

Name: Ian Burt

Case Ref Number: APP219497

Status: PRIORITY

DOB – 27/01/1946 - 80 years old

Social Services/Local authority - South Lanarkshire Council

Name(s) of Care Home – Polmont - 14 days, Friarton Court - 3 months

Reason for going into care: Breaking and entering

Age in care: Approximately age 17 - 1963

Parents Name: William Ernest Burt & Elizabeth Smart Lindsay Burt

Siblings: Norman Kenneth Burt - 18th or 20th of August 1940

Personal statement

Polmont -

I was arrested and taken to the police station and then appeared before the sheriff court and given 3 months' detention. I was around 17 years old when I was sent to Polmont. I spent 14 days there. While there I suffered physical & sexual abuse.

I was beaten black and blue by staff members. I was touched inappropriately 2 or 3 times by staff members. I had a single cell. They would come into my cell and touch me down below. They tried to make me touch them, but I resisted and that's when I got beat up. I was only there 14 days, and I was beaten up around 5 times by staff members. I was covered in bruises. I had to go to the toilet in a bucket in my room. I had it thrown at me by staff and made to clean it up.

Friarton Court in Perth

I was then moved to Friarton Court in Perth. I spent 3 months there. When you arrived there your head was shaved. You were not allowed to talk. For every meal you had to shout loud and say thank you. I suffered severe physical abuse there. It was run like an army prison. If my bed block wasn't up to their standards I would be smacked in the face. The floors all had to be polished and then a staff member would walk on them and say that there were footprints on it and I would get a beating for that, even though it was his footprints.

I was smacked with a bunch of keys often. It was always on the body where the bruises could be covered. Most of the staff members were ex-army and big, hefty men. There was one that was referred to as the boxer. He gave out the beatings. There was another one called Cameron, he was like a sergeant. He was an animal. He beat me black and blue for no reason. I would fight back which made it worse. Every time I got a beating my ribs would be in agony. I never received any medical treatment.

I was beaten so badly at times and punched in the face that my teeth started to go crooked and I lost most of my teeth eventually. I recall this would happen twice per week for my entire time there.

I was made to have ice cold showers at 5am. Every shower I was made to line up with 6 other boys naked and stand while the staff inspected us.

I was made to try and run a mile in under 6 - 8 minutes. If I didn't make the time I had to do it again. This would be repeated until I dropped to the ground. We had physical training which was brutal at least three times a week and ran on the spot for periods of time.

We were also sent into a gymnasium to play 'murder ball' as it was referred to and this would be fighting the other teams to get the ball, again this was brutal.

The staff members hated people from Glasgow or the West of Scotland, so I got picked more.

I was degraded by staff there; I was called a scumbag and an idiot. I witnessed other boys being abused a couple of times.

I had one visit the whole time I was there.

My time there was horrific, I suffered flashbacks for a while after I left there. I was only a kid but not according to them. I've struggled with my back and resorted to heavy drinking to numb this experience. I have lived on antidepressants to cope for the majority of my time and it's been only since reaching out to you that I have spoken about my experience which also meant I had to share this with my wife Susan and Children – who have been supportive in helping me to manage this - it's been stressful going through this. I now have cancer - Hodgkin's Lymphoma as well as a heart condition. At 80 I can only hope to see an outcome.

Received on the 28/10/2025 –

Thank you for your call today. Here are the points I told you about.

Murder ball was played in the gymnasium. A large rubber ball was placed in the centre of the gym. Two teams were placed at each end. The officer would blow a whistle, and both teams had to get the ball to the opposite team's end. The only rules were, you couldn't punch or kick the ball. They said it was to relieve tension. The teams were usually made up from boys from the Glasgow area versus the rest. All it was, was a mass fight as you just went for someone you had issues with.

The so-called officers did not like anyone from the Glasgow/ West of Scotland areas. I remember being woken about 2/3 am to go and clear snow. We were told to wear sand shoes, shorts, and a vest. Usually there would be 5/6 boys, all from the Glasgow area. We were sweeping snow in the freezing cold. They were very hard on bed-wetters, young boys who just couldn't handle the regime.

Visits. I can't remember how many visits you were allowed, but in 3 months I had one. It was a closed visit with one of the officers sitting at the end of the desk. If your mother/father asked you a question, ie what's the daily routines, you had to look at the officer and he would nod yes or no, you can answer. You were not allowed to talk about the actual day to day routines.

Food. The food was not too bad. Most inmates were hungry with the circuit training giving you a good appetite. It was expected that you eat everything you were served. Certain officers would pick on someone who hadn't finished all the food, tell them to finish the food and if they didn't, you would be put on report for not obeying an order, for which you could lose remission/privileges. I lost most of my remission because I was from the Glasgow area and I stood up for myself.

Recreation. Was a joke. We all sat round tables and looked at each other waiting to get a read at a 3-day old newspaper. You were not allowed to talk to each other. You had to wait till the officer

was at the other end of the room and whisper to the other person. If you were caught taking, depending on who was the officer, you were put on report and lose remission.

Staff. They were mostly ex-army, and the place was run on the basis of an army detention camp. If you had finished a task you would run to the officer, and tell him whilst running on the spot, with your knees as high as you can get them.

I can't remember how often I was assaulted but it was quite a few times. It was always done out of view of witnesses, usually in your cell.