

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

Christopher David Buchan BOOTH

Support person present: Yes, Wife [REDACTED]

1. My name is Christopher Booth. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1941. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I don't remember anything about my mother and father. My mum was [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] She is now dead. I have never found out who my father was. From a very early age I was looked after by my aunt, my mother's sister. They lived in Aberdeen. Her name was [REDACTED] and her husband was [REDACTED] They had their own children too. I believe that my grandmother paid her to look after me. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I think I had a fairly normal childhood living with my aunt and I went to school in Nelson Street, Aberdeen.
3. In 1951 my grandmother died and I believe my auntie could no longer afford to look after me. She sent me back to my mother but within a week I was in Nazareth House so my mum must have moved pretty fast. My mother told them that she could not care for me [REDACTED] so she colluded with the parish priest at Sacred Heart Church in Torry to get me put into Nazareth House. My mum was living with my grandmother and grandfather at the time. They were all non-Catholic, yet for some reason my mum got me baptised into the Catholic church. My grandfather didn't actually let me sleep in the house that week I was back with my

mum. I slept at another auntie's house. Because I was a Catholic he wouldn't let me into his house.

Nazareth House, Aberdeen

4. The building was one building but it was in two parts. One side was the boys side and the other was the girls side. In between was a chapel. The boys would play in the recreation area but there was a big fence outside between the boys and the girls. There were toilets at the back too. I don't remember where the kitchen was but there was a gym on the ground floor. In the gym were things on the walls that you could climb up. The dormitories were upstairs, but I don't remember much about them apart from the fact that there were a lot of us in there. I have no idea how many children were in Nazareth House. The age range was probably from toddler up to about sixteen years old.
5. As far as I know the person in charge at Nazareth House was the Mother Superior. I never ever saw her. There were a lot of other nuns at Nazareth House because when we used to go to mass on a Sunday you could see them all. The church was divided basically into three parts. There was the main body of the church and there were aisles. There were pews on both sides and on the left there was an enclosure type thing which had a separate door. The nuns used to sit in there and you could see there were quite a few of them. I reckon there may have been about twenty nuns but I am not that sure.
6. The nuns used to wear black habits right down to the ground and on their head a veil. You could see their foreheads. They had a big belt around their waist and over that they hung huge rosary beads. There were two nuns who looked after us. There was Sister [LDR] and there was another one but I don't remember her name but I do remember that she wasn't as brutal. Sister [LDR] may have been in her forties. They carried big canes about with them all day. I never ever saw a nun without a cane apart from when we went to church. I never saw any non-religious staff working in there apart from a man with a Labrador dog who used to walk us to St Mary's

school and back. He stayed in the grounds. I did see a priest coming into the building because I believe they used to say mass every day for the nuns. I think he came in from the local cathedral.

Routine at Nazareth House, Aberdeen

First day

7. I don't actually remember how I got to Nazareth House. I don't remember packing my bags or the actual journey going there. I just remember actually being in Nazareth House. I would have been ten years old when I arrived there because I definitely remember turning eleven when I was there.

Mornings and bedtime

8. The nuns woke us up every morning walking around clapping their hands shouting at us to get up. We would get up and the nuns would make us kneel by our beds and say our prayers. We would then get washed and dressed and go downstairs for our breakfast.

Mealtimes

9. We would always have our meals in the dining room. I think we all had our own seats at a specific table. Food was then served to us. All the boys went at the same time for their meals. I don't know what time the girls went for their meals because they had their own kitchen and dining room. I don't remember what the food was like.

Washing and Bathing

10. I don't remember there being any showers in Nazareth House. In fact I don't really remember having a bath either. All I remember were the rows of wash basins in the washroom where we washed every day. After we had washed, the nuns would check

the fronts and backs of our hands and then our ears to make sure we had washed properly.

Leisure time

11. After we had our breakfast we would be allowed to go to the play area where we would play until it was time to go to school..
12. When we got home from school we were allowed to play outside in the yard until teatime. There was no ball to play with or any toys. We used to play hop scotch, tag or something like that. In the house there was no television or radio at that time, and there were no books or comics to read. We got homework from school but I enjoyed school so I didn't really need any encouragement to do it. There was no organised sporting activity at Nazareth House and we were never taken to the shops or the cinema.

Schooling

13. I initially went to St Peter's Primary School then went to St Mary's Primary School in Summer Street. There was no uniform but we all wore similar clothes. All our clothes were provided by the nuns. I don't know where the clothes came from. We stayed at school all day and we never got any lunch. I am not sure if anyone had lunch. It is possible the children who didn't come from Nazareth House had lunch but I am not sure.
14. We were all treated very well at school. In particular I remember the maths teacher who around Christmas time gave us a maths test. I was one of the ones who got all my maths right.

Healthcare

15. There wasn't a nurse or doctor at Nazareth House. I never saw a doctor when I was there. I never needed to see a doctor. I think if you needed medical attention we would just have been taken to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. I never saw a dentist.

Religious Instruction

16. When we were woken up in the morning we had to kneel by our beds and we said our prayers. We never really got any other religious instruction. We got that at school as it was a Catholic School. We were taught Catholicism. We only went to mass on a Sunday.

Birthdays and Christmas

17. Nuns would give you sweets on your birthday, but there was no card and no cake. I was only there for one Christmas but I don't remember getting any presents and I can't remember if there were any decorations or a Christmas tree.

Visits / Inspections

18. I only remember seeing my mother once when I was in Nazareth House. I can't remember much about it but I know she had another young girl with her which I later learned was one of my cousins. There was a nun sitting with us all the time and I am pretty sure she was there to make sure that I didn't say anything untoward. I seem to remember another woman coming to visit but I am not sure who she was. It could have been one of my aunties.
19. I am not aware of seeing any social workers before I went into Nazareth House or when I was in Nazareth House. There was a scout master who came in because we had joined the boy scouts. We did things like boxing with him, although I hated boxing.

Emotional care / support

20. There was no adult at Nazareth House who was nice to me and there was no-one I could turn to, to confide in.

Personal possessions

21. I never had any personal possessions when I was at Nazareth House.

Discipline

22. The discipline at Nazareth House was very strict. You had to do what you were told, when you were told and if you weren't fast enough doing it, you got the cane. You learnt very quickly when they asked you to jump you would say how high. Discipline was very, very tough, rigid and if you didn't move fast enough you would get the cane.

Abuse at Nazareth House, Aberdeen

23. The nuns carried canes about with them all the time. The canes were about three feet long and were a bit bendy. They were like walking canes. The nuns were always careful where they hit you. They made sure they hit you where nobody would be able to see the bruises and in those days you wore short trousers so it was in-between the back of the knees up to the back of your shoulders. They would hold on to you with one hand to stop you from running away and thrash you with the cane in the other hand. Sister LDR gave me some of my worst beatings, and she gave me more beatings than any of the other nuns.
24. I remember when I turned eleven at Nazareth House. It was a brutal day. When it was someone's birthday the nuns would give you sweets. I didn't tell anyone it was my birthday. A couple of the other boys told me that I had to tell Sister LDR I

refused to tell her so when she found out I got a thrashing for not telling her. That was just one of many thrashings I got from Sister [REDACTED] LDR [REDACTED]

25. I sometimes climbed the outside wall between the boys and the girls areas. I got caught a few times and I got thrashed because you weren't allowed to talk to the girls.
26. At meal times if you didn't eat any of the food that was put down in front of you, you would get a thrashing from the nuns. This happened to me a few times because I didn't like some of the food. This thrashing was from whichever nun was there at the time.
27. One of the maths teachers gave me half a crown for doing well in a maths test. After school I spent some of it. When I got back to Nazareth House I got a thrashing because I had spent some of the money and also because I wasn't going to give the money to the nuns. Apparently, I was supposed to give them the money because we weren't allowed to have any. I don't think the teacher that gave me the money realised this otherwise he wouldn't have given it to me.
28. I never wet the bed when I was at Nazareth House. I think there were a number of boys who did. The nuns would check every morning for wet sheets. If boys had wet the bed the nuns would strip the bed. The boy would then be made to carry his sheet along to the washroom where they would be made to wash it. I remember there were a couple of times when I saw that a boy who was about five years old had wet his bed. I helped him wash his sheets, but I was caught by the nuns and I got a thrashing for helping. The bed- wetters would usually get a rubber sheet on their bed after that.
29. The nuns would check that we had washed ourselves when we were in the washroom. If they thought that we hadn't done it properly we would get thrashed with the cane and made to wash again. After you had washed again they would check and if they still didn't think you were clean they would thrash you again. I got

thrashed a few times for not washing properly. I saw this happening to other boys too.

30. When I found out that I was going to Australia some other older boys in Nazareth House must have told my cousins. I believe that my aunt must have been told by them. She then contacted Nazareth House and objected to me being sent to Australia. The reason I know that is because I got a thrashing from the nuns because they must have thought I had told her.
31. From my memory of Nazareth House I don't think a week went by without me getting thrashed with the cane. I was there roughly 6 months and I remember getting the cane quite a lot. I have no happy memories from my time at Nazareth House.

Leaving Nazareth House, Aberdeen

32. The first time I was aware that I was going to Australia was when the nuns took me to see a doctor at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. They told me I was getting a medical because I was going to Australia. I was never asked if I wanted to go to Australia, I was just told that I was going. I didn't question it with the nuns because I would just have got a thrashing. I don't know if they asked my mum for permission. I have since asked my mum, in 1979, and she told me she never signed any papers or anything. I didn't give it any thought because possibly, at that time, I didn't even know where Australia was. I probably thought any place was going to be better than Nazareth House.
33. I am sure it was just after Christmas so it was January 1952 that I got the medical. This was around three months before I actually left for Australia. They gave me a vigorous test and they identified that I needed spectacles for a lazy eye. I was later taken for a further eye test and they put a patch over my left eye to force me to use the lazy eye. When I was sent to Australia I still had the patch on my eye.

34. I am not aware of getting any other test, although I suppose I may have done a test at St Mary's Primary without me knowing what it was for. I believe that Nazareth House had decided as soon as I arrived there that I was going to Australia. That is the only way they would have had time to organise it. In those days, late 1951 early 1952, most letters took about 6 weeks to get to Australia and there were no faxes or email and most mail that was sent from Britain went by surface mail. Airmail was very expensive. I think they had organised practically from the day I went in there that I was being sent to Australia.
35. The only thing that the nuns ever told me about Australia was that I was going to be fostered or adopted by Australian families. They said that because of the war, Australia had lost a whole generation of their men and that is why they wanted good, young, British stock to replace the men that had died. I was definitely told I was either going to be fostered or adopted and brought up in a normal family life.
36. I never saw my mum or my aunties before I left. for Australia. I didn't even pack a case. On the day I was leaving I was given a little red cardboard case. I still have it. It is a bit bigger than a shoe box. In it was possibly a pair of shoes, some socks, and some underwear. The case came from Marks and Spencer. We weren't given any warning that we were going. We were just told that day and were given the case. There was a label on the case with my name and Melbourne written on it.

Reporting of abuse at Nazareth House

37. I never told anybody about the abuse at Nazareth House. There was nobody that I could have told. The first person I would have told about any of the physical abuse was to Margaret Humphreys of the Child Migrant Trust. That was after I contacted them in 1995. I have never reported anything to the police.

Migration to Tasmania

Journey

38. I know from a letter which I will give to the Inquiry that I arrived in Tasmania on 6 June 1952 so I reckon I must have left Nazareth House, Aberdeen around April 1952. I think our journey would have been about six weeks.
39. Two other boys came with me from Nazareth House, Aberdeen. They were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The civilian member of staff with the labrador dog, who used to take us to school, took us to the train station along with a couple of nuns. The nuns didn't come on the train.. The man who owned the labrador came with us on the train. I remember it was late at night and it was dark. We left Aberdeen by train and when we got to Edinburgh we picked up a couple more boys. We stopped at York. They wouldn't let us off the train and they kept their eyes on us. Presumably they were worried we would run away. We picked up a few more boys in York. There was a woman with them and she came all the way to Australia. We got off the train either at Euston or St Pancras Station. We then walked to another station in London and got the train from there to Tilbury Docks. The man who owned the labrador didn't come any further with us.
40. At Tilbury Docks we got on a big ship, the S.S. Ormande. I learned later that this was the ship's second last ever voyage. The journey from there took 6 weeks. I remember it stopped at Port Said, Egypt. I think it was just waiting on its entry to go down the Suez Canal. It stopped at Aden too. Some British soldiers took us ashore on a day out and bought us lunch. We then carried on and arrived at Columbo, Sri Lanka. We got off the boat and spent the day there. I remember visiting some of the temples or shrines because we had to take our shoes off. We then carried on to Fremantle, then Adelaide and then to Melbourne. Children left us at each of these places. We all got off at Melbourne and that included some girls who we picked up on the way. A priest met us at Melbourne when we got off the ship and he took us to a Salesian house and we were given lunch.

41. The journey from Port of Tilbury was great. I really enjoyed this journey. There were six of us to a cabin and we all had single beds. We learned what has now become the Australian national anthem and a couple of other songs. We had lessons on the boat too. Nothing too heavy, just information about Australia. I remember when we crossed the equator too.
42. After lunch in Melbourne we boarded a boat called S.S. Taroona and it took us to Beauty Point in Tasmania. The priest who met us in Melbourne came with us back to Tasmania on the ship. It was an overnight journey. This was a dreadful part of the trip because the boat got tossed and turned. It was only a small boat and apparently they had a storm that night. It was really rough. I think there were about 25 boys on this part of the journey who went to Tasmania.
43. I am not aware of having any paperwork, documentation or anything like that. I don't know if the lady in charge of us, the lady who got on at York, had anything. She left us at Melbourne.
44. When we got to Beauty Point we travelled by bus to the train station called Western Junction. We then got a train from Western Junction to Hobart Station where we were met by other priests or brothers. We were then driven from there on a bus to Boys' Town, Glenorchy. I think the bus must have been hired because there were only the 25 boys, the priests and the brothers on the bus.

Life in care - Boys' Town, Glenorchy, Tasmania

45. The grounds of Boys' Town consisted of 52 acres. Part of the grounds were used as farmland at the time, and part of it was bush. At the top of the driveway you came to a sort of dog-leg in the road and in front of that there was a fairly big house. This was the original house and had been donated to the Salesian priests and brothers and that is where they started off. Because they were getting more boys from Britain and Australia they needed a bigger boys home. This original house is where a family

lived and they did all the cooking and cleaning. They were private staff employed by the priests. This was completely separate from the new building.

46. Close by was a building which was a specifically built brand new building. It was "L" shaped. There were also two old army huts. One was a church and the other was a classroom. In the new building there were three dormitories which had three rows of beds. There were windows at either side of the dormitory. Each dormitory would have had about thirty beds in them. The older boys were in different dorms from the younger boys. At the front of the dormitory near the door there was another bed for either a priest or brother to sleep. His bed had a curtain which pulled round like a hospital type curtain to give him some privacy. There was another area which was the infirmary with about six beds in it. This is where boys went if they were sick. There was a recreation hall and above that was a dining room, and above that was one of the dormitories. On the bottom floor was where the priests and brothers lived and the kitchen. There were four classrooms and two offices. One office was for the priest who was the prefect of studies and the other office was for the head priest who was in charge of Boys' Town. The washrooms were upstairs beside the dormitories. Within the grounds they had two Australian football fields which are called ovals. The ovals were very big.
47. Boys' Town was run by the Salesian priests and brothers. Father [LHH] was initially the principal priest in charge and he was there for the first six months. He was replaced by Father [LHE]. There were a couple of priests that helped him. One was the prefect of studies and he was in charge of the education. Below them were about twelve other priests, brothers and lay brothers. Father [LHE] left in 1956. I can't remember the name of the father who replaced him.
48. There were three types of priests at Boys' Town. There were the priests who were the proper ordained priests. You had the brothers and they were studying to be priests. Then you had lay brothers. The priests and brothers wore black cassocks. The lay brothers wore ordinary civilian clothes. One of them was Brother Newport and he was in charge of the kitchen and was the main cook. He was helped by a couple of other brothers.

49. There were probably 50 Australian boys already at Boys' Town when we got there. I arrived in June 1952 as part of a group of 25. In September that year another 25 boys arrived from Britain so there were roughly 100 boys there at one point. I was the only Scottish boy there. I would say that the age range of the boys was from five up to sixteen years old. There wasn't anyone over the age of sixteen.

Routine at Boys' Town

First day

50. When we arrived there we got shown to the dormitory and told which bed was ours. We didn't get shown around the building or anything like that. I was later introduced to the Australian boys who were already there. We had a bit of recreation time and that night the Australian boys put on a concert for us to welcome us to Tasmania.

Mornings and bedtime

51. The priest or the brother who was in charge of the dormitory would wake us up probably by clapping his hands. I would get up and have a wash or a shower then go back and get dressed. I would then make my bed. Through the week they used to turn the bed half down and tuck it in so there was half a sheet with your pillow at the top. At the weekends I would throw a bed cover over the bed and at night you would take it off and fold it up. That was only on Saturdays and Sundays.
52. After supper, all the boys over ten years old, would go into the classrooms and do a bit of studying or reading or whatever. The younger boys would be put to bed. After the younger ones were in their beds, we were put to bed. We went to the toilet, got dressed, then into bed. Once you were in bed you weren't allowed to talk in the dormitories. It was bad to talk in the dormitories. You had to be quiet and go to sleep. The priest or brother in charge of the dormitory made sure you were quiet. He used to sit and read his religious reading or whatever. We were in bed with the lights on and then after half an hour or so, it was lights out.

Mealtimes

53. Brother Newport was in charge of the kitchen and he did the cooking. We generally sat at the same seat at the table for every meal. The food was served to us unless it was our turn to serve the food. The priests had a dining room that was adjacent to ours but separated by a sliding door. The doors were mostly kept shut unless it was a recognised feast day like Easter or Christmas or many of the other feast days. On these days the doors would be opened. The food was generally okay and it was all fresh food that we got. Sometimes boys would be told to read a chapter from a book whilst everyone else was eating. You were not allowed to talk when a boy was reading. Once the priest thought you had read enough you were told to stop. The boys were then allowed to talk to each other.

Washing and bathing

54. We had our showers or washed in the morning. The priests and brothers didn't inspect us to make sure we had washed ourselves properly but two brothers walked up and down to watch what we were doing. You weren't allowed to talk when you were getting washed.

Bed-wetting

55. I am not aware if there were any issues with bed-wetting because the younger boys were in a different dormitory. There were no issues in my dorm. I do know that there was no punishment handed out to anyone at Boys' Town for bed-wetting because I would have heard about it.

Leisure time

56. We got to play in the playground when we had spare time. At the weekend there was more organised sport. I don't remember having any toys apart from marbles. We had little cricket stumps made so we played cricket. I think some of the younger ones had scooters but there were no little toys, no teddies, things like that. There were plenty books to read which were suitable for our age. Reading was encouraged.

57. We used to have music concerts. We had a lady who used to come and give piano lessons to those that wanted to learn piano. A lady used to come and teach Highland dancing. I remained friends with her for years after I left Boys' Town because she used to run a dancing school for the children of Hobart. There were good times when I was at Boys' Town. I saw Billy Graham the evangelist preacher and Patrick O'Hagen, an Irish tenor. He came and put on a concert for us. He sang Irish songs. We had movie nights fairly often too.
58. On Saturday and Sundays, after breakfast, we had recreation and after recreation we used to go down to the oval and play sport. They taught us how to play Australian rules football, cricket and because a lot of us were from Britain we had football and athletics.

Trips and holidays

59. We used to go on plenty of trips, weather permitting. Quite often we would go for bush hikes, mainly at weekends. We would set off and they had a designated stop where we had a meal, probably sandwiches. The brother who was in charge of the kitchen used to take the sandwiches and tea. We had that and then would walk back.
60. Boys' Town had organised something called the Big Brother Movement. This involved Tasmanian families who took one or two of the boys from Boys' Town to their home for the school holidays. I went to a family in Stonor on my own. This was the first Christmas I was in Boys' Town and I would have been eleven at the time. I went by train and I was met by a man who worked on a farm. He took me home to his wife and two children. I remember for Christmas they gave me a game called a bob set. It was a wooden board game. One day I was outside playing with the two children. The girl was the eldest. She was about my age and had a little brother. We were playing doctors and nurses and the mother caught me kissing the girl and she lost her rag. It was just a peck on the cheek. When her husband got home at night she told him and they decided to send me back to Boys' Town. I was supposed to be

there for six weeks but I was only there about a week. They put me back on the train but they did let me keep the bob set they gave me for Christmas.

61. After that first Christmas I didn't go back to the family in Stonor. I was sent to another family. They lived in a suburb called New Town in Tasmania and they had 3 boys. They took me at holiday times. There was a fortnight in the school holidays, Christmas holidays and the summer holidays. I went to them from the Easter holidays in 1953 to 1956. I enjoyed my time with them because I was mixing with their sons. One son was older than me., The other son, David, was roughly my age and then a younger son, Michael. I had a really good time with this family. They used to take me to the football and I would get hot dogs and watch the game. Hobart used to have a royal show which is in September and they took me to the show.

Schooling

62. After breakfast we went into the classrooms where they gave us some lessons. Halfway through that there was time for recreation and then we would have lunch then back to the classroom. When we were finished in the class for the day we had time for some recreation and then get our supper.
63. The priests and brothers did the teaching in the classrooms. We really didn't get any formal education at Boys' Town. There was no real curriculum, there was none of that. I suppose they did teach us to write, they did teach arithmetic and they taught us to read. They taught us about Australian history. We never ever had tests or exams. We never got any homework. I doubt that the priests and brothers were even trained to teach.

Clothing

64. There was no uniform at Boys' Town until it changed to Savio College in 1956. After that a uniform was worn. I never wore a uniform. We just used to get given our clothes by the priests. Barbers used to come at night time and give us all a haircut. It

was all short back and sides, you didn't get a choice of anything else. They came fairly regularly.

Healthcare

65. One of the priests used to look after the boys and be responsible for any health issues. If anyone needed to see a doctor you would get taken to see one, or the doctor would come to Boys' Town. If it was ever anything serious we used to get taken into Hobart to the Royal Hobart Hospital or Calvary Hospital. Calvary Hospital was a private hospital run by the nuns. A dentist came to Boys' Town. At the end of the dining room there was a little room and that was set up as a dentist's surgery.
66. I had my tonsils taken out at Royal Hobart Hospital. I didn't even have tonsillitis or have any problems with my throat. Half a dozen of us were just taken to the hospital to get it done as a matter of course. I remember when I was in hospital because in those days they used to give you ether and put this thing over your mouth and nose. I fought like nobody's business and gave them a really hard time. A couple of nurses and doctors held me down while they gave me the ether. The next thing I remember I woke up in the infirmary at Boys' Town. I think we were only in hospital overnight and then taken back to the infirmary at Boys' Town.
67. A doctor came to see us maybe twice a year and we were given a health check. I was never injured as a result of any of the abuse that I suffered at the hands of Father [REDACTED] or any of the other brothers or fathers.

Religious Instruction

68. After we had all had our wash in the morning we went upstairs to church where we said our morning prayers and had mass. We didn't have a choice. All the boys had to go. After mass there was time for recreation and then after that we went for breakfast.

69. They taught us the catechism of the Catholic church at Boys' Town and all the various laws of the church. They taught us how to pray. At the morning mass I was one of the lucky ones that used to lead the boys in the prayers. We said our morning prayers before and after communion and then obviously prayers after the mass. We always prayed for the conversion of Russia. That's when Russia was totally Communistic and they were persecuting the Catholics. We did that for years. In the classroom we always started off with a prayer and after we did our reading or writing or whatever we were doing, we would say a closing prayer afterwards. I was one of the ones that used to get selected to go and serve the priest's mass and that was where the priest had his mass on his own.
70. We had night time prayers in the chapel as well. That was before we went back to the classroom to do our reading. If we were going for a trip, on a bus or a car, we always said a prayer at the start of the trip and a prayer at the end of the trip.
71. They did have a time for confession at Boys' Town. It was our choice to go and we weren't made to go, but we were encouraged. We used to have confessions on a regular basis.

Chores

72. In Boys' Town there was a rota for chores. In the dining room there were six boys at each table. One day it would be your table's turn to do the lunch, or your turn to do the washing of the pots and pans and clearing up or setting the tables for the next meal.
73. We had other chores to do like cleaning the dormitories. There were big heavy electric polishing machines with brushes underneath it. I really enjoyed doing this. Sometimes we used to take turns sitting on the machine when the priest or brother wasn't around. If we got caught doing this we were in trouble.
74. There were other chores that we did. We had some cows at Boys' Town. Some of us used to go down and milk the cows and that's where we got our milk and butter from.

This wasn't part of the rota, it was just those that wanted to do it. I chose to do it. Another chore involving the cows was to pick up the cow dung from the oval playing field, where we played sport. The cows got to roam all over the place so we had to pick it up. We used the dung to fertilise the ground where we were growing vegetables. Again this was something I chose to do because I wanted to do it.

Pocket money

75. We weren't physically given any pocket money. There was a book kept and every week you were credited in the book with a couple of shillings. We could spend the money in the tuck shop which opened on a Saturday and Sunday. You used to be able to get chocolates or sweets. They had Cadbury's chocolates, toffees and lots of different kinds of sweets. Every boy's name was in the book as to how much money they had. When you bought the sweets they took the price of the sweets off your balance.

Birthdays and Christmas

76. There was no Christmas tree or decorations at Boys' Town in the lead-up to Christmas. I never spent Christmas day there as I was always with the families in Stonor and then New Town. Christmas wasn't celebrated. Birthdays weren't celebrated either. There was no birthday card, no present and no birthday cake.

Visits / Inspections

77. I didn't get any personal visits when I was at Boys' Town. The families who I went to for holidays, didn't visit me either. Some dignitaries, like the Pope's representative in Australia came to visit us. He asked me if I liked Australia. My reply got me into trouble and I got a thrashing for that. I never saw anyone from the social work department.
78. I was made to write to my mother once a month. She replied occasionally, certainly not letter for letter. Letters from my mum were always opened before I got them. Her

letters just repeated the same thing over and over. It was always raining and there was never any news. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] There was definitely never any expression of love. In my letters to my mum I wasn't told what to write but the priests told me what I wasn't allowed to write. I wasn't allowed to seal my letters either. They were handed to the priest unsealed and he would read the letter before it got posted. If there was something in the letter that the priest didn't like, it was torn up and you had to write another one.

Emotional care / support

79. There was no-one at Boys' Town that gave me any love or affection and there was no-one that I could confide in or look to for any type of care, support or advice.

Personal possessions

80. I only ever had the red case that I arrived with which was packed for me at Nazareth House in Aberdeen. I can't even remember what was all in that case.. The only other personal thing I collected when I was there was postage stamps. I was later made to give my stamp collection away by Brother Preitto. He said I was selfish and never gave anything to anyone.

Discipline

81. Discipline was very harsh at Boys' Town. There was no written discipline code. You had to do what you were told, when you were told and how you were told. I used to get disciplined for talking in the dormitory, which was my favourite. The priest or brother in charge of the dorm would clip me round the ear. Sometimes, as a punishment, the money was deducted out of the pocket money book depending on what you had done.
82. If ever boys were caught fighting, they would be taken down to the gym by the priests or brothers where they would be made to put on boxing gloves and settle it that way.

Work outside Boys' Town

83. When I was fifteen years old in 1956 and old enough to work I didn't have any school certificates or qualifications. The Priests had arranged for me to take the Commonwealth exams. I sat the exams and did very well so I was offered a job with the Commonwealth Public Service in their social work department in Hobart. I had to sit a medical but I failed because of my eyesight. I didn't get a full-time contract but was put on a temporary one. I only worked there for a month then I got a job at a tannery.
84. Because I had started work I was moved to live at the old original house within Boys' Town where the staff stayed. The family and staff lived in part of the house. The other part was given to what they called the "old boys" who were the boys who were working. We were responsible for getting ourselves up, having our breakfast and for getting ourselves to work.

Abuse at Boys' Town, Glenorchy, Tasmania

85. I was supposed to stay with the family at Stonor for six weeks over the Christmas holidays in the first year I was there. Following the incident with the daughter I was put back on the train to Hobart. I was met at the train station by the principal priest and taken back to Boys' Town. That is when the abuse started.
86. When I came back from Stonor, Father LHE quizzed me in his office about why I had been sent back early to Boys' Town. I told him we were just playing doctors and nurses and I had just kissed her. Father LHE had all his bills and documents lying about on the floor and he said he wanted me to sort them out into a set order, alphabetically. He taught me how he wanted me to do it. It was when I was doing this in his office that he started interfering with me. He ultimately penetrated me and that went on, on average once a month for three years. He used to take me into his office at the end of each month to sort his documents and he interfered with me. He didn't always penetrate me but there was always some sort of physical or sexual abuse.

This abuse started in 1953 and it only stopped at the start of 1956 when Father [LHE] was transferred to Sydney and someone else took over. When I was there Father [LHE] would have been in his late forties or early fifties. Father [LHE] never asked me to do anything to him. He never told me not to tell anyone because he knew that I wouldn't tell anybody. I was never injured as a result of what Father [LHE] did. I remember it did hurt a hell of a lot and I just had to put up with it.

87. We had a dignitary come to the school once and he asked us if any of us wanted to go back to the UK and I put my hand up and I said "Yes" and he asked me why. I said "I don't like it here, you don't get treated very nice". He just said "We'll see what we can do". When he went away I got a hell of a thrashing from one of the priests because you weren't supposed to say whether you liked or disliked it.
88. When I had my tonsils out at the Royal Hobart Hospital I ended up in the infirmary at Boys' Town. When I was in there Brother [LHF] came in and indecently assaulted me. He played around with my penis. I am not sure how old I was but would have been between eleven and fifteen years old. Father [LHF] was [REDACTED] and he was in his early to mid-twenties. He only did this to me once. There was another Brother [REDACTED] there but he was American.
89. At Boys' Town I used to lead the prayers and say mass and these were good things. I was later told by a parish priest that this was them grooming me. Father [LHE] was the main instigator. A couple of others had a go at me but I started to get wise. By then I just made sure I was staying out their way and was never caught on my own.
90. Every one of the priests and brothers had their own favourite weapon. The prefect of studies Father [LHG] favourite weapon was a rubber hose which was about twelve inches long. The [REDACTED] brother, Father [LHF] favourite weapon was a leather strap, which was very long. The first half was solid leather and the second half he'd slit. You got hit with the slit bit. I can't remember how many tongues it had. They would hit me anywhere with these but by that stage we had started wearing long pants and overalls so it didn't matter where they hit you as long as it didn't show anywhere. One of the priests, his favourite weapon was a cane but it wasn't as big

as the canes the nuns in Nazareth House had. He just slipped it down in his cassock. Sometimes you'd just get a whack for being in his way.

91. One time I got the blame for talking in the dorm even though it wasn't me. I got a clip round the ear from the brother. The next day I was made to clean in-between the tiles in the washroom with a toothbrush and a hard bar of soap. The brother came and if he didn't think I had done a good enough job he would kick me up the backside. This happened a couple of times.
92. If we spoke in the classroom when you weren't supposed to you would be made to put your hand out and you would get six of the best usually with a cane. Father LHG would hit you like this with his rubber hose. I saw this happening regularly to other boys too.
93. There was a lot of physical and mental abuse, to us British boys at Boys' Town. The priests and brothers favourite saying was "Y our mother doesn't want you, your country doesn't want you, you're only garbage". I don't know how many times we were told that but it was a hell a of a lot. All the priests said that. I got that on many occasions and quite often sometimes before I got a hell of a hiding. Sometimes you just got a hiding for nothing, just because you happened to look the wrong way or you were in the wrong place at the wrong time.
94. Near the playground they had a toilet block and I made sure that when I went to the toilet there was no priest or brother anywhere near it. At night I went down to go to the toilet when all the boys were there washing or getting ready for bed. I wouldn't go to the toilet any other time because you could never be on your own, that was very dangerous. It was either a physical beating you would get or you were interfered with. You just had to learn to be smart. That went on for four and a half years.

Abuse to other boys in Boys' Town

95. There was a boy that came out with us from Britain. His name was [REDACTED] [REDACTED] His mother was French and his father was British or the other way around. We used to tease him because his underwear was silk and he used to get called [REDACTED] On this particular cold day, Father [LHH] had said to [REDACTED] to take his overcoat off. [REDACTED] didn't take it off. Later on in the morning Father [LHH] must have told him again. We were having our lunch a while later and the next thing was Father [LHH] punched [REDACTED] in the face full on and he completely knocked him and the chairs backwards and they fell over. It was brutal and Father [LHH] said "I won't tell you a third time". I remember those were his words. Father [LHH] would have been early sixties then but he was a big tall man, very fit. [REDACTED] would have been about our age, ten or eleven. [REDACTED] subsequently turned out to be one of the lucky ones because he was sent back to his parents early.

Boarding House, Lochner Street, Hobart, Tasmania

96. When I was still sixteen and working, with the aid of the Tasmanian government social services, Boys' Town arranged for me to move and board with Mrs Kube, 61 Lochner Street, Hobart. I was in a big room which had four beds. I shared it with three other boys. We had to make our own beds, do our own washing and ironing and everything. I had been told that I was a ward of the Tasmanian government and classed as a minor so couldn't move. The Tasmanian government told us that we had to stay at Mrs Kube's until we were 21 because in those days everybody was classed as a minor until you were 21. I stayed with her for five years..
97. From my job with the Commonwealth Public Service, after paying tax, I was clearing 4 pounds 12 and sixpence a week. She was charging us 4 pounds ten shillings to board which left me 2 and sixpence. From that I had to pay to cover my medical benefits which meant I was left with absolutely no money. I couldn't buy clothes, go to the football, cinema, I couldn't go anywhere. Wherever I went, I had to walk. All I got from Mrs Kube was breakfast and supper. I didn't get any lunch. I worked in

South Hobart and her house was in North Hobart so I had to walk from North to South Hobart every day.

98. At the weekends, if Mrs Kube and her partner went out for the day she used to lock the whole house up. We were locked out the house until she got back. This happened regularly almost on a weekly basis. She had a garden down the side of her house and she told me that I had to help her in the garden because I wasn't paying enough board. I was told to weed her garden. I went up one flower bed and deliberately dug up all the flowers and left all the weeds where they were. I then went and told her I had finished. She came to inspect it and she was mad at me for digging her flowers up. I never did the garden again.
99. In 1957, just before I turned sixteen, one of the chaps that I was boarding with at the time, got me an apprenticeship in a tannery. I worked in the tannery for three years. When you turned eighteen in Australia, at the time, you had to do military service. I failed my medical because of my eyesight. I joined the Citizens Military Forces (CMF) and used to go training every week. I used to spend three weeks of my holiday doing training..

Boarding house visits / inspection

100. There used to be a chap from the Tasmanian social services who came in and inspected the boarding house every now and again but he warned her when he was coming. Obviously when he turned up everything was great. Normally she would buy the cheapest corn beef but when he was there it was the best meat, beautifully cooked and presented. When he sat down and talked to us Mrs Kube was there making sure that we didn't talk out of turn. He came to the boarding house sometimes as a result of me and others complaining about the food, about being locked out at the weekend and having to walk so far to work. He never spoke to us on our own away from Mrs Kube. He just thought that we were telling lies. He was hoodwinked into thinking everything was great there.

101. As far as I was concerned I was still under the care of the Tasmanian government when I was in the boarding house but I never saw anyone or had any contact with anyone from Boys' Town. No-one else in authority visited to see how we were getting on. I was there from just before I turned 16 until I turned 21 years old.

Reporting of abuse at Boys' Town

102. When I was getting abused by Father LHE at Boys' Town I couldn't tell anyone because no-one was going to believe me. I didn't tell the family I was staying with at New Town on the holidays because I was frightened that if I told them I would be stopped from going there.
103. I never told any of the other boys at Boys' Town about the sexual abuse otherwise that would have gone right through the school. I never heard any other discussions or conversations between any of the other boys talking about sexual abuse.
104. The first time I mentioned any sexual abuse was when the Tasmanian government had an inquiry into the care in their homes. I am not sure what year that was but I was back in Britain when I spoke to one of their consultants on the phone. It was either late at night or early in the morning. I had heard about it because Gordon Brown, the British prime minister had given the British child migrants a formal apology. I got in touch with them. She phoned me back and we had a conversation over the phone. She took all the details from me over the phone. That is the first time I mentioned the physical and sexual abuse at Boys' Town.
105. I continued to get communication from the Child Migrant Trust and they kept me up to date with what was going on. They told me about the Australian Royal Commission Inquiry into institutional responses to child sexual abuse. It took me two years to pluck up the courage to get in touch with the Royal Commission. They sent me documentation of what they wanted and a list of questions. I sat down and wrote it all out. I did all that and I sent the original to the Royal Commission, a copy of it to the Child Migrant people and I kept a copy. I have provided the Inquiry with a copy of

my submission to the Australian Royal Commission [WIT]. I received a letter dated 21 August 2017 from the Royal Commission acknowledging my letter.

106. I have never reported any of the abuse I suffered at Boys' Town to the police. I didn't because I knew that no-one would have believed me.

Life after being in care

107. The day after I turned 21 and no longer a ward of the Tasmanian government I started a hunt for somewhere else to live. I found these two Catholic ladies who were looking for short-term boarders. I lived with them until 1966. I also became an Australian rules football umpire. I did this part-time for ten years and I got paid for that.
108. In 1968 I married my first wife when I was 27 years old. By then I had moved to Sydney because that was where she was living. After leaving care I had several jobs and even when I was working I also went to night school to get extra qualifications. I passed with honours all the courses I signed up for. I qualified as an accountant. Over the years I did various jobs like store-man and clerking jobs, ultimately ending up a senior clerk, and then a credit clerk. In 1978 I became seriously ill with ulcers and had to have an operation.

Return to Scotland to visit mother

109. In 1979 the company I was working for, Kilpatrick Green, gave me money to come back to Britain so that I could see my mother. They had previously heard me talking about my family. I flew to Scotland on my own because I couldn't afford to take my wife. By then I had a daughter. She was born in 1970 and I had a son who was born in 1977 so when I went back to Scotland he was only just two years old. I stayed with [REDACTED] I met my mum a few times and I tried to get some information from her but got nothing. I tried to find out who my father was and why I was sent to

Australia, but she didn't tell me anything. It was like talking to a brick wall, I got no information out of her whatsoever. Seeing her was a total flop and a waste of time.

Return to family in Australia

110. When I got back to Australia for some reason my wife resented the fact that I had gone to visit my family in Scotland and from that day onwards she was impossible to live with. She abused me mentally in public, even when her friends were around and that happened for seventeen years. I just thought it was something I should put up with. It wasn't until 1994 or 1995 I saw something on Australian television from the child migrant people about lost children in particular about British child migrants. I thought that this was aimed at me so I got in touch with them. His first name was Ian and I told him I was one of those British child migrants. We had a chat on the phone and then I went and saw him.

First marriage breakdown

111. No matter how much money I earned my wife was never satisfied. She wanted more and more and more. When I got in touch with the child migrant people they told me I didn't have to put up with the abuse from her. I eventually decided I had had enough and we split up. In 1995 I came back to Scotland.

Returning to Scotland 1995

112. Before I left Australia to return here for good I saw my doctor and he gave me a full medical examination and even an MRI scan. He then gave me a history of all my records which I brought back with me. I gave it all to the doctors in Denburn Medical Practice and they passed them on to the doctors surgery I am registered at now.
113. When I returned to Scotland in 1995 I stayed with [REDACTED] initially, then I got a flat in Torry, Aberdeen. I managed to get several short-term working contracts so managed to get by.

114. I subsequently had to go back to Australia to sort everything out with my wife. The Australian government told me that I had to go back, so I did. It was all settled in the family law court. I was only in Australia for four days and I then returned to Aberdeen. We subsequently divorced and I married [REDACTED] my current wife, in October 1997.

Impact of abuse

115. Before I met my first wife I had a girlfriend. We were together for two and a half years. In those days the husband had to support the wife and I didn't think I could afford to look after her so I broke our relationship off. She went off crying. I tried to explain to her my reasons afterwards but she wouldn't listen. I obviously really hurt her but I didn't realise this because I didn't know how to treat women. I had never had a family life. I have great difficulty expressing my emotions and communicating with the opposite sex because I didn't have any family to teach me or for me to learn what was socially acceptable.
116. Being in care has definitely had an effect on me. I am very anti-gay in the community, not so much for women but for men. I can't be in a room on my own with a male person or a group of male people. It really sends shivers down my spine. I avoid public toilets wherever I can. I have also got opinions about marriage. I think the government has allowed gays to have a civil ceremony so I can't understand why they have to get married because I think a civil ceremony is acknowledging that they are a couple. I totally disagree with gay marriage as it is not normal. God invented a man and woman to be loving partners, bring up children and teach them respect. If people want to do their own thing then that is fine but I don't like it when they try and push their ideas onto us. I think my opinion stems from Nazareth House but more especially Boys' Town. I have got nothing against them if they don't bother me I won't bother them. People say that's the way God made them but I still think that they should accept and stop at civil partnership.

117.



118. I get really angry when I see someone abusing somebody else on the TV. I will often shout at the TV. Annette says there's no use screaming at the television they're not going to hear you.

119. What has happened to me hasn't really had an effect on my religious faith. What I have done is I have looked at the situation and I feel that they are all individual men. They are not the church. They are individual members of the church. They are responsible members of the church. They shouldn't have done those things but they'll get punished by God if they don't seek forgiveness.

120. Because I didn't get a proper education at Boys' Town this affected me for a number of years. I luckily did manage to hold down several jobs and because of my determination and my fighting spirit I went to night school and I educated myself.

Treatment / Support

121. I went for counselling once, about fifteen years ago. I did all the talking and I don't consider that the bloke helped me in any shape or form. It was a waste of time. I didn't go back.

Records

122. A few years after I left Boys' Town I phoned and spoke to Father Papworth at Boys' Town which by then was Savio College. I was still living in Tasmania. I asked for any information that was held on me. I subsequently received a letter from Father A.

Papworth who was the head priest after I left. I have provided the Inquiry with this letter [WIT.003.001.0770] Within the letter it states that I was brought up from infancy by my aunt who ultimately was unable to look after me any longer. I was received into Nazareth House, Aberdeen on 27 September 1951. He further stated that I arrived at Boys' Town on 6 June 1952. Along with this letter I was sent and have provided to the Inquiry my Certificate of Baptism [WIT.003.001.0772], a letter indicating that I was "confirmed" on 29 June 1952, [WIT.003.001.0773] and a letter indicating I was admitted to St Mary's School in Aberdeen on 1 October 1951 [WIT.003.001.0774]. This letter states that according to a school record card my I.Q. in an "Essential Intelligence Test" conducted in 1949 was 95. This letter really didn't tell me anything that I didn't already know. All it did was clarify the dates when I was in Nazareth House and Boys' Town. I knew it was roughly March, April time when I got sent to Australia.

123. I have also obtained from someone else a copy of a photograph which I have provided to the Inquiry. [WIT.003.001.0775]. In this photograph is Sister [LDR] The three boys at the front have their names written below them. There is [REDACTED] me and [REDACTED] I think that photo was taken at Nazareth House, Aberdeen the day before we left for Australia. I have since heard that Sister [LDR] has died.
124. I also approached Mario Conti who was the bishop of Aberdeen. I spoke to him about the abuse I suffered at Nazareth House. Initially he wouldn't speak to me about it because one of the sisters of Nazareth was up in court. I got in touch with him again and I went and saw him. He basically insinuated that what I experienced was normal discipline so I got nowhere.

Other information re migration

125. I had no help from the Child Migrant Trust to resettle in Britain because I had arranged to come here myself. I know now that the British government have set up a compensation scheme which is a travel fund. British migrants in Australia can apply

to this fund for money to travel back to Britain and help them find their relatives. This fund doesn't apply to me because I am already here.

126. As a result of me contacting the Tasmanian abuse Inquiry I received from the Tasmanian government \$35,000 dollars compensation for the abuse I suffered at Boys' Town.
127. I have tried raising my experiences of migration and care with the British government. The Child Migrant Trust people have helped me. I think it was because of them that there was a formal apology from both the British and Australian governments. Neither of them however have put their hands in their pocket. I think they owe us. They have robbed us of our lives, the British government most of all. They thought they had the right to send young children out of this country to not only Australia, they sent them to other countries. I'm not being racist when I say this but they allowed the blacks, Jamaicans and Indians into this country when they were sending us out. They allowed them to come in and take our place. It's not their fault that it happened but that's what the British government did. They allowed the Pakistanis, the Indians, the Bangladeshis and all the Muslim people in and yet they denied us the right to be able to live, work and mature in this country.
128. I have never really had a problem with obtaining a passport. I actually have dual citizenship. The first passport I got was a British passport because I had a birth certificate in Britain. I wrote to the births, deaths and marriages office in Edinburgh from Australia. I gave them my date of birth and name and I think I had to pay a fee. They sent me back my birth certificate. From the birth certificate I then got in touch with a consulate in Australia. I gave them my birth certificate, and I then applied for a British passport. In 1967 I became an Australian citizen and entitled to an Australian passport.
129. I am not entitled to an Australian pension because I don't live in the country. Their pension system is different because you don't pay into a pension scheme in Australia. In Britain I am only getting a basic pension, I am also getting a monthly pension through a company I was working with when I came back to Britain.

130. I have sent three emails to the First Minister and she hasn't bothered to answer any of them. I've sent emails to our MSP, he hasn't answered. I visited a member of parliament for the UK government and I asked her to comment on the subject of financial compensation for being taken away from this country. I've never received a reply. Basically you're hitting your head against a brick wall. There's no avenue for people if they've got a genuine beef to be able to get it off their chest. There's no avenue for that. I'm not worrying if my emails are screened. All I am worried is that they get it and they can see what you are trying to ask them.

Lessons to be learned

131. I think the British and Australian government owe us. They have robbed us of our lives, the British government most of all. I hate them for denying me of a family life, denying me of my country, stripping my identity away. They thought they had the right to send young children out of Britain not only to Australia. They sent them to other countries. I believe that the senior government of the land should financially compensate children or adults who have suffered abuse. I believe that a verbal apology is of no consequence. It is very easy for someone to say sorry but it really means nothing.
132. I believe that in 2018 the Australian government are going to assist people who were child migrants access to counselling if they want it. I don't think I want it because I think it will just bring back bad memories to me. I would rather just leave it buried.
133. The Australian government are apparently going to give \$150,000 dollars as compensation to people who qualify for the abuse that was suffered. I think the British government should do something similar as they owe us a lot more than the Australian government does. I only have a small pension and can't even afford to take my wife on holiday or go out for a special meal. Compensation may make my life a little more enjoyable.

Hopes for the Inquiry

134. I honestly truly hope that no other child will ever have to suffer what I had to suffer. I hope that one day all children will be brought up in a lovely, loving home where they can be taught how to love people. I honestly think that any person male or female, who is looking after children, their backgrounds should be thoroughly investigated. I mean properly investigated, not just taking that person's word for it. Anyone who has abused a child, in any way, should be banned. They shouldn't just be given a slap on the wrist. They shouldn't be allowed to work or be near children in any way and I think the government should really strenuously police this.
135. In relation to child migrants I don't think any child should be sent away from the country of their birth unless that child wants to go themselves or they go with their family, their lawful parents. If the child is migrating with loving parents, fair enough. The overarching consideration must be "Are they doing the right thing for the child?"
136. The needs of former migrants must be considered. Financial compensation is probably the most important thing. I would really like to be financially compensated so that I can live out the latter years of my life, not in luxury but where I can afford to go on holiday. At the moment I can't afford to go on holiday, I can't afford to take [REDACTED] out for a nice dinner. Just now we are forced to look out for special deals at restaurants where the price is reduced. I would really like to go to Italy. I can't afford to do that but if the British government decided to compensate me for robbing me of my country, childhood, family and my life so I could live to a better standard, it would be great. I don't think they will, but that would be great.
137. We have no way of talking to the government to discuss what is happening about compensation for what has happened to me and that is frustrating. I would like to see it so we can tell them what we think should happen.
138. Child abusers must be rigorously hunted down and severely punished irrespective of their background. Even if they were abused as a child this does not excuse them from becoming abusers themselves.

139. 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..... 16th November 2017