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Thursday, 5 December 2019

(8.00 am)

LADY SMITH: Good morning, everybody.

Mr MacAulay.

MR MacAULAY: Good morning, my Lady. The next witness is an applicant who wants to remain anonymous and to use the name "Gavin" in giving evidence. His evidence is coming from Australia, somewhere north of Sydney. So there's an 11-hour difference.

LADY SMITH: Right, thank you very much indeed.

Gavin, can you hear me and can you see me?

THE WITNESS: Yes, I can hear you and see you.

LADY SMITH: Let me introduce myself: I'm Lady Smith and I chair the child abuse inquiry here in Edinburgh and can I begin by thanking you for agreeing to engage with us over the video link today.

What I would like to do, first of all, is put you on oath. Am I right in thinking that you would prefer to affirm rather than swear a traditional oath?

THE WITNESS: I don't mind. Whatever.

LADY SMITH: Let me give you the traditional oath.

"GAVIN" (sworn)

LADY SMITH: Gavin, just before I hand you over to Mr MacAulay, can I ask you please to let me know if you're finding any difficulties with the link, whether

1 in hearing us or seeing us. If at any time you want  
2 a break, that's absolutely no problem, I can do that.  
3 So it's very much a matter for what will work best for  
4 you. Please understand that. Is that all right?

5 A. Okay, thank you.

6 LADY SMITH: If you're ready, I'll hand over to Mr MacAulay  
7 and he will explain what happens next. Okay?

8 A. No worries, thank you.

9 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

10 Questions from MR MacAULAY

11 MR MacAULAY: My Lady.

12 Good evening, Gavin.

13 A. Good evening.

14 Q. I think it's about 7 o'clock in the evening where  
15 you are; is that right?

16 A. And it's about 8 o'clock in the morning where you are.

17 Q. That's correct. Perhaps you can tell us, where exactly  
18 are you?

19 A. I'm at Umina Beach, about 80 kilometres north of Sydney.

20 Q. And the weather is glorious?

21 A. The weather is pretty warm, yeah, a bit smokey, but  
22 otherwise it's warm.

23 Q. I think you have a copy of your statement in front of  
24 you; is that right?

25 A. That's correct, yes.

1 Q. If you turn to the final page, WIT.001.002.2311, can you  
2 confirm that you have signed it?

3 A. Yes. You need me to show it to you?

4 Q. No, I have it here. Just to say you have signed it.  
5 Also, are you happy that it forms part of the evidence  
6 to the inquiry?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. I think you say also that you do believe the facts set  
9 out in the statement are true.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. What you tell us in your statement, Gavin -- perhaps  
12 before I come to that, can I just confirm with you --  
13 I don't want your date of birth, but can you confirm for  
14 me that you were born in 1943?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. I was going on to say that what you tell us in your  
17 statement is that you went into care at a very young  
18 age; is that correct?

19 A. I believe it was just -- I thought I was 11 months old,  
20 but apparently -- I found out since I was just over  
21 a year.

22 Q. Clearly, you have no recollection of that, but since  
23 then, having regard to records that you've seen, have  
24 you been able to piece together the background to you  
25 going into care?

1 A. Yes, to a certain extent, yes.

2 Q. Can you tell us what you have discovered?

3 A. Well, only that mum had met dad, fell in love with him.

4 He was 20 years older than her or something and he was

5 married with seven children and promised her this and

6 promised her that, and she had apparently my sister,

7 before me, [REDACTED] and then she had me, and because

8 she applied for -- she had to get a job because her

9 parents kicked her out of the house -- having another

10 child out of wedlock in the 1940s, I guess, was a sin

11 then -- so she had to get a job and somewhere to live,

12 and it was a live-in job she applied for but she could

13 only do it with one child, so apparently (inaudible:

14 distorted).

15 Q. That's the background to you going into the care of

16 Barnardo's; is that right?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And so far as dates are concerned, we can tell from

19 records that you were taken into care, first of all, on

20 [REDACTED] 1945 when you were a bit over the age of 1.

21 That's what you understand the position to be now?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. You were in three places altogether. Finally you were

24 in a place called Tyneholm and you went there on

25 [REDACTED] 1950.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. By then, you'd be 6 years of age, is that right, 6  
3 coming on to 7?

4 A. Yes, I think so. Almost 7, yes.

5 Q. Do you have some recollection of your time at Tyneholm?

6 A. I have a little bit of recollection. I remember some of  
7 it, but not a great deal. I don't remember the other  
8 homes, but Tyneholm, yeah, I remember some of it.

9 Q. The inquiry has already looked at the evidence you've  
10 given in your statement in connection with Tyneholm.  
11 But putting it shortly, was the home run by a man by the  
12 name of Mr BEB ?

13 A. It was, yes.

14 Q. And how did you get on with Mr BEB ?

15 A. Not great because I think he was a bully, personally,  
16 but you know, really, I really didn't know the guy, but  
17 I just didn't like him. I heard so many things about  
18 him from different people and I just didn't like him.  
19 I didn't like the way he treated his family and that was  
20 it.

21 Q. I think you do tell us in your statement that you were  
22 caned by Mr BEB ; is that right?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. I think there was also an occasion when he made some  
25 form of sexual advance towards you; is that correct?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. How did you react to that?

3 A. Well, I was already warned by my friend [REDACTED] --

4 [REDACTED] had apparently had -- he'd done the same thing  
5 to him and [REDACTED] had told me about it, and I was  
6 prepared, really, I suppose, and I just kicked him and  
7 that's when I got the cane again.

8 Q. What you tell us in your statement, Gavin, is that you  
9 felt that Mr <sup>BEB</sup> [REDACTED] as you put it, was a constant  
10 threat to you; is that correct?

11 A. Yes.

12 LADY SMITH: Can I just say at this stage, so far as the  
13 part of your statement that covers your time at Tyneholm  
14 is concerned, that was read into the evidence that  
15 I heard in relation to an earlier case study we did  
16 about Barnardo's and I have taken account of everything  
17 you said about your time at Barnardo's in considering  
18 the findings about what happened there. I know that you  
19 also had two very good friends, you've referred to  
20 [REDACTED] and there was also another boy -- I think there  
21 was a threesome of you at Tyneholm that was broken up  
22 when you went to Australia -- but I've already got that  
23 evidence and I'm very grateful for it. Thank you very  
24 much.

25 A. Okay.

1 MR MacAULAY: Can I then look for a moment or two at the  
2 background to you going to Australia. Can you give me  
3 some idea as to how that arose? What were you asked or  
4 what were you told about Australia?

5 A. Well, when we had the altercation, I suppose you'd call  
6 it, it was a little while after that that I was asked if  
7 I wanted to go to Australia. I said yes because  
8 I wanted to get away, I wanted to get away from  
9 Mr BEB, really.

10 Q. Who asked you?

11 A. Mr BEB.

12 Q. As I understand your position, the reason you were happy  
13 to accede to that was because you wanted to get away  
14 from him?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Were you given any information at that time or  
17 subsequently before you left as to what life would be  
18 like in Australia?

19 A. Well, I had this vision of riding horses to school and  
20 seeing kangaroos jumping up and down the street. It  
21 just seemed like an exciting trip -- plus the boat trip,  
22 that sort of made me feel good too. Getting away from  
23 him, that was the main thing.

24 Q. Were you given any information, for example by

25 Mr BEB, of how life would be in Australia?

1 A. Not really, not really. Just we sort of it -- I think  
2 it was, in my mind, a quieter place than Scotland and  
3 a lot less people there. Nothing else, really. Just  
4 the excitement, you know.

5 Q. Were you looking forward to going?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Were you told before you left Scotland where you would  
8 be going? By that I mean what the name of the place  
9 was.

10 A. I seem to remember, yes, I seem to remember Greenwood,  
11 which is the home in Normanhurst in Sydney.

12 Q. Did you understand it to be a place that was also run by  
13 Barnardo's?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Did you go for a medical before you left?

16 A. I did, yes.

17 Q. And you remember that?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Do you remember where you went for that?

20 A. Oh God, no, I don't remember that. I remember we had  
21 needles but I don't remember where it was.

22 Q. Just jumping ahead a little bit, have you managed to  
23 recover records from, for example, Barnardo's or any  
24 other source providing you with information about the  
25 background circumstances to you leaving for Australia?



1 A. No, not really, no. Not really, not the reason, no.  
2 Because they were bringing lots of kids out here, so  
3 I suppose ... I don't know.

4 Q. You've already mentioned to her Ladyship about your  
5 friends, two particular friends.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. We don't need to look at the names -- you've mentioned  
8 the name [REDACTED] already -- but were you hoping that  
9 your friends would go with you to Australia?

10 A. At first, yes, yes, I was.

11 Q. If we just focus on [REDACTED] was there a particular  
12 reason why he wasn't acceptable?

13 A. Well, mainly because of the White Australia policy back  
14 then. He was black and his father was a [REDACTED]  
15 and he was black so he couldn't come anyway. Neither  
16 could the other fella because he wet the bed.

17 Q. Did you wet the bed?

18 A. Yes, I did. That's why I, since then, had thoughts of  
19 the reason I was able to come here.

20 Q. What thoughts have you had?

21 A. The fact that I wet the bed, I thought, well, if [REDACTED]  
22 couldn't come, how come I was able to come? So I think  
23 Mr [REDACTED] wanted to get me out of there.

24 Q. When you came to leave, can you give me some information  
25 as to what you were given to take with you?

1 A. Clothes. We had a little suitcase with some clothes in  
2 it and shoes and a hat. That's right, because of the  
3 sun, apparently, in Australia. Yes. That's about it.

4 Q. According to records that the inquiry has seen, you left  
5 Tyneholm on [REDACTED] 1953.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. So you'd be aged 9, I think, at that time; is that  
8 right?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. How did you travel from Scotland?

11 A. By train. I went on the Flying Scotsman from Edinburgh  
12 to London. It shows you in my records there that when  
13 I got to London -- I think it's Queen Victoria station,  
14 I'm not sure -- I sat there for 2 hours waiting for  
15 someone to pick me up and finally they came.

16 Q. Did anybody travel with you from Scotland?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Were you the only boy then from Tyneholm in particular  
19 that was sent?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Did you spend some time at one of the Barnardo's places  
22 in London before you went on to the ship?

23 A. Yes, it's a place called Barkingside and it's where all  
24 the kids used to go before they came to Australia. It  
25 was quite good actually because we got to see most of

1 the tourism places in London, like the Tower of London  
2 and the Crown Jewels, et cetera, et cetera.

3 Q. Were there other children there then waiting to go on  
4 the ship?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Can you say how many were there, can you remember?

7 A. Altogether 21 of us.

8 Q. Was it mixed, boys and girls?

9 A. Boys and girls, yes, but I was the only Scot.

10 Q. Again, I think we know from records that you left  
11 Southampton on the SS New Australia on [REDACTED] 1953.

12 A. That's correct, yes.

13 Q. Can I ask you this: was it an enjoyable trip?

14 A. I loved the trip; I'd do it again if I could.

15 Q. What was so good about it?

16 A. Well, just the ocean, just the excitement, you know.

17 I copped a fair bit of rubbish on the boat because I was  
18 the only Scot there, but we all became friends in the  
19 end. It was just the fact of being on the ocean.

20 I used to sneak out of my cabin in the middle of the  
21 night to go and just look at the ocean. It was  
22 beautiful, I just loved it.

23 Q. Very approximately, do you have any idea as to how many  
24 children were on the ship?

25 A. From what I remember, there was 21 of us. That's all

1 I remember. I don't know about other children but

2 I remember them.

3 Q. So that was your group?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Again, from records, we know that you arrived in Sydney

6 on [REDACTED] 1953.

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. What happened when you disembarked? Did somebody meet  
9 you?

10 A. Yes, we were met by two -- auntie and uncle, we used to  
11 call them -- and they put us on a bus to take me to the  
12 home at Normanhurst.

13 Q. How far away from the port was Normanhurst?

14 A. Normanhurst ... I'm not sure how far. How far to ...  
15 From Sydney to Normanhurst is probably about 30K,  
16 I don't know, something like that.

17 Q. Did you see kangaroos, as you had hoped to see, when you  
18 arrived?

19 A. Not a one, no.

20 Q. I think the name of the orphanage itself was  
21 Greenwood Orphanage; is that correct?

22 A. Greenwood, yes.

23 Q. Can you give me some understanding as to what the layout  
24 was of Greenwood?

25 A. It was a huge property. They had three different

1           houses, big giant houses there, a tennis court and  
2           a place to play. There was a lot of ground there. It  
3           was a good place for kids, that's for sure.

4           Q. Are you able to give me any sense of how many children  
5           were being accommodated there?

6           A. I'd say nearly 60.

7           Q. Again, were there boys and girls?

8           A. Boys and girls there, yes.

9           Q. Did you understand that the children were all  
10          child migrants?

11          A. Yes.

12          Q. You mentioned already that you were the only Scot in the  
13          group. Were there other Scottish children there?

14          A. Um ... It's quite possible. I don't remember, to be  
15          honest. I'm not sure.

16          Q. I'll jump ahead a bit because I think you spent about  
17          18 months at Greenwood before you moved to Mowbray Park  
18          orphanage in Picton; is that right?

19          A. Yes.

20          Q. I'll come to that in a moment.

21                 So far as Greenwood was concerned, can you help me  
22          with some sense of the age range of the children? By  
23          now you were 10, I think. What about the other  
24          children, what was your impression of the age range?

25          A. They varied, because back then we used to leave school

1 at 15 anyway. It was from 10 to 15, the kids. I think  
2 there were some younger ones there too, maybe 8 to 15,  
3 I don't know.

4 Q. What can you tell me about the staff?

5 A. The staff were pretty good. We used to call them auntie  
6 and uncle in that place. Auntie Boucher and Tom Price  
7 was Uncle Tom, he was the superintendent there. He  
8 finished up running Barnardo's for a while in Sydney.

9 Q. Can you tell me how many, roughly, staff there were to  
10 look after the children?

11 A. Oh, goodness me ... I'd say there would have been eight  
12 or nine, say eight or nine, maybe ten, I'm not sure.  
13 They had different ones for different houses because we  
14 had the three different houses.

15 Q. How were the houses divided up then? Was it by age or  
16 by sex? How was it done?

17 A. Yeah, by age, I think. Age more than anything.

18 Q. Can I just ask you some bits and pieces about the  
19 routine. Let's look at the sleeping arrangements first  
20 of all. What were the sleeping arrangements there?

21 A. Well, we had big dormitories we all used to sleep in,  
22 and, yeah, that was it. That was the sleeping  
23 arrangements in the big dormitory.

24 Q. Schooling?

25 A. Each three houses had big dormitories.

1 Q. And schooling? What were the arrangements over  
2 schooling?

3 A. Well, when I went there, I went to Normanhurst Public  
4 School, which was a primary school. I went there for  
5 just over a year, actually. Then I thought I was going  
6 to be sent to Hornsby Tech, which was where all the  
7 other boys went when they went to high school.  
8 I finished up getting sent to Carlingford, which was  
9 a rural school, me and two of the others.

10 Q. Do you know why that was?

11 A. I don't know. I still don't know why. Me and two other  
12 boys.

13 Q. I think what you tell us in your statement is you  
14 started to skip school; is that correct?

15 A. Yes, we used to wag the school and go swimming in  
16 a place called the Basin, which was a beautiful spot,  
17 actually. It was like a big waterhole and we used to go  
18 swimming there. We didn't want to go to school, we  
19 wanted to go with the other boys.

20 Q. Did that get you into trouble?

21 A. It got us into trouble, yes, and we copped the cane, as  
22 we usually did.

23 Q. Who would cane you?

24 A. Who would cane you then? Let me think. I think it was  
25 Mr BLD then. Yes, Mr BLD.

1 Q. What was his role there?

2 A. He finished up superintendent after Tom Price left,  
3 because Tom Price went into the Barnardo's head office.

4 Q. As you tell us in your statement, there was an incident  
5 in the dormitories when there was a pillow fight and  
6 that got you into trouble. Can you tell me about that?

7 A. Yes. I went to the toilet and they were all having  
8 a pillow fight in the dorm. I probably would have  
9 joined in anyway if I'd been there. But I went to the  
10 toilet and on the way out, Mr BLD was coming up the  
11 stairs and surmised I was involved in it, took me down  
12 the stairs, and that's when I got into trouble. I had  
13 to stay up all night because I was a naughty boy,  
14 according to him.

15 Q. Did he cane you?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Where would he hit you with the cane?

18 A. On the behind.

19 Q. Was that over your clothing?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And how many strokes did you get on that occasion;  
22 can you remember?

23 A. Six.

24 Q. Looking generally at discipline at Greenwood, how was  
25 discipline managed?



1 A. It was pretty good. Considering, you know, the amount  
2 of kids that were there, I think it was pretty good, the  
3 discipline part of it, yeah.

4 Q. And the food, can you help me with that? How did you  
5 find the food?

6 A. Good. The food was good.

7 Q. I touched upon this earlier. You left Greenwood and  
8 moved to Mowbray Park in Picton. Do you know why you  
9 left Greenwood?

10 A. Yes. I was sent to Picton because of the wagging,  
11 because of not going to school when I was supposed to,  
12 and that was my punishment, to go to the farm school  
13 instead.

14 Q. Did the other two boys that you mentioned who had been  
15 skipping school, did they go with you?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Were you sad to leave Greenwood?

18 A. Well, not really, because I hadn't been there long  
19 enough and Picton sounded like a big adventure anyway.

20 Q. Again, I think that's also New South Wales; is that  
21 right?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. It's south-west of Sydney, I think.

24 A. Yes. It is, yes. About 60 miles south-west of Sydney.

25 Q. I think you were about 11 or so when you went to Picton;

1 is that right?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. So that'd be about 1954?

4 A. Yeah, about that. Either 1954 or 1955, I'm not sure.

5 Pretty close.

6 Q. You stayed at Picton until you were 16?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Again, as with Greenwood, can you describe the layout at  
9 Picton for me?

10 A. Well, Picton was huge. They had about a mile square of  
11 property, two big dams down the bottom where we used to  
12 go swimming. They had a big dairy farm and they had  
13 vegetables growing there, which we used to grow  
14 ourselves. It was a lot different from Normanhurst,  
15 that's for sure.

16 Q. Was it one main building or were there different  
17 buildings?

18 A. No, no, there was three, at least three -- there was  
19 a lot of big houses in there. Again, 60 kids.

20 Q. You say 60 children?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Again, was there a mix of boys and girls?

23 A. No, only boys there.

24 Q. And the age range then?

25 A. Again, it was from, you know, 11 or 12, to 16. 15 or

1           16, because that's when you left school at 15.

2           Q. So far as schooling was concerned, where did you go for  
3           schooling?

4           A. Picton High School.

5           Q. Were you happy at school?

6           A. I probably was happy to a certain extent, but I think  
7           I was a bit lazy. I think I thought I was too smart and  
8           I didn't worry about school too much.

9           Q. Can you help me with the staffing? Who was in charge at  
10          Picton when you were there?

11          A. Mr Green.

12          Q. How many staff were there so far as you can remember?

13          A. Well ... We had a farm as well. There was a farmhand  
14          who was looking after us as well and there was ...  
15          Probably ten or 12, I'm not sure, really, I can't  
16          remember.

17          Q. And the sleeping arrangements here? Was it something  
18          similar to Greenwood, with dormitories?

19          A. Very similar to Normanhurst, yes.

20          Q. Was there some suggestion that you might be adopted by  
21          a particular family?

22          A. Yes, there was. One of my schoolteachers wanted to --  
23          him and his wife apparently couldn't have children, so  
24          they decided to try and adopt me when I was 12 years  
25          old.

1 Q. Did you go to stay with them?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And how did that work out?

4 A. No good. I thought it was all right at first, but then  
5 the guy used to go to church and he'd even get up in the  
6 thing and preach and everything, and then come home and  
7 belt his wife. That didn't work out. I finished up  
8 jumping on him one day when he did it. That's when he  
9 hit me and I just hitchhiked back to the home.

10 Q. I think you mention in your statement that many years  
11 later you came across this husband and wife again;  
12 is that right?

13 A. I did, yes. I was in the Barnardo's head office in  
14 Sydney and I just came out and was walking down  
15 York Street and there they were walking along with two  
16 children. I said hello to Mrs [REDACTED] and she gave me  
17 a big cuddle and -- nothing, he just ignored me, he  
18 wouldn't even say hello.

19 Q. Can you give me an overview or summary, if you like, of  
20 how you would describe your time in care with Barnardo's  
21 in Australia?

22 A. Most of it was good. It was good, most of it. We had  
23 some bad moments, but otherwise it was good, you know.  
24 A lot -- I think it was a lot different to Scotland  
25 anyway, that's for sure.

1 Q. Can I take you to when you came to leave care. You said  
2 you were 16 and that would be about 1959, would that be  
3 about right --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- or 1960?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. What sort of preparation did you have for leaving  
8 Picton?

9 A. Well, the only preparation you had was to get yourself  
10 a job -- or I think Barnardo's actually got this job for  
11 me originally. One of the fellas in the home with me  
12 was working in this particular place so I got a job  
13 there and moved into a house in Rosehill, which is  
14 a suburb of Sydney, with him and another one of the  
15 Barnardo's boys, we were staying in this boarding house  
16 and that was my job, supposedly an apprentice fitter and  
17 turner, but it wasn't, we were making ear and sheep  
18 markers for cows and sheep (inaudible: distorted).

19 Q. Did you move from that job to another job?

20 A. Yes. I went from there to McCallars(?), a grocery store  
21 back in the old days, and from there I had a lot of  
22 different jobs, a lot of different jobs.

23 Q. But can I ask you this: did Barnardo's keep in touch  
24 with you during the early years after you left Picton?

25 A. Yes, they did, yes.

1 Q. Was that in the context of an aftercare type of  
2 arrangement?

3 A. Yes. Well, when you say -- we used to have, what do you  
4 call it, a founder's day, and we used to go there every  
5 year, September every year. I still go to them  
6 occasionally now. But yeah, they always sort of kept an  
7 eye on what you were doing. They were aware of what was  
8 going on, what you were doing.

9 Q. Would somebody come and actually speak to you and ask  
10 you how you were getting on and so on?

11 A. Well, that was pretty rare, really. That was pretty  
12 rare.

13 Q. Did it happen in the early years after you left?

14 A. Yes, it did happen, it did happen, but there was a lot  
15 of kids out there that had left Barnardo's and I don't  
16 think they had the staff to be able to do that much.  
17 That's what I think.

18 Q. You provide us with some personal information in your  
19 statement, Gavin, that you met your wife and you had  
20 children and so on. We've got that evidence in front of  
21 us in the statement.

22 What I want to ask you now is this: throughout your  
23 time in care before you left Barnardo's care, what was  
24 your understanding as to your status? By that, I mean  
25 did you consider you had parents or did you consider

1           that you were an orphan?

2           A. I considered I was an orphan because I never met my  
3           parents.

4           Q. Were you ever told anything about your parents?

5           A. Not really. I had to make enquiries after I left the  
6           home.

7           Q. I'll come to that. If we just focus on your time in the  
8           homes, were you ever given any explanation about your  
9           parents or whether or not they might be alive?

10          A. No.

11          Q. You were going on to say there, Gavin, that after you  
12          left the homes, you did start to make some enquiries  
13          about your background; is that correct?

14          A. Yes.

15          Q. What triggered that?

16          A. Well, I guess I was -- I guess because I was more of an  
17          individual then, I was able to do something like that  
18          and find out who I was.

19          Q. So what did you do?

20          A. What did I do? Um ... Well, I got in touch with  
21          Barnardo's and got a hold of my records. That was  
22          originally what happened. That's how come I found out  
23          who my mother was and my sister, et cetera, et cetera.

24          Q. Did you have any difficulty in getting records?

25          A. Not really, not then. Not once I'd left the home.

1 Q. What then did you discover about your background at this  
2 time?

3 A. According to my records, it had said that ...

4 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: You had a mother in --

5 A. I heard that I had a mother, but I didn't really know  
6 anything about it. I did hear about my father, what had  
7 happened, and I didn't really want to meet my father.  
8 I wanted to meet my mother but not my father.

9 MR MacAULAY: You also learned that you had a sister?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. So did you take --

12 A. I didn't find my sister for a long time. It took me  
13 ages.

14 LADY SMITH: Gavin, how old were you approximately when you  
15 started to unearth this information?

16 A. Probably about 18, something like that.

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

18 MR MacAULAY: Then what steps did you take to try and make  
19 contact in particular with your mother?

20 A. Well, I just got -- I had been given her address by  
21 Barnardo's and I just sent her a letter and she didn't  
22 answer me for a while. I sent her another letter and  
23 then she answered, and then she told me not to write and  
24 that was it.

25 Q. What age were you at that time when you got that letter



1 from your mother?

2 A. About 18, something like that.

3 Q. Did you discover afterwards whether there was a reason  
4 for her taking up that position?

5 A. I discovered afterwards that she was married and had  
6 three boys by her husband, who wasn't my father. I just  
7 surmised in my mind that maybe he didn't know about me,  
8 her husband.

9 Q. You also mentioned your sister and it wasn't until some  
10 time later that you met your sister. Can I ask you  
11 about that? How did that come about?

12 A. It came about because in 1977, I was a lot older then,  
13 I moved back to Sydney -- I was living in  
14 South Australia in Adelaide and I moved from there back  
15 to Sydney, came back to my old girlfriend who I'm  
16 married to now, and her brothers were going overseas and  
17 they were going to Scotland, [REDACTED] her younger brother,  
18 and I asked them if they were going to Edinburgh. They  
19 said yes and I said, can you see if you can find my  
20 uncle? I was born in my uncle's house, but I didn't  
21 know the address of it.

22 [REDACTED] went back to Scotland, he found my uncle, and  
23 he was in Scotland and just to this lady, "Do you know  
24 where [REDACTED] lives?" and the lady just said, "Just  
25 round the corner", because he was well-known, he was

1 a [REDACTED] referee for the Olympic Games. And [REDACTED] went  
2 round there and that's when Uncle [REDACTED] decided I have my  
3 sister's address and I got it.

4 Q. Did you make contact with your sister?

5 A. I made contact with my sister, she got a surprise when  
6 she got the letter, and sent me a letter back. She  
7 entered a competition, she had to say in 25 words or  
8 less why she wanted to visit her relatives in Australia  
9 via Singapore and she won it. And that's how we first  
10 met.

11 Q. You also tell us in your statement about a TV programme  
12 that you were involved in called [REDACTED] Can  
13 you help me with that? Can you give me the background  
14 to that?

15 A. Well, it was because of what happened with me finding my  
16 family and also because of [REDACTED] and I getting back  
17 together, that was the main situation because -- just  
18 the way things happened, and because of that I found  
19 some of my family and one of [REDACTED]'s friends was  
20 a journalist and he got in touch with another journalist  
21 who came out and interviewed us, and wrote a story  
22 in the [REDACTED] the paper. It said -- with a picture  
23 of [REDACTED] and I in the shop that we owned:

24 "Orphan finds love in his search for the past."

25 And it went from there. [REDACTED] then

1 found it in the paper and it went from there. They did  
2 it on our wedding day.

3 Q. The TV people came to see you on your wedding day;  
4 is that right?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. So far as your mother is concerned, I think it is the  
7 case that you never actually came to meet your mother.

8 A. No.

9 Q. Did you learn that she died in 1968?

10 A. Yes, I did, yes.

11 Q. Did you come to Scotland?

12 A. Yes, I came back to Scotland in 2005. I got a free trip  
13 back because of the Stolen Generation, paid for by the  
14 government, and [REDACTED], my wife, and I both went back to  
15 Scotland, and also to Hungary where she lived, and there  
16 I went to my mum, found her grave, and that was all.  
17 That's -- the only time that I had anything to do with  
18 her was then.

19 Q. Just looking generally at your time in care then, Gavin,  
20 do you consider that that time in care has had any  
21 impact, any detrimental impact, on your life?

22 A. Well, not really, because -- I don't know, maybe because  
23 I'm stubborn or something, I don't know. Because  
24 I didn't have family -- well, it was only me, you know.  
25 Whatever happens, I have to do it myself. That's it.

1 Q. You mentioned the two good friends you had at Tyneholm;  
2 did they come to visit you much later on?

3 A. They did. They turned up in Queensland, actually, and  
4 my old landlady, [REDACTED] as I called her, happened  
5 to read the Sunday paper, and there was a little column  
6 with different people looking for people. She saw it  
7 there and rang me and that is how I found them. They  
8 were about to fly back to Scotland when I rang them and  
9 they cancelled their flight and came down to (inaudible:  
10 distorted).

11 Q. What year was that?

12 A. Goodness me.

13 What year was that, [REDACTED], when [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]  
14 were here.

15 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: It was after we went overseas. Was it  
16 after or before?

17 A. Before.

18 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Before? (inaudible: distorted).

19 A. Probably about 2000, wasn't it?

20 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Yes, early 2000.

21 A. Round about 2000, I think.

22 MR MacAULAY: Have you been in contact since or have you  
23 lost contact?

24 A. I've lost contact. Yes, I have.

25 I went and saw [REDACTED] when I went back to Scotland,

1 but since then I haven't heard.

2 (Pause)

3 Q. The final thing I just want it put to you, Gavin, is  
4 this. You say in your statement:

5 "[You] do think a lot about what could have been,  
6 but the worst part is that [you] never got the chance to  
7 meet [your] mother."

8 Is that what you feel?

9 A. Yes, it is, yes. It's sad.

10 MR MacAULAY: Very well, Gavin. These are all the questions  
11 I have for you this evening. I think you're ready for  
12 your evening meal. Thank you for engaging with the  
13 inquiry and for answering my questions this evening.

14 My Lady, I can say that I have no other questions  
15 submitted to me.

16 LADY SMITH: Can I check whether there are any outstanding  
17 applications for questions? No.

18 Gavin, that does complete all the questions we have  
19 for you this evening. Thank you again for letting us  
20 interrupt you tonight and I hope you're able to have  
21 a quiet evening after this.

22 Being able to speak to you in person over the link  
23 makes an enormous difference to me in helping me  
24 understand the entirety of the child migration  
25 programme. I'm really grateful for you being prepared

1 to do that, so thank you very much and I'm now able to  
2 let you go.

3 A. Okay, thank you for that.

4 (The video link was terminated)

5 MR MacAULAY: I think that's the line down.

6 My Lady, two names have been mentioned in the  
7 evidence, and these are people who have been granted  
8 anonymity, so these names should not be published.

9 LADY SMITH: These are the friends he mentioned?

10 MR MacAULAY: Yes.

11 LADY SMITH: I am sure that has been picked up and I hope  
12 everybody's noticed that they were children in care;  
13 anyone who was in the Barnardo's case study will  
14 remember that.

15 MR MacAULAY: The next video link is timed for 10 o'clock  
16 our time, so we have a little time before that.

17 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. We'll break now until  
18 10 o'clock --

19 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, before we rise, there is the  
20 possibility of doing a read-in at some point. Perhaps  
21 we could come back at 9 o'clock.

22 LADY SMITH: Actually, let's do that, come back at 9.00.

23 Very well, until 9 o'clock, thank you.

24 (8.45 am)

25 (A short break)

1 (9.00 am)

2 LADY SMITH: Ms Rattray.

3 Witness statement of "ANNE" (read)

4 MS RATTRAY: My Lady, this is a statements of an applicant  
5 who wishes to remain anonymous and has chosen the  
6 pseudonym "Anne".

7 Anne's statement can be found at WIT.001.002.3278:

8 "My name is Anne. I was born in 1944. My contact  
9 details are known to the inquiry."

10 From paragraphs 2 to 13, Anne describes her early  
11 life growing up in [REDACTED] with her parents and four  
12 siblings. Anne suffered from ill health in early  
13 childhood. She suffered from [REDACTED] and  
14 later in her statement she explains that is another term  
15 for [REDACTED]. She spent three and a half years in  
16 hospital, 12 months of which were spent in an iron lung.  
17 When she was discharged she had to wear callipers.

18 When Anne was 10 years old, her mother died. I'll  
19 now move to paragraph 14 on page 3280 where Anne  
20 describes what happened after the death of her mother:

21 "About two months after mother died, we were playing  
22 outside at the front of house. A big black car pulled  
23 up. In those days, there aren't many cars in the  
24 street. We stopped playing when a man and woman got out  
25 of the car. They asked our names and they then grabbed

1 two of my brothers and me. My older sister ran off. We  
2 didn't know who these people were. All they said was  
3 we were going for a ride. We were all crying, screaming  
4 and very scared.

5 "I would find out later in life that our local  
6 church, the St Vincent de Paul Society, decided dad  
7 wasn't looking after us properly. As a result, us kids  
8 would have going into Catholic care. They had  
9 threatened dad that he would be reported to the Child  
10 Welfare if he refused. Dad liked to have a drink but  
11 he wasn't a drunk. If he had a drink, he would sing  
12 songs. He wasn't bad.

13 "The next thing that I remember was arriving outside  
14 a big grey building. This was my new home,  
15 Nazareth House at Kilmarnock."

16 The Nazareth House registers states that Anne was  
17 admitted to Nazareth House Kilmarnock in [REDACTED] 1953 and  
18 sailed for Australia in [REDACTED] 1954 when she was sent to  
19 Nazareth House Camberwell:

20 "The lady in the car took me into the building. We  
21 went into a big hallway with black and white tiles on  
22 the floor. A nun came to greet us but didn't  
23 acknowledge me. She just took a hold of my hand and  
24 spoke with the woman. I was screaming and trying to get  
25 back to my brothers. The woman then just left. I never



1 saw my siblings again until 1982.

2 "After the woman left I needed to go to the toilet.  
3 The nun took me. It was the biggest toilet that I had  
4 ever seen. I was then taken to a dormitory. I must  
5 have been really tired from screaming and crying as  
6 I fell asleep on top of the bed. The next thing I woke  
7 up and it was morning. I was a very frightened little  
8 girl. No one had come to see me to make sure that I was  
9 okay.

10 "The dormitory that I was in had about 25 other  
11 girls in it. The girls were all different ages. An  
12 older girl told me to get out of bed. She gave me some  
13 different clothes. I then joined the line with the  
14 other girls waiting to go to the washroom. The older  
15 girl didn't know how to put my callipers on, so just  
16 left them off.

17 "Later on the same girl must have got me some shoes.  
18 I was taken to the refectory for breakfast. It's funny  
19 because I remember a little Polish girl taking my hand.  
20 She couldn't speak any English.

21 "The food was really bad. You were given a sausage  
22 for breakfast, a plate full of dripping, and a crust.  
23 You were never given sliced bread, it was always  
24 a crust. We were also given stew. There was hardly any  
25 meat in it. There was only a tiny bit in the bottom of

1 the pot.

2 "Once a week we had to walk to the bathhouse in  
3 Kilmarnock. There wasn't a bath area at the home. Two  
4 of us would share the same bath.

5 "I remember going to Sailor Street School. I had my  
6 callipers on when I went there. We would go to Mass  
7 every day. If it was Lent, you might have to go to Mass  
8 two or three times a day. My knees were really sore  
9 from polishing the floors, but you couldn't get up. If  
10 you moved or lifted your head, you would get a jab  
11 in the small of your back in the nuns.

12 "I remember my dad and auntie coming to visit me at  
13 Christmas. They gave me a doll but I never saw it again  
14 after they left. My father used to come and visit me at  
15 other times, but the nuns didn't know this. He would  
16 come and see me at the gates. He would always tell me  
17 to be quiet in case the nuns heard him.

18 "I used to think about running away. I never did  
19 though as I didn't have any money for the bus.

20 "I remember that I had a gum boil once and I had to  
21 come home from school. I was taken to the dentist to  
22 have this lanced. When I was back at Nazareth House,  
23 Sister LFL came and got me from the playroom. She  
24 took me to her office and she showed me a picture of a  
25 ship on a calendar and asked if I would like to go for

1 a ride on it. I said I would. What 8-year-old girl  
2 wouldn't want to do this?

3 "An older girl took me to the doctor for a medical  
4 the week before I left for Australia. I was examined by  
5 the doctor. I didn't have my callipers with me when  
6 I was given the medical. My medical was over very  
7 quickly. I wasn't asked any questions. I just sat  
8 playing in the room. The older girl then took me back  
9 to the home. In later life when I accessed my records,  
10 there was a copy of the medical letter. It said I was  
11 a fit and healthy little girl, despite this not being  
12 true.

13 "The next thing I knew, me and three other girls are  
14 going on a 'holiday'. The night before we left, my  
15 father came to see me at the orphanage. This was  
16 different from how he would normally visit. It was very  
17 traumatic. He also said that I was going on a holiday  
18 and he would see me when I got back. My father had  
19 asked where my callipers were, I told them they were on  
20 the chair next to my bed. I never saw the callipers  
21 again once I left Nazareth House.

22 "When he left, I remember my father kissing me and  
23 holding me tight. I had a terrible habit of wiping his  
24 kiss off my face. I think back do this now and how it  
25 was the last affection I had from my father. I just

1 stood there watching him with tears running down my  
2 cheeks. Sister LQM [REDACTED] took me back to the  
3 playroom and I never saw my father or my callipers  
4 again.

5 "We were allowed a special tea before we left.  
6 There was a girl who was the oldest one of us that were  
7 going. Her brother who was in the Army came to see her.  
8 He had tea with us as well.

9 "When I left Nazareth House at Kilmarnock, I'd only  
10 been there around five months. The next morning we went  
11 to the station escorted by two nuns. We met another  
12 four girls from Nazareth House Aberdeen, also escorted  
13 by two nuns. We then all went on the same train to  
14 London.

15 "We spent one night at Nazareth House Hammersmith in  
16 London. The next day we were taken to a ship at  
17 Southampton. The ship was called the Orontes.

18 "There was 24 children altogether on the ship.  
19 There were a few young boys who were accompanied by  
20 a priest, Father Tye. The girls had three chaperones  
21 for the journey to Australia. Three of us shared  
22 a cabin and the chaperones had separate rooms.

23 "We ran free on the ship like normal kids. We  
24 didn't have many clothes and didn't have any swimwear.  
25 I think they got us swimwear from somewhere on the ship.

1           "The ship stopped at a few places called Aden. We  
2 saw Arabs selling trinkets and visited a zoo in Ceylon.  
3 On board it was fun watching the boys diving for pennies  
4 thrown in the water by the other passengers. I think  
5 the journey on the ship lasted about 4 or 5 weeks.

6           "When we reached Australia, the boys and Father Tye  
7 left the ship at Perth. Around this time I had a bad  
8 fall on the ship. I had to go to the ship's hospital  
9 and needed seven stitches on my chin. We eventually  
10 arrived at Victoria dock at Melbourne where we were met  
11 by the press. The Herald Sun did a feature about us.  
12 We were lined up on the deck and had our photograph  
13 taken.

14           "Two nuns from Nazareth House at Camberwell were  
15 waiting to greet us when we left the ship. We were then  
16 taken by bus to our new whom in Australia. Our  
17 chaperones never came with us to Camberwell.

18           "I still thought this was some form of extended  
19 holiday I was on. When the bus arrived at Camberwell,  
20 we all had our faces pressed against the windows to see  
21 what it was like. There was a long drive up to the main  
22 building. It was the biggest building I had ever seen.  
23 It wasn't grey and old like Kilmarnock. It was all red  
24 brick and verandas.

25           "There were three floors and five separate wings.

1           These consisted of the convent, the novitiate, the old  
2           men and ladies wing, and the children's wings. The  
3           fifth wing was where the kitchen, chapel and stores  
4           were.

5           " There was tennis courts at one end of the grounds.  
6           There were also well-tended lawns with palm trees and  
7           a little grotto that had a statue of the Virgin in it.  
8           At the back of the grounds there was a farm, a laundry,  
9           a huge dressing shed and a vacant allotment. The  
10          allotment was where later the swimming pool would be.

11          " A lot of nuns came out to meet us when we arrived.  
12          They were like a gaggle of penguins. As you entered the  
13          building through the wooden door at the front porch  
14          there was a veranda going away to each side. Once  
15          inside I could see red and black floor tiles going off  
16          in different directions. In the main hall there were  
17          a few statues on the pedestals.

18          " We were marched across the hall through a glass  
19          door. This led to a highly polished passage. There  
20          were several doors on each side and another glass door  
21          at the end of the passage.

22          " A nun stopped at the first door and pulled a large  
23          bunch of keys from her belt and opened the door. The  
24          nun said, 'Leave your cases, coats and hats here, line  
25          up and we'll go upstairs to the washrooms and

1 dormitories.' If you had any personal belongings in your  
2 case, too bad, you never saw them again. Life at  
3 Nazareth House in Camberwell had started.

4 "The first order was that we were all to have our  
5 haircut. We were told that there was no need for long  
6 hair at the orphanage. Our hair was cut very short by  
7 an older girl who I'd never seen before. We were all  
8 issued with the same clothing. This comprised a green  
9 apron, a dress, knickers that were made of denim and  
10 looked like shorts, a vest, a flannel nightdress, socks  
11 and a pair of lace-up shoes. Your surname was taped to  
12 all your clothes.

13 "Once a week we were given clean clothes. If you  
14 had an accident before then, you still had to use the  
15 same clothes. It wasn't until you were a bit older that  
16 you could sneakily wash your clothes if you had to.

17 "When you were given your clothes back, one of the  
18 nuns would shout your surname out. That was how you  
19 would get your clothes handed to you. There was no  
20 empathy. The bottom sheet and pillowcase were changed  
21 once a fortnight. Our towels were washed once  
22 a fortnight.

23 "There were three nuns who looked after us:  
24 Sister LSV [REDACTED] who we called LSV [REDACTED] she was Irish;  
25 Sister LSW [REDACTED] who we knew as LSW [REDACTED] she was also

1 Irish; Sister MEJ known as MEJ who was  
2 Australian.

3 "Sister MEJ was our favourite. You knew where  
4 you stood with her. If you needed a punishment, she  
5 would find a chore or some other form of correction.  
6 Most of the nuns at the convent were Irish.

7 "The sisters worked three-hour rosters with the  
8 children.

9 "When I first arrived I was shown to the dormitories  
10 along with the other girls. There were five  
11 dormitories. I was issued with a bed, locker and chair.  
12 The dormitory was spotless with polished floors.

13 "The nun who was in charge had their own room called  
14 a cell. This was at the end of each dormitory. The  
15 nuns also had their own washroom.

16 "The day always started at 6. When the nun banged  
17 on the dormitory door you had to be on your knees by  
18 your bed for the morning prayer. I would then get  
19 dressed, make my bed and do my ablutions. After this  
20 I would get in line to go for Mass at 7.

21 "Breakfast was at 8. You were given a slice of  
22 bread, a sausage, some dripping and a cup of tea. On  
23 a Friday there was porridge and a boiled egg. After  
24 school, you were given a cup of cold milk. The milk was  
25 straight from the cows. It had been left out all day



1           until it was given to you. The milk was sour like  
2           yogurt. You had to drink it. I would hold my nose to  
3           help me swallow it. You were given the milk in horrible  
4           plastic cups that hadn't been washed properly.  
5           Sister <sup>LSW</sup> [REDACTED] would make sure I had two mugs of milk as  
6           she knew I couldn't drink it in any shape or form.  
7           I still can't even stand the smell of it.

8           "Tea was usually a cup of tea, bread and jam, and  
9           maybe a piece of fruit. After breakfast, there were  
10          chores to do. Every girl was given a separate chore.  
11          The younger girls would tie rags to their feet to polish  
12          the floors. One of the older girls would then use the  
13          polishing machine on the floor.

14          "The older girls, 12 to 14, were normally given the  
15          heavier chores. This could be helping in the laundry or  
16          parlour. They would also have to help out with the old  
17          people.

18          "There was a number of empty dormitories. Along the  
19          classrooms, we had to make sure they were clean. There  
20          was no cleaning staff. We had to do it all. Some of it  
21          was very dangerous, like when we had to clean the  
22          outside of the windows upstairs.

23          "Myself, along with two other girls, had the rooms  
24          on the second floor to clean. There were five  
25          classrooms, the classroom toilets, two sets of stairs,

1 the stairwells and the passageways. We polished the  
2 passageways on our hands and knees with rags tied to our  
3 feet.

4 "I was rostered every Tuesday to help out in the  
5 kitchen. It was my job to peel the potatoes for the  
6 convent's meal that day. It was a big sackful. They  
7 went into a machine to be washed and were then peeled.  
8 I had to stand on a box to reach the huge sink. On one  
9 occasion when I finished peeling the potatoes early,  
10 LTC, the Irish cook, gave me another sack and said,  
11 'Do these too.' I was furious so I said no. LTC went  
12 to grab me and so I threw a spud at him. After this,  
13 all hell broke loose. He said he would box my ears.  
14 When LTC eventually caught me, he locked me in a room.  
15 Sister MEK came in and said she was going to cane me.  
16 She tried to hit me with a cricket stump. I grabbed it  
17 and threw it out of the window. I was then marched to  
18 Sister LSW who then caned me.

19 "You couldn't get away with anything. Any  
20 misdemeanour that the children did would be heard about  
21 all round the convent. My kitchen escapade was soon  
22 known about. This meant that as well as the nun  
23 involved, everyone else would have their say on the  
24 matter and frown at me. You would also be punished by  
25 the other nuns when they saw you. The other children

1           were all patting me on the back for doing it.

2           "Saturday's were a big cleaning day. The floors were  
3           waxed and polished. We scrubbed the bathrooms and  
4           toilets. The whole place was dusted high and low.

5           "Bedtime was around 6 every night. We had to kneel  
6           and do our prayers. After this you had to wash and do  
7           your teeth.

8           "The washroom had a speckled stone floor. There was  
9           about 12 basins with a shelf that ran round the top of  
10          them. This is where we put our mug with our toothbrush  
11          in it. The washroom also had three baths and one  
12          shower. There was also towel racks in the middle of the  
13          room. The toilets were separate and next to the  
14          washroom.

15          "You were allowed one bath a week. The shower room  
16          was used as a changing room by the older girls. Every  
17          night you had to have a strip-down wash. You had to  
18          keep your towel wrapped round you tightly. If the towel  
19          slipped, you'd be clipped around the ear or whacked with  
20          the cane, which again was actually a cricket stump.

21          "If you had your period you weren't allowed to use  
22          the dryer after washing your underwear. As you only had  
23          one pair of pants, you did your best to wash and dry  
24          them. If you couldn't dry them then you had to put them  
25          on wet.

1            "If you wet the bed or had an accident, then you  
2 were made to stand with the sheet over your head during  
3 breakfast. You had to wash and dry the sheet to be put  
4 back on your bed that night. This had to be done come  
5 rail, hail or shine, even if the sheet wasn't dry.

6            "We were allowed to play for half an hour between 4  
7 and 5. After tea there was another hour of play before  
8 bedtime prayers.

9            "School was from 9 to 3.30 every day. Lunch was at  
10 12, and we would have to do our Angelus as well. The  
11 Angelus was a prayer did you when the bell rang at 12.  
12 If you weren't there to do the prayer, then you didn't  
13 get any lunch.

14           "If you weren't on kitchen duties it was back to  
15 school at 1. At school I passed my Commonwealth public  
16 service exam. This meant that I would be able to work  
17 for the government. I didn't find out I had passed the  
18 exam until Mother **MEJ** found it in a rubbish bin  
19 within Sister **LSV** room. I wouldn't have known  
20 otherwise.

21           "A lot of the time your studies suffered. There was  
22 so much to do you never had time to do your homework.  
23 This meant that when you went to school you would get  
24 into trouble.

25           "There were no regular health checks by a doctor or

1 dentist. If you had something wrong with you, the  
2 doctor would come in or you'd be taken to the dentist.

3 "I never wore my callipers in the first five months  
4 I was at Camberwell. I would tell the nuns that I had  
5 [REDACTED] All they would say was that I was  
6 lying. It was obvious I had a problem. One leg was an  
7 inch and a half shorter than the other. One of the nuns  
8 noted that I fell over a lot and had scabby knees.  
9 I was taken to see old Dr Croty. He saw I had a problem  
10 and said I should go to the Royal Children's Hospital to  
11 see a specialist.

12 "I remember the day I went to hospital so clearly.  
13 I went in the convent van with Sister MEO [REDACTED]  
14 Sister MEK [REDACTED] and LTC [REDACTED] When my name was called, I went  
15 into the examination room. In the room was the doctor  
16 and about six student doctors. They made me strip,  
17 which was very embarrassing for me. I had to bend over  
18 and lift my legs, turn my head, and then walk back and  
19 forward. I couldn't wait to get out of there. It was  
20 bad enough having all these men there, but the nuns were  
21 also present.

22 "On the way home, I was sitting there wondering  
23 what was wrong with the nuns. When we arrived back,  
24 Sister MEO [REDACTED] called me over. She then struck me so  
25 hard across the face that I fell over and my nose

1 started to bleed. Sister <sup>MEO</sup> [REDACTED] said, 'That's for  
2 parading so immodestly in front of those men.' For  
3 a 9-year-old, it was very difficult to fathom what she  
4 meant. I only know that she had it in for me from that  
5 day on.


6 "The specialist, Dr Barr, from the hospital, wrote  
7 to the nuns. He confirmed that I did indeed have  
8 [REDACTED] now know as [REDACTED] and said that he  
9 was at a loss as to how nobody knew anything about this.  
10 In addition, I had passed through immigration and passed  
11 my medical. I don't know how. A report was also sent  
12 to the Child Welfare and Immigration Department.

13 "When I had first arrived at the home, they had sent  
14 my dad a letter. What they didn't realise was that my  
15 father could hardly read or write. He had passed the  
16 letter to my older brother. He wrote to the home with  
17 my full medical history. This detailed how I'd nearly  
18 died and all the operations I had had. My brother also  
19 told them I'd been in hospital for three and a half  
20 years and had used an iron lung for 12 months.  
21 Nazareth House at Kilmarnock denied any knowledge of my  
22 callipers. Now the blame game would begin.

23 "There were a lot of letters back and forwards  
24 between Australia House, British Immigration,  
25 Nazareth House in Kilmarnock, Nazareth House at

1 Camberwell, and Dr Barr, the specialist.

2 "Meanwhile, I went into the children's hospital for  
3 my first operation. This was on my foot. I was in  
4 hospital for a month. I was sent home in crutches and  
5 remained in plaster for the next three months. Despite  
6 this I wasn't allowed to use the lifts. I had to use  
7 the stairs. I also had to keep up with the other  
8 children for meals and prayers. If I didn't, I would  
9 face the consequences for being late.

10 "I had a red sock over my plaster. One night I went  
11 for my bath and forgot about the sock on my plaster.  
12 The result was a pink soggy plaster. Sister <sup>LSV</sup>   
13 made me sit with her all night in front of a heater  
14 until it dried.

15 "When the plaster came off, I was given a new  
16 calliper. This was only on the one leg and went up to  
17 my knee. I was provided with lace-up shoes. These were  
18 an improvement on the boy boots.

19 "Two years later, I had another operation at  
20 Frankston Mount Eliza Children's Hospital. It was the  
21 worst of all the operations. They cut and stretched the  
22 tendons in my bad leg.

23 "Two nights after the operation, I was in dreadful  
24 pain. I had an abscess on my leg and I had to go back  
25 in the treatment room to have the wound cleaned.

1 "I was in hospital for three months with no  
2 visitors. The girl in the next bed to me was from the  
3 Salvation Army. People from the Salvation Army came to  
4 visit her every Sunday. They were lovely and ended up  
5 being my visitors as well. I never forgot their  
6 kindness.

7 "The nurse I had was also very nice to me. She  
8 would bring me comics and lollies. I had some schooling  
9 and craftwork when I was in hospital.

10 "When I was back at Nazareth House, I had to wear  
11 a harness that kept my leg up at the back rather than  
12 hanging down. I was back on my crutches. This time,  
13 Sisters <sup>MEJ</sup> [REDACTED] and <sup>LSV</sup> [REDACTED] let me use the lifts.  
14 Sister <sup>LSW</sup> [REDACTED] still insisted I use the stairs.

15 "Because of my disability, I couldn't use the  
16 crutches properly. I ended up with terrible pain in my  
17 armpits. I told the nuns about this but they never  
18 listened. They didn't care if you were in pain or  
19 unwell" --

20 LADY SMITH: Ms Rattray, I have just been passed a message  
21 that the video call is going to be ready at 9.30 for the  
22 next witness. That looks like a place we could break  
23 this read-in. Could you mark where we were and pick  
24 this up after the oral witness, if that's okay.  
25 Thank you very much.



1           What I'll do is rise for five minutes or so and  
2           we'll get the video call set up and then hear the next  
3           witness after that. Thank you.

4           (9.25 am)

5                                 (A short break)

6           (10.00 am)

7           LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

8           MR MacAULAY: My Lady, the next witness is an applicant, she  
9           wants to remain anonymous and to use the name "Kath" in  
10          giving evidence. She is coming to us from Perth in  
11          Western Australia.

12          LADY SMITH: Kath?

13          THE WITNESS: Good afternoon, my Lady.

14          LADY SMITH: Hello and good morning from here, good  
15          afternoon to you.

16                 Let me introduce myself: I'm Lady Smith and I chair  
17          the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry and I'm very grateful  
18          to you for agreeing to give evidence to us over the  
19          video link. Before I turn to your evidence being taken,  
20          I would like to begin by you taking an oath, if that's  
21          all right with you. Is that okay?

22          A. Yes, my Lady.

23                                 "KATH" (sworn)

24          LADY SMITH: Kath, please let us know if you have any  
25          problems at your end with the link. Also, if at any

1           time you just want a break, that's not a problem for me.  
2           It's important that this works for you first and  
3           foremost; do you understand that?

4           A. Yes, my Lady. Thank you.

5           LADY SMITH: So let me know if you have any difficulties.  
6           If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask. If  
7           you're ready then, I'll pass over to Mr MacAulay and he  
8           will explain what happens next; is that okay?

9           A. Yes, thank you.

10          LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

11                                Questions from MR MacAULAY

12          MR MacAULAY: Good afternoon, Kath, from me.

13          A. Thank you, Colin -- may I just call you Colin?

14          Q. Colin is fine by me, thank you.

15          A. Thank you. I don't mean any disrespect.

16          LADY SMITH: No, no, as I said, Kath, if it works for you,  
17          whatever it is, it works for us; all right?

18          A. Thank you.

19          MR MacAULAY: I do think that you have your statement there  
20          in front of you. Can I ask you to confirm that you have  
21          signed the statement?

22          A. I did sign the statement, Colin.

23          Q. And I think you're happy that the statement forms part  
24          of the evidence to the inquiry; is that correct?

25          A. Yes. I do have the statement on my iPad right now.

1 Q. And I think you also say that you believe what you have  
2 said in the statement is true.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Can you confirm for me, Kath, that you were born in  
5 1945?

6 A. I was, yes.

7 Q. If I look, first of all, to your life before you went to  
8 Australia, because we're going to talk about Australia  
9 in particular, I think you were one of a fairly large  
10 family; is that right?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. How many brothers and sisters did you have?

13 A. I had three brothers and two sisters; I'm the youngest  
14 of six.

15 Q. Was there quite a gap in age between yourself and some  
16 of the other children?

17 A. Yes, there was, yes. They're all deceased now, Colin.

18 Q. You tell us in your statement, Kath, that your father  
19 died in 1955; is that right?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And you'd be aged about 9 or 10 when that happened?

22 A. I was round about 10.

23 Q. That meant that your mother was really the breadwinner  
24 for the family and she had to try and earn money to keep  
25 the family; is that correct?

1 A. Yes, Colin, to keep myself and my two younger  
2 brothers -- you know, they were older than me, but they  
3 were younger than the eldest brother. She had to work  
4 and look after the three of us when dad died.

5 Q. Indeed, at one point do you tell us that she actually  
6 had three jobs at the same time in order to do that?

7 A. Yes, sometimes it was three.

8 Q. You also tell us that at some point after your father  
9 died, your mother got in touch with the  
10 Fairbridge Society; is that right?

11 A. I don't know how she did it, Colin, as I said to  
12 everyone in Fremantle when they were here last year, but  
13 I'm just taking it that because, with my brother dying  
14 as well, I don't think she could cope, and she thought  
15 maybe I'd get a better life either in Canada, Australia,  
16 New Zealand or South Africa, but Australia came to  
17 the -- she chose Australia.

18 Q. Did you know at that time, when you were young, when  
19 this was going on, that your mother was taking these  
20 steps?

21 A. No.

22 Q. So when did you first find out that your mother had been  
23 in touch with Fairbridge?

24 A. I think it was when -- from what I can recollect --  
25 I think it was when -- I had to go to the hospital and

1           get my tonsils out and I had to get all my hair cut,  
2           because I used to sit on my hair and I'd never had my  
3           hair cut since I was born, and of course with getting my  
4           tonsils out, that would save disease, maybe, I suppose,  
5           and then getting my hair really cut short, that would  
6           save things as well. I asked her why and she said:  
7           well, you're going to a farm in Australia and they're  
8           going to look after us.

9           Q. And did you understand or have you at least understood  
10           since that this was under a scheme that was run by  
11           Fairbridge called The Family Scheme?

12          A. I'd say no, Colin, I was quite innocent. I just thought  
13           it was just like people who live in cottages and look  
14           after you. That's how naive I was.

15          Q. Did you develop any images as to what it would be like  
16           in Australia from anything you saw or heard?

17          A. Well, mum got some pamphlets, if you can call them that,  
18           saying about how lovely and hot Australia is, and  
19           a scheme or the society would look after the children.  
20           And when the parent came out to Australia, as mum did,  
21           I would be taken out of the environment as soon as  
22           possible. But that sort of didn't happen, Colin.

23          Q. We'll come to look at that. I'm interested at the  
24           moment in understanding what sort of picture in  
25           particular the Fairbridge Society were putting forward

1 as to what life would be like in Australia.

2 A. Mum told me something about -- that I'd be living with  
3 other children and on a farm, and I thought that sounded  
4 terrific because I loved my animals. But we didn't see  
5 many animals.

6 Q. Did you yourself see any adverts, either on television  
7 or on any other place, about what life would be like?

8 A. No, Colin, mum couldn't afford a TV, no.

9 Q. Did you ever see any adverts anywhere about what life  
10 would be like in Australia?

11 A. No. I can honestly say no.

12 Q. Let's just take you then to the time you came to leave  
13 Scotland. Did you travel by train to London?

14 A. Yes. I'm not aware if I was met at the Waverley station  
15 by someone. I must have been. And I was then taken by  
16 train and ended up in Kent at a Fairbridge house there,  
17 which would prepare us for getting on to the ship and  
18 then getting to Australia eventually.

19 Q. And as you've said before, it was your understanding  
20 that once you were in Australia, shortly thereafter your  
21 mother would join you and you'd be living with your  
22 mother?

23 A. Yes. Immediately -- well, if I can put it like --  
24 I thought immediately she came over, say within a month,  
25 I would be reconciled with her.

1 Q. I think we know from records that we've seen that you  
2 went to what's called the Fairbridge Reception Centre on  
3 [REDACTED] 1958.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. So you were about 11 years of age at that time? Would  
6 be that correct?

7 A. No, I was 12, Colin. I was there in the April,  
8 April 1958, and I had my 13th birthday in the [REDACTED] of  
9 1958.

10 Q. Yes. I think also you sailed on the SS Iberia from  
11 Tilbury and, according to the records, that was on  
12 [REDACTED] 1958.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And as you've said, you were 12 years of age at that  
15 time?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. What was the trip like?

18 A. Oh, I had a ball. I didn't realise that -- I never knew  
19 what a sea cruise was. Yes, it was very enjoyable and  
20 we had a married couple from Sydney who were our  
21 chaperones. They had to look after the 12 children that  
22 I was amongst going to Australia.

23 Q. The 12 children you mentioned -- you were clearly  
24 Scottish, but were there other Scottish children in the  
25 group?

1 A. No.

2 Q. When you were --

3 A. I've got a feeling -- sorry.

4 Q. You carry on.

5 A. Most of them were English.

6 Q. At the Fairbridge Reception Centre itself, was it there  
7 that you met up with the other children that were going  
8 to be travelling with you?

9 A. No -- oh yes, sorry, in Kent.

10 Q. Yes.

11 A. I do beg your pardon. I met some of them there. It's  
12 sort of few and far between because everything was so  
13 new and I really didn't click on what was happening, if  
14 I can put it that way.

15 Q. That's fine. You were 12. What about the age range of  
16 the other children in your group? Can you give me some  
17 sense of that?

18 A. Yes, certainly. The youngest one, she was either 4 or  
19 5, and she was going out to her sister who was in  
20 Fairbridge Farm. I think the eldest might have been,  
21 say, maybe 15, but please don't quote me on that. Just  
22 a rough idea.

23 Q. Okay. Was there a mix of sexes, boys and girls, in the  
24 group?

25 A. It was boys and girls in the 12 of us.



1 Q. According to the records, and indeed from what you tell  
2 us in your statement, you arrived in Fremantle,  
3 Western Australia, towards the end of [REDACTED] of 1958;  
4 is that right?

5 A. That's right.

6 Q. So far as you were concerned, were you going to be taken  
7 to a place known as the Kingsley Fairbridge Farm School  
8 in Pinjarra, Western Australia?

9 A. Yes. I think the little girl who was 4 or 5, she went  
10 there too.

11 Q. So of the group, was it just the two of you who were  
12 taken to Pinjarra?

13 A. I think it was, Colin, and the rest were going to go to  
14 Molong in New South Wales.

15 Q. And do you know why it was Pinjarra that you were  
16 destined for?

17 A. Colin, I couldn't answer that, I'm sorry.

18 Q. Okay. How did you travel there?

19 A. Well, the actual principal of the Fairbridge Farm, he  
20 met us with a car at Fremantle Harbour and then we  
21 motored all the way down to Pinjarra. That would have  
22 taken about two, two and a half hours. He took us on to  
23 the farm.

24 Q. And what was his name?

25 A. His name was Mr [REDACTED] MIP [REDACTED]

1 Q. And apart from that encounter with him, did you see him  
2 again after you'd been taken to the farm?

3 A. Yes, Colin. Him and his wife -- and he had a couple of  
4 children -- they had a home on the farm. They lived on  
5 the farm, but they were the principal people that if  
6 anything went wrong, they had to attend to everything  
7 legally.

8 Q. Can I ask you now to give us some description of the  
9 set-up at the farm? And I think, for example, from what  
10 you've said in your statement, there were cottages there  
11 or what are described as cottages. Can you help me on  
12 that?

13 A. Yes. There were quite a few cottages and I have shown  
14 the plan to [REDACTED] in the group that I saw last year.  
15 It was pretty spread out. It was a huge big place. The  
16 cottages were either single storey or double storey.  
17 Boys were in theirs and girls were in their ones, and it  
18 was -- how can I say? -- well, it was pretty  
19 uncomfortable in the heat. There was no fly screens or  
20 anything and we all got bitten to blazes.

21 Everything was really spread out and there was  
22 a farm, a cow barn at the very top where we got milk and  
23 that. The boys were in charge of the farm, doing the  
24 farm duties, while the girls did the home duties.

25 Q. I think you have told us then that so far as each

1 individual cottage was concerned, it would either be  
2 boys in a cottage or girls in a cottage?

3 A. That's correct.

4 Q. So there was no mix of sexes?

5 A. No. Even -- well, the cottage mother we had, Colin, she  
6 was awful.

7 Q. I'm going to come --

8 A. I understand but, yeah, we had to be careful with her  
9 because if we were talking to any boys, we got into  
10 trouble.

11 Q. What I wanted to ask you is: were there brothers and  
12 sisters there that you were aware of?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Were they kept in separate cottages?

15 A. Yes, they were.

16 Q. Can I then just look at your cottage? Did your cottage  
17 have a name?

18 A. Wolfe, after General Wolfe. All the cottages were named  
19 after English people, soldiers or like nurses,  
20 well-to-do, say, generals or something. It was all  
21 English cottages, they were all named.

22 Q. Let's just focus on Wolfe Cottage. Can you describe it  
23 to me? How big was it? How many storeys and so on?  
24 Can you give me a description of it?

25 A. It was a double storey. Inside on the first floor was

1 the laundry and the bathroom and the shower. Then the  
2 kitchen was off that, then you had the lounge, and then  
3 off the lounge the cottage mother, who I had to call  
4 "auntie", she had a room with her daughter or two rooms.

5 Upstairs (inaudible: distorted) is a dormitory.  
6 You didn't have many places to hang clothes and it was  
7 very open, there was no privacy whatsoever up there.  
8 I just found it quite embarrassing and humiliating, if  
9 I can use that word now. But, no, there was no privacy,  
10 Colin.

11 Q. And so far as the dormitory area was concerned, then,  
12 did that accommodate all the children that were in the  
13 cottage?

14 A. Yes. Yes, we were all up there.

15 Q. The next question then is how many children were in the  
16 cottage?

17 A. If I can ... I reckon between maybe up to 16, Colin,  
18 because there was a lot of beds that they had up there,  
19 I remember that very well. A lot of beds.

20 Q. So far as the age range was concerned, what age ranges  
21 are we talking about?

22 A. Again, I don't think there was anybody younger than me  
23 and I know that a couple of girls were turning or going  
24 on for 16, and that meant when you were 16 you would be  
25 employed somewhere. But after 16, you weren't in the

1 cottage.

2 Q. Can I take you then, Kath, to your first day at  
3 Wolfe Cottage. Can you tell me about what happened on  
4 that very first day?

5 A. When Mr <sup>MIP</sup> took me there to introduce me to the  
6 cottage mother?

7 Q. Yes.

8 A. Oh, I don't want to sound rude, Colin, but it was  
9 terrible. What happened was, Mr <sup>MIP</sup> took me into the  
10 cottage and he says, "MRT this is your cottage  
11 mother". It was a Mrs <sup>MRU</sup> her name was. And  
12 understanding now -- and I remember it so, so ... Yeah,  
13 it's like yesterday or today. She says, "You'll call me  
14 auntie", because I just came up with it, Colin, didn't  
15 think, 12-year-old, I says, "You're no' my auntie, I've  
16 got aunties and uncles in Scotland", and that was it.  
17 To put it bluntly, I think I was dead meat for saying  
18 that, excuse my language there but, oh, she was cruel to  
19 me, mentally.

20 Q. I'll come on to some aspects of that in a moment.

21 But so far as travelling there, did you have  
22 a suitcase with you, with your clothing?

23 A. Yes, I had a little brown suitcase, yes.

24 Q. And did anything happen to the suitcase?

25 A. Colin, I never saw it again after that day. Never saw

1 the clothes, nothing. Never saw it again after that day  
2 when it was handed over to her.

3 Q. Did you find out afterwards, some years after that, what  
4 happened to these suitcases?

5 A. Yes. When I visited the Child Migrants Trust in  
6 Victoria Park here, the gentleman, Michael, told me that  
7 the suitcases were sent back, and I said, "I've never  
8 known that for 45 years." But he said that a lot of the  
9 suitcases were never touched and they were sent back to  
10 Britain.

11 Q. Can I ask you then about your clothing? Because you had  
12 clothes in your suitcase which you say you never saw  
13 again, so what clothes then were you given to wear when  
14 you were there?

15 A. Shorts, they had them in those days, of course, and  
16 a T-shirt, and that was about it. You never wore shoes  
17 unless you went to the church on a Sunday or -- like  
18 when I had to go to the high school in Pinjarra, I was  
19 given shoes. The third time we could wear them was when  
20 we were going out on a day trip or something. But it  
21 was always bare feet, Colin, from dot one.

22 Q. Insofar as the other girls in your cottage were  
23 concerned, and you may have dealt with this already, but  
24 were there any other Scottish girls there?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Did you come across any other Scottish children during  
2 your time at Pinjarra?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Was it your thinking in these early days that your  
5 mother would be joining you fairly soon?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. But I think in fact that didn't happen for some months;  
8 is that right?

9 A. That's correct, Colin, yes.

10 Q. Can I just ask you a little bit about your interaction  
11 with other children from the other cottages. Did the  
12 children mix?

13 A. Well, the cottage mother, I don't know if people can  
14 understand, she was very strict and we couldn't leave  
15 the cottage grounds, say the grass area. We couldn't go  
16 and visit any other cottages. So I didn't do a lot of  
17 interaction with other children, only the ones that were  
18 in the dormitory in our cottage.

19 She was very strict, very strict, and I couldn't  
20 understand that. But she would get me on my own and  
21 chastise me because I was talking to the other children.

22 Q. Can we focus for a moment or two on the cottage mother  
23 and Mrs **MRU** behaviour towards you. How did she behave  
24 towards you?

25 A. Oh, Colin ... she was horrible. She suppressed me

1           because she used to always -- she was very clever. She  
2           used to get -- I sort of think about that after I left,  
3           of course. She seemed to get me on my own quite a lot  
4           and she would chastise me. She'd say, "You are  
5           a stupid, stupid girl. Why don't you speak English?  
6           No one can understand you and you will never get on  
7           in the world because of how you talk." But most of all,  
8           it was everything I did was stupid and, I'll be honest  
9           with you, I used to walk on eggshells because I was  
10          scared to talk.

11         Q. Did you understand at that time why she was saying these  
12          things to you?

13         A. No, no, I don't know. I just sort of think that -- is  
14          it because I said to her at the very beginning of the  
15          meeting, "You're not my auntie, all my aunties and  
16          uncles are in Scotland"? And I don't know if anyone had  
17          talked back to her. I don't know. I really put my foot  
18          in it.

19         Q. I think at that time you were wearing glasses; is that  
20          correct?

21         A. I've always worn glasses, Colin.

22         Q. And did she call you any names? I think our children  
23          may have done, but did she call you any names because  
24          you wore glasses?

25         A. Oh yes: "Four Eyes", "Red Hair", "Freckles", and "very



1           stupid".

2           Q. And clearly, this would have upset you, Kath, at the  
3           time?

4           A. Well, I didn't know any better, Colin, and I thought:  
5           how do I speak English when I'm speaking as I am? And  
6           there was no way that ... She wasn't a compassionate  
7           person or had any empathy towards me. I wasn't  
8           a favourite, I was very boisterous because I had three  
9           brothers, and I don't know if she just didn't like my  
10          personality, my character, but she soon got that in line  
11          because I was just -- I think within a week or  
12          a fortnight, I was just -- not traumatised but I was  
13          just scared to talk. I was scared to go anywhere.  
14          I just sort of withdrew within myself.

15          Q. Did you see how she behaved towards other children  
16          in the cottage?

17          A. Yes. If you were a favourite, Colin, or maybe not  
18          a favourite, I don't know if it's because they were  
19          English -- no disrespect to anyone, please -- but she  
20          got on with them very well, and especially the two older  
21          girls, because they were going to be debutantes, because  
22          you had that in the 1950s, as you would understand, and  
23          of course they were the bee's knees. But no, I can  
24          honestly say she had never really had a kind word with  
25          me.

1 Q. Did you see if any other child or children were  
2 subjected to the similar sort of treatment that you  
3 were?

4 A. Not altogether, I can honestly say that. But you know,  
5 I don't know if she had another child that she didn't  
6 like or whatever, if she more or less got them on their  
7 own and chastised them. So I can't swear that anyone  
8 else was treated like how I was.

9 Q. Did you come across any of the other cottage mothers who  
10 were there at this time?

11 A. Only in passing. Maybe getting the stores from the  
12 general store on the farm, getting all the groceries,  
13 and even then, I hardly talked to anybody, because I was  
14 just too scared to open my mouth because I didn't speak  
15 English.

16 Q. Can I just look at some aspects of the routine with you  
17 now, Kath? First of all, let's look at the food.  
18 What was the food like?

19 A. It wasn't anything fancy or anything. It was just bare  
20 necessities -- and you got your breakfast, I think we  
21 got -- it was always porridge. Oh, it was like cement.  
22 And of course, I never ate it, but she would force me to  
23 eat it. She would sit there until I ate it and then, if  
24 I was sick, I'd get called, "You stupid, stupid girl,  
25 why be sick when you're eating porridge? You eat that

1 in Scotland."

2 Then at lunchtime it'd be a sandwich or something.  
3 And then teatime would be, like, say, some meat or  
4 potatoes and some vegetables or whatever.

5 But I'll be honest with you, Colin, I never saw  
6 a lot of fruit on the farm. I'm just thinking, yeah.  
7 It was just Plain Jane and if we ran out of food, we'd  
8 have to have bread and dripping.

9 Q. And did you run out of food?

10 A. Sometimes, yes, because naturally she would have to  
11 cater, I think it was every fortnight, so she would have  
12 to cater the allowance that the whole lot of us would  
13 eat, plus herself and her daughter, so I can understand  
14 that, you know. But if we didn't have anything or --  
15 I don't mean anything, but, yeah, it was quite a few  
16 times I had dripping on bread and you ate it because you  
17 were hungry.

18 Q. Can you just tell me about the arrangements about  
19 schooling?

20 A. Right. On the actual farm, there was a Fairbridge Farm  
21 primary school. I went to that and I was in the top  
22 class because I must have done a test or something. But  
23 then they said, "MRT [REDACTED] too advanced, we'll have to  
24 send her to high school." So I wasn't long in the  
25 Fairbridge Farm primary school. I was sent, because we

1 had a Fairbridge Farm bus, and we naturally had to wear  
2 the uniform, and we would go to the Pinjarra High  
3 School, which was about 20 minutes away in the actual  
4 town of Pinjarra, or village. Then the bus would  
5 collect us later on that day, bring us back to the farm,  
6 and we'd change our clothes and get on with duties --

7 Q. I'll come to duties in a moment.

8 A. -- until teatime.

9 Q. Looking at life at Pinjarra High School, do I take it  
10 from what you've said that there would be other children  
11 from the farm who'd also be on the bus going to that  
12 school?

13 A. That's correct.

14 Q. How were you treated by the local children?

15 A. Well, we got a lot of abuse, bullying. It didn't happen  
16 to me, Colin, but I know it happened to a couple of the  
17 Fairbridge kids because our uniform -- we were like,  
18 what would you say? A red cloth to a bull. We got  
19 bullied a lot. And sometimes when the lunches came,  
20 because they would bring the lunches in a crate and  
21 they'd be sitting outside the classrooms for us, so you  
22 got a sandwich, some milk and a bit of cake. But  
23 sometimes the local kids would steal just to think they  
24 were funny. So that meant that you had nothing to eat  
25 at lunchtime and I was too scared to speak up, you know.

1 I remember that very clearly.

2 Q. You were moving on to talk about some work or chores  
3 that you would have to do. Can you help me with that?  
4 What chores were you given during your time there?

5 A. Right. It was either sweeping all the floors and  
6 mopping them, doing all the laundry and hanging it on  
7 the line, anything, really, like tidying up the garden.

8 I do always remember these cottages were -- you  
9 might have seen it in the old days, they're surrounded  
10 by a veranda, wooden veranda. Well, that was one of my  
11 duties. I had to polish that. There was a huge  
12 veranda. You never got any gloves, so I used to mix  
13 Care-all(?) and polish with a stick and then get the  
14 cloth and put that on the veranda wood, the wood  
15 veranda.

16 Then what you would do is you would go all the way  
17 back again and polish it within an inch of your life or  
18 -- the cottage mother did this to me -- she said,  
19 "That's not good enough, you'll start again," and I had  
20 to do all that before I had tea one night and I thought  
21 I wasn't going to get any tea. Anyhow, I did get  
22 something to eat but it was cold. I just thought, well,  
23 you know, some of the chores were quite heavy for you,  
24 with your build and that.

25 Q. How long would this particular chore, the polishing of

1           the veranda, take?

2           A. I think the roster, as we call it now, say it was  
3           weekly. Yes, say it was weekly. And you had to cook as  
4           well. And of course --

5           Q. How long would it take you to polish the veranda then if  
6           that was your chore?

7           A. Oh ... I reckon myself it would take you just under the  
8           hour, because we weren't allowed watches or anything.  
9           She'd just shout at you and say, "Haven't you done it  
10          yet?" and you'd have to polish it like heck so you could  
11          see your face in it.

12          Q. You've already mentioned that generally you did not wear  
13          any shoes and you were in your bare feet.

14          A. That's right.

15          Q. What was the impact of that on you?

16          A. Well, the place was covered in like sort of gravel and  
17          dirt, you can imagine the Australian soil. I used to  
18          get a lot of cut feet and blisters. Again, if I said  
19          anything, "Oh, you stupid girl, just get on with it,"  
20          that was the sort of attitude she had. I just had to  
21          suffer it, end of story, because -- I could have went to  
22          the nurse, Nightingale Cottage, but she was a bit of  
23          a -- oh, I don't know what the word is, but I'd better  
24          not say it. But she was hard. She'd say, "Nothing  
25          wrong with your feet", and yet I've got cuts and

1           bleeding. She was terrible.

2           Anyway, I just had to live with it, there was  
3           nothing ...

4           Q. What about mosquitoes? Did they cause a problem to you?

5           A. Oh god yes, terrible. I had lumps and bumps and  
6           bleeding and everything.

7           Q. Did you get any treatment for those?

8           A. Oh no. No, no, no, no.

9           Q. You tell us in your statement, Kath, that you were  
10          pretty fair-skinned and indeed had red hair; is that  
11          right?

12          A. I am still the same, Colin.

13          Q. But being in the sun, did that cause a problem to you?

14          A. Yes. Even now, Colin, I have had everything under --  
15          melanoma. I have had a carcinoma. A basal carcinoma.  
16          I've had all of them, but thank God I've not had  
17          melanoma. We've.

18                 I'm in constant -- I've been with the cancer clinic  
19          nearly 45 years because I was just one heck of a mess  
20          with the spots and the cancer, skin cancers. I thought  
21          it was because I was out in the sun, but even when I did  
22          my Scouting, I used to be all covered up with gloves,  
23          long shirts, hat on, long pants, shoes on, and the  
24          specialist said, "No, MRT what has been your  
25          background? I bet you've been out in the sun." I said,

1 "No, I hide from the sun, but I used to get sunburn in  
2 Scotland", and she laughed.

3 No, I am still under the cancer thing -- in fact I'm  
4 going in another couple of months again to get another  
5 body check because I've got a couple that have come up  
6 and I'm just hoping they're not -- they'll be all right,  
7 you know. But she says --

8 Q. Were you in the sun, however, when you were at Pinjarra?

9 A. Yes, Colin. We didn't have any hats either. It was  
10 just short-sleeved T-shirts and short shorts and bare  
11 feet no coverage whatsoever.

12 Q. Did you suffer from sunburn?

13 A. Oh yes, but then that was my fault. The cottage mother  
14 didn't even say, "Right, we'll cool you down with cool  
15 salt water or get a shower". Again, I just had to  
16 suffer it. I had no option because I was alone, let's  
17 put it that way.

18 Q. I think, as time went on, it was apparent that your  
19 mother had not yet come out to see you in Pinjarra.

20 A. No.

21 Q. But on your 13th birthday, when you were in Pinjarra in  
22 1958, did she send you a parcel?

23 A. No, I have got -- no. When she came to visit me,  
24 I think I've got it wrong. I do apologise. I know that  
25 she came with some things for me when she came in --



1           what was it? -- July, September. Sorry, I've forgotten.  
2           Isn't that terrible? Forgive me. Anyway, she brought  
3           a parcel.

4           Q. I think that was July. I think your mother was out in  
5           July.

6           A. Yes. I beg your pardon, thank you.

7                        So she brought me a parcel with some sweets or  
8           lollies, as we call them here and, of course, I don't  
9           know what else. It was a lovely little parcel. And  
10          of course, mum thinking that she's giving me presents,  
11          when she left -- because if you can envisage in the  
12          lounge, around the windows are like wooden benches, and  
13          they've got a lid. All you do is pick that up, the lid,  
14          but everything's hollow. There was no privacy. So if  
15          anybody wanted to take anything of yours, well, why not?

16                       So I put my stuff in there from mum because we both  
17          were quite innocent, but then when she left, I was sort  
18          of put on the hot coals with the cottage mother, she  
19          said, "No way has your mother got a right to give you  
20          anything for your birthday because lots of children here  
21          don't have parents."

22                       Well, I didn't know any better, Colin, but my mother  
23          was chastised in a letter from the principal, Mr MIP

24                        "Do not bring any presents to your daughter, it's  
25          not fair."

1           Well, my poor mother was absolutely heartbroken; she  
2           couldn't understand that way of going.

3           Q. Have you yourself seen that letter?

4           A. No.

5           Q. But your mother told you about it?

6           A. Yes. I probably saw it when mum brought me out and just  
7           before we went back to Edinburgh in 1960, but of course  
8           a lot of things she probably threw out.

9           Q. I'll come on to look at this in a moment. Before your  
10          mother came out and visited you and then took you out of  
11          Pinjarra, did you write to her?

12          A. Yes, but everything was -- how can we say? -- censored.

13          Q. Before your letter or letters were censored, what did  
14          you say in your letters?

15          A. I begged my mum to get me out: doesn't she want me any  
16          more, it's horrible here, and I'm always -- you know,  
17          I don't like the woman, she's always telling me off for  
18          things and I'm scared to talk. That sort of general  
19          thing that I was telling her. May I continue, Colin?

20          Q. Please do.

21          A. Thank you. And of course, nothing would leave the  
22          cottage without being seen. So at the time I was doing  
23          aerograms and of course she had to see everything.  
24          Anyhow, I'd written a letter and of course that night  
25          she saw my letter. Well, I was on the coals again. She

1           says, "You do not do this, you do not do that", blah,  
2           blah, blah. She says, "I'm going to get another air  
3           mail and you will write what I say." Well, I had no  
4           option and she's saying to me, "You will write the  
5           following: Dear mum, having a lovely time, the children  
6           here are just wonderful, the farm's great", sort of  
7           promoting the farm, although it was the dead opposite.

8           So everything was censored, Colin. Honestly, it was  
9           censored, I was just heartbroken because I thought mum  
10          had left me forever.

11         Q. You told us that your mother did come out to Australia  
12          and came to visit you, in particular, in July 1958;  
13          is that right?

14         A. That's correct, yes.

15         Q. Was that simply a visit on a particular day?

16         A. Yes. Well, the point is, mum -- you had to go through  
17          all the rigmarole. You had to write to the cottage  
18          mother. Then the cottage mother would tell Mr MIP  
19          the principal, and then mum had to write to Mr MIP and  
20          then she agreed to come to see me.

21          Because what they did in their infinite wisdom, they  
22          sent my mother a way up north in WA. I don't know if  
23          you have ever seen the map, Colin, I'm not putting  
24          anybody down, but it's many thousands of kilometres up  
25          to Carnamah(?), Geraldton, blah blah. They put my mum

1 quite far away from me in Pinjarra and she had to take  
2 all these, like, trains and buses to get to me,  
3 et cetera.

4 She was just, oh, she was just gobsmacked, if I can  
5 say that word now, the state I was in, because I was  
6 covered in mozzies and I was scared to talk even to mum.  
7 I said, "Don't you love me any more, mum, don't you want  
8 me?" She was really upset.

9 Q. Do you know now when your mother actually went out to  
10 Australia?

11 A. Oh ... I'm so sorry, um ... I may have it in one of  
12 the -- my life story because I have done all that.

13 Q. It doesn't matter.

14 A. Sorry.

15 Q. Is it the position that your mother was going out to  
16 Australia to work and thereafter --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- go and get you and to live with you? That was your  
19 understanding?

20 A. That's right.

21 Q. Was it --

22 A. That was a condition, yes.

23 Q. Was it Fairbridge who were organising where she would go  
24 to work?

25 A. Colin, I would think so because she wouldn't know anyone

1           else in Australia, so it must have been, like, something  
2           that Fairbridge would do and get mum working. But she  
3           was very far away from me, which made it difficult for  
4           her to come and meet me or visit me, which I think was  
5           on their agenda. The less she saw of me, maybe the  
6           better it was. I don't know.

7           Q. You have told us about the visit in July and I think  
8           that was the first time you saw your mother since you  
9           had left Scotland; is that correct?

10          A. That's correct, yes.

11          Q. You also tell us in your statement, Kath, that your  
12          mother also came to visit you in September of 1958.

13          A. Yes.

14          Q. And at that time did you actually spend a week with her?

15          A. Yes. That had to be prearranged, yes.

16          Q. Where did you go with her at that time?

17          A. She had a live-in job at Armadale. That's one of our  
18          suburbs here. I think she was working for a doctor,  
19          like a housekeeper for a doctor, and I got to live with  
20          her for the week. But she had to make all these  
21          preparations prior to me getting out, of course, for the  
22          week.

23          Q. And in the course of that week, did you tell your mother  
24          what life was like at the farm?

25          A. Yes, yes, yes.

1 Q. What was her reaction to that?

2 A. I think she was just really taken aback and I thought,  
3 I don't think she believes me, she might think I'm  
4 making it up. But she saw the scars on my body, the  
5 mozzie bites I was scratching, and she thought I had the  
6 measles or chickenpox. She took me to the doctor and he  
7 helped me, and mum got me lotion and that.

8 But, no, she was devastated about what was happening  
9 and of course by then, Colin, if I'm not jumping the  
10 gun, but what I'll try and reiterate was, round about  
11 that time, she was told, "You won't get MRT out of  
12 our care until she's 21. She is a ward of the State of  
13 Western Australia."

14 Well, I think mum went ballistic and that's when she  
15 started doing the writing to government departments to  
16 get me out, if I can put it that way.

17 Q. I'll look at some of that in a moment. But is it the  
18 case that in fact you managed or your mother managed to  
19 get you out in of 1958?

20 A. That's correct, yes.

21 Q. And I think you have seen in your records,  
22 correspondence relating to that; is that right?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. In paragraph 48 of your statement, what you tell us is  
25 this:

1            "I have in my records a letter from the secretary of  
2 the Fairbridge Society which states:

3            "MRT [REDACTED] has been released to her mother, who is  
4 still housekeeping in Perth. She left on [REDACTED]  
5 after finishing her school exams."

6 A. That's correct, Colin, yes. I'm there.

7 Q. And there was also some comments made about your time at  
8 Pinjarra; is that right?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Have you seen the comment that goes on to say:

11            "MRT [REDACTED] will miss the full life and companionship  
12 she has had at the Farm School, but there is no doubt  
13 that she has benefited greatly from her time at  
14 Fairbridge"?

15 A. What number is that, please, Colin?

16 Q. I'm just reading from a note. Do you remember --

17 A. Yes, that's correct. Because I had to write what they  
18 wanted me to write and, of course, Mr MIP [REDACTED] the  
19 principal would be getting all the news from the cottage  
20 mother because he would ask about how the children are  
21 doing and of course she'd be telling him, oh, they're  
22 fine, they're lovely, they do this and they do that,  
23 there's nothing wrong. So she wasn't really passing on  
24 exactly how you were feeling, really.

25 Q. There is what's referred to as a half-yearly report





1 Q. Again, if I look to your statement, at paragraph 51 of  
2 your statement, and I'll read it out to you. What you  
3 say there is:

4 "I have in my possession a copy of another  
5 Fairbridge letter which was written between the director  
6 of the Fairbridge Society and Mr MIP, the principal of  
7 Pinjarra."

8 And then you quote:

9 "Thank you for your letter of 19th. I am sorry that  
10 Mrs [name redacted] has been such a nuisance."

11 And do you understand that to be in the context of  
12 your mother pressing to get you out of Pinjarra?

13 A. Yes, because they kept saying to her, "You won't get her  
14 until she's 21 because she's a ward of the state." And  
15 of course, my mum relayed that to me. I just thought,  
16 "Oh God, I'm in a life of hell."

17 Q. Does the letter go on to say:

18 "I have no doubt, however, that she will [that's  
19 you] miss the life at Fairbridge and all her friends  
20 there."

21 Do you see that?

22 A. Very untrue, Colin, very untrue. Honestly, I was  
23 miserable. I just thought I'd been abandoned. Any  
24 other 12-year-old would think the same to a certain  
25 extent. I felt I was completely abandoned by my mother.

1 Q. You've told us, Kath, about how you were treated, in  
2 particular by Mrs MRU or Miss MRU. Emotionally did that  
3 have an impact on you?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Can you explain that?

6 A. I used to ... I think it would be maybe a form of  
7 anxiety, Colin, because I always had pains in my stomach  
8 and when I tried to eat something, I just ran to the  
9 toilet and vomited, because -- I think it was just  
10 nerves, I was just ... I didn't know what was happening  
11 to me, but she wouldn't take me to the nurse to help me.  
12 But I think -- I'm sure -- I never knew what anxiety  
13 was. It was just awful, the pains and that, because  
14 I was just so scared, just to open my mouth, because  
15 I thought: who's going to believe you, that you're so  
16 scared to open your mouth? Because all you got called  
17 was stupid. You know, mentally, that's what she ...  
18 She hardly spoke my name. Everything I did was stupid,  
19 and of course mum had a hell of a time trying to get me  
20 out of that way, that I wasn't stupid. You know?

21 Q. You have told us about that type of treatment and what  
22 was being said to you and the impact of that on you.

23 What about physically? Were you ever physically  
24 chastised, if I can put it that way?

25 A. No. It was always verbal, Colin. Always verbal.

1 Q. Let's go to when you came to leave and your mother  
2 managed to get you out of Pinjarra. What was life like  
3 after that in Australia?

4 A. Well, it was just glorious. Mum had another job working  
5 for a doctor in Cottesloe, a suburb here, and it was  
6 a room and a kitchen, and I was free, it was just so  
7 nice to talk how I did talk to mum and vice versa.  
8 I went to Hollywood High School, the secondary school,  
9 made friends, did a lot of sports, was in Guiding.

10 Oh, I just had a ball, because even though mum was  
11 working three jobs, bless her, still, she was only just  
12 down the road at a shop where I could go and visit her.  
13 It was just lovely and I did a lot of studying as well  
14 because I liked my books. I always had my nose in  
15 a book, but I never got that at Fairbridge because there  
16 weren't any books there, there was no library, so  
17 I missed my books.

18 Q. It is the case, though, I think, as you tell us in your  
19 statement, that your mother and yourself returned to  
20 Scotland.

21 A. In [REDACTED] We arrived on [REDACTED] 1960 because we left  
22 [REDACTED] 1960 from Fremantle, and back to Tilbury on

23 [REDACTED]

24 Q. And you came back to Edinburgh where your mother had  
25 kept her house; is that right?

1 A. Oh yes. That was a blessing, Colin, yes. Thank  
2 goodness. Thank goodness.

3 Q. In your statement, you provide us with some information  
4 about your personal circumstances and in particular that  
5 you got married and that, thereafter, having got  
6 married, in fact, you decided to go back to Australia.

7 A. Yes, because of the -- nearly 18 months of just the  
8 openness of Western Australia -- I think [REDACTED] and  
9 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would understand -- the openness of  
10 Australia is just great and I just enjoyed it all: fresh  
11 air, a bit of sunshine (inaudible: distorted). It was  
12 just a beautiful place.

13 But then again, Colin, I always said that I came  
14 here at the right time. Fairbridge was a good thing in  
15 a way because I was very, very lucky that mum got me  
16 out, others didn't. So I was very fortunate. That's  
17 the way I look at it. But oh yeah, I love Australia.  
18 Aussie ways and everything, I love it.

19 Q. You tell us that you have two children; is that correct?

20 A. That's correct, Colin: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

21 Q. You also provide us with some information about how you  
22 have had a particular job that you had for about  
23 30 years or so.

24 A. Yes, Murdoch University. And I was in temporary  
25 position for 10 years, I was round the whole campus.

1           You name it, I was in it. Then I got nearly 20 years in  
2           the accounting section, accounts receivable, accounts  
3           payable, doing foreign currencies and talking to lots  
4           and lots and lots of people. That's what I'm like.  
5           Maybe that stems back to Fairbridge, because I was  
6           scared to talk, you see? But now I yabble on.

7           Q. You also became involved with the Child Migrants Trust.

8           A. Yes. They contacted me, Colin.

9           Q. And are you still involved with them or not?

10          A. Not in a social way or anything, Colin. Like if  
11          anything comes up on an email, I will contact them and  
12          they will -- you know, they advise me what to do or what  
13          not to do, yes.

14          Q. Are you now an Australian citizen?

15          A. Yes, I am.

16          Q. And I've already touched upon what impact life at  
17          Fairbridge had on you. Have you managed to get over the  
18          anxiety that you suffered when you were there throughout  
19          your life? Have you managed to get over that?

20          A. No, Colin, no. I don't know if you're aware that I'm  
21          a widow.

22          Q. I think you tell us that in your statement, yes.

23          A. Right. There's just sometimes, like being on my own,  
24          I do -- yes. I do get anxiety. But the doctors are  
25          very kind with me and I sometimes work it out myself,

1           you know. I do a lot of walking when I can.

2           Q. You say in your statement that one positive thing that  
3           may have come out of your Fairbridge experience is that  
4           later on in your life you got involved in Scouting.

5           A. Oh aye, aye. I was in Scouting for 35 years.

6           Q. Why do you relate that to Fairbridge?

7           A. Because of the children. I thought, because I was  
8           getting little children -- they were called Beavers, but  
9           now it's called Joey Scouts -- the Beavers that  
10          I started way back in 1979, they were the little  
11          5-year-old children and they would leave us at 8 to go  
12          to Cubs. That bracket, I just got on with them so well  
13          and then, later on, I used to go on camps with the big  
14          kids. We'd go in the bush and that, up to the Rovers,  
15          up to 26.

16          I was just this type of person, I suppose. I didn't  
17          want any children or any child to go through what I went  
18          under and I thought Scouting seems to be my forte, and  
19          I just enjoyed the children and the parents and people  
20          in general, like what I do now as a volunteer. I just  
21          enjoy people, Colin.

22          Q. I think what you're saying, and you can correct me if  
23          I'm wrong, is that the way you were treated at Pinjarra  
24          made you want to treat other people differently from the  
25          way you were treated?

1 A. Oh, definitely. I think maybe -- it might have made me  
2 strong, but I didn't realise that then, not at 12 years  
3 old. I feel as though it's built my character, that  
4 Fairbridge example.

5 Q. You were chosen by a national ballot to attend the  
6 apology that was given by the Prime Minister of  
7 Australia; is that right?

8 A. Yes, that was October, yes, in Canberra.

9 Q. October 2018?

10 A. That's right.

11 Q. And how did you find that?

12 A. Oh, I was in awe. There was sadness for a lot of the  
13 people who never made it or who committed suicide.  
14 I spoke to quite a lot of people. They just couldn't  
15 put on enough for us. They paid for everything and it  
16 doesn't make up for what's happened, but to me, they put  
17 in a lot of thought to make us really, really welcome  
18 and feed us to the hilt, and drink if you wanted to. It  
19 was just absolutely beautiful. I was in awe of it all,  
20 yes.

21 I felt sorry for the Minister and the Opposition  
22 Leader as well because I thought, you guys maybe weren't  
23 born when a lot of what happened to us as children --  
24 but they were just trying to make amends, I suppose.  
25 I was very grateful for everything because it made it

1 a pinnacle that I was chosen out of thousands. I was  
2 just so honoured.

3 Q. You tell us in your statement that one thing you do  
4 remember when you look back at your time in Fairbridge,  
5 with all these other children is that there was very  
6 little or no laughter there. Is that your --

7 A. Oh, that's my opinion. I just felt as though there  
8 wasn't a lot of laughter, no, and of course we had  
9 laughter in our big family. But, no, there just didn't  
10 seem to be laughter, no. Then again, that could be me,  
11 Colin, because I was too scared to speak, because all  
12 the time, I just didn't want to open my mouth because  
13 I didn't want her to say, "Well, you speak English, you  
14 stupid, stupid girl." I got that a hell of lot, Colin,  
15 and yeah, it took me years to get out of that because  
16 I was just stupid.

17 Q. Was it your understanding at the time that the other  
18 children you came in contact with at Pinjarra were  
19 child migrants?

20 A. Yes, they were all child migrants.

21 Q. You end your statement by saying:

22 "I just want people to believe me and understand  
23 what I went through."

24 And is that your hope?

25 A. It is my hope, Colin. It is my hope, yes. It doesn't



1 matter how much older I'm getting, lots of the things --  
2 you get flashbacks and it's very vivid, and I'm not  
3 exaggerating, in fact I'm probably underestimating  
4 everything that I told you. But it was just cruel. It  
5 was mental cruelty and I don't care whoever says any  
6 different. It was mental cruelty I got. I don't care  
7 who they are or what, but it was. It was very cruel to  
8 a child of 12, you know.

9 MR MacAULAY: Well, Kath, thank you for coming to the  
10 inquiry and giving us your evidence. You've answered  
11 all my questions and thank you for doing that.

12 A. Thank you.

13 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, no questions have been submitted to  
14 be put to Kath.

15 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

16 Are there any outstanding applications for  
17 questions? No.

18 Kath, that does complete all the questions we have  
19 for you today.

20 A. Thank you, my Lady.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you so much for engaging with us, both by  
22 providing your written statement to the team who came  
23 and took it from you, and by agreeing to talk to us  
24 today. It has been so helpful to me to enable me to get  
25 a picture of what Pinjarra was like in 1958, so

1           thank you very much.

2           A. My Lady, may I please add?

3           LADY SMITH: Please do.

4           A. This is me. This is me. I was only a 12-year-old girl  
5           coming from a big family and lots of love and laughter,  
6           going to, like, a nothing. Not all the cottage mothers  
7           were bad, you know, don't get me wrong; we just happened  
8           to get the horrible one.

9           LADY SMITH: Well, thank you for everything you've  
10          explained. I'm pleased to hear how things worked out  
11          for you in the end, that you didn't turn away totally  
12          from Australia. It's obviously worked very well. So  
13          thank you again and I'm able to let you go now.

14          A. Thank you, my Lady, and all the best.

15          LADY SMITH: Thank you.

16                           (The video link was terminated)

17          LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

18          MR MacAULAY: The plan is to have some further read-ins.

19          LADY SMITH: We still have one to finish.

20                           Ms Rattray.

21                           Witness statement of "ANNE" (read) (continued)

22          MS RATTRAY: This is resuming the statement of Anne.

23                           Starting off where we finished at paragraph 94 on  
24                           WIT.001.002.3293. When we left off, Anne had just been  
25                           discharged from hospital back to Nazareth House

1 Camberwell on crutches:

2 "After this, I spent a lot of my time in the  
3 playroom but mostly in the small library. There weren't  
4 many books, but I ended up readings the entire  
5 Charles Dickens collection.

6 "The last operation I had was to straighten my  
7 hammertoe. I didn't have a plaster this time; it was  
8 just thick bandages. I was still wearing my calliper,  
9 although it was getting old. One of the irons had  
10 become detached and was rubbing against my leg. They  
11 wouldn't get it fixed for me. This led to me having a  
12 running sore on my leg. If I didn't wear my calliper,  
13 I would get into trouble.

14 "There was another time that I was having trouble  
15 walking and it was my good leg that was giving me the  
16 problem. I was hanging on to anything and I couldn't  
17 stand up. We were lined up to do the rosary when  
18 I collapsed. Sister LSW [REDACTED] shouted at me to get up.  
19 When I said I couldn't, she became really angry. She  
20 told me to get up or I would be in worse pain. I tried  
21 but it was too painful. I shouted at her, 'I bloody  
22 can't stand up.' Sister LSW [REDACTED] asked if I got that  
23 language from my father. I just saw red and said  
24 I hated the place and they could all go to hell.

25 "The next thing that I remember was being picked up

1 off the floor by two of the other girls. I was taken to  
2 the dormitory and the doctor was called. I had  
3 a deep-seated infection in my good leg. Sister Mary had  
4 to give me penicillin injections twice a day for three  
5 weeks.

6 "I think that Sister LSW really did hate me.  
7 The feeling was mutual after this latest incident.

8 "The majority of Sundays were spent at church  
9 services. We would also go to church every afternoon at  
10 4 for the rosary.

11 "I was in the choir which practised twice a week.  
12 Sister MEJ was our choir mistress. We had to  
13 learn all the Mass and Benediction hymns. We also had  
14 to know the hymns for the special services when the nuns  
15 were being professed. Some of these services lasted 2  
16 or 3 hours.

17 "There was a music classroom that was one of my  
18 favourite places. I remember being there once when  
19 I was really unhappy. I cried buckets of tears and told  
20 God that I hated him. There was no other place or  
21 person that I could go to for comfort.

22 "All the saints days were celebrated by the nuns.

23 "Every Christmas members of the Catholic parishes in  
24 Victoria were urged to open their homes and take one us  
25 poor orphans for the holidays. My first holiday was

1 with a family from Kew. The mother was a physiologist  
2 and the father was a major in the Army. The home was  
3 run in a very strict manner.

4 "The family had two children, a boy and a girl. The  
5 girl was a couple of years older than me. The family  
6 were kind to me but I was very shy and scared.  
7 I probably wasn't very sociable. The one of their  
8 friends was a teacher. She sent magazines to me for  
9 quite a few years.

10 "The next family that I went to were the [REDACTED]  
11 They were very kind and the salt of the earth. The  
12 family lived up at the Dandenongs in Victoria. I have  
13 loved the bush ever since. They became my surrogate  
14 family and they took me on holidays whenever they could.  
15 I was treated like a member of their family. They would  
16 buy new clothes and toys for nor me. Whenever I went  
17 back to Nazareth House, the clothes and toys would be  
18 taken off me. This made [REDACTED] the mother, very angry.

19 [REDACTED] give me a lovely doll as a present for my  
20 11th birthday. When I went back to the orphanage, it  
21 was taken off me. When I left the orphanage, I saw the  
22 doll. It was on display. No one was allowed to play  
23 with it.

24 "I wouldn't find out until years later why they were  
25 stopped from taking me on holidays with them. This is

1 because they didn't go to Mass on a Sunday.

2 "After this, I went to a family in Burwood. The  
3 woman, Mrs [REDACTED] was very religious. She would go to  
4 Mass every day and Benediction twice a week. The nuns  
5 at Nazareth House loved her. The father was an  
6 accountant. Their daughter, [REDACTED] was a chronic  
7 asthmatic. [REDACTED] and I eventually became very close.  
8 Her mother was instrumental in getting me accepted for  
9 St Benedict's College.

10 "The nuns chose a friend of mine to go to college  
11 with me. We had to walk the five or six kilometres to  
12 the college. It finished at 3.30 and we had to be back  
13 at the home for 4. I still had bother with my leg and  
14 couldn't do it at that time. My friend was great and  
15 always stayed with me. All the walking left me with  
16 a sore on my leg from the calliper.

17 "Thinking back now, the nuns never offered me bus  
18 fares despite knowing about my leg. I left school  
19 halfway through year 10 when I required another  
20 operation on my toe.

21 [REDACTED] mother wanted to adopt me. When  
22 Sister <sup>LSV</sup> [REDACTED] asked me about this, I said no, as  
23 I had family back in Scotland. Sister <sup>LSV</sup> [REDACTED] was  
24 furious and said that I was an ungrateful hussy.

25 "Christmas Day and Easter and birthdays were never

1 celebrated. They were just another day at the home.  
2 There were no presents or Easter eggs.

3 "I have a memory of the Mother Superior coming down  
4 to see us. We were told that there were two women  
5 coming from child welfare. We were to be on our best  
6 behaviour when they came. When Mother Superior told you  
7 something, you always listened and did as you were  
8 asked.

9 "When the visit took place, they never came near us.  
10 I think the nuns made sure of this in case we said  
11 something to them about what was going on.

12 "There was a playroom that was absolutely wonderful  
13 to look at for a visitor. It had a dollhouse and lots  
14 of lots of toys. It was more like a showroom.

15 "I had no personal possessions. These had all been  
16 taken from me when I arrived at Camberwell.

17 "The normal form of punishment was the cane.  
18 Sister <sup>LSV</sup> [REDACTED] would cane us. In saying that, it was  
19 an effort. She would sooner give us a punishment like  
20 polishing the floors at 2 in the morning than use the  
21 cane.

22 "We had been told on our arrival that we could write  
23 home to our family. About a month after I had arrived,  
24 I wrote to my father. I told him that I hated it at the  
25 orphanage and I wanted to come home. Sister <sup>MEJ</sup> [REDACTED]

1           seen the letter and ripped it up in front of me. She  
2           said I wasn't allowed to write things like that.

3           "If you were lucky enough to have letters sent to  
4           you, these would be vetted by the nuns. I was sent  
5           a birthday card by my auntie, but I only found out about  
6           it when I discovered part of it in a bin when I was  
7           cleaning a classroom.

8           "One of the worst experiences of me was about four  
9           months after I arrived at Nazareth House. One of the  
10          older ladies had died. Sister LSW decided that  
11          because she looked so beautiful she would be laid out in  
12          the habit of St Francis. Sister LSW lined us up and  
13          took us up to the ward where the lady was. We had to  
14          walk past and say a prayer.

15          "When it was my turn I just screamed. I hadn't seen  
16          a dead body since my mother died. I must have passed  
17          out because when I came to, I was in the dormitory with  
18          Sister LSW and Mary next to me. I explained that  
19          all I'd seen was my mother. The nuns had no empathy.  
20          I was told that I had been disrespectful to the dead and  
21          I was to stay in bed without any dinner or tea as  
22          a punishment. Even Sister MEJ said to me I must  
23          have dreamt it when I saw my mother when I was dead.

24          "Sex education was virtually non-existent at the  
25          home. One morning, when the girl in the next bed to me



1 got up, her nightgown and bedsheets were covered in  
2 blood. The poor girl was shaking. I went over and  
3 asked what had happened. The next thing I know I was  
4 pushed over and given a whack across the ears. The girl  
5 was then dragged by her hair to the bathroom. Later,  
6 when I asked the girl what had happened, she said she  
7 couldn't talk about it.

8 "About a year or so later when I started to grow  
9 pubic hair I took nail scissors to the toilet and tried  
10 to cut it. When I first had my periods I was terrified  
11 and thought I was going to die. I didn't know what to  
12 do so I told a friend. She took me to Sister MEJ  
13 She said not to worry and it was normal for this to  
14 happen to girls. I was then taken to the storeroom and  
15 I was given a belt and a pad. Sister MEJ told me  
16 that when it happened again I was to go to the nun on  
17 duty who had the keys for the storeroom.

18 "You were only allowed one pad at a time. We still  
19 only had one pair of pants and were not allowed to wash  
20 these. Some of us washed them anyway and hung them over  
21 our locker at night to dry, which, of course, they  
22 didn't.

23 "When I was 14, a nurse came in and gave us  
24 a lecture on sex. It was so informative that I thought  
25 for years after this that if I kissed a boy I could get

1 pregnant.

2 "Any family that we had was never really spoken  
3 about between the girls. Despite this, I still thought  
4 of my family back in Scotland. We were always told that  
5 we should be grateful, despite how the nuns treated us.

6 "When I was about 14, Sister <sup>LSV</sup> [REDACTED] woke up one  
7 of the girls and asked her to help lay out an old woman  
8 who had died. Myself and the girl spoke about this at  
9 night when we couldn't sleep. The girl said how scared  
10 she was. Sister <sup>LSV</sup> [REDACTED] caught us. She said that if  
11 we had that much energy, it was better it was put to  
12 good use. We were made to scrub all the floors. We had  
13 to go on our hands and knees. It was all the tiled  
14 floors and we were frozen. It was the middle of winter  
15 and we could hardly walk after doing this.

16 "On one occasion Sister <sup>LSV</sup> [REDACTED] broke a bone in my  
17 hand after she gave me the cane. She had to leave the  
18 class and put me in charge while she was away. When she  
19 came back, I was punished because the girls were  
20 talking. It was a joke. How was I supposed to stop the  
21 older girls from talking? I couldn't move three fingers  
22 and had to go and see sister Mary. She asked me what  
23 had happened. When I told her, she contradicted me and  
24 said that I had fell over. When I said that I hadn't,  
25 she said, 'Yes, you did', so a lesson was learnt. My

1 hand was strapped up. I still can't straighten it to  
2 this day.

3 "Sister LSW was a different kettle of fish. It  
4 was almost as if she delighted in using the cane.  
5 Sister LSW would cane you with all the effort she  
6 could. Her face would be red and there was spittle  
7 coming out of her mouth.

8 "My last run-in with Sister LSW came when some  
9 of us girls decided to let our hair grow.  
10 Sister MEJ said that if we kept it tidy we could  
11 have it long. Sister LSW came on duty when the  
12 hairdresser was cutting my hair. I told her what  
13 Sister MEJ had said. Sister LSW hit me on the  
14 shoulder with a cricket stump. She just ignored what  
15 I'd said and told the hairdresser to cut it extra short.  
16 I told her she couldn't do that. Sister LSW held me  
17 down in the chair and my hair was cut like a boy's.

18 "Later that night after tea when I was doing my  
19 prayers, Sister LSW told me to be quiet and gave me  
20 a whack with her stick. I started to scream. The  
21 harder she hit me, the louder I screamed. In the end  
22 she grabbed me by the hair and the arm and I was dragged  
23 down two flights of stairs to the closed storeroom on  
24 the second floor. I had my callipers on and I was  
25 frightened that I was going to fall down the stairs.

1            "Sister LSW then continued to whack me wherever  
2            it landed. She didn't care. I must have passed out.  
3            When I came to I was on the floor, locked in the room.  
4            It was pitch dark and I was terrified. Sister LSW  
5            came back later and told me to get to bed.

6            "You learned to keep your mouth shut and take your  
7            punishment. It was almost like you had lost your  
8            personality.

9            "After Sister LSW had cut my hair short and hit  
10           me with her stick, Sister MEJ asked me what had  
11           happened. When I told her, she was furious. Some of  
12           the girls heard her and Sister LSW having a heated  
13           argument.

14           "When I was getting close to 15 years old, the nuns  
15           probably thought that I needed assessed to see if  
16           I could go out in the workforce. They considered me to  
17           be handicapped although I never considered myself to be.

18           "I eventually left Nazareth House when I was 15.  
19           I wasn't allowed to finish year 10. When I was leaving,  
20           I was given my clothes, a coat and my baptismal  
21           certificate. I went back to stay with the [REDACTED] it  
22           had been arranged by the orphanage.

23           "Mrs [REDACTED] got me a job at the clearing department  
24           with the bank. I remember my first day at work. I was  
25           wearing my calliper, bobby socks and a little dress. A

1 couple of weeks later, the people next door to the  
2 [REDACTED] gave me a present of three pairs of bras.

3 "Mrs [REDACTED] made me leave my pay envelope on the  
4 table every week. I would be given my bus fares to go  
5 to work but nothing else. One of the ladies at work  
6 said that I needed new clothes. I said that I had no  
7 extra money. I then told her what I did with my wages.  
8 After this, she took me to buy new shoes and a coat.  
9 Mrs [REDACTED] found my coat and shoes in the wardrobe.  
10 I hadn't even worn them, I was too frightened. I got in  
11 big trouble. I went to the local phone box and phoned  
12 [REDACTED] She came and picked me up. Mrs [REDACTED]  
13 threw all my clothes outside when I left.

14 "The [REDACTED] were very kind to me when I stayed with  
15 them. I was with them until I met my husband. I went  
16 back to the convent with my husband to see  
17 Sister <sup>MEJ</sup> [REDACTED] I had kept in touch with her after  
18 I left the orphanage. Sister <sup>MEO</sup> [REDACTED] who was now in  
19 charge, was horrible to us. After this I never went  
20 back again.

21 "I have never taken any civil action against the  
22 Catholic Church in relation to my time in care.

23 "In 1962 I tried to raise awareness about what had  
24 happened to me and the other girls at Nazareth House.  
25 Most of the girls were too scared of the Catholic Church

1 to try and do anything. It was a very powerful  
2 organisation at that time.

3 "The Child Migrants Trust has helped me. They've  
4 also helped a lot of the people who were children at  
5 homes in Australia.

6 "I have managed to obtain very little of my records.  
7 There's a letter that acknowledges the doctor who gave  
8 me my medical in Scotland made a mistake. This was  
9 after the Australian authorities had questioned it when  
10 I needed my operations at Camberwell. I don't know how  
11 they managed to send me to Australia when I was infirm.

12 "I learnt that in 1958 my father had tried to get me  
13 back but was told that I was a ward of the State of  
14 Victoria. My uncle who was in the navy had visited  
15 Melbourne in 1959. He had wanted to see me but was told  
16 that I was no longer a member of their family.

17 "I spoke to my uncle myself and he said that the  
18 nuns had been quite rude to him. The nuns made it clear  
19 that under no circumstances would he be allowed to see  
20 me.

21 "When I met my aunt, who was my dad's sister, she  
22 asked why I hadn't written to thank her for the gifts  
23 she sent me. The problem was that I had never received  
24 them. It was the same with the birthday cards that had  
25 been sent by my other aunt.

1            "In 1982, I went back to visit my family in  
2            Scotland. I remember when I was leaving to come back  
3            home I was at my sister's. The rest of the family were  
4            there as well. As I left, my brother came running down  
5            the garden path. He gave me another cuddle. It was  
6            almost like he knew he wouldn't see me again. He died  
7            a year later.

8            "The first time I tried to apply for an Australian  
9            passport I was told that they no record of me arriving  
10           in Australia. I contacted Nazareth House at Kilmarnock  
11           and Hammersmith in London. They didn't even respond to  
12           my letters. My husband was working at the immigration  
13           department. This helped me with my application. The  
14           whole process took about 10 months.

15           "I have suffered from depression since I was 22.  
16           I told the doctor my history and he said that because of  
17           this I'd be on medication for years. I was on  
18           prescribed tablets until about 8 years ago. It's only  
19           since then I have managed to come off the medication.

20           "I think a lot of the problems were as a result of  
21           my childhood. I missed my brothers and sister. I will  
22           probably never see them again.

23           "I had a low esteem of myself, although it is better  
24           now. I suffered from a lack of self-confidence and  
25           self-belief after being in care. I became more

1 confident when I started working as a librarian at  
2 a library in Canberra.

3 "We weren't brought up at the convent. We were like  
4 garbage being pushed up. I felt like we were rubbish  
5 being sent out, like the convicts. The Catholic Church  
6 has a lot to answer for. I think they thought no one  
7 would find out what they did to the children."

8 My Lady, since signing her statement, Anne has been  
9 in touch with a few more comments about impact which we  
10 said we would read out.

11 LADY SMITH: Yes.

12 MS RATTRAY: And those are:

13 "Last week, we had lunch with some friends; we were  
14 celebrating our recent birthdays. When the subject of  
15 childhood and birthdays came up, there was laughter and  
16 joy at the memories of best Christmases and birthdays,  
17 et cetera. I sat there very quietly trying to conjure  
18 my happiest childhood memories while in care, such as  
19 birthdays and special occasions. No matter how hard  
20 I thought, I could not recall even one. When  
21 I contemplate my childhood in care, the words that come  
22 to mind are: traumatic, frightening, apprehensive and  
23 painful. Needless to say I didn't contribute to the  
24 conversation.

25 "Childhood memories are precious, I know. When our



1 family gets together at special events, we reminisce,  
2 laugh, cry and sometimes argue about who did what. This  
3 is good therapy for the soul.

4 "When I was down at my friend's a few weeks past, we  
5 talked about Nazareth House and the memories we had were  
6 of the punishments, the fear and all the work we used to  
7 do. There was also a lot of resentment, anger and  
8 hostility."

9 Turning back to the written statement at  
10 paragraph 155.

11 LADY SMITH: Just to be clear, that's something received  
12 recently, this year, and she is talking about  
13 conversations that took place here, is it?

14 MS RATTRAY: It was received as recently as this week, so  
15 when she is talking about last she is actually talking  
16 about a week ago.

17 LADY SMITH: So that's very much up to date?

18 MS RATTRAY: Yes:

19 "I still look on myself as one of the lucky ones.  
20 I would hope that by recounting what happened to me, it  
21 will ensure it doesn't happen to other children.

22 "I am interested to know if there will be a redress  
23 process put in place for child migrants that were sent  
24 from Scotland.

25 "I have no objection to my witness statement being

1 published as part of the evidence to the inquiry.  
2 I believe the facts set out in this witness statement  
3 are true."

4 The statement was signed by Anne on  
5 13 December 2018.

6 My Lady, I will now hand over to my colleague,  
7 Ceit-Anna MacLeod, for the next read-in.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

9 (Pause)

10 LADY SMITH: Actually, we will take a short break and we can  
11 reorganise the seating arrangements at the same time.

12 (11.28 am)

13 (A short break)

14 (11.43 am)

15 Witness statement of WALTER KERKHOF (read)

16 MS MACLEOD: We now turn to the statement of an applicant,  
17 and this applicant has waived his right to anonymity,  
18 and that's the statement of Walter Kerkhof. It is to be  
19 found at WIT.001.002.4854:

20 "My name is Walter Kerkhof. I'm known as Wally. My  
21 date of birth is [REDACTED] 1942. I found out my real  
22 date of birth when I was 55. My date of birth had been  
23 [REDACTED] 1942 but the authorities altered it. My  
24 contact details are known to the inquiry.

25 "A priest fathered me. He was called Father [REDACTED]

1 I was put into Nazareth House in Falkirk. I don't know  
2 anything about where I lived before I was put into  
3 Nazareth House. I just can't remember anything about  
4 Nazareth House or the journey to Australia. I left  
5 Scotland when I was 4 years and 10 months old."

6 My Lady, from records the inquiry has recovered from  
7 the Sisters of Nazareth, they have noted in the  
8 admissions register that Walter was admitted to  
9 Nazareth House Lasswade on 30 May 1943 when he was  
10 1 year and 4 months old, and that he was discharged on  
11 10 October 1947, when he was 5 years old. It is noted  
12 that he went to Australia at that time. It is also  
13 noted that he was born in Falkirk and his date of birth  
14 is noted as [REDACTED] 1942:

15 "I can remember soon after I arrived, I was outside  
16 digging the bitumen road. I think it was minus  
17 10 degrees in Scotland and 40 degrees in Fremantle.  
18 I was red raw with sunburn. I was digging the road  
19 because I remember being told before we left that there  
20 was gold in the road. The road was shimmering because  
21 of the sun. I thought it was gold. A man came up to me  
22 and kicked me in the bum. He asked what I was doing and  
23 said there was no gold in the road.

24 "I went to St Joseph's Girls' Orphanage, Subiaco,  
25 Western Australia, because of my age.

1 St Joseph's Orphanage was for girls. I was too young  
2 for the brothers to dress. I can't remember anything  
3 about it there at all. The things that stick in my mind  
4 are the things that had an impact, not the daily aspects  
5 of living. I have little clear patches of memory that  
6 are usually connected to the major things. The more  
7 I air it out, the more I see. It's too hurtful.

8 "I had to make all the beds in St Joseph's dorm  
9 while others were watching a film. There were 54 beds  
10 and mine was the last one. I would just have finished  
11 the last bed and I'd hear the tune at the end of the  
12 film. It always ended the same way.

13 "Other times, I would have to watch one of the  
14 brothers saying, 'Oh, look at that', to the boys, and  
15 some of the boys would turn around. He would kick them  
16 in the groin. It was the mind games they used to play.  
17 A brother would check the hem on the top sheet was  
18 perfectly made.

19 "I went from St Joseph's to Castledare Boys' Home.  
20 The Christian Brothers were in charge. There was one  
21 superior; I think that was Brother Lacygne. I was there  
22 for two to three years until I was 8 or 9.

23 "One of the brothers used to come into the bedroom  
24 and say, 'Right, everybody up.' It would just be  
25 whichever brother was there. We had to kneel down and

1 say our prayers. After that, we had a job to do.

2 I can't remember my job.

3 "I can't remember a lot about Castledare.

4 Brother **MDF** was there. I could never forget him. He  
5 followed me from Castledare to Clontarf. No one liked  
6 him. He was just a mongrel. He was 6 foot 4 inches  
7 like a skinny rake. He wasn't the superior.

8 "Soon after I arrived I went into the boiler room.  
9 I saw two kittens. I thought they were feral. I had  
10 never seen cats or dogs. I grabbed a metal aeroplane  
11 wing and killed them. I thought they were beasties.  
12 I told everybody what I had done, that I had saved them  
13 from the beasties. They called me a little bastard.

14 "Fifty or so boys took me down to the 'ghost tree'  
15 and found me guilty. They told me to climb up on the  
16 fence post. Somebody found an old holster from the  
17 dairy made out of jute, which is a kind of coarse  
18 string. They told me to say sorry to God and jump from  
19 the fence post. I did what I was told. I saw stars and  
20 my neck was aching. Brother **MDF** came up to me and  
21 told me to stop slouching my neck. He lifted me up off  
22 the ground and I saw stars again.

23 "I can't remember the classrooms or the teachers.  
24 They taught us to swim. They lined us up on the jetty.  
25 Brother **MDF** was at the end of the jetty and he would

1 just say, 'Swim, swim.' I was only about 7. He would  
2 count us and us and say two would be missing so he'd  
3 tell us to dive in and find them. One time we thought  
4 one kid was gone but we got him eventually. He was  
5 spewing.

6 "I ran away once from Castledare.

7 "I can remember we went to Scarborough beach and  
8 I had woollen bathing trunks. They hung down like  
9 a pair of ram's balls when they got wet. We got back to  
10 Castledare and I told the superior brother that I had  
11 something wrong with me down there. I let him have  
12 a look. I had sand under my foreskin. I had to have a  
13 have lotion put on my penis every morning. One morning,  
14 I got an erection. I got a wallop and it knocked me  
15 flying. I was told to do it myself from then on.

16 "They didn't tell us anything about sex. Kids got  
17 warped ideas about it. In that era, the church made it  
18 disgusting and rude. If it was rude, why did God give  
19 us the things that get us into trouble?

20 "One morning, I told my friend not to look at me  
21 when we were talking because the brothers were behind us  
22 and would see our heads moving. The next thing I was  
23 socked in the side of the head by one of the brothers  
24 and they hit my friend's head off my head. It was  
25 Brother MDI who did this to us.

1            "They marched down to the cricket pitch. The lawn  
2 was pure white and you could hear the ground crackling.  
3 The brother said, 'It's a bit nippy round the hills this  
4 morning, isn't it, Walter?' It was all right for him.  
5 He had galoshes over his leather boots. I had to kneel  
6 on the pitch for three-quarters of an hour with no  
7 shoes, shorts, a little shirt and a thin jumper. I was  
8 so frozen that I couldn't even stand up when he blew the  
9 whistle. I was 7 at the time. I had indentations on my  
10 knees for weeks after it from kneeling on the stones.

11           "Brother **MDF** called me one day to nit his head  
12 with my fingers. While I was doing that, his hands were  
13 up my trouser leg. He had wandering hands, which I  
14 discovered later.

15           "I went into the showers one night and two of his  
16 henchmen were making a kid piddle into a milk bottle.  
17 The kid behind had to drink it. I walked straight past.

18           "Another time I was called to Brother **MDI**  
19 office. I can still hear the grandfather clock  
20 tick-tocking some nights. He asked me why I had done  
21 something. I didn't know what he was talking about. He  
22 gave me six of the best. He hit me with the strap all  
23 over my body. He was powerful. Another ten minutes  
24 went by and the clock was still ticking. It drove me  
25 mad. He gave me 20 more. I realised if I said the same

1 thing again I would get another six so I said that I did  
2 it. I still don't know what I was admitting I had done.

3 "He told me to name the other kids who were there.  
4 I said, 'You've got me there.' He asked why I said  
5 I did it when I didn't and I said, 'Because you would  
6 have kept belting me until I said I did.' He told me  
7 that I was supposed to have walked up to a boy who was  
8 playing outside and grabbed him while he was counting up  
9 to 100 and he thought he saw me speeding off into the  
10 distance.

11 "MDI flogged boys who would get scared and just  
12 name anybody to stop the belting. The floggings would  
13 be beatings on the body with a cane or the strap. It  
14 was just madness and it went on for weeks. Kids were  
15 just naming other kids to stop. The brothers were  
16 brutal with their beltings.

17 "I got Brother MDF back one time when we were  
18 playing blacks and whites. He had a big collection of  
19 moths and beetles from all over the world. I was  
20 collecting them with a friend one day and I hid a mouse  
21 in a hole at the back of the cupboard one day.

22 "One time, I was up a loquat tree when  
23 Brother MXD came over and shouted me down. They  
24 were huge trees. I was sitting in a fork in the tree  
25 with my shirt full of loquats. I went to move and my



1 foot slipped, my hand let go of the shirt and the  
2 loquats fell. He told me to come down and pick them up.  
3 He knew it was me.

4 "He let me go for a week until he grabbed me one day  
5 and said, 'Thought you'd get away with it, Mr Kerkhof?'  
6 I got 89 freezing cold showers each day after that.  
7 Every shower represented a loquat. It was freezing. It  
8 was so cold that I would walk out and bang into other  
9 kids. My brain wouldn't function. It was frozen with  
10 the cold and pressure of the water.

11 "Another time, I woke up in the night. I slept in  
12 a little cubicle. I could hear the window above me open  
13 slowly. Then I felt pressure on the edge of the bed and  
14 Brother <sup>MYK</sup> was sitting there. I was shaking like  
15 a leaf. He said, 'I will come like a thief in the  
16 night.' My heart didn't stop thumping until 2 in the  
17 morning.

18 "The next thing I heard, Brother <sup>MYK</sup> going  
19 crazy throwing kids around the room for being out of  
20 bed. Everything was about fear and massively wicked.  
21 He was usually tough but fair.

22 "We were given a pair of shorts and a shirt. We  
23 didn't have shoes. They used to say that it offended  
24 God to have bare feet in church, so we only wore shoes  
25 when we went to church and had to give them back to them

1 afterwards.

2 "Brother **MDF** was so cruel to me. He followed me  
3 to Clontarf. I left Castledare because I was at  
4 a certain age.

5 "Clontarf Boys' Town, Waterford, Western Australia,  
6 was about 11 kilometres away from Castledare. It was  
7 in the bush. Brother **MDI** came after I had been there  
8 for about a year.

9 "There was a little fat brother in charge,  
10 Brother McGee. **MDI** was a superior. He was 33 years  
11 of age. I always remember that because Christ died at  
12 33 years of age.

13 "I slept in a big dorm. There were about 40-odd  
14 kids to a dorm. There was a dorm for the big boys too.  
15 They never went to school so they became working boys.

16 "There was a PR system because we used to listen to  
17 a creepy thing called The Shadow. Nobody would dare  
18 talk when it was on. The theme song was 'Crime doesn't  
19 pay, the Shadow knows.' It was so quiet when we were  
20 watching it that you could hear a gecko lizard fart.

21 "The brothers just came around in the morning and  
22 shouted, 'Out of bed'. We would jump out of bed and  
23 kneel by the side of our bed saying prayers. We did our  
24 jobs and then had breakfast. We hung around the  
25 quadrangle until we started school at 9 o'clock.

1            "My job was to rake the poplar leaves barefoot. My  
2 toes would be cracked and my feet would bleed.

3            "In the afternoon we would have a piece for lunch,  
4 which was an apple or broken biscuit from local  
5 shopkeepers.

6            "Teatime was 6 o'clock. After school we played  
7 around down at the oval or the creek, catching jilbies,  
8 which are like crayfish. I was always fishing. I had a  
9 good method of catching them. I used to dam up the  
10 creek and divert it. I would stand in the water,  
11 feeling them crawling over my feet and trying to eat the  
12 scabs, so I would put my hand in and calmly catch them.  
13 I would get a couple of gallon of them.

14           "After we had done our jobs, we would have breakfast  
15 and we would usually be given porridge. The milk was  
16 always just a little bit off. The brothers got cream  
17 but we never got it.

18           "There were 30-odd milking cows and they would sell  
19 the cream and butter for a bit of money for the school.  
20 Brother MIZ was in charge of the chooks or  
21 chickens. We never had bacon either but the brothers  
22 had copious amounts of it.

23           "I knew how to sneak into the cool room by undoing  
24 a little bolt on the wall. I was in there all night.  
25 I ate cream and lumps of butter like you'd eat cake.

1 I did it twice.

2 "There was a storeroom with biscuits and lollies.  
3 We used to see the rats come out of the storeroom with  
4 full biscuits in their mouths. I never accepted a  
5 biscuit.

6 "We got slops from other Christian Brothers. They  
7 boiled them up and gave it to the pigs.

8 "Teatime was at 6. We were given a lot of basic,  
9 steady food. I used to tell Brother MDI that the dog  
10 had worms and I would eat the tablets. She was a red  
11 setter.

12 "A lot of the veggies were steamed. It was basic  
13 food. One day we got a truckload, about 8-tonne of  
14 swede from the market. We had a huge bowl of swede,  
15 there was one wee sausage in it and a bit of potato  
16 mashed. There was no cream, garlic, salt or pepper,  
17 nothing.

18 MDI was always flicking out the swede onto the  
19 ground, so he got a big bowl and three-quarter filled it  
20 with dirty swede. He told us that we had to eat it. We  
21 did and nobody dared throw up.

22 "From 6 o'clock to 7, we played around doing active  
23 sports. We played a game called blacks and whites and  
24 kids would say, 'We want to be in your mob.' They  
25 wanted me to be the leader. We would get socks, put

1 salt in them, use them as clubs and flog each other.

2 "We went to church after that and said prayers.

3 I think we might have gone back to the quadrangle and  
4 played around a bit more. Then we went to bed.

5 "We went to bed at about 9 pm every night. We got  
6 up every second morning for church and also on a Sunday.

7 There were 20 kids in the wetty-bed dorm. MDI  
8 used to say they were lazy good-for-nothings. They  
9 would get a dong in the morning and a freezing cold  
10 shower. The dong was a strap or a cane on their head.  
11 They were made to feel like a criminal for wetting the  
12 bed. It wasn't their fault. It was a medical problem.

13 MDI came up with the idea of electric shock  
14 treatment for them too. When the kid woke up and  
15 piddled, he got an electric shock. They had to wait  
16 until MDI got out of bed to stop it. The kids were  
17 raving lunatics. They were demented because of the  
18 shocks after that happened a few time.

19 "Some of the kids had medical problems, others were  
20 scared of the dark. I wet the bed once. I dreamt that  
21 I was swimming in the river. Luckily, the boy in the  
22 next bed to me was crook in the infirmary, so I swapped  
23 the sheets. They were dry by the time he came back.

24 "The brothers used to line us up and pour kerosene  
25 on our heads to get rid of lice. We never got them

1 again. It killed them off stone dead.

2 "I used to have to go through Brother <sup>MDF</sup> hair  
3 with a fine nitcomb in the classroom. It was bearable  
4 until he grabbed my doodle or made me grab his. My  
5 doodle was my penis. My mates were there, but they  
6 couldn't see it happening behind the desk. I was in  
7 second year at the time. He liked me doing it because  
8 I must have been good at it. I was ambidextrous. He  
9 did it whenever he got the urge until I pulled away one  
10 day. It went on for a while. They had a phobia about  
11 sexual stuff, yet they were doing it themselves.

12 "The British Government used to give them two and  
13 sixpence for each kid. You could do a lot with money in  
14 those days and could buy four lollies for a penny.  
15 Brother <sup>MXI</sup> used to look after our lollies. We would  
16 ask him for a lolly and go into his office. He never  
17 tried to do anything inappropriate, although he was in  
18 his 80s. I don't know what he was like when he was  
19 younger.

20 "I collected bugs. I had bugs and beetles in jars.  
21 Kids were scared to go into my room because of what  
22 I had in there.

23 "We went to Bindoon on St Joseph's Day. St Joseph  
24 was the patron saint of Bindoon. We would travel on an  
25 open-sided truck in rain, hail or shine. There were 50

1 kids on the truck. We spent all day digging rabbits out  
2 of their holes. We would bring the bunnies back to  
3 Clontarf and hide them in our desks. Brother MDI  
4 would find them and kill them.

5 "We were going on a trip to Bendotty's farm when we  
6 were in a bus accident. Boys lost arms and legs. One  
7 boy was killed. That boy's own brother didn't even know  
8 they were brothers. Another boy had a leg cut off.  
9 Another boy's wrist was flopping and he was asking other  
10 kids if they needed any help. Another kid had his nose  
11 ripped off. Brother MDI just told us to pray.

12 "At Bendotty's farm, we were just cheap labour.  
13 I got up at 6 am and we milked 70 cows. We would be  
14 planting spuds, cutting or bagging them up for  
15 seven weeks. It was supposed to be our holiday.  
16 I found it repugnant. I asked Mr Bendotty why I had to  
17 work on the Sabbath and he told MDI that he didn't  
18 want me because I complained too much.

19 "We had a Clontarf fête. The photographer would  
20 come to take photographs of me with the bees.  
21 Everything was fine until the flash went off and the  
22 bees went crazy. Brother MXD was screaming.

23 "Another time, Brother AOW who we called 'baby  
24 face', pushed me into his bedroom to catch a rat.  
25 He was up on the bed with his trousers rolled up

1 screaming his lungs out. I caught it but I hung on to  
2 it for a while to scare him with it.

3 "Some of the boys didn't go to school, they became  
4 working boys. They were sent to work on farms. I was  
5 relatively bright until I was assaulted by  
6 Brother **MDF** when I was about 12. I got 48 for  
7 English and 3 for arithmetic.

8 "Brother **MXD** used to teach algebra and  
9 trigonometry. I liked technical drawing and I was good  
10 with my hands. I sort of went away from the  
11 intellectual stuff and put my efforts into woodwork.

12 "When it came to sex, they didn't tell us anything.  
13 In that era it was seen as disgusting. The church made  
14 it rude.

15 "None of us got crook or ill. No one caught mumps  
16 or polio. However, at the time, polio was rife around  
17 Perth. It was caused by people who were dirty. People  
18 didn't wash like they were told to wash. They gave us  
19 pink powder for our teeth. It was dry and they poured  
20 it on to the toothbrush. If you had dirty teeth or  
21 a bit of food in your teeth you got a backhander or you  
22 missed out on the movies. Your teeth enamel wore off.  
23 You cannot put a price on a set of teeth, especially if  
24 someone takes that away from you.

25 "They sent me to Perth Dental Hospital. They



1 catered for the poor and those who couldn't afford  
2 dentistry. There was a government initiative to train  
3 dentists. They couldn't get enough volunteers so they  
4 started to use orphans. Orphans didn't ask questions.  
5 They drilled all my back teeth. After my fourth or  
6 fifth visit I asked why they were drilling my teeth  
7 because I didn't have any cavities. They didn't take  
8 X-rays or anything. They told me I had soft centres.  
9 It was just an excuse to use me as a guinea pig. I told  
10 Brother <sup>MDI</sup> that I wasn't going back. I lost all but  
11 one tooth.

12 "One of the Hungarian sisters at Clontarf had a  
13 surgery once a week. If you were crook or had cut  
14 yourself, she would give you a Band Aid and some  
15 Disprin.

16 "I was sent to the infectious disease hospital when  
17 I was 6, but I can't remember anything about it.

18 "We always prayed and said grace before meals.  
19 I wouldn't do Stations of the Cross in the church. If  
20 Brother <sup>MDI</sup> saw you doing Stations of the Cross he  
21 thought you were fiddling with yourself. He would be on  
22 your case asking who you were doing it with.

23 "You were supposed to just work and say nothing.  
24 We were in our bare feet. Sometimes they gave us boots.  
25 It was hard working on the farm with boots on. They

1           were heavy and sore. I used to get a burnt nose every  
2           day because I didn't wear a hat.

3           "We made the pool. It was 1 metre shy of an Olympic  
4           sized pool. We didn't want people coming from all  
5           around to use it. We mixed up the cement with our feet  
6           and with sticks. We had no tools.

7           "We worked for an hour after school. We had to get  
8           the manure from the piggery or the dairy. We had to  
9           make sure there was enough for the rose gardens. We  
10          built handball courts with bricks. They were huge. We  
11          put a foot of dirt in the oval and used sugar bags to  
12          raise it. We started growing vegetables in the garden.  
13          They had all the water in the world to do it. We had to  
14          sew up to 180 bags of wheat. There were 12 stitches to  
15          a bag of wheat.

16          "I was in charge of the parrots. I used to suffer  
17          more because I liked animals. I cared for them and  
18          understood them. The human has emotions but animals  
19          don't. Emotions control humans. I was in charge of the  
20          pigeons and rabbits. I was in charge of the birds too.  
21          There used to be parrots flying around until some kid  
22          shot them with a crossbow.

23          "I ran away once. There were six of us. I can't  
24          remember why we decided to do it. The brothers were on  
25          a religious retreat somewhere. We came across a house

1 in the middle of nowhere. We stole a loaf of bread from  
2 there. The guy who lived there spoke funnily and  
3 slurred his words. He had lots of puppies and one of  
4 them wouldn't leave me alone. The guy told me I could  
5 take it. I didn't know at the time that he was drunk.  
6 I had never seen a drunk bloke before. I just thought  
7 he was funny.

8 "I took the puppy back to the orphanage about two or  
9 three days later. I hid it in the boiler room.  
10 Brother **MYK** came to the window and told me he knew  
11 where the dog was. The guy with the puppies came to  
12 Clontarf a few days later with the police and told them  
13 that I had stolen the dog. The police told him to get  
14 lost. Some kid killed the puppy. I was used to my  
15 animals being killed.

16 "We had seven weeks off at Christmastime. We would  
17 go to somebody's house. A priest in the diocese would  
18 ask people if they wanted a poor orphan. The bus would  
19 take us to certain locations. A lot of kids went to  
20 places around Perth. I went with my friend to stay with  
21 a family in Subiaco. We used to go fishing. We made  
22 kylie's, we were pieces of flat metal made into  
23 a V-shape. They were a bit like a boomerang.

24 "If people gave you presents, as soon as you got  
25 back to the orphanage, they took them off you. You

1 didn't see them again. Nobody knew about birthdays.

2 "the Welfare Department came once and everybody was  
3 on their tippy-toes. The visits were all orchestrated.

4 "I ran away frequently, especially in my last year.  
5 When I did they noticed. I don't know why I attracted  
6 attention. I thought that I was different from the  
7 other kids because I was sent away when I was only  
8 4 years and 10 months and my name had been changed.

9 "I asked Brother Dopiazza why God made some kids  
10 suffer more than others. He told me, matter of factly,  
11 'God gives it to those who can handle it, so be off with  
12 yourself.' I felt like telling him to tell God to give  
13 it to somebody else because I had had enough.

14 "We didn't have any personal possessions. In that  
15 era, society was different. It was brutal. Parents  
16 belted their kids if they had erred on the side of  
17 naughtiness. Nowadays people aren't even allowed to  
18 shout at a child. Humans have to be disciplined.  
19 That's why we have so much crime nowadays. However,  
20 some of the discipline was over the top. Some of the  
21 incidents were abuse. They were really brutal with  
22 their strapping.

23 "Brother MDI came to Clontarf after I had been  
24 there for about a year. He called me into his office  
25 one day and accused me of hitting another boy. He asked

1 why I had done it and gave me six of the best. He was  
2 very powerful and I ended up getting 20. Another time,  
3 Brother MDI kicked me in the groin.

4 "Brother MXD was known as MXD, he was  
5 a sadistic bastard. Brother MXD had a knack of  
6 hitting us. He had a halfpenny sown into the end of the  
7 strap by the bookmaker. He was very accurate. He would  
8 hit you right on the tips of your fingers or your wrist  
9 all the time.

10 "We never wore shoes and I remember standing on  
11 a nail. It went right into my foot. I didn't feel it  
12 until later on when my body had warmed up, so I hadn't  
13 noticed a big pool of blood on the floor. I got  
14 a hiding from Brother MXD for making a mess on the  
15 floor and not telling the brothers.

16 "Brother MDF grabbed my penis in the classroom.  
17 I had to touch his penis under the desk. The other boys  
18 were there. He was straight out brutal. He touched me  
19 twice one day and twice another time. I had had enough  
20 by then so I pulled away. He grabbed me and said, 'Not  
21 good enough am I, Kerkhof? We'll remember this', with  
22 his horrible breath. He didn't say what he was going to  
23 do to me.

24 "A couple of days later, I was sent down to the big  
25 boys' end of the showers because I had pubic hair.

1 Brother <sup>MDF</sup> used to look at all the boys' doodles.  
2 There were 27 boys showering at any one time. He would  
3 turn the tap for a minute and move on to the next one.  
4 He would come back and look at you when you had soaped  
5 up.

6 "One night at about 6 o'clock, when the boys were  
7 having tea, <sup>MDF</sup> came into the big boys' end and the  
8 locker room. He left and then came back when I was  
9 in the shower cubicle alone. He pulled my towel off and  
10 was looking down at my crown jewels or private parts, so  
11 I covered myself. He said, 'Who told you to move?' and  
12 went in with his knee in my groin so I doubled over.  
13 The next thing, I was upside down and he knocked me out.  
14 All the other boys were in the dining area having their  
15 tea by this time.

16 "When I came to, I was lying on the ground.  
17 I coughed and saw a big lump of thick red jelly next to  
18 me. I felt my tongue and there were two holes in it.  
19 I had bitten my tongue on both sides. I was out of it  
20 for 20 minutes. He just left me lying there naked.

21 "Eventually, I went to tea and one of the brothers  
22 said, 'Playing with the pigeons again, nature boy?' and  
23 I said, 'Yes, sir.' There was no way I could tell the  
24 brother what had been done because I would have been  
25 flogged for being a lying little shit or the son of

1 a whore. Those were the types of things the brothers  
2 called us. I didn't know my mum, but I don't think she  
3 was a whore.

4 "I got six of the best in front of everybody and  
5 missed the movies for five weeks. I think MDF  
6 thought he had killed me because he didn't speak to me  
7 after that.

8 "After that I used to get shocking headaches. He  
9 had wiped out my memory. That's why I can't remember  
10 things. I was 11 or 12 when that happened.

11 "I stayed in the same class at school for two years.  
12 If I tried to remember anything or concentrated on  
13 something, I would get a headache.

14 "I would only get three or four spellings right out  
15 of 10. If you got less than six right you got a dong  
16 off a brother for every one wrong, so I used to get a  
17 lot of dongs. They couldn't make me cry.

18 "If I tried to concentrate or remember anything, I'd  
19 get a headache.

20 "After I left school, I used to feel anxious and  
21 pressured whenever I was in a group of more than a few  
22 men.

23 MXD would look at me, grin and say, 'Oh  
24 Wally -- no, I've lost it.' I had to wait with  
25 a psychological anguish for a week waiting to find out

1 what he was going to do to me. He played on my mind.  
2 He was sadistic. I suffered more than the six dongs  
3 because it got into my head.

4 "One day, I flicked a spoon of food at somebody  
5 in the dining room and he saw me. He saw this and said,  
6 'We're still thinking about it.' He meant that he was  
7 considering what punishment to give me. I suffered  
8 because it got into my head. I was worried about it  
9 every day. He had to feast and got an adrenaline rush  
10 out of it. They had a phobia about sexual stuff.

11 "I reckon I was given four dongs with the strap  
12 every day. It would be a six foot two guy on his toes  
13 with a strap. If you tried to defend yourself, he would  
14 make sure he got you on the head. The pain was  
15 unbearable. They were accurate with the strap.

16 "I can remember one brother came back from Ireland  
17 and told us that he had got a lovely shillelagh for us.  
18 This was a solid cane. If you got something wrong at  
19 school or talked in the chapel you were belted with  
20 this. It was like being hit with a metal pipe although  
21 it was made of bamboo. [REDACTED] would throw something at  
22 you and ask a question. If you got the answer wrong,  
23 you got a backhander.

24 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were the main ones. They  
25 did a lot of belting. You had to be really bad for



1       MXD       to do it to you. It was like the army. They  
2       had to be brutal to a few to control many. There were  
3       virtually four men looking after 200 kids. It wasn't  
4       hard to get away with misbehaving.

5                "Every Wednesday we had speech day where we left  
6       school at 11 am and went into the hall. MDI       would  
7       walk down the middle of the room and pick someone out if  
8       they reminded him of a misdemeanour or something that he  
9       wanted to talk about to give them six of the best in  
10      front of everyone.

11              "He would get to my row and say, 'Kerkhof', and  
12      I would have to go over to the wall and stand with the  
13      other bad kids. MDI       would say what you had done wrong  
14      and then give you six of the best.

15              "I never told a brother or outside authority about  
16      the abuse. We spoke amongst ourselves about it. I saw  
17      it happening to the others, fists, the strap or the  
18      cane. It happened regularly. You wouldn't dare report  
19      anything to the police. It was pointless. There was  
20      a lot of Catholics in the police and government. The  
21      people at the top level were in denial. The whole  
22      nation was in denial about the abuse.

23              "They were all complicit in it. The attitude was  
24      that these men had given up their lives for us. It took  
25      for attitudes to change for things to start coming out

1 because they didn't have anybody blocking them. It's  
2 all these years later for them to realise that we were  
3 telling the truth. I have never reported anything to  
4 the police.

5 "Brother MDI just came in one day and told me that  
6 I wasn't doing very well at school. I was just short of  
7 15. He told me I was leaving and sent me for the bus.  
8 In those days it was the back of beyond.

9 "I got a job at Jay Roll's farm. When I arrived  
10 I saw an old bloke outside. He yelled at me to get  
11 a move on. I worked there for six months until they  
12 realised that they couldn't afford me.

13 "The brothers got me another job because that wasn't  
14 my fault. I went to work on a farm run by the MSB  
15 family. I slept in a tin shed. It was stinking hot in  
16 the summer and freezing in the winter. Their little boy  
17 was only 7 and he used to make me give him lollies. He  
18 would bribe me by saying if he didn't, he would tell his  
19 mother that I had hit him. The mother was a big woman  
20 who didn't like me. I was terrified of her.

21 "After an incident with the son, MSB put his arm  
22 around me and told me that I was the best worker that  
23 they'd ever had but I had to go because the woman didn't  
24 want me there.

25 "After that, I went to stay with another family.

1 I lived with them for four years. They always respected  
2 me.

3 "I left and went to work on the railways doing  
4 contract work. It was 118 degrees in the shade and 36  
5 at night. We used to get up at 3 o'clock in the morning  
6 and start work at 4. We worked through the heat. I was  
7 earning good money. I wasn't even 21 then. I worked  
8 doing well sinking in Perth, too. In those days  
9 everyone had jobs. If someone didn't have a job, they  
10 were seen as some sort of criminal.

11 "I got married at 24. We had two children, a son  
12 and daughter. I was married for nearly 14 years when  
13 one day I looked into her eyes and said, 'You're seeing  
14 somebody else.' I knew it and I hadn't wanted to admit  
15 it to myself. She left. A little while later, she got  
16 the kids too. About three weeks later, the kids begged  
17 to come and stay with me. I applied to rent a house on  
18 a farm. I started to work for myself as a handyman.  
19 I always had enough to pay the rent.

20 "I had another relationship because the kids wanted  
21 a mother. I advertised in the paper for a woman who  
22 also had children. In the end she cheated too. There  
23 was no animosity or fighting; I was just disappointed.  
24 I always seemed to attract women who needed my help  
25 initially. I think they were drawn to me because I was

1 kind and listened to them.

2 "When I was 65, I found out I had no nationality.  
3 I met some Dutch people last year who told me that my  
4 surname was spelt incorrectly.

5 "I have never had counselling. I sometimes think  
6 it's worse to dwell on things. You have to get yourself  
7 together and pick out the best parts of life.

8 "When I meet up with my friends who were in there  
9 too, we talk about it all. I have never had an argument  
10 with any of them. We just don't do that kind of thing.

11 "I received a letter from the church which stated  
12 that my mum died in 1985. I never met her.

13 "I travelled to Scotland in 1990 and 1999. I met  
14 some of my family. I have a [REDACTED]. I'm still in  
15 touch with [REDACTED]. I never received my records because  
16 they had been falsified.

17 "When I went back to Scotland, I spoke with a woman  
18 who knew about me going into care. She said that when  
19 I was baptised she had heard Father [REDACTED] saying he was  
20 my natural father. She was only small when she heard  
21 him saying this.

22 "I got AU\$25,000 about two or three years ago. It  
23 sounds a lot, but I wouldn't even accept that to have my  
24 teeth smashed out. The Christian Brothers paid me  
25 AU\$62,000. We were British subjects. The government

1 gave me the money back to be an Australian citizen and  
2 a British passport. I receive a state pension for  
3 single people.

4 "I don't know what I would be like if I hadn't been  
5 sent to Australia. I don't know what I never had.  
6 I could have had it worse off in Scotland.

7 "I have flashbacks and wake up screaming. One night  
8 I woke up dreaming that I was in the shower and wouldn't  
9 let **MDF** touch me. The older I get, the more  
10 emotional I get.

11 "I tell people that I am glad that I am an orphan  
12 because I see how families can be. When someone dies,  
13 they are all fighting over things.

14 "I can never recapture my Scottish culture. It was  
15 taken away from me. I just wanted my mother or  
16 a sister. I never had any female bonding. I don't like  
17 thinking about it. It's just when someone pulls a scab  
18 off, it all comes flooding back.

19 "I am getting better at mixing with people because I  
20 give talks on Carnaby's birds and bees. I sometimes  
21 can't wait to get home to shut myself away with my  
22 birds.

23 "I think the biggest problem is when children tell  
24 you something. They generally don't lie, especially  
25 when it is something at a 10 on the Richter scale. An

1 allegation of that magnitude has to be looked into  
2 objectively. The church can't investigate the church.  
3 We've got to find a balance when we find someone who can  
4 arbitrate a problem without bias.

5 "I just want people to believe what I have said is  
6 true. I can only speak for myself. I can't forget what  
7 happened. The Catholic Church should be told that they  
8 cannot let men look after children. There has to be  
9 a balance of men and women. It gives children  
10 a semblance of normality. It is hard to establish a set  
11 of rules when there is a huge number of children being  
12 controlled by men.

13 "That being said, nobody ever says that there are  
14 good brothers and priests, which isn't true at all.  
15 There are good ones. Things were different in those  
16 days. People were more cruel during that era.

17 "I have no objection to my statement being published  
18 as part of the evidence to the inquiry. I believe the  
19 facts stated in this witness statement are true."

20 The statement was signed by Walter on 23 March 2019.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much, Ms MacLeod.

22 MS MACLEOD: I will now pass over to Ms Rattray, who'll read  
23 in the final statement.

24 Witness statement of "JOHN" (read)

25 MS RATTRAY: My Lady, this is a statement of an applicant

1 who wishes to remain anonymous and has chosen the  
2 pseudonym "John". His statement can be found at  
3 WIT.001.002.6065:

4 "My name is John. I was born in 1936. My contact  
5 details are known to the inquiry.

6 "I don't know where I was born. I have a birth  
7 certificate but it doesn't say. I think it was the  
8 Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. I had three sisters and  
9 a half-sister. When we were sent to Australia, my  
10 half-sister came out later than two of my other sisters  
11 and I.

12 "I can't remember living as a family; maybe we did  
13 during the war as two of my sisters and I have all  
14 burns: on my shoulder, on my sister's ankle, and other  
15 sister had a burn on her leg.

16 "I remember being at my grandfather's place but  
17 I can't remember that much. I think he was in the  
18 Craigentiny/Portobello area of Edinburgh.

19 "I was in care in a number of places but I can't  
20 remember several of them. I think my mother was a bit  
21 of an alcoholic. She didn't really want us. I think  
22 I was in five or six places. The only one I remember is  
23 Nazareth House in Lasswade. I think I was 10 years  
24 old."

25 My Lady, the Nazareth House registers state that

1 John was admitted to Nazareth House in Lasswade in  
2 [REDACTED] 1946, and sailed for Australia in [REDACTED] 1947,  
3 where he was sent to Bindoon.

4 LADY SMITH: Sorry, what month in 1947?

5 MS RATTRAY: [REDACTED] of 1947:

6 "I remember my mum dropped me off at Nazareth House  
7 in Lasswade. I'm not sure how long I was there;  
8 anywhere between 12 and 18 months.

9 "I slept in a dormitory. I think there were about  
10 10 to 20 boys in the dormitory. It was an old building.  
11 Half of it wasn't being used. The dorms were up the  
12 stairs.

13 "I think a couple of dozen of us walked to the  
14 school. It was just boys there. I didn't have any  
15 drawers or a cupboard in the dorm, just a bed.

16 "In the mornings we got up, got dressed, had  
17 breakfast, went to Mass, then school. We had to go to  
18 Mass every morning before school. We had to wash up,  
19 clean up, make our beds and put our clothes away to be  
20 washed. Nobody supervised the washing-up.

21 "There were quite a few nuns there. Sister <sup>LPY</sup>[REDACTED] was  
22 in charge; she was very cruel. There was  
23 Sister <sup>LKF</sup>[REDACTED] she was nice. I can't remember the  
24 names of any of the others."

25 "I can't remember what we got for breakfast.



1 I think one of the senior boys woke us up.

2 "There would have been some who had a problem with  
3 bed-wetting. I didn't. I can't remember how it was  
4 dealt with.

5 "I can't remember having lunch at school and I don't  
6 remember anything about the food in the evenings.

7 "We would play soccer. There wasn't much else to  
8 do. There was an orchard and a garden we would play in.  
9 We played a lot of games inside the home. We didn't  
10 have to do any chores.

11 "I didn't run away from Lasswade. I did run away  
12 from other places in Scotland. I remember being picked  
13 up and asked where I was going. I'd say I was going  
14 home. I didn't know where home was. It wasn't the  
15 police that picked me up, it would have been other  
16 people. I don't know who.

17 "We went to school in Dalkeith. I can't remember  
18 the name of the school. We didn't have a uniform. We  
19 walked there but most of us didn't make it, we would go  
20 somewhere else. One of the senior boys walked us down  
21 to the school. I didn't go that often. There were  
22 plenty of places to go, orchards and things like that.  
23 We used to steal apples. We would go back to  
24 Nazareth House at about 3 pm.

25 "There wasn't too much religious instruction. We

1 went to Mass every morning and all day on Sunday. The  
2 church was in the grounds of the home. You said grace  
3 before meals.

4 "I can't remember Christmases or birthdays. I had  
5 no visitors while I was there. The only time we went  
6 anywhere was when we went to the Forth Bridge. That's  
7 the only trip I remember.

8 "I didn't really know I had sisters at this time.  
9 I found out when I was on the boat to Australia. This  
10 was when we realised we were a family.

11 "Sister <sup>LPY</sup> [REDACTED] She was a very cruel  
12 person. She was shocking. She made you kneel down and  
13 put your hand out to get the strap. Then she would belt  
14 you across the wrist. You didn't have to do much to get  
15 it; she was just cruel. Everybody copped it. She had  
16 A couple of pet kids. There was a boy there who was  
17 dropped off when he was a baby. He didn't get hit  
18 often. She belted him around a bit but nothing cruel.

19 "I can't ever remember getting asked if I wanted to  
20 go to Australia. I can't remember sitting any tests.  
21 We were told we were going. I didn't have a clue where  
22 Australia was. My sister was asked if she wanted to go.  
23 She said everyone put their hands up. She thought she  
24 was going down to the shop for an ice cream.

25 "My mum signed the papers for me to go. I can't

1 recall who told me that. It was in conversation  
2 somewhere along the line.

3 "I remember getting on a bus and going to Middleton  
4 camp. I don't know where it was. There were hundreds  
5 of kids there. We were then sent to Liverpool or  
6 Southampton and got on the boat.

7 "I stayed at the camp for a week or two weeks.  
8 There were other boys I knew there but no friends  
9 really. They were all a bit older than me. Another boy  
10 was about the same age. I can't remember much about the  
11 camp. I had no lessons and no talks about where we were  
12 going. I took nothing with me.

13 "Before we left Lasswade, we were all given a suit  
14 to wear: a jacket, shorts, shirt, tie and shoes;  
15 a proper suit. I didn't have anything else with me.  
16 From Middleton, we were put on a bus. We were driven  
17 nearly all night before we were put on the boat, the  
18 SS Ormonde. We arrived in Fremantle in  
19 Western Australia in [REDACTED] 1947.

20 "The first week or so was all right on the boat.  
21 I just remember every morning we would run down and look  
22 at the map. They would put up a thing about how far we  
23 had travelled. We were looked after pretty well on the  
24 boat. There was nobody really looking after us.  
25 I think there were two Christian Brothers looking after

1 the whole lot of us. I don't know their names. We were  
2 allowed to run wild.

3 "We just got up, had breakfast, and ran up and down  
4 the boat. We had one or two lessons on using the life  
5 jacket and things like that. I used to get sunburnt a  
6 lot. I can't remember having sea sickness. I remember  
7 a lot of the other boys did. It was more or less boring  
8 after the first week.

9 "I can't remember how I found out, but two of my  
10 sisters were on the boat. They were on a separate part  
11 of the boat, but we sat down and had all our meals  
12 together. When we got to Australia, they separated us  
13 again. I never even knew where they went to when we got  
14 off the boat. They went one way and I went the other.

15 "I don't really know how I felt when I found out I  
16 had sisters on the boat. We hadn't been a family all  
17 our lives.

18 "We had at least one stop, but didn't get off the  
19 boat. Others did. I can't remember where it was.  
20 I know we came through the Suez Canal but I can't say  
21 whether we stopped there or not.

22 "I remember landing in Australia. All the girls and  
23 boys were separated. I was hanging around wanting to  
24 get on the bus with my sisters. I thought I was going  
25 to the same place as them but I was told they were going

1 on a different bus. I was taken right up to Bindoon.  
2 I didn't know where I was in Australia, I only knew it  
3 was West Australia.

4 "There were at least a dozen boys with me. There  
5 were four or five I knew from Lasswade. I didn't make  
6 any friends on the journey. I made a few at Bindoon.  
7 There was a Christian Brother driving the bus. I can't  
8 remember who it was.

9 "I remember we stopped at the top of the hill and  
10 got out of the bus and looked down on Bindoon. It's  
11 only about 60 miles from Perth, Fremantle. It took over  
12 an hour or so to get there. When we looked down, the  
13 place was only half built. There wasn't much to see, it  
14 was all bush and country. You couldn't run away. It  
15 was in the middle of nowhere. Then they took us down.

16 "I can't really remember the first day. I was given  
17 a dormitory. The place was only half built, so we were  
18 sort of jammed in. There were 30 or 40 kids there then  
19 and then they kept coming in. About 12 months later  
20 there were about 70 there.

21 "The place was all on one level. There were a few  
22 boys there when I got there. The first group had come  
23 in August; we were the second or third group. We  
24 arrived in the [REDACTED] of 1947.

25 "There were about 20 boys already there when we

1 arrived. I think there were two dormitories for all of  
2 us. There were about 12 to 15 in each dormitory.

3 "The clothes we had on were taken from us when we  
4 arrived at Bindoon. We were given some old clothes and  
5 something to eat. That's the last I saw of shoes for  
6 four years. We were never given shoes to wear.

7 "It was the same sort of regime as Nazareth House:  
8 getting up, going to Mass every morning, breakfast and  
9 school or working. There wasn't any schoolroom for the  
10 first three months until Brother MDJ came back from  
11 Ireland.

12 "There used to be a bell ringing to get you up.  
13 A Christian Brother walked down the row of beds ringing  
14 a bell. We made our bed. It was Mass before breakfast  
15 in the church there. It was more or less beside where  
16 we had breakfast.

17 "Quite a lot of boys had a problem with bed-wetting  
18 and they got belted around a bit and had the wet sheets  
19 put on their heads. I was lucky, I never wet the bed.

20 "Breakfast was a couple of pieces of bread dipped in  
21 dripping. It was too bad if you didn't like it, you'd  
22 go hungry. I can't remember much about lunchtime for  
23 teatime. Breakfast is the only thing that sticks out in  
24 my mind. We were always hungry.

25 "We had showers at Bindoon. It was a communal

1 shower. There was a shelf that you would hang your  
2 clothes on and then go and have a shower, come back and  
3 put the clothes on again. You had one set of clothes.  
4 We had a shower every night, but then put on the same  
5 clothes every day until the Saturday.

6 "On a Saturday morning, we got our clothes washed  
7 and got clean ones to wear. We had nuns there who  
8 looked after the laundry. They stayed there and they  
9 did the cooking and the laundry.

10 "After I was at Bindoon for three months,  
11 Brother MDJ came back from Ireland and they used to  
12 try and get us to go to school. There was one brother  
13 there who would try to teach us. His name was  
14 Brother McDonald. We would get about an hour of  
15 schooling a week. We would just get into class, then  
16 we were all needed out on the building site when the  
17 truck came in with supplies.

18 "There was nothing to say about the schooling,  
19 absolutely nothing. I could read and write when I left  
20 there, but only just. I taught myself a lot after  
21 I left.

22 "There was another brother called Brother AKL  
23 He was the secretary of Bindoon. He gave me £20 when  
24 I was leaving. I think it was for all the work I had  
25 done.

1           "There was no doctor at Bindoon. One of the nuns  
2 had a bit of experience. If you had a cut or something,  
3 she would bandage you up. I can't remember her name.  
4 If you were ill, you went to the Royal Perth Hospital.  
5 I had tonsillitis while I was at Bindoon. I spent about  
6 a week in hospital getting my tonsils out. I had  
7 trouble eating my breakfast one morning and I couldn't  
8 swallow and it was discovered I had tonsillitis.

9           "I remember having a toothbrush and toothpaste.  
10 A dentist came in and checked your teeth. I had two  
11 teeth out when I was there.

12           "I mainly worked in the dairy. Initially there  
13 wasn't a dairy and I would work on the buildings, mixing  
14 cement and loading bricks. I was 11 and a half to  
15 12 years old. There wasn't a cement mixer, you mixed it  
16 with a shovel. There were four or five of us mixing  
17 cement.

18           "They had a brick machine there that made bricks.  
19 I can't remember how it worked. Before they got the  
20 press for the bricks, we had to go to the quarry and dig  
21 out rocks using a pick. The bigger boys dug them out  
22 and we would pick them up and load them on to the truck.  
23 The rocks were as heavy as you could lift. One of the  
24 Christian Brothers would be supervising, Brother MDY  
25 We called him [REDACTED] because [REDACTED]



1 He was terrible.

2 "We didn't have any protective hat on. I remember  
3 my nose getting sunburnt a lot. I used to get in fights  
4 because I had a scabby nose for months and months.

5 "Later on, just before I left, they got some old  
6 ex-army hats. They gave us a few of them, but they were  
7 too big for us. Nobody liked wearing them anyway.

8 "While we were working we never had anything on our  
9 feet. We didn't have shoes for four or five years.  
10 I got a pair of rubber boots with six months to go, by  
11 which stage I was running the dairy.

12 "Brother MDY would drive the truck and go and pick  
13 up bags of cement with a couple of the older boys. They  
14 used to bag it themselves. We didn't have any trolleys  
15 there. We had a few wheelbarrows and picked up the bags  
16 of cement in them. Nobody complained. There were a few  
17 broken fingernails and blisters. It was useless  
18 complaining.

19 "When you reached 14 years old, you didn't go to  
20 school, you worked permanently.

21 "When I started working in the dairy I would get up  
22 in the morning, go to Mass and when everybody went to  
23 breakfast, I went out and brought the cows in for  
24 milking and I'd feed them. That was my job from when  
25 I was 14 until I left the place.

1           "I got breakfast after I brought the cows in.  
2 I then cleaned out the dairy and put the cows back  
3 in the paddock.

4           "I fed the pigs and brought the cows back in for the  
5 afternoon milking. There were at least 20 cows. They  
6 were all hand-milked by other boys.

7           "Sometimes I would separate the milk and make the  
8 butter.

9           "In the afternoon I would work in the orchard and  
10 water the young plants. I think there were 17,000 acres  
11 in the whole place.

12           "I would take the milk up from the dairy and get the  
13 scraps from the kitchen to feed the pigs. I don't know  
14 how many there were, quite a few. There was a gentleman  
15 there looking after the pigs. I just used to bring the  
16 scraps down for them.

17           "After work, I would go for a shower. If I was  
18 quick enough I would get down for tea. If not, I would  
19 go hungry.

20           "Birthdays were just another day in Bindoon. At  
21 Christmas some people would make donations. I can't  
22 remember getting anything. I never had anything of my  
23 own while I was there. I don't think we got a different  
24 meal on Christmas Day. We maybe had a longer mass, went  
25 to church more often.

1            "It was a couple of years after I was at Bindoon  
2            that I found out that my sisters were in an orphanage.  
3            I think someone took me down to see them. I would be  
4            about 15 or 16. They were at St Joseph's Orphanage in  
5            Subiaco. My half-sister was there by that time too.  
6            She'd come out to Australia later. I was only there for  
7            about an hour or so.

8            "On the Tuesday or Thursday Brother MDY drove the  
9            truck to get supplies. He dropped me off. Then, after  
10           I visited, I had to make it to a Christian Brothers  
11           place in St George's Terrace to get picked up.

12           "My mother came over later on. She came over  
13           herself. She remarried when she was out here. She  
14           tried to get us all together. I was maybe 14 or 15. It  
15           was too late by then. I met her and my sisters met her.  
16           This is before I left Bindoon. I was taken to meet her.  
17           I can't remember much about it. We were separated so  
18           long that there were no feelings whatsoever.

19           "We didn't really do anything that wrong, to be  
20           honest. We just got belted for the sake of it half the  
21           time. There was a couple of boys who couldn't handle it  
22           there. They would set traps for the brothers on the  
23           building site. They were sent back to Scotland or  
24           England. It was rough in Bindoon.

25           "Brother MDJ had one intention in life. He

1 wanted us to build the place and that is all we did.  
2 Apart from that, it could have been worse, I suppose.  
3 It could have been a lot better too.

4 "When Brother <sup>MDJ</sup> arrived back from Ireland,  
5 things changed. We would go to school for an hour or  
6 so, after which we were treated like slave labour under  
7 the harshest conditions. We worked until dusk each and  
8 every day in the fields, on the quarry and the farm, but  
9 mostly working on the building site, which was made from  
10 large rocks from the quarry.

11 "We were deprived of proper schooling. Most of the  
12 brothers used sadistic methods to control and punish us.  
13 The worst was Brother <sup>MDJ</sup> This man took great  
14 pleasure in flogging us with his heavy walking stick,  
15 which he had with him at all times.

16 "I can't say all the brothers were sadistic. There  
17 was Brother <sup>MDW</sup>, who was a wonderful man, and  
18 Brother <sup>LZO</sup> who I grew quite fond of.

19 "One morning I couldn't eat my breakfast. I had not  
20 been long at Bindoon at this stage. Breakfast was the  
21 two pieces of bread dipped in hot dripping. I didn't  
22 feel well, so I passed my bread to the boy beside me.  
23 Immediately I felt this awful bang. I was hit from  
24 behind. I got up, turned around, and bang, I was  
25 knocked down again. I was then given a good kicking.

1 I can't remember the rest, but the boys told me I was  
2 picked up by the ears by Brother MDJ my face shoved  
3 into the greasy bread and told to stay there until I ate  
4 the lot. I can't remember the rest of the day, but that  
5 night I went to the sick room. The sister there told me  
6 I had tonsillitis.

7 "Numerous stories could be told of such things, but  
8 it would take more than a book to write it all. I will  
9 never forgive them for what they did to my very best  
10 friend, who was like a brother to me. Early in 1950,  
11 around there were police everywhere. We  
12 just thought someone had run away again. At mass next  
13 morning, we were told that my best friend was in an  
14 accident and he was dead. They said a truck ran over  
15 him. We were told to go for mass out the side door and  
16 we had to file past my best friend, who was lying  
17 a table with just a towel across his middle. I didn't  
18 recognise him at first because of the mess he was in.  
19 I remember his last words to me: John, when I make some  
20 money, I will come back and take you away from this  
21 slave camp.

22 "When I had prayed for my best friend's soul,  
23 we were told to go and have breakfast. I remember a few  
24 of the boys vomiting. Some even fainted. I was so  
25 shocked, it took a few days before it hit me. I tried

1 to run away but only got as far as the main road. The  
2 flogging I got did not worry me as I was still in shock.  
3 I still have nightmares about having to look at my best  
4 friend's mangled body. At that time I was only 13 years  
5 old.

6 "While I was working in the dairy and bringing the  
7 cows in twice a day during the summer wasn't bad but  
8 during the winter my feet would freeze. I soon learnt  
9 to walk behind the cows and step into the hot dung as it  
10 came straight from the cow to stop my feet from  
11 freezing. Some time later, Brother LZO bought me  
12 some rubber boots.

13 "The first two years at Bindoon were bad enough with  
14 mental and physical abuse. I got used to the lumps,  
15 bumps and bruises, but the sexual abuse I will take to  
16 the grave with me. One Sunday evening I was sent up to  
17 Father MPG room to talk about being an altar boy.  
18 When I got there he asked me about the impure thoughts  
19 I was having as I had been to confession that morning.  
20 The next thing I know, my pants are down to my ankles.  
21 I'm not going into the gory detail as this is hard  
22 enough to put to paper, but my first sexual experience  
23 was with a paedophile priest. This went on until  
24 I turned 14.

25 "One day, I was out in the bush with Brother LZO

1 looking for a new site to shift bees and hives to.  
2 We were saying what a good life a beekeeper's was.  
3 He was telling me, when I get a block of land from  
4 Bindoon he would help me get started. He was saying  
5 I'll get married, have children and have a good life.  
6 That was when I lost it and started to cry and sob. He  
7 came over to me. He thought I had been bitten by  
8 a snake. He put his arm around me and I started to  
9 punch him, but he wrestled me to the ground and shook me  
10 and asked me what the matter was. I told him what  
11 **MPG** had been doing to me.

12 "Two or three days later, Brother **LZO** came back  
13 to me. He told me to try and forget it. He said it  
14 will never happen again and made me promise to tell  
15 no one. I have not even told my wife about this part of  
16 my life at Bindoon. I believe I'm a good Christian  
17 person, but I could not stand the sight of  
18 a Christian Brother or a priest for a very long time.  
19 I have no vendetta against the Catholic Church. It was  
20 not the church that did this to me. All these brothers  
21 and the priests will be dead now, so I hope God has  
22 mercy on their souls.

23 "I never reported the abuse I suffered at Bindoon.  
24 Who could you complain to? Brother **MDJ** brother was  
25 a senior police officer in Perth. I think he was the

1                   ██████████ Nobody complained.

2                   "One day I was told I was leaving. I was told to  
3 get a shower, get my gear and get ready to go. I left  
4 about two months after I turned 16. I knew they got rid  
5 of everyone when they were 16. The child endowment they  
6 got paid for us stopped when you were 16, so you were no  
7 good to them. They weren't making any money out of you.

8                   "I had no preparation for leaving. One day you were  
9 there, the next you were leaving. I was on my own and  
10 didn't know where I was going. They said they had a job  
11 for me and it was out in the country somewhere and that  
12 was it. I met these people and they took me down to  
13 some farm. The town was called Newdegate. It was  
14 a sheep farm. I didn't know much about sheep. The  
15 family were called the Kerwins. They only used me.  
16 They wanted a holiday and left me to run the place.  
17 They were away for about six weeks. There were about  
18 500 to 1000 sheep spread over there. There was a son  
19 who dropped in once a week to check on me. I made my  
20 own food. I'd never done that before. I had to kill  
21 a sheep there to eat. When they came back from holiday  
22 they said I wasn't suitable and put me to another place.

23                   "The other farm was owned by a family called  
24 McGlynn. That was even worse. They also left me for  
25 weeks. When they returned, they said I would get



1 a bonus if I helped with the harvest. I did this but  
2 got nothing so I walked off. I was picked up by the  
3 local priest. I knew him as I went to church every  
4 Sunday. He took me back to Perth and dropped me on the  
5 at the child welfare place there.

6 "I was then sent up to a dairy in a place called  
7 Bullfinch. I was sent to every one of these places by  
8 the Christian Brothers. This was owned by the Young  
9 family. I stayed there for two years from 17 to  
10 19 years old. That was good.

11 "After this, I thought enough was enough and I left  
12 and looked after myself. I got a job in a shearing shed  
13 as a shearer and moved around a lot. I decided to come  
14 to Queensland. I was moving between jobs and my wife  
15 was on a bus trip and we happened to stop at the same  
16 private hotel. She was going to Melbourne. I decided  
17 to go down there and we met up. I got a job with  
18 Dandanell General Motors, but they closed down. I was  
19 running out of money and my wife's dad got me a job  
20 at the airport. He was a tarmac foreman. My wife and  
21 I were married when I was 24 and she was 18. I was  
22 going to get paid off again so I got a job in  
23 Western Australia as a shearer, so we moved back there.  
24 We had our first child in Fremantle and we've been  
25 together nearly 60 years. We have two sons.

1            "My wife didn't know anything about my life in  
2 Bindoon before we were married. I just said it was  
3 a bit rough. I became an alcoholic for a while.  
4 I didn't really start drinking until I was 24. It  
5 lasted a few years, then I got over it. It was mainly  
6 when I was travelling around shearing a few weeks at  
7 a time. When I came back to Queensland, I got home  
8 every second or third weekend. I started shearing when  
9 I was married and kept it up until I retired when I was  
10 about 60 years old. Then I had a milk run until I was  
11 65.

12           "How I was treated in Bindoon hasn't really  
13 influenced how I've been with my own kids. I took my  
14 oldest son out shearing for a while. He had a bad  
15 marriage, stopped shearing and got a job. He travels a  
16 lot, flies to Darwin. He's a month on and a week off.  
17 He's done well for himself. We have another son. My  
18 wife and I have the same blood group, one positive, one  
19 negative, and when our son was born he needed a complete  
20 blood change. He got cerebral palsy and he is deaf.  
21 He was a handful and he kept my wife going all the time.  
22 He is still with us now. We couldn't have any more  
23 children after that, so we adopted a girl. She died of  
24 breast cancer last October. I don't really want to talk  
25 about that.

1            "I saw my sisters after they left St Joseph's. I  
2 went to my sister's wedding. She had a bad marriage.  
3 Every time I was in Perth I used to go and see them when  
4 I came back from shearing. My wife and my sister became  
5 friends for a while as we were living near her. I'm the  
6 closest to my sister. I used to stay at my other  
7 sister's when I was in Perth. She was in Bayswater and  
8 my other sister was in Fremantle. I knew where they  
9 lived and I'd stay there.

10           "My half-sister was in the newspaper when I was in  
11 Bindoon when she came over here. A Christian Brother  
12 showed me the picture of her getting off the boat and  
13 told me she was my sister. I can't remember who the  
14 brother was. She came a few years later and went  
15 straight to St Joseph's in Subiaco.

16           "My sister has come over to the Gold Coast every  
17 year for the last three or four years. She's coming  
18 over in June this year. We go down for a couple of  
19 weeks. My half-sister came out a couple of times and we  
20 meet up there. She's married and has two girls.

21           "My mother got a job over here on the railway.  
22 I got a job there too. I stayed there with her for  
23 three or four months, but I couldn't put up with her new  
24 partner, so I left. I was about 20 or 21. I didn't  
25 really have much contact with her after that. My sister

1 rang me up later and told me she'd died.

2 "Some time ago, I applied to the Australian redress  
3 scheme. Someone got in touch with me about it from  
4 Tuart Place or something. The government got in touch  
5 and said something about compensation. I completed the  
6 form. It was the Western Australian government redress.  
7 There was initially an age limit on compensation, but  
8 they've done away with this. It has been settled now.

9 "I still get letters from the Child Migrants Trust  
10 and get the magazine every couple of months.  
11 Counselling is there if you want it. It's too late to  
12 do me any good. I have never tried to get my records.  
13 They wouldn't do me any good.

14 "I have been shown a copy of a statement in relation  
15 to the Western Australian redress scheme and confirm  
16 that I wrote this along with my wife. I have also been  
17 shown a register from the Sisters of Nazareth and can  
18 confirm that the details in this are mine, along with my  
19 parents. As well as this, I have been shown an extract  
20 from the HMS Ormonde and can confirm that the details  
21 shown to me as being on the ship are also mine.

22 "I have Australian citizenship. I don't have  
23 a passport. When I was with Tuart Place, if I wanted  
24 a passport I could have got one. They would have helped  
25 me with trips to Scotland if I'd wanted to go. My

1 sister has gone a couple of times. It isn't for me.  
2 I definitely still see myself as Scottish but I'm proud  
3 to be Australian too. I get an Australian pension. It  
4 wasn't difficult.

5 "When I was in Western Australia I played soccer.  
6 I tried to join a club there. When I was here and my  
7 oldest son was 13, he played soccer. I coached the team  
8 and some of the dads were Scottish. Our next-door  
9 neighbour is Scottish. My wife's father was born in  
10 Scotland. You've got to keep hold of something.

11 "I don't really think about Bindoon too much. It  
12 was rough, but it was what it was. It definitely  
13 impacted on my education. It affected me getting a job  
14 at first. I applied for a few jobs and didn't get any  
15 of them. When I was 17 or 18 I tried to join the army  
16 but didn't even have the education to do that. I got  
17 into shearing and they were good people. I'm 83 in [REDACTED]  
18 and I think my health is pretty good.

19 "Our time in care has affected my sisters and I.  
20 We weren't a family, really. We've been able to build  
21 a relationship. We've been quite happy with the  
22 outcome, I suppose.

23 "At the time I was in Bindoon, nothing could be  
24 different. It was what it was. I wasn't the only one.  
25 There were hundreds of us there. There were over 7,000

1 of us came out here. There's only 2,000 left.  
2 I couldn't advise anything, really. If there was  
3 anything to come out of this, it would be: just don't  
4 let it happen again. I don't think it will happen  
5 again.

6 "I have no objection to my witness statement being  
7 published as part of the evidence to the inquiry.  
8 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are  
9 true."

10 John signed the statement on 15 May 2019.

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much, Ms Rattray.

12 MS RATTRAY: My Lady, that concludes the evidence for today.

13 I think we resume tomorrow at the later time of 8.30.

14 LADY SMITH: Yes, we've got the luxury of 8.30 rather than  
15 8.00 tomorrow morning.

16 MS RATTRAY: At which time we will have one oral witness by  
17 video link and three read-ins.

18 LADY SMITH: That's fine. Thank you very much. I'll rise  
19 now until tomorrow morning, sitting at 8.30 for a video  
20 link at that time.

21 (1.00 pm)

22 (The inquiry adjourned until 8.30 am on  
23 Friday, 6 December 2019)

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"GAVIN" (sworn) .....1

    Questions from MR MacAULAY .....2

Witness statement of "ANNE" (read) .....31

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Witness statement of WALTER KERKHOF .....106

    (read)

Witness statement of "JOHN" (read) .....134

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