

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HHA

Support person present: No

1. My name is HHA. My date of birth is 1962. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was six months old when I first went into the care system. I cannot remember anything about my life before then. My parents had lived in Johnstone. Their names were and .
3. There were seven children in our family in total, six brothers and one sister. My mother had ten children within the space of ten years but she lost three of them through miscarriages. In descending age order my siblings' names were: , , , , , , and me. We were all taken into care together.
4. We were sent to a place called Atholl House in Thornley Bank in Glasgow. The home was split into two units. My siblings and I were separated between the two units based on our age. I was the youngest and was the second youngest. We were both babies. and I were put into the top unit. The other five were put into the bottom unit.
5. When we were taken into care my parents were not together. I do not know much about my father. I have never even seen a photograph of him. I couldn't recognise

him anyway. He committed suicide in 1979. Everything I know about him has come from my mother. She told me that he was an alcoholic and a womaniser. Whether that is true or not I don't know. My mother's story is that my father was chased out of town by her brothers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for physically abusing her. They chased him to Johnstone. Apparently my father hit my mother, neglected her and spent all of his wages in the bookies and the pubs. He did not sexually abuse her.

6. My mother claimed that she put us into Atholl House voluntarily but I don't know whether that is true. It could have been social services who put us there. Atholl House was run by Renfrewshire Council. We were under their remit as we had all been based in Johnstone prior to going into care.
7. When we went into Atholl House, my mother based herself in London. She got a job with the Navy, Army and Air Force Institute (NAAFI). I still feel angry that she just left seven children in a home whilst she went off to London. She said that she had gone to London because she wanted to make some money to get us a house. I don't know why she couldn't have just got a job in Glasgow.
8. We stayed at Atholl House for approximately ten years. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] got out because they were of working age and could support and help my mother get a house. I went back to my mother's at that time. I was ten or eleven.

Atholl House, Thornley Bank, Glasgow

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Atholl House, Thornley Bank, Glasgow

21. It was 1972 and I was 10 years old when I left Atholl House. One day we were just were told that we were going home and I remember thinking "home where?" We were taken to a place called [REDACTED] in Johnstone. It was a four-block old-fashioned tenement building. It was an unfurnished council house. When I say unfurnished, I mean unfurnished. We had some very basic chairs. No carpets or fitted cupboards. We had a piece of lino on the living room floor. It was my mother's house and that was our home for the next seven years. Nobody had given us any warning that we would be returning to our mother's house. I think it probably was a voluntary arrangement when we were put into Atholl House. If it had been involuntary, I don't think my mother would have been able to take us all out so suddenly.
22. My mother had taken my eldest brothers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] out of Atholl House when they had reached working age. I think it was so that they could help her with the household bills. She took the rest of us out about eighteen months later.
23. I do not recall any social work visits to check how we were all getting on at home. I can't say 100% whether they visited or not, I'm not sure.
24. When we were staying at my mother's house I went to St David's Primary school in Johnstone. I did not fit in. I just went off the rails. I was very frustrated and couldn't accept my mother for who she was. I hated her with a vengeance. She wanted respect there and then but I couldn't respect her. I couldn't respect someone I didn't know. She had to earn my respect. She couldn't deal with my anger. We just fought like cat and dog from that day on.

25. I ran away umpteen times. I think that is when the social work started to get involved. I would refuse to go into the house at night time. I would just sit outside the front door until 10pm, 12am, 2am. My mother would scream at me and send my brothers out to find me. I think it was just being in that environment. I was out of my comfort zone. I never had any destination when I was running away, I just didn't want to go back into my mother's house. When my mother did get hold of me she would severely beat me. She was quite old fashioned in that way. She expected me to respect my elders.
26. When I started skipping school and fighting with people, I was just exhibiting pure anger. I would fight, disrespect authority and anyone who came near me. I was like a "mini-tornado". I was a wee boy but I wasn't taking any bullshit from anybody anymore. I had had enough of being thrown from pillar to post. That was the background build-up to being sent to St Ninian's in Stirling.

St Ninians, Stirling

27. The Children's Panel sent me to St Ninian's. I had been taken to the Children's Panel a couple of times. The Reporter had asked why I wasn't being chastised enough for missing school and misbehaving. She must have thought that was the reason I was behaving badly. She lifted my shirt up to reveal my back covered in welts from where I had been beaten with a belt. The Panel accepted that I was being chastised enough.
28. I had a social worker who took my mother and I to the Children's Hearings. I can't remember the name of the social worker. I think they asked for my school reports from St David's. The headmaster said that I was completely out of control, a bully and a thug. I remember thinking that it was a bit harsh for him to describe a ten year old like that.

29. I went to a couple of Children's Hearings but I didn't have any respect for them or the Reporter. I would tell the Reporter to "Go take a running jump." I can recall there being four people on the Panel. I would speak to them directly sometimes. I had no respect for any of them. I would never give them a straight answer. I wasn't a nice person but I was only ten years old. I just didn't care. I appeared before the Panel a few times before they sent me to St Ninian's. I was sent to St Ninian's as a "review case" to see how I got on. I think it was in the hope that the shock would kick me to my senses.
30. St Ninian's was a Catholic children's home run mainly by Catholic priests called "Brothers". There were civilian staff too. There were approximately 30 children at St Ninian's. I did not know anyone when I arrived. I had no siblings or friends that I recognised there with me. I think I was at St Ninian's from 1972 until 1974.

Routine at St Ninian's

31. I think the Children's Panel thought that putting me into a routine would help. My mother had never been able to get me into a routine. They thought that under the circumstances, being at St Ninian's might settle me down.

First day

32. My mother and I were driven by her friend's husband from Glasgow to Gartmore. My mum's friend was called [REDACTED] For some reason there was no social worker involved. We arrived at this big white house. It was called St Ninian's House. I remember thinking "What the hell am I going into?". My mother dropped me off and that was it. I had to go in by myself.
33. A monk called Brother ^{MJJ} [REDACTED] met me. He must have been expecting me. He was ^{SNR} [REDACTED] figure of St Ninian's. He was quite old, probably in his early seventies. He took me inside to meet the housemasters of the different houses. I can't remember the name of the house I was in. I also met the civilian staff. I was

taken by Peter Indigo. He was a municipal teacher working within the school. He showed me around the dormitories. I was told to unpack my things into a locker and go downstairs for lunch.

34. The rest of my memory is just a blur. I started to settle in. Basically, the first week was a bit of a whirlwind but I learnt the routine. It was very similar to Atholl House.

Layout / Dormitories

35. When you walked into the front main door, there were stairs to your left. Upstairs to the left there was a long corridor. There were two entrances to the dormitory I was in, one on the right, one on the left. For some reason we were only allowed to enter on the left. The dormitories were quite big. There were fourteen beds in each one. The older children had dormitories further along the corridor. They had smaller dorms with partitions between the beds. There wasn't any one monk or civilian staff member in charge of the dormitories. Different monks and staff were coming and going all the time.

36. I had a single wardrobe next to my bed. I didn't have many clothes so it was ample space for me.

Mornings and bedtime

37. We would have mass at 4.30 am. After mass we would return to our dormitories. We would get washed and dressed and go downstairs for breakfast at 7.30 am. After breakfast we would go to school then back to St Ninian's after school.

Washing

38. We would get washed in the morning before breakfast. I never had a shower in the morning, I would just comb my hair, wash my face and brush my teeth in the wash-basin.

39. At night I would have a shower. In the showers, you never had any privacy. The monks were always lurking about. By "lurking about" I don't mean in the background, I mean they were looking at you. It was a horrible feeling being watched.
40. When I was young I was a slow developer. I didn't go through puberty until I was sixteen or seventeen. I felt very uncomfortable throughout the whole process of going for a shower. There were a lot of other boys who went through puberty much younger than me. The showers were just part of the routine, you had to have a communal shower whether you liked it or not.
41. There would be a monk on duty in the showers who would walk around. It was not just one monk who did the shower duty, all of the monks took turns to be on duty. The monks who weren't on duty weren't present during the shower times. Any other adult would have just left you alone to wash and do what you had to do but the monks were sinister. There is no doubt about it.

Uniform

42. We did not have any uniform at St Ninian's. I would just wear a t-shirt and a pair of jeans. I would wear the same clothes to school. There was no school uniform either. I would be given smart clothes to wear if I had a Children's Hearing to go to. I would not be allowed to keep the smart clothes.

Food

43. We would eat our meals in a big canteen. We had typical school food, pink custard, semolina and mince and tatties. It wasn't too bad, it was edible. For breakfast we would normally have porridge, eggs, toast or cereal.
44. There was nothing sinister about the food or eating meals. If you ate your food, you ate it. If you didn't, you didn't get any afters. It was fair enough I suppose.

School

45. There was a school within St Ninian's. My IQ wasn't damaged, I was quite intelligent and could read and write from quite a young age. I don't know where I picked things up from but I did.
46. The school staff were a mix of monks and civilians. Brother MJJ SNR but he had a number of other monks all running about for him. The monks were present but they weren't friendly or approachable. They would call you by your first name. I was called HHA. The monks had to be called "Brother". You did not need to say any other name, just "Brother".
47. The monks were approachable if you had a problem in relation to school work or school issues. They would pass it on to the appropriate staff. If you had a problem in any private circumstances they would not listen. If you went to them upset or saying that you didn't like it at St Ninian's, they would send you away and tell you to just get on with it. There was no sympathy regarding your circumstances. The attitude was "You do the crime, you do the time".
48. There was also a social worker who would come into the school daily. I'm not sure whether she was just there to take children to Children's Hearings or for some other reason. I don't know whether she ever dealt with anything specific. I think she was attached to the school through Stirlingshire Council. She worked in tandem with Brother MJJ SNR figure for the school.
49. School started at 9 am. There was a break at 10.30 am, then we went back to lessons. Lunch was back in the canteen, then there were lessons until 3 pm.
50. The children that were slow at learning were in different classes. If you struggled at arithmetic you would be held back to improve it. There were Latin classes as well as the normal subjects.

51. If we misbehaved at school, we would be told to go outside or stand in the corner of the classroom. If we disrupted the class we just had to leave until we had calmed down. We did not get given lines.
52. They must have been doing something right as my English and arithmetic were pretty good for my age. In comparison to what I had been doing at my last school, where I had always been running away and playing truant, I excelled. I suppose it lasted for the first four or five months.

Running away

53. After I had settled in for a while, I began to wake up and “smell the coffee”. That was when I decided to get out of there and run away. I ran away with two other boys. Their names were something [REDACTED] from Wishaw and [REDACTED] from Dundee. I can't remember [REDACTED]'s first name. We were planning it for a week or two and headed towards Glasgow. We got through a few fields in Gartmore before someone must have realised that we had done a bunk.
54. We were about two miles away from St Ninian's when we heard these dogs and saw a policeman. We all began running but I had the sense to stop. I was laughing and crying at the same time. The other two boys carried on running. The police dog ran by me and grabbed one of the other boys by the arm. We were taken back to St Ninian's by the police. They never once asked us why we had run away. I think in those days they probably wouldn't have believed us anyway.
55. When we were taken back to St Ninian's, we were given a real hammering. Brother MJJ [REDACTED] said that we had brought shame on the school and upset the other pupils. We had upset the monks and everyone else. It was only us three boys that weren't upset.
56. We were caned as a punishment. It was sore but it was quite half-hearted for corporal punishment. I think Brother MJJ [REDACTED] was getting sexual gratification from it. I remember being frog-marched into his study by another monk but I was left in private

for the caning. I think I received twelve strokes. I had to sit right next to Brother MJJ and lift my rear end over towards him. He would remain seated so that he could see my uncovered back-side really closely. My backside was always uncovered. It was sinister to say the least. After that, I lost all respect for the monks. I felt abused.

57. The reason we ran away was because the monks had started to belt us. They had started hitting us with a really old fashioned school belt. It was leather with a buckle on. They would just swing it and hit us. They would belt us for really stupid trivial things, just high jinks or saying a swear word. It was never for anything serious like breaking a window. It was never a single stroke, they would keep hitting until they had released their anger or had their gratification. Brother HHI was particularly fond of hitting us with his belt. I'm not sure whether he kept a belt in his pocket but he was always very handy with giving it to us. Brother HHI had thick black NHS glasses and was a heavy build. He was perhaps fifty-one or fifty-two years old. We had decided that we had had enough.

Birthdays and Christmas

58. Birthdays were never celebrated at St Ninian's. I never got a cake or any presents. I remember only realising it was my birthday one Friday because the date was written on my bus ticket.
59. Christmas was treated like any other day. There were no celebrations or decorations. I didn't go home or receive any presents.

Visits / Inspections

60. I was never visited by my family or a social worker whilst I was at St Ninian's. I do not recall ever seeing anyone from the council or any inspectors visiting. I didn't care about my mother not visiting because I hated her so much. None of my siblings ever visited me.

61. As time went on I was allowed to leave St Ninian's to go and visit family for the weekend. On a Friday night, I would get a bus to Buchanan Street in Glasgow. The bus was St Ninian's and was driven by one of the Brothers. Buchanan Street was the drop off point. After that I would walk to Waterloo Street where I would get a bus to Johnstone. I would do the trip in reverse on Sunday. I would get picked up by the bus from St Ninian's at 6 pm from Buchanan Street. Going home for weekends was a taste of freedom.
62. My sister got married when she was 16. She was very young and I think it was because she wanted to get out of my mother's house. I think part of her decision to get married was to escape. She got her own house in Barrhead so she became my escape route. I would go and stay with her for a few days before the monks would suss out where I was. I would then get hauled back to St Ninian's by the police. The police never asked why I had run away, they thought it was funny. It was only when the police said to my sister that she could get prosecuted for harbouring me that I stopped going there. My sister told me I had to stop visiting her as she would get into trouble.

Healthcare

63. I cannot recall ever visiting a doctor or dentist at St Ninian's.

Religious Instruction

64. St Ninian's was a Catholic school and the monks tried to make us go to mass at 4.30 am. We would have to put a towel on the end of our beds at night if we wanted to get up for mass. The night keeper would go around and see who had towels on their beds. He would wake you up.
65. Mass was supposed to be voluntary but it normally worked out that everyone was woken up. Somehow everyone ended up with their towel on their bed. I think the monks put your towel on your bed in the night so you had to go to mass whether you liked it or not. As a twelve year old boy, I never wanted to go to mass.

66. The monks would push Catholicism onto you as much as possible. They would push boys into being altar boys. Everyone had a shot of being an altar boy. It was a bit like brain-washing. The altar boys would have a worse time because they had to get up at 3 am. They had to prepare the wine for the Holy Communion and get the incense out. After mass we would go back to our bedrooms. Some of the boys would try to get back to sleep but I never could.

Abuse at St Ninian's

Physical abuse

67. The monks would regularly give you what was known as a "johnny egg". A "johnny egg" was where the monks would skelp you really hard on your head and the back of your ears with their knuckles. It was incredibly painful. It was the Brothers who gave us johnny eggs.
68. I remember getting a really bad beating for smoking. I had taken a wee pouch of tobacco and cigarette papers with me back to St Ninian's. I had hidden it in my underpants. For some reason it managed to fall out of the bottom of my trousers. I got a real beating for that in front of everybody. There were fists and slaps and I was booted here and there. I got a lecture about how bad smoking was and how I was disrespecting the school.

Sexual abuse

69. I was sexually abused by one of the civilian staff called Jimmy or James McKinstrey. He was a security and maintenance man. He was an avid Celtic supporter. I was also a Celtic boy and completely football mad. Jimmy would prey on that and take me to Celtic games in Parkhead or Hampden. It was a dream come true for me. I think Jimmy was grooming me. It was only me that he would take with him.

70. My bedroom had a sky-light directly above my bed. I used to look up at the stars from my bed. It was a full window. On the roof there was a path around the edge almost like a moat. You could get out onto the roof and walk right around the edge. You could walk right past my window.
71. Jimmy McKinstrey was the night-watch man. One night I was lying in my bed having fallen asleep. I saw Jimmy through the skylight looking straight down at me. I was terrified and thought "What the fuck is he doing there?" He then dropped his trousers and started masturbating himself. I honestly thought I was dreaming. I had to get up and wash my face. When I got back to my bed he had gone. I woke up a few of the other boys and told them what had happened. They were all bleary eyed and said they hadn't seen anything. I saw Jimmy the next day and I asked him whether he had been on my roof the night before. He denied it. I told the other boys in my dorm to stay awake that night to try to spot Jimmy. Of course he didn't come back that night.
72. Whenever Jimmy asked me to go to a Celtic match again I would say no. He questioned why I didn't want to go any more and I told him it was because of what he had done at my window. He said that I must have been dreaming. He stayed away from me for a couple of weeks after that.
73. I remember being in the school grounds a few weeks later. Jimmy tried to hug me and feel my private parts. He tried to put his hands down my trousers. I said to him that if he tried to touch me again I would stab him. I was glad that I said it because that is when he stopped.
74. Jimmy was quite a popular guy at St Ninian's. I never heard other stories about him sexually abusing anyone else. We never really discussed it amongst ourselves but there was a body language between the children that made me think we all knew what was going on.
75. The police contacted me in around 2010 about Jimmy McInstrey. There had been allegations made against him of similar abuse. A female from the Sexual Offences

Unit asked me to give a statement. I gave a statement to the Procurator Fiscal but they didn't call me to give evidence in the end. I think there were other witnesses who had better, more recent memories than me.

Leaving St Ninians

76. I stopped running away and settled down a bit when I realised that I would never get out of St Ninian's if I continued. I worked out that I would just be taken back to the Children's Panel and kept at St Ninian's if I didn't behave. I still got the odd slap and johnny egg but my behaviour basically improved. My social worker noted my improvement and wrote a good report. It was put before the Children's Panel. They were impressed by my attitude and decided to send me back to my mother.

Life before going into St Mary's, List D School, Bishopriggs

77. I was returned to my mother's house and I was sent back into mainstream schooling. I attended St Cuthbert's school in Johnstone. The cycle started again and I went off the rails. I refused to respect or acknowledge the Establishment or any form of authority. I just told everyone to get "out of my face". I think I was even angrier than I had been before. It was the impact of the beatings I had received at St Ninian's and what had happened with Jimmy McInstrey. I went out of control again. I refused to go to school and was classed as a bully and a thug.
78. During this period, I told my mother that I was going to London with a friend. She asked me why. I told her it was because I couldn't stand her and I needed to get away from her. She said "Ok, bye". I was fourteen years old. My friend and I hitch-hiked our way down the motorway to London.
79. My friend introduced me to glue-sniffing which was a bad idea. We stayed in Piccadilly Circus for a week but decided it wasn't for us. We returned to Johnstone. I

went back to my mother's house as if nothing had happened. My mother hadn't reported me missing or anything. I went back to school the next day.

80. The police began to get involved because I was breaking into houses and shops. I was out of control. I was breaking into houses and shops because I wanted to have the same trainers and bikes that my friends had. For Christmas I would get an orange. I never received any presents or new things. I felt embarrassed. It was my way of making my own money.
81. I admit that at school at St Cuthbert's I was a nightmare. Some of the things I did were ridiculous. I remember I thought it would be funny to burn down the theatre curtains. It nearly burned down the whole school. In my mind it wasn't a bad thing to do. It wasn't sinister. I look back on it now and I cringe. I think maybe I was trying to draw attention to myself. I think I was looking for someone to ask "What is wrong with that boy?" The school did send me to the an Institute in Paisley to see if they could help. I don't know if the social work was involved in the decision to send me there. The Institute decided that I needed to see a psychiatrist.
82. My mother took me to see a doctor called Dr Kissinger. He was the psychiatrist. He asked me lots of questions. I think he was trying to establish why I was so angry. I gave him the same attitude I gave everyone else. I would give him sarcastic replies. He wrote a report. I think he recommended that I needed care and protection.
83. I was sent back to the Children's Panel. There was the same Reporter that I had seen at my last Children's Panel Hearing. He asked me what had happened to all my good progress and behaviour. My attitude was "Fuck yous." The Panel decided to send me to St Mary's. I think they thought that St Ninian's had settled me down a bit so maybe St Mary's would do the same.

St Mary's, List D school, Bishopriggs*First day*

84. I got dropped off outside St Mary's by my mother and her friend. Once again she just dumped me outside and didn't come in with me. I was met by SNR [REDACTED]. I can't remember his name but he was a big brute of a man. He was an Irish ex-boxer and his nose was completely flattened. He was massive.
85. SNR [REDACTED] shook my hand and took me inside. It was like de-ja-vu. I was taken upstairs and shown the dorm and told to go back downstairs.
86. I met a boy called [REDACTED]. He was a nice big boy from Govan. He supported Celtic and had had a similar history to me. He took me under his wing from my first day there. He warned me to "watch myself" and I told him I would heed that. After a couple of months some boys that I recognised from St Ninian's started to arrive.
87. St Mary's was run by civilian staff. I did not come into contact with any priests.

Routine at St Mary's*Mornings and bedtime*

88. The routine was much the same as at St Ninian's. We would get up, get washed and go for breakfast. We would go to school or work and come back.

Dormitories

89. There were 12 beds in each dorm. They were open plan with no privacy.

School

90. I didn't spend much time at school as I was sent to work in the kitchens. They decided that I had had enough schooling. I did not take any Highers exams or anything like that. I did not get any qualifications.

Visits / Inspections

91. We were not allowed out of the school grounds except on a Friday when we were allowed to visit our respective families. I remember on one occasion getting the bus and train to my mother's house and finding that the house was empty. My mother had just moved. I had to ask the neighbour where she had moved to. I was very angry that she had not told me she had moved. I found her new address but I didn't want to go inside in case it was the wrong house or a wind-up. I chapped on the door. My mother answered the door and she said "Oh, it's you". I said "You might have told me that you had moved?" She just said "I didnae think you'd be home this weekend".

Running away

92. I never ran away from St Mary's although I was late back at the weekends a few times. It was when I visited my sister at Barrhead. I was a one-trick pony. Generally, I was more settled at St Mary's and more accepting of the situation. I was aware of what could happen if I misbehaved so I tried to keep my head down a bit.

Recreation

93. We would make our own fun. There was the recreation room upstairs with a couch and a TV but it always had the lights off. I think it was for sexual grooming sessions only. There was no library as such or access to books for reading.
94. There was a big aerodrome type building next door where we would play five-a-side football. We were all mad-keen on football in those days. We were quite happy

kicking a ball around. The players from Partick Thistle would come down to train 2 or 3 times a week. We would be high as a kite playing football with professional players.

Healthcare

95. I can't recall ever seeing a doctor or a dentist at St Mary's. If I had a toothache or something wrong I would probably have been taken to see someone. I just never did. There weren't any six monthly check-ups or anything like that.

Abuse at St Marys

Physical abuse

96. When I arrived at St Mary's I was getting to the end of schooling age. The school was located within the grounds. My education had been good and I was clever enough. Compared to the other boys I could read and write relatively well. I knew my times tables and things. They decided that my schooling was ample and I could go to work in the kitchens instead. I could have been too advanced for the classes they put on because of my reading and writing and arithmetic. I had to attend at the kitchen at the same time that I would at school. I worked 9 am until 5 pm.
97. When I worked in the kitchen I worked with another boy my age called [REDACTED]. We would just do basic mundane things like collecting flour or washing pots. We weren't doing any cooking. We used to have quite a good laugh.
98. Nothing untoward happened until I had been at St Mary's for four or five months. There was a baker called HHF [REDACTED] who was a nice old man from Bishopbriggs. We all called him 'HHF'. One day he asked us to watch a wedding cake that he had made. There were various tiers and they were in the oven. He asked us to watch the cakes for him. We thought it would take hours for the cakes to cook so we went out to play football. When we came back the wedding cakes were completely black.

When ^{HHF} [REDACTED] came in the next day he went ballistic. He gave us a massive hiding, a really severe beating. It would be criminal now to use that sort of violence. I had thought he was a nice guy before that.

99. A while later, we were allowed to make the scotch pies. We had to put the mince in the pastry. [REDACTED] and I decided to add loads of salt to the pies so that when people bit into the pie they would get a mouthful of salt. We got a big hiding for that too. I had to go to work in the laundry after that as a punishment. It was disgusting, I had to physically pick up soiled teenager's underpants. They didn't give you gloves or tongs or anything. I worked at the laundry for three or four months before returning to the kitchens.
100. There was also a big guy called ^{HHG} [REDACTED] at St Mary's. He was civilian staff member but I don't know what his job title was. He used to play [REDACTED] for [REDACTED]. I think he was only in the reserve team. I don't think he was good enough to play for [REDACTED] although he told everyone he did. He was a big brute of a man. I remember we were at the communal showers one day. There was this young boy called [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] had old-fashioned round National Health glasses and bright strawberry-blond hair. His face was always flushed red. I will never forget the wee boy. He said something cheeky to ^{HHG} [REDACTED]. ^{HHG} [REDACTED] grabbed him out of the shower. When [REDACTED] came back his eye was bursting out. It looked like his guts were hanging out of his eyes. His glasses were just mangled. His hair was all ripped up. He got such a severe beating for nothing.
101. [REDACTED] was never taken to hospital. I think if he had been taken to hospital, questions would have been asked about what had happened to him. There might have been a nurse within St Mary's. I don't know whether he got treated by her. If it happened nowadays he would have definitely been taken to hospital. His eye was in some mess. When I saw him again he had his eye covered. Whether that was by a nurse or it was by ^{HHG} [REDACTED] himself I don't know. When the bandage came off there was some mess to his eye. He would have been scarred for life. I was never asked about the incident by the staff or the headmaster or anyone.

102. On one occasion I decided to cut my own hair. I think it had more to do with attention seeking than wanting a "short back and sides". It was terrible, there were clumps of hair everywhere. SNR [REDACTED] went absolutely ballistic. He asked me "Are you on glue or something?! What the hell have you done to your hair?" I said that I had cut it. I got a slap for that. It wasn't that bad a slap.

Mental Abuse

103. We would be threatened with never seeing our families again. In my case that was a good thing. They would threaten us with never seeing our families as a general policy really. It was mind games to try to get us to behave. If you had a Children's Panel Hearing coming up you would be threatened with a bad report.

Sexual Abuse

104. When I went back to work in the kitchens there was a man called Bill Franks who worked there. He was a civilian cook. I remember he said he was quite claustrophobic. He was in charge, he started getting over familiar with me. He started brushing against me unnecessarily. I was in the fridge one day. It was a walk-in fridge. Bill Franks touched my backside. I ignored it and didn't say anything. The next day I was in the fridge and he followed me in. There was no reason for him to be in the fridge. He closed the door. I said "If you touch me in this fucking fridge, sure as God, I will be jailed tonight for murder. I'm going to go into that kitchen, get the biggest knife and I'm going to cut your fucking throat". Those were the exact words I used. He looked at me. I said to him "Go on Bill, try something". His words were "Please don't tell anyone". He knew exactly what he was going to do. He was in there to molest me or rape me or sexually abuse me. I said to him "You might get what you want right now, but trust me when I get out of this fridge I will get what I want". That was the end of our conversation.
105. Looking back it was strange that he followed me into the fridge because he said he was claustrophobic. It could have just been an excuse so that he went into the fridge with other boys.

106. After the fridge incident, Bill Franks never came near me again. I still worked in the kitchen but there was an uneasy tension. I can honestly say that if he had laid a hand on me I would have killed him. I would have stabbed him there and then. It wouldn't have bothered me if I had got twenty or thirty years in jail. He backed off from me after that but he was definitely interfering with other kids.
107. Bill Franks had a habit of making new recruits, the youngsters, sit on his knee in the recreation room. He was always taking the new recruits up to the recreation room after they first arrived. He would do that for maybe the first week or two to "give them comfort." There was a TV, couch and magazines in there. The lights were always turned off. There was never a light on at night just the TV. In hindsight it must have been one of his ploys to keep the lights out. He kept the young ones at the back and he would fondle them. The boys must have been around thirteen years old.
108. When I first started at St Mary's, Bill had tried his luck with me. I don't know if he was a drinker or a smoker or if it was just really bad BO but he had this overwhelming smell. He tried to get me to sit on his knee. He tried to play with me beneath my midriff and get into my trousers. He pretended to be kidding around but he wasn't pretending. He was seeing how much he could get away with. I just told him to "Get away". After sitting on his knee. I was pretty clued up about him. I was pretty streetwise by that stage. I knew what was happening. I wasn't stupid. I was angry, really angry, and wouldn't tolerate it.
109. There was another member of staff. I think he was called HHE. He liked sitting boys on his knee as well. He worked in the workshops and smoked a pipe. I don't know whether it was my attitude that kept him away from me. Maybe Bill Franks had told him what I had said to him. Maybe they worked in groups to target certain boys. I don't know. I think HHE was convicted of sexual abuse much later.

Leaving St Mary's

110. When I was working in the kitchen, my social worker Marjorie Dixon started taking me under her wing a bit. We just called her Marj. I think she saw that I was getting a bit old to still be at St Mary's. She took me to one side and said "If you start to behave yourself and get on with your life in here I will get an appointment with the Children's Panel and we will see if we can get you out of here". I was past school age by then. I don't know whether there was a time-bar on how long they could keep you.
111. Marj kept her word and got me a Hearing at the Children's Panel. She took me to the Children's Panel herself this time. She gave me a good report and said that she and St Mary's were happy with my progress. The Children's Panel did not agree. The Panel was concerned that if I was out of school and out of a job, I would return to my old ways. The Panel refused to let me out because I didn't have a job. I thought "How am I supposed to get a job if I can't leave?" Marj said "Leave it with me for twelve weeks and we will go back to the Hearing and I will see what I can do for you."
112. Marj did some investigations and got me onto a course at Reid-Kerr College to train as a chef. I think it was a Youth Training Scheme (YTS) course. It was twenty hours a week. She asked me if I was interested and I just asked if it would get me out of St Mary's. She said there was a 99% chance I would get out if I accepted a place on the course. It was basically a year's job with training. I said I would go for it so we went back to the Children's Panel.
113. The Panel listened to what Marj had to say about the course and Reid-Kerr College. I was accepted onto the course and let out of St Mary's. I left St Mary's in [REDACTED] and started college in [REDACTED]. Marj took me to Glasgow and spent about £100 on new clothes for me. Being a teenager I was quite happy at having Adidas tracksuits and things. She also got a grant from a government scheme to buy me my chefs whites and books.

114. After I had been at college about 10 weeks, Marj sent me a letter asking how I was getting on. We didn't have a phone in those days. I wrote back telling her I was fine and enjoying the course. I thanked her for all her help. She was the only person I had come across during my time in care that had any sympathy. I really appreciated what she did for me. I have been cheffing ever since. That was how I got into the catering industry.
115. I must have still been under the supervision of the social work department during my time at college because I was appointed a social worker from Renfrewshire Council. Her name was Mary Hamilton. She lived at Eldersley and came to visit me every 4 weeks. She kept tabs on me and told me to make sure that I towed the party line and kept on the straight and narrow. Unfortunately I didn't heed her warnings.

Reporting of abuse at St Mary's

116. At the time, I never reported Bill Franks and the sexual abuse to the police or anyone else. My social worker Marjorie Dixon was excellent with me. There was another civilian called Jerry. He was really into football and I used to play football with him. He was great too. There were good people as well as bad at St Mary's. Some of them took an interest in your welfare and made sure that if you behaved yourself you would be rewarded. By rewarded I mean you would get out, go back to see your families. In hindsight, I could probably have told Marjorie Dixon about what was going on and she would have believed me. I just wish that I did.
117. Whether the staff saw what was happening and turned a blind eye, I don't know. They couldn't have missed [REDACTED]'s eye. His eye was in such a mess someone other than ^{HHG} [REDACTED] must have seen it. Whether the staff told [REDACTED] not to tell anyone what had happened or put the fear of God into him I don't know. Maybe they told him to say that he fell or something like that. I couldn't say for sure what happened but they couldn't not have seen his eye. I would say that those sort of beatings at St Mary's happened weekly or fortnightly.

118. When I cut my own hair **SNR** sent me down to the hairdresser in Bishopbriggs. It was in the shopping centre by the train station. I think it was someone called **MHL** who took me into town and asked the hairdresser to fix my hair. It was the middle of June and it must have been eighty degrees. I was wearing a parka so that no one could see my hair. I took my parka off and the woman hairdresser just burst out laughing. She said "My God son, what have you done to your hair?". I told her that I had done it myself. She said "That is just not right. Who cuts their hair like that? There is something not right here". She phoned the police.
119. The police came to the hairdressers and spoke to the man called **MHL**. They also spoke to **SNR**. They asked me why I had cut my hair. I told them that I thought it would be a good idea. That was the end of it but it just shows you how other people pick up on things like that. It was strange that the hairdresser called the police for someone cutting their own hair. I wish someone had been more understanding years back and noticed that something was wrong. In hindsight I should have opened up to the police back then.
120. In 2010 I was in touch with Police Scotland. I was part of a victim group that was involved with Cameron Fyfe. Cameron Fyfe sent me a letter and I sent him a statement. He asked me whether I would be willing to be a witness if I was called. I said "I will go as a witness no problem. I have already told the PF that". Cameron Fyfe was trying to get compensation from the criminal injuries board for the group.
121. I told Cameron Fyfe that I wasn't bothered about compensation but they sent me an offer. The offer was built down in stages and because I had been a "bad boy" my reward was being reduced. There was a scale and it depended on your criminal convictions how much the amount was scaled down. I was offered £2000. I said I would just take it. I thought it was a slap in the teeth. I was being punished because of my criminal convictions. In my eyes, my criminal convictions were caused by what had happened to me. I couldn't care less whether it was £2, £2000 or £20,000. It was the principle.

Life after being in care*Criminal Justice System*

122. After my college course I went back to Johnstone and got in with a crowd of friends. We weren't bad but we just got up to no good. We were helping ourselves to money that we shouldn't have been helping ourselves to. We were robbing shops and breaking into houses. I'm ashamed to say I went for rich houses where I thought the owners could afford it. I know that is completely the wrong attitude. It was disrespectful but in those days I didn't think about things like that. I just helped myself to other people's belongings. It was totally wrong and unacceptable. I used to steal things just so that I could have a good weekend.
123. I began to get caught up in the criminal justice system. I ended up going to Glenochil, the old fashioned "DC" or detention centre in 1982. I was about twenty years old. It was for a mixture of things. Breaches of the peace, stealing, breaking and entering. I think it was the combination of offences that made the judge say to himself "He needs a shock". I went to Glenochil for 8 weeks or what they called "5 days and a breakfast". The "5 days and a breakfast" was good actually because they wouldn't let you smoke. It meant that when I got out I could run faster from the police.
124. My social worker, Mary Hamilton, in Johnstone got in touch with me and told me that if I didn't change my behaviour, the next stop was Borstal. She said Borstal wouldn't be "5 days and a breakfast". It would be 9 months at a minimum (and that was if I behaved myself). It would be 18 months if I didn't behave myself. She said "The choice is yours." I kind of thought about it but I think at 21 I was too old to go to Borstal. I think I would have been too old for Borstal.
125. I was sent for a 3 week remand stint in Barlinnie for the same sort of things. Fighting and breaches of the peace. It was then that I had a wake-up call. I was lying in a cell one night and I said to myself "Is this the life you want **HHA**?" It kind of sobered me up. I was thinking "Do you really want to go through life like this?" I knew what was

going to happen if I didn't tow the party line, behave and settle down. I knew criminality would just become my lifestyle like my brother [REDACTED].

Siblings

126. [REDACTED] was sent to St Josephs for the same sort of reasons that I was sent to St Ninian's. It was in the 1970's, probably 1972 that he went there. [REDACTED] was out of control and angry. He hated my mother but also loved her. I just hated her. He wouldn't let me say a bad word against her. Throughout his life he went to every establishment or penitentiary and prison in Scotland. He came out of St Josephs, went to a DC, went to Borstal, went to Low Moss, went to Barlinnie, went to Greenock, he went to them all. He was well known in the jails. He was an alcoholic and could never keep a job down. He would do a week's work, get paid and then go on a two week drinking binge. He got into a cycle of job, drink, jail. He never opened up to me or my siblings. He never spoke to me about his experiences. He never shared any stories of abuse but when he was sober he would rock himself. He couldn't sit still. He had his demons.
127. One day he went to bed drunk. He fell out of the bed and broke his neck. There were four hundred people at his funeral.
128. My other brother [REDACTED] was in some home near Paisley. He had alcohol problems and dementia. He got his own house quite young. He took in a male lodger in the late seventies. The male lodger ended up going off with his wife. He just turned to alcohol from then on. He was drunk for the rest of his life basically. He recently passed away.
129. My brother [REDACTED] went to a special school called Mary Russell in Paisley. He was backwards in reading and writing. He never went to any listed schools or anywhere like that. He just came out of the home, went to the special school and went through life. He never had a problem with alcohol. He is in a bad way with his lungs. He has emphysema now. He has to be on oxygen 24 hours a day.

Career and home circumstances

130. It took a couple of years before I got a head chef job. It was in [REDACTED] Hotel in Paisley. That is where I met my partner [REDACTED]. From then until 2007 I behaved myself. There was not so much as a blot on my paper.
131. I bought a house in 1997. It was on one of the schemes in Elgin. My daughter went to school and was settled. I was working off-shore in a routine 2 weeks on, 2 weeks off. I was going through life going on holidays, I had bank cards, I was just doing what everyone else does.

Breakdown / Alcohol difficulties

132. One day I was on a bus to Aberdeen. The train had been cancelled so I had to take the bus. I hate buses, I can't get on them to this day. I left the house at 12 pm and I was due to check-in at 5 pm to go off-shore. I was on the bus for 2 minutes when I got a whiff of this smell. It was the smell of Bill Franks. I don't know whether it was his bad breath, his body odour, smoke or whatever it was, it just gave me a flash-back. I thought I was sitting beside him. I felt physically sick. I had to get off the bus.
133. The rest of 2007 was not a good year for me. I just hit the bottle with a vengeance. I lost my house, I lost my job and I nearly lost my family. It was all down to that one incident on the bus. I didn't sober up for 12 months. I ended up back in jail for a couple of remands for drunk driving, police assault and domestic abuse. I was behaving like a total twat. I was bouncing cheques left, right and centre. I had no money in the bank but was trying to keep the addiction going. My debts started spiralling out of control and I ended up going bankrupt.
134. It was my responsibility to control the situation but my head just wasn't in a good place. I just went totally out of control with alcohol. It really upset my daughter and I think that is why she went into the mental health side of things. I think she wondered "What is wrong with my Dad because he was never like that". After 2007, my daughter wrote me a letter saying that I had better get myself a house and move

back to Paisley. She said that she wasn't going to speak to me. She said that it was totally unacceptable and I couldn't live like that anymore.

135. I went to see a psychologist to try to sort myself out but she was trying to dig too deep, too quick. I think the reason for that was because she was an NHS psychologist so her time was at a premium. If you missed a session, she never took you back, you had to keep your appointment. Being drunk all the time, keeping appointments was never a priority for me. Alcohol was my priority. In any case, when I went to see her she was digging too deep too quick so I stopped going.
136. I moved down to London and slept rough for a couple of weeks. I slept in cardboard by Waterloo train station. I had time to reflect and I said to myself "FHA you had bought a house. You had a job off-shore. You had a family and you just threw it away". In my mind it was Bill Franks, the homes, the abuse, the alcohol. I just couldn't handle the flash-blacks. I said to myself "You have to get your act together".
137. I phoned [REDACTED] from London and asked her if she wanted to try again. Understandably she was very cagey about it. She said "What happens if you go back on that drink?" I said that I couldn't promise that I wouldn't go back on the drink but that I could promise that I would go back to work and try to get back into a routine again. I think life is better when I am in a routine. I need a routine. I think everyone needs a routine. She asked me if I would go off-shore again and I said yes because the money was so good. But part of my problem was that I had too much time on my hands, 2 weeks on, 2 weeks off. I would get bored and go to the pub. The cycle would just start again. But I said I would try for her. So I went off-shore but I had an accident. A helicopter did an emergency landing and I decided that I didn't want to do off-shore work anymore.
138. I went back to see an adviser in Aberdeen. I saw some courses for ships advertised but I needed some different qualifications. I paid £1500 to do one of the courses to get on the ships. I have been working on ships for the last four years.

Impact

139. My biggest issue when I was growing up between coming out of the homes and meeting my partner [REDACTED] was anger. I have struggled with anger right through my life. Total and utter anger. I cannot emphasise enough how much I would have stabbed somebody in the blink of an eyelid. It wouldn't have entered my head as to the consequences. I was that angry. As I grew up, obviously I got older and wiser but I still had a big chip on my shoulder.
140. A lot of anger was directed towards my mother and the way I was brought up. A lot of anger was towards the Establishment and the way I was treated. To get on in life, you have to respect authority. To this day I just can't come to terms with someone telling me what to do. I am very short-fused. Throughout my working life I have never been able to accept management. I would just fly off the handle. I had an attitude of "Fuck yous". It caused me a lot of grief and disciplinaries at work. I just felt that I couldn't explain all of my background to my employers. I'm an easy-going guy when you get to know me but don't step on my toes. I get very, very defensive. It's a lot to do with defending myself I think. Sometimes when I get angry I scare myself. I know I could do something that could have serious consequences. Hopefully I am old enough and wise enough not to over-step the line.
141. Going back to when I ran away from St Mary's, the police never asked me "why?" They probably would know but back in the 1970's it was a different kettle of fish. [REDACTED] went home at the weekends. Why the hell didn't someone say something about his eye? Why didn't someone call the police? There were so many things, tell-tale signs left, right and centre that were never picked up. That caused a lot of anger within me.
142. I am more upset about what I have put my partner and daughter through because of my actions. I wasn't so angry at Bill Franks but at my own actions and the way I reacted to that smell. Maybe if I had had counselling then I would know how to handle those trigger situations. My counselling back then was just alcohol.

143. I have not received any counselling or therapy for my experiences. I am not prescribed any medication. I don't like going on any medication, I think it is false therapy. I've been in touch with the Samaritans and the charity Breathing Space. I gave them a call and they listened but they turned around and said "It's your life you need to get on with it". Its fair enough I suppose. I have been given the details of Future Pathways and may give them a try.

Records

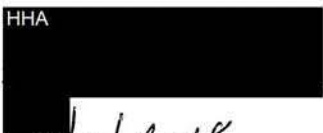
144. I enquired at Renfrewshire social work department a few years back for my records from St Mary's and St Ninian's. I didn't have much luck. It would be good to see my records to get a timeline of my life in care.

Lessons to be learned

145. I think we need to look for signs of child abuse. If it happens, the signs are there. Listening is one of the biggest lessons to learn. In my eyes a child wouldn't make up a story as dramatic as the one I am telling. I just don't think a child could make it up. Not even out of vindictiveness or badness. I just don't think a child could be plausible enough to do that. Listening to children has to be 100% the priority because if they have a story to tell someone has to be listening to them.

146. I still view social work as part of the Establishment. I think that children should be able to speak to someone independent of social work and the institution they're in. It should be someone qualified that the child is comfortable to speak to. Someone who might have expertise in dealing with children who have suffered child abuse.

147. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed..... 
Dated..... 7/1/2015.....