

Leisure time

166. There wasn't a lot of leisure time. The only day would be Sunday and by the time we got back from church and had dinner, we would only have a few hours until it was time for bed.
167. The only thing I had was a blue book that was about stories from the sea that was sent to me. I read it from cover to cover, time and time again. We also had a radio that we used to tune into get some pop music now and again. There was no television.
168. On one of the occasions I returned to Tiree as an adult, I was at a reunion thing and I was at a little ceilidh. I was talking to a woman, about my age, who used to play with my sister and I couldn't remember her, but she told me I was known back then as the boy who was always working, because I was never at the house when she was playing with my sister, I was always working.
169. I did go to the Tobermory games on the Isle of Mull on one occasion. That was the only time I left the island. I was put on a bus that passed by the house, travelled over on the boat and spent the day there wandering around on my own. I then got back on the bus, came back to Tiree on the boat and that was it. I wasn't taken under anybody's wing or shown what was what I just did my own thing for the day.

Birthdays and Christmas

170. I think I learnt to forget when my birthday was, as our birthdays were never celebrated. I do remember I was in secondary school on the [REDACTED] 1966 and that was the [REDACTED], that's the only birthday I remember on the island and for that [REDACTED] reason only.

171. We did have small presents given to us at Christmas but they were usually something that we could eat or drink, there were no toys that I remember. There might have been toys but I certainly don't remember ever getting excited about Christmas, it was a non-event in my opinion.

Personal possessions

172. I had very little in the way of possessions. I had the blazer badge from the USS Hunley and the book that I've told you about. I did get an old push bike, which made such a difference for me getting around the island and I remember I maintained that as best I could. Anything we did have we held on to.

173. We did get pocket money occasionally, and the money for collecting the sheep's wool. If we were going to the local shop we would get a couple of pennies for sweets and that would be part of our pocket money and was only an occasional treat.

Family contact

174. My older sister [REDACTED] and younger brother [REDACTED] were in another bigger croft and my younger sister [REDACTED] went to a separate croft on her own.

175. I did get to see my brother and sisters at school and at church every Sunday. The school was right next to the church. After about half an hour of the service we would break away for Sunday School and then we could all get together, which I would look forward to. Occasionally we would go to Balemartine, another part of the island, to a beach and do stuff there as part of Sunday School.

176. Occasionally we would also be allowed to go to where [REDACTED] was living, at a place called [REDACTED] and meet up with her. We weren't allowed to go to the house she was living in, so we would meet up on the road and go for a walk and do stuff.
177. In the three and a half, nearly four years we were on Tiree I don't think I was permitted to go and visit [REDACTED] any more than half a dozen times.
178. There were families who were worse than us though. There was a family of five children called [REDACTED]. Their guardians were a brother and sister who lived two miles apart. The five children were split three and two between the brother and sister and because of where they were living three children went to one primary school and two went to another one. For over a year the two sets of siblings didn't know where the other set had gone and it wasn't until they all met up in secondary school that they saw each other. I was with one of them walking along the corridor in school when two of the brothers met for the first time, in over a year. I don't know if the guardians had even been advised that they were sharing siblings from the same family. Two miles is a long way in Tiree when you're a young kid and you're movements are being restricted.
179. There was zero contact with either of our parents throughout the entire time we stayed on Tiree.

Supervision by boarding out authority / social services

180. The only person that ever came out onto the island to visit us was a social worker called Mr Meldrum. We saw him at the school and at the house but he was no use at all and was really only there for his dram of whisky and to tick his boxes.
181. From the school records I managed to obtain it would appear we received visits from Mr Meldrum about every six months. They were never done in the way they were presumably designed, with us all being seen individually. There was always someone there to witness it, that we would probably have preferred not to be there. We were all

spoken to together in front of our guardian, and you couldn't say what you wanted to say. Not that I had much to say, as EGY wasn't really a bad person in any way.

182. When my oldest sister [REDACTED] was about fourteen or fifteen, she made a complaint to Mr Meldrum and he then told her guardian, Mrs EHD [REDACTED] who took the belt to her. My sister was belted by her guardian and told never to talk about it again. I know now that [REDACTED] had told Mr Meldrum that the son of the guardian had tried to rape her. He then told the guardian who didn't believe her and belted her for making such an accusation. So we all learnt at a very early age that you don't speak out in front of these people as you just didn't trust them. The father of the boy, who was a bit more understanding banned his son from the house, so he certainly took it seriously. I only know the boy's nickname was EGZ [REDACTED] and he was about twenty. He is deceased now.

183. We learned not to say anything, or to just let Mr Meldrum hear what he wanted to hear, so we more or less blanked him. I have no idea what he talked to EGY [REDACTED] or our teacher about, we certainly didn't tell him anything and he was just a waste of space as far as we were concerned.

Language

184. The Gaelic language barrier did become a problem because people could talk about us without us knowing what they were saying. As pretty shrewd kids I would say it didn't take us long to pick up the words that were important. We soon learnt when certain things were being talked about, and when we were being talked about. I personally took a great interest in the Gaelic and I did pick up a very pigeon conversation capability and did learn a lot of what was being said.

185. There were Gaelic lessons at school, it was part of the curriculum, but it was just the very basics that we were being taught in primary school. I wasn't at secondary long enough to really get in to it.

Running away

186. There is a story of a boarded out kid that disappeared on the island and wasn't found for about three days. He was eventually found in Balemartine hiding underneath a parked upside down boat and it had been because he had been badly abused by his guardian. He was quickly moved to another guardian and the guardian that was responsible for the abuse was refused any more children after that. I picked that story up from [REDACTED], the veteran survivor I mentioned earlier.

Bed Wetting

187. I didn't have a problem with bed wetting but it was for my older sister [REDACTED], who lived with us. I think she was badly treated for it and I do believe there was some form of punishment to try and make it stop, obviously not the right thing to do. I do think she picked up some slaps for that.

Abuse at [REDACTED] Tiree

188. EGY [REDACTED] was a strong and quite a stubborn lady but she wasn't all bad, and did nothing more than slap my sister and belt her a couple of times. I don't ever recall getting a slap from her myself or being physically punished by her at all.
189. I wasn't ever in the room when that happened I just heard EGY [REDACTED] giving my sister a bollocking for something and then my sister screaming back at EGY [REDACTED]. I don't know how the punishments were actually administered.
190. As I said before we were the third family that EGY [REDACTED] had looked after. The family before us were [REDACTED] and EHE [REDACTED]. We saw [REDACTED] as she visited once or twice when we were first there but EHE [REDACTED], who was older, about eighteen or nineteen, would come and help out at the croft, as a farmhand. His nickname was EHE [REDACTED] and he was a big strong muscular man.

191. When he came to work he took over my sisters bedroom and she went in with EGY. EHE had sinister ways, and is one of the few people in my life that I've come to hate, because he molested me on numerous occasions.
192. The abuse started off around the summer of 1965. The first occasion was on a Sunday afternoon, when we were back from church and EGY was downstairs in the Sunday room, where she used to have a snooze. I remember EHE asking me to go up to his room, to look at some comics, but there were no comics, and then he started touching me. He got his penis out and wanted me to fondle it, which was something that wasn't on my radar at that age, I just couldn't take it in. I couldn't not do what he was asking as he was being quite forceful and then he made me take my trousers off and he was fondling me as well. I was terrified, so terrified, this was something I had never experienced and I just couldn't understand how this was all happening.
193. That first time, it was masturbation that he was interested in and he made it quite clear that any mention of it would result in physical harm. I know I felt ashamed and guilty as if I had done something wrong. I felt dirty, I felt confused and it was just mind blowing, my innocence had gone. I didn't understand why someone would want something like that to happen.
194. I suppose I chalked it down to experience and let it go but then it continued and later in the week he got the opportunity again. He wanted oral sex that time, which I wasn't capable of doing but he performed oral sex on me. It meant nothing to me but it felt so wrong, I just didn't want to be there. It was disgusting alien behaviour and was horrible.
195. That eventually progressed to him forcing me to have anal sex with him and that was the worst experience ever in my whole life. From that day to this, nothing could compare with it. I was in tears and my back passage was bleeding, it was horrible and nothing could compare with it. I didn't know how to stop the bleeding and I'm sure there was damage done there. There was no one I could possibly tell, and I was thinking it was me who had done something terrible.

196. I was never right after that. Every time I went to the loo I would pass blood. I don't know if this is anything to do with that but over the years I've always had a problem with my bowel, passing blood. Later in life I went on to have ulcers and scabs around my back passage and eventually I went on to develop a thing called ulcerated colitis, which is ulcers inside your bowels that can bleed when you open your bowels. I don't know if the two things are related but to me I feel as if they must have been. Eventually I had to be operated on and I had part of my lower bowel removed and I had a colostomy bag fitted for two years. Even now I pass blood from my rectum, so I feel it's never going to be right. I am convinced it's to do with what EHE did to me.
197. I remember once, after the abuse had started, I had cycled over to the farm of EHB who we called Uncle EHB as he was the brother of EGY but he was no relation to EHE who abused me. It was about three miles from where we lived and before I had a bike I used to walk there and back every Saturday to muck out his byre or get hay in, just whatever jobs he needed done.
198. This time I cycled over I saw EHB who had the farm talking to the EHE, who abused me, as he had turned up at the farm in a tractor to collect hay or something. I was well aware that they were talking about me as they were looking at me and then later that same day Uncle EHB accosted me in the byre and tried to have the same wicked way with me.
199. He came up from behind me while I was clearing hay away and put his arms around me and put his hands down my front and tried to touch my groin area. I don't remember what he was saying. He held me quite tight and I immediately knew I didn't want to be there. I managed to get out of his grip and get away and that didn't happen again, but he was obviously looking for the same events as EHE
200. I can only assume that EHE had told him something about what he had been doing to me. That was particularly difficult because up until that point Uncle

EHB was held up on a pedestal. He worked us hard but I had liked him, as a kid, I wouldn't have had any bad things to say about him.

201. There was another family followed on from us at **EGY** s, when we left Tiree and I do know of them. There was a boy and, now, as an adult he is super shy about what he talks about, so I have a feeling he might have had some problems. That's his story though, I can't say anything for sure about that.
202. I have also learned that, on more than one occasion, **EHE** sexually abused my sister, I don't believe he raped her but he made every effort to do so. She has told me that when he stayed at the croft and was in her room. He sometimes got into bed with my sister and tried to do things to her, while she was sleeping in her bed, in the same room as **EGY** while she was sleeping in her bed.

Leaving Tiree

203. Other than my experiences with **EHE** and Uncle **EHB** living on Tiree was hard work, or slave labour, that I would have rolled with, as not being something that was too unpleasant, compared with what it could have been.
204. Me, my brother and sisters all left Tiree on 1966 but I know that many boarded out children were on Tiree a lot longer than us, not everybody got repatriated like we did. They tended to filter them out when they got to fifteen or sixteen.
205. I have heard that after we left, two sisters were boarded out to the same family my younger sister had stayed at on her own. Apparently once they got to the age where they were becoming a nuisance, one of the sisters was taken from the island and just dumped on the mainland. Quite literally taken over, sat on a bench and left until she was found and taken into care. Some time after that the sister was then put on a plane from Tiree to Glasgow, by the same family, and there was no one to meet her,

nothing had been organised, so the Welfare Department had to come and collect her at Glasgow Airport.

206. It was in the summer of 1966 that our guardian, EGY told us there was a good chance we would be going back to the mainland in [REDACTED] of that year. However, that was put on hold until [REDACTED]. We were then told about a week before the actual date we left, that we were going for sure, so it was on the [REDACTED] 1966 that we left the island and flew back to Glasgow.
207. I didn't know the reason for that delay, at the time, but I did find out later. It transpired that our home was in need of new linoleum on the floor and my two older brothers, who were working, had given my father the money for that. My father had then taken that money to the bookies and the pub and spent it all. It then took him a couple of more months to save up the money to have the work done before we could get home.
208. To be honest we hadn't got that excited about going home in the [REDACTED] because although EGY was honest in what she was saying, we had learned not to believe much of what we were told. Nothing happened until it happened. I do think that repatriation all came about because my parents were pushing to be reunited with all of us and they had been able to get a bigger house, albeit condemned. My sister [REDACTED] was also getting close to the age where she would have been repatriated anyway, so rather than have our parents find out where we all were from her and cause any kind of problem it was easier to reunite the whole family.
209. There was no Glasgow Corporation or social work involvement or any kind of preparation for us being reunited, the green lady just picked all of us up on the day, took us on the flight to Glasgow, took us to the house, walked us up the stairs and walked away without even coming into the house. As far as I'm aware, there was no further contact from any green lady or anyone from the social services, ever again.
210. I would say that I wasn't particularly happy about the fact that we were leaving Tiree, because I knew what the future held for us. While it wasn't great to be away from my

family and it wasn't great to be made to work, we did have three square meals and a clean bed. I wasn't exactly over excited about what the future held but I understood other things overruled that and I was going to be with my family. I would still say there was an element of dread though.

Life at home (1966 – 1969)

211. The house we were taken to, to be reunited with our mother and two older brothers, was a property at [REDACTED] in the [REDACTED] area of Glasgow. Our father was not present as he was away on some kind of business.
212. The building was condemned and was, in my opinion, unfit for human habitation. It had three bedrooms and was expected to house eight people, my mother and father, three boys and three girls. It had an inside toilet but no bath and one thing that was most apparent was the noise from traffic and people outside. It was as good as my parents could keep it but it was a condemned building.
213. We had been giving a small amount of money by EGY [REDACTED] when we left Tiree, which our mother quickly identified and requested we give her so she could buy us food. We all freely gave her our money to help her.
214. I shared a bed with my younger brother [REDACTED] and we were in the same room as our mother and father. We didn't have much in the way of bedding and I recall that we had to use old army coats to keep us warm. It was definitely a culture shock for all of us, from the comfort and cleanliness of Tiree.
215. The three girls shared a bedroom and didn't have things much better, other than having three separate beds. My older brother [REDACTED] had his own box room and was a bit more comfortable because he was working and could provide himself with that bit more comfort. The kitchen area was dated and horrible and when it rained the floor got wet. When that happened we used to get electric shocks off the floor if we

walked across it in the rain. We ended up putting planks of wood on bricks so we could get to the sink.

216. That place was a disgrace, we should never have been put back into that, and it was a big mistake by the corporation or whoever arranged for that to happen. I hated the place with a passion. We had been abandoned completely by the corporation again.
217. I was taken to enroll at Dennistoun Secondary School, which was just off Duke Street. I was subjected to a certain amount of bullying there, because I had developed an island accent and stood out. That only lasted a day or two, until a friend of my brothers banged a few heads together and took me under his protection.
218. I remember there was about 44 children in my class and they were due to take the winter exams when I started. I was asked to take the test and to try my best as they didn't expect me to do well. However, I came top of the class in that exam and outshone the rest of them. I was then moved to Whitehill Senior Secondary, where I started the next term after Christmas.
219. As time went on I made friends with the local boys and girls but I made two different sets of friends. The ones that were good trouble-free guys and others that were the local street gang, that were often involved in fights with gangs that ventured into our area.
220. Being in the local street gang left its impact as I was involved in that for around three years and during that time one friend was murdered and another one was convicted of murder. I did quite enjoy the stupidity of that gang culture at the time as it was an escape from home.
221. As a result of that, I ended up being put in an approved school and went on to spend thirteen months in Kibble Approved School in Paisley in 1969. That was for breaking into a pub under my house and as much as that's not a highlight of my life it was actually quite a good thing for me, as I was then taken away from that environment.

Larchgrove Remand Centre, Glasgow (1969)

222.	Secondary Institutions - to be published later
223.	

Kibble Approved School, Paisley (1969)

224.	Secondary Institutions - to be published later
225.	

Leaving home

226. I left home on [REDACTED] 1970 when my brother and I hitchhiked down to Harrow in north London. We only went for a weekend to party but I ended up staying there. Two or three years later, in December 1972 I joined the military and I went on to spend 22 years in the military.
227. In my time in the military I met my wife and married and had two children. When I finished my time in the military I worked for about 17 years as a Private Investigator and I've also been involved in truck driving instruction.

Reporting of abuse

228. When you are a young twelve or thirteen year old lad that has been subjected to abuse, the last thing that you do is make things public. The shame would be too much to bear and who would believe you over an established set of adults.
229. We, quite rightly, never trusted Mr Meldrum, the visitor from the corporation, he was a waste of time, and we saw him as a traitor. He would try to come over all helpful and say that our stories would be treated with confidentiality. He would then tell our guardians all we had said and for some children this would ensure a beating. The man was useless.
230. I have never made any official report to the police or to a lawyer. I wouldn't have spoken to the police at the time, that just didn't happen, the police would probably have had some connection on the island in any case. As time went on I grew to not trust the system and thought it best to keep it to myself and let it go.
231. I've only spoken about the abuse once before in my life. That was with a fellow survivor and I didn't go into much detail but that person did encourage me to speak to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry.

232. I have spoken to my sister [REDACTED] and encouraged her to contact the Inquiry as she is very articulate and has great recall. She lives in New Zealand now but I don't know if she will come forward or not.

Support

233. When I registered with Future Pathways and I was telling them about the things I was doing to help others, they were concerned that I was taking on other people's traumas. I was then referred to the Anchor Programme and I've now spoken to the professor there.
234. I never covered the abuse on Tiree with him, I elected not to bring that up as it's just too difficult, but I spoke about everything else that he wanted to know. I think I have done all I need to do there and I don't feel a need to go there anymore. It would be lifting a scab off a wound that doesn't need to be lifted.

Impact

235. The decisions my father took in being a father was something that was never going to happen to me. My whole life has always been dedicated to my family, my children. I'm not a gambler and I'm not a drinker. I would go hungry to feed them and everything I could provide for them I did. I didn't spoil them or smother them, they've become self-sufficient in their own way and we are a very close family.
236. I did have to make sacrifices. When I was in the military I could spend a lot of time away and while I could have taken the family with me on certain tours we opted for the family to remain at home. I would return as and when the situation allowed it. That maintained continuity in the schooling of my children.
237. I do think I'm strong enough to not let what happened guide my future. Other people did guide that but as soon as I was in control I guided it. I am the author of my own

book. I try not to dwell on the past. I speak to people who say their whole life's been ruined because they were in care, and yes that particular part of their life was ruined but the future hasn't been ruined, the future is tomorrow and we make that happen. That's my stance, my glass is always half full and I don't carry negatives.

238. I did develop a work ethic which was drilled into me right from the beginning. I learnt of the advantages of working and earning.

239. My education was a bit of a challenge but I am pretty resilient and can adapt and adjust to any situation. To succeed in the military I did have to sit some intensive educational tests to get promoted and I was always able to successfully negotiate through them.

240. It's hard to say if the relationships with my siblings have suffered. Children are inherently selfish so we all went on to do our own things. We came together quite a lot at home, but I can't say we ever sat around a table and had a meal together. We were very close though and I couldn't have wished for two stronger brothers than I had.

241. It now takes a very long time to trust people, especially people in authority. Maybe your peers are easier to trust but with people who you respect and who are in authority it's harder, because when they were really needed those people let us down.

242. Secondary Institutions - to be published later



243. Every chance I get I do go and visit Tiree. It is a tranquil, peaceful place and I have a relation there. I do find though, that when I visit Oban on the way over I can have a bit

of a flashback or discomfort and things can come to mind. That's where EHE
EHE stays you see, but I can handle it.

Records

Records - The An Iodhlann; The Historical Centre for Tiree

244. I am now in the process of writing a book about my time on Tiree. I'm trying to get stories from other people who were also boarded out on Tiree and I do have several people who are interested in telling their stories. It's been interesting research work and it's taken me years because I want to get it right.
245. One person that was interviewed was the [REDACTED], I've mentioned, who was interviewed by Doctor [REDACTED]. The interview was held within the last ten years or so and there's no doubt it will be very interesting as [REDACTED] is pretty clear on what he says.
246. That interview recording is now held by the An Iodhlann (pronounced 'an-ee-lun') which is the historical centre for the island where they store items relating to the history of Tiree. An Iodhlann is Gaelic for 'the stackyard where the harvest is stored'. I tried to get a copy of the recording through a Freedom of Information request but as they are a private body they cannot be forced to release it under such a request. That is not to say they could release a copy if they wanted to, but I truly believe they are refusing to release it because they know it contains facts they are trying to suppress.
247. I went on to apply to the Information Commissioner but they couldn't help me. I haven't approached [REDACTED] to ask him to get a copy, I don't really want to put him in that position as he's got to live on Tiree and if it's going to upset people I don't want him to be seen as the architect of it all.

248. I do wonder if the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry has powers to get a hold of that statement because it would certainly open people's eyes to how things were for boarded out children.
249. I was actually in the An Iodhlann once, doing some research, when I saw a photograph of some girls that I knew. It had 'boarded out' in brackets underneath which I hadn't seen before and I asked the lady who was the curator at the centre if they had anything else with 'boarding out' references. She looked at it, took a note of the photograph reference number and said it shouldn't have been there and that it would be taken out. She then told me they had nothing there that was anything to do with being boarding out. They were basically burying the fact that people were boarded out. You could say she was doing that to protect that person but I think it was quite clearly a way of suppressing the fact that boarded out people were on the island.
250. I have experienced that for myself. They have a reunion event every ten years on the island, which is for people whose relatives originate from Tiree. People come from all over the world and it lasts five days. They advertise it on blogs and on the internet and they have a variety of shows, events and lectures. I put up an offer of talking about the boarding outs who have contributed to the island because some went on to have very successful lives there. I didn't even receive an email back to say they wouldn't do it, they just completely blanked it. I understand them not accepting it, if there were other interesting things that people wanted to see but I do think it's a very important part of the heritage of the island.
251. I then spoke to Doctor Holliday, who I've mentioned, and who is an incomer to the island but was involved in the reunion event. He told me he saw my email and that he brought it up at one of the event meetings. He told me he that he was told, quite clearly, that under no circumstances are boarding outs to have any platform at any of the events that were being planned for the reunion. He told me he was shocked at that and the way it was put to him, by the local committee that was involved, was quite forceful.

252. The locating of any records has proven to be a nightmare for most survivors, as the establishments have illegally destroyed or misplaced them. I eventually managed to locate a few boxes of primary school records from Tiree that had been held by the An Iodhlann.
253. Just as they had with the [REDACTED] interview, the An Iodhlann refused to make those primary school records available to me, claiming they were custodians holding the records for storage purposes only. As a result I contacted Argyll and Bute Council informing them of the school records and that they were being held by the An Iodhlann on Tiree. Argyll and Bute Council arranged for the documents to be returned to the public council and I then managed to access some of them with numerous information requests. This did not please the people on Tiree as they are very reluctant to give out any information relating to boarding out.

Records - General

254. Records for all the children who were boarded out to Tiree would appear to be scattered around Glasgow and it would need a small team with legal powers to locate them. You would think that if a family of seven, the EGW family, were taken into care there would be records for that somewhere. The Mitchell library only have records of my eldest brother, so how can that be? I honestly believe that there is a building somewhere in Glasgow where all those records are stored.
255. Almost every survivor I know and have spoken to has had great difficulty retrieving any records of proof of their time in care. This is a must for anyone applying for the redress payment.
256. The school of thought with survivors is that the Scottish Government makes the redress payment scheme available and part of the criteria is proof of evidence that you were in care. That perhaps doesn't take a lot, but that is the stumbling block for most people, actually getting that proof. It's as if the money is being made available but not the information they need to get that money. If you were cynical you might say it's a deliberate attempt to suppress the information rather than to provide it.

257. I don't know if Mr Meldrum or Miss ^{EGX} maintained any records but they surely must have and I think that might be one of the channels the authorities could look at, to see if these people did keep any records. If they did some of that may still be somewhere and be something survivors can get their hands on.
258. a boarded out it's called and invited people who were boarded out to join it. We also invited islanders who weren't boarded out to join us so we could get their version of events and so they could hear ours, because a lot of them were in the dark about the things that went on. I've also joined the and I've now read many of the stories that people share.
259. A hobby of mine, along with a colleague, is to offer our assistance to people who were in care, which includes helping them obtain copies of their records. We guide them towards Future Pathways and places like that. I have also collected paperwork and other stuff, which includes the paper work I've sent on to the Inquiry, in particular, the Glasgow Corporation Boarded Out Rules, that I've referred to.
260. A separate document the Inquiry may find of interest is entitled 'Boarded Out to Private Dwellings' and is an excerpt from the book 'The Foster Home and the Boarded Out Child' by D. M. Dyson, which was published in 1947. I am happy to share all the paperwork I have collected with the Inquiry.

Lessons to be Learned

261. People try and brush things off by saying "things were done different back then" and that might be true but people paid for our safety and security and it failed at almost every level, destroying the children that they were meant to protect. The people that failed must be exposed, even in death, for the widespread human disasters that they caused by those failures in the duty of care. I hope they are named and shamed.

262. People that work in the care system nowadays will, I hope, be better at dealing with the complex needs of vulnerable children. The Inquiry will, I hope, leave people in no doubt that they will be taken through the justice system should they fail children in the future. I am passionate about people who let us down, and went on to live joyful lives, needing to be held accountable for their failures.
263. I would like to believe that children would have the strength to be physically and mentally strong, as I was, and not let time spent in care define them. Children must build their own futures and not look back at the failures of others. It's not the children's failures, it's the failures of the system. Perhaps their parents failed them, but when they are then failed again by the system, they have got to be made stronger.
264. To me, Mr Meldrum, the social worker who visited us, was really only performing a box filling exercise. He had his routine to do and was too familiar with the guardians. Personally, in retrospect, I feel that if that sort of thing still happened in any way then the visiting officer needs to be rotated so that the same person isn't always visiting the same people. I would say the expression familiarity breeds contempt was certainly prevalent there.

Hopes for the Inquiry

265. My main hope for the inquiry is that they don't let us down. That would destroy many people who have been let down for years. I am totally dedicated to the boarded out having a platform because they existed. I have had contact with several people who were boarded out and they have all told me that they don't want people to forget them. They have tried so hard on many different levels to have the whole boarded out thing recognised but it never comes up, it's suppressed and it is a different contract from fostered.
266. Boarding out is classed as fostered but it wasn't the same thing. Lynn Abrams wrote an article called '*Lost Childhoods : Recovering Children's Experiences of the Welfare in Modern Scotland*' and she quite clearly says that boarded out children

were a different entity altogether. The best case option for me is that boarded out people are given a voice and given a mention as a separate entity, because we were different. It was a zero hours contract for us, whereas when you're fostered you have some sort of security. The way some boarded out children were treated post boarded out age, was unbelievable. They were taken back to hostels on the mainland and abandoned. There was no help in place for the boarded out.

267. It matters not what happens to me, because it's happened. I'm not really bothered about the future for anybody other than the children that, maybe, just maybe, the Inquiry will make the future better for. My concern is that Lord Clyde was asked to put an Inquiry together into the effects of fostering and boarding and nothing really changed, as far as I can see. Many failures continued after it.
268. The support given to me and my family throughout my time in care was non-existent. Once we were home we were poorly fed, as our father would drink and gamble most of the money that we ever had. The reunification of our family really was a nightmare and was such a struggle for my poor mother.
269. We had been removed from the Welfare Departments books but they hadn't improved our welfare, in fact they had taken it down several grades. They didn't put us with a family that was capable of looking after us, although it was our own family.
270. Personally I would like to see a recommendation from the Inquiry that a team of forensic type people or investigators are given the job of finding all the records that must be sitting in some room somewhere in Glasgow. The archivists at the Mitchell library can only look at what they've got and I don't think the people that are given the jobs of locating and providing records are hungry enough. If I had that job I wouldn't leave any stone unturned until I got my hands on all such records.

Other information

271.





272. In total, there was over 2000 children boarded out on Tiree and way back in 1906 my grandfather's brother was boarded out on Tiree. He was [REDACTED] and he had a good life there. He moved back to the island later in life and his daughter, [REDACTED] still lives on Tiree. She was actually married and living there when our family were boarded out there.
273. When we were there, there was a secondary school sports day and my eldest sister [REDACTED] won the sports girl of the year award. That was announced on the tannoy and [REDACTED]'s mother, who was at the sports day, heard the name [REDACTED] and mentioned it to [REDACTED] wondering if there could be a connection. They never followed that up, which is a shame, because we were all there on the island and they could have made some form of contact. So it didn't happen but years later, I put something on a Facebook blog, and we went on to make contact.
274. My sister [REDACTED] should actually have gone on to represent Tiree at the Argyll and Bute School County Games in Oban but because she was a boarded out child she was not allowed to represent the island. It was actually the girl who was second that went on to represent Tiree.
275. 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..... EGW [REDACTED]

Dated..... 15-06-2021