

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

QEQ [REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is QEQ [REDACTED] though I prefer to be known as QEQ [REDACTED] which is what everybody calls me. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1960. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I believe I was born in Clydebank but can't say for certain. I may have actually been born in Helensburgh but that was the maternity ward for Clydebank.
3. My parents were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and there were ten of us children. My parents both died many years ago. From the oldest to the youngest my brothers were [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] then me. My sisters were [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I was the youngest. I very rarely have any contact with them these days.
4. While I was still in nappies all ten of us were put in to Quarriers. I cannot say for sure why we were placed there and can only assume we were a disfunctional family.

Quarriers, Bridge of Weir

5. I have very little recollection of my time there. As I say, I was still in nappies. I know that I was initially placed in the nursery and was there from 1961 till either 1962 or

1963. After that I was put in to cottage 13 where the house parents were Mr and Mrs QDW/QDX

6. I recall that Quarriers had wide open spaces and there was a lot of freedom. There was also a church there which was the only time I saw any of my brothers or sisters. I remember that cottage 13 was right next to the nursery which might be why I was put in there. None of my brothers or sisters were in cottage 13 with me.
7. Mr and Mrs QDW/QDX were in their 50's and I know that they retired to Ireland in the 70's. Mr QDW would reprimand the other kids but I didn't see him abuse them.
8. There were between three and five children in each dorm and I would say there were at least ten boys and girls in each cottage.
9. The only thing I recall about the food was that we got tapioca which I hated. Basically you ate what you were given or you starved. I have no recollection of anybody being force-fed.

Injury at Quarriers

10. One of my few recollections of my time there was standing on the table when Mr QDW slapped me on the head causing me to fall off the table whereupon I broke my arm. Whether he meant to break my arm or not I cannot say.
11. One thing I do recall about that was, because I had to get a stookie, plaster cast on my arm, I wasn't allowed to go on a holiday I was due to be going on. That would have been the first holiday I would have gone on. I would have been about four years old at this time so it would probably be 1964.
12. Another thing I would say about that time of my life was that later, when I was eight, I had an operation on my left eye but they were unable to save the sight in it.

13. I was told that if the operation had been done before I had turned five they could have saved my sight. The problem with my eye was never picked up during my time in Quarriers.

Leaving Quarriers

14. At the age of three I went to stay with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in Paisley. This was arranged by my social worker Mr Clarke who was my social worker till I was sixteen. His boss was Mrs ^{QKC}[REDACTED] whose office was in Clydebank. I recall being in her office one time and her battering my head with the back of her hand causing my head to hit a bookcase.
15. Prior to me leaving Quarriers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had been taking me out at weekends, probably as preparation for them fostering me. They were to become the only real parents I ever knew.
16. When I was fourteen or fifteen I learned that my whole family were moved from Quarriers because one of my brothers, I don't know which one, was sexually abused.

Foster care with Mr and Mrs [REDACTED]

17. I stayed with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] until I was eleven years old and you couldn't have met two nicer people. They knew about my arm having been broken and I know they mentioned this to the social work.
18. While there, I attended the West primary school. What I do remember was that there was a boy, [REDACTED], who kept hitting me. I punched him and got moved to Maxwelltown primary school. However, I didn't settle there and got moved to Amochery primary school.
19. The only time I saw my father was when he came to see [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and tell them that he was dying of cancer. I didn't have any contact with my siblings while I was

with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and didn't realise that they were in residential places not far from me in Paisley.

20. I have nothing but good memories about the time I stayed with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

Leaving foster case

21. There was a review of my care in 1971 as a result of which I was sent to Bellfield which was a remand centre in Dumbarton. I have no idea why this was done. I was getting on great with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and had been attending school regularly. It was a place for criminals and I had done nothing wrong.
22. I learned later that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had tried to adopt me but had been considered too old. That was nonsense, they were only in their 40's. It was ludicrous that I was moved from their care.

Bellfield remand centre, Dumbarton

Routine at Bellfield

First day

23. I think it was [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who first took me to Bellfield. We got there and the doors opened. I recall that two members of staff, ^{AIB}[REDACTED] and a guy called ^{AIA}[REDACTED] grabbed me, stripped me naked then put me in a room where they hosed me down with an industrial type hose.
24. To me it seemed as if they were doing this simply because they thought it was funny. It lasted for about ten minutes. They were wearing civilian clothes. ^{AIB}[REDACTED] always wore suits while ^{AIA}[REDACTED] would wear cardigans.

25. Only the outer doors were permanently locked in Bellfield. The windows had wire running through them and could only be partially opened. I was in Bellfield for a few months.

Mornings and bedtime

26. You would get up in the morning at about 7:30 am being woken by day staff. They tended to do twelve hour shifts and would pull you out of your bed or throw water on you. There were about nine in a dorm and you had your own bed and a unit to put your stuff in.
27. Before and after breakfast you would do chores like polishing floors with those big buffers. Thereafter you would be in the TV room watching things like "Watch with mother". There was no school or attempts to educate you.
28. There were no organised activities or anything like that though you could sometimes play football. You would be watching TV till supper at 8:00 pm then more TV then bed.

Mealtimes / Food

29. The food was rotten but you had to eat it as there was nothing else. I remember that one of the other boys had a glass eye and his party-piece was to take it out and put it in your mince and say "keep an eye on that for me". It was disgusting.

Washing / bathing

30. You were dipped in a bath, scrubbed and back out. Staff were in the vicinity

Visits / Inspections/ Review of Detention

31. ██████ and ██████ visited me every weekend. They could never understand why I was there and ██████ used to say that I wouldn't be there for long. They would bring me clean clothes and take the dirty ones away to wash.
32. There was no meetings with staff or social workers while I was there. It was "out of sight out of mind".

Bed Wetting

33. Anybody who wet the bed would get reprimanded and slapped. You're bed got stripped and the mattress was turned. You dreaded it happening. The place was very regimented and if you stepped out of line you got walloped.

Abuse

34. The abuse was slaps and dead-arms and legs done by AIB ██████ and the guy called AIA ██████ I also got regular hosings and on one occasion, as I was getting hosed, I put my foot through AIA ██████ shin to defend myself.
35. The main form of discipline was forcing you to polish the floors. There was no use of the belt or things like that. In fact you were allowed to smoke though, officially, not till you turned twelve.
36. The place had a gang mentality and there were constant fights between the various rivals especially between those from Clydebank and Drumchapel. You were constantly living in fear.

Reporting of abuse at Bellfield

37. I did tell ██████ and ██████ about what was happening to me in Bellfield. It's possible that they told somebody about it and maybe that was why I was moved. ██████ and

█ were the only people I could talk to about it. I couldn't speak to the staff and social workers didn't come and see me.

Leaving Bellfield remand centre, Dumbarton

38. When I was twelve or thirteen a children's panel sent me to Woodcroft in Lenzie. I didn't attend this panel. I was taken there by █ and her friend █ who I called aunt. Woodcroft was an annex of Woodilee Psychiatric Hospital though was about four miles from it.

Woodcroft, annex to Woodilee Hospital

39. When we arrived at Woodcroft I opened the car door and ran for it. I ran to the train station and got a train to Glasgow then another one to Paisley where I made my way to █ and █'s house. I had tea there then █ and his friend took me back to Woodcroft. █ made me promise to stay this time and behave.

40.  Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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44. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Secondary Institutions - to be published later

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Leaving Woodcroft

75. When I was fourteen I was sent back to live with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] though no explanation was given to me as to why I was allowed to go home.
76. I was there for four months during which I attended part-time at Camphill which was apparently their way of integrating me back into the school system.
77. Unfortunately [REDACTED] the boy I had had a run-in with at West Primary School was also there and I again was subjected to bullying from him. As a result of this I was sent back to Woodcroft.
78. I left Woodcroft as soon as I turned sixteen. Before I left there had been no outside training for the future. There was no back-up or consideration given to what I was going to do. There was no vocational training.

Craiginch Prison Aberdeen

79. When I was sixteen I was living in a hostel in Pollokshaws. Somebody said they were going to Aberdeen in a car but unbeknown to me it had been stolen. We got arrested and I ended up in Craiginch Prison in Aberdeen on remand for three weeks.
80. This was an adult prison. I was put on remand because I couldn't raise the bail. It took two weeks before somebody paid my £35 bail.
81. When I arrived I was put through reception and got my clothes changed and was put onto the top landing along with the regular adult prisoners.
82. After three or four days I was in my cell during what was called association time. This meant that the cell doors were unlocked and prisoners could go in and out of them. I never left my cell during this time.
83. It was during such a time that I was in my cell when three guys came in, grabbed me and attacked me. They raped me. I went crazy and ended up in the segregation unit till I was bailed. I don't know who it was who attacked me.
84. The screws knew I had been attacked but just walked away from it.
85. There was no segregation of ages and as a sixteen year old I was put in the main prison. After I got bailed I never heard any more about the charge of car theft. This was about [REDACTED] 1976 and when I got out I hitch-hiked back home.

Life after care

86. During that summer when I left Woodcroft I was offered a live-in position in [REDACTED] Hotel in Argyle. I did the summer there then went to [REDACTED] in Torquay. I did a second year apprenticeship there then a third year apprenticeship in Leicester.

87. I eventually became a Maître D' which I did for many years. When I left catering I moved into landscaping but developed medical problems and had to retire from it about ten years ago. I haven't worked since.
88. I was never married but have two children. I keep in touch with my daughter though not so much with my son who stays with his mum.

Impact

89. Sometimes at night it won't leave my mind. I try to minimise the impact by becoming a third person to it. I feel as if I've been a pawn in a game of chess and moved from pillar to post without ever being given a reason.
90. I feel as if I've just accepted it because there's nothing else I can do. I don't like it but to move on I've had to accept what happened. I think to have settled down and be happy after what I went through took some doing. It's something I'll never forget.

Reporting of Abuse

91. I gave a statement to the police in June 2018 during which I told them everything that happened to me while in residential care and that I had been raped in Craiginch prison. There was no point reporting that part of it to the screws that had been in Craiginch as they already knew what had happened. Prior to speaking to the police in June 2018 I had never reported any of the other stuff that happened to me to anybody in an official position though I did tell [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

Records

92. I have never asked for my records though I have signed a mandate authorising a lawyer's firm in Glasgow, Thomson's in Bath Street, who are taking out an action against Dumbarton Social Services on my behalf, to try and obtain them.

Counselling

93. I was never on medication after leaving Woodcroft and I am unaware of having had any mental health issues while there though I am now on anti-depressants and pain killers.
94. About fourteen years ago I saw a forensic psychiatrist from Ayrshire on two or three occasions, Dr Flowerdew. He asked me to write a life-line. I remember asking [REDACTED] to read it. She just stood and cried and hugged me. She hadn't realised how much I had gone through.
95. Dr Flowerdew said I had been a victim of the state and that what had happened to me had been terrible. I felt a lot better having spoken to him.

Lessons to be Learned

96. They should take away the masculinity and violence. There should be more therapeutic talking. If kids have to get drugs it should not be overdone. You shouldn't go overboard with prescription drugs.
97. I think there should be a better way than people having to come forward. Establishments should be better inspected in the first place. Undercover cameras have shown how much abuse still goes on in places where they are supposed to be looking after people.
98. Such places should be better staffed with the appropriate number of psychiatrists in place and the patients welfare should be better represented.
99. The past has to be put to bed and the future has to be rewritten before it's implied. Rules and regulations have to be changed and better ones put in place. The children have to be listened to.

Other information

100. [REDACTED] died about 24 years ago. About sixteen years ago [REDACTED] broke her hip and I looked after her until she died about ten years ago. I couldn't have wished for two better people to look after me. It's probably thanks to them that I never took to either drink or drugs.

101. 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.. [REDACTED] QEQ

Dated..... 20/6/2018