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Quarrier's paedophile failed to offer apology in court as abuse victim looked on

A convicted paedophile failed to offer an apology for his crimes as he appeared before the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry.

John Porteous, 85, was jailed in 2002 for sex offences against two boys at Quarrier's Village in Bridge of Weir, Renfrewshire, where he worked in the 1960s and 1970s.

Lady Smith, the judge leading the inquiry, told the public gallery, including one of Porteous' victims, that his convictions were "established fact" but that it was Porteous' position that "no apology is offered or is due".

David Whelan, 61, who was abused by Porteous as a child, sat listening to the evidence.

Mr Whelan, who has waived his right to anonymity, has previously criticised the decision to call Porteous to give evidence. Porteous said he grown up at the children's home until the age of 15, returning to work there in 1969 and staying until his retirement in 1998.

He admitted to having just a fortnight's training before being put in charge of children's care, but he said he would never be left alone with a child.

Porteous was initially sentenced to eight years in prison, but that was later reduced to five years after two of the charges were quashed on appeal due to a legal technicality.

The trial heard how during his time at Quarriers, Porteous became known as the "beast of the bell tower" because of the 150ft tower in the village where the abuse took place.

Yesterday, the inquiry also heard evidence from “Jack”, whose identity is protected for legal reasons, a former house parent at Quarriers.

He denied a series of allegations that he had abused children by force-feeding and administering corporal punishment.

Asked by James Peoples QC, senior counsel to the inquiry, if he had ever grabbed children and taken them to a shed for a beating, Jack said: “That’s disgraceful. No, I did not.”

And he denied an allegation he had assaulted a girl by striking her head against a sink.

Later the inquiry heard from “May”, now in her 70s, who began working at Quarriers in the mid 1960s.

A series of allegations were put to her about abuse she is alleged to have perpetrated.

Asked by Mr Peoples if she had ever given a child a “clout on the ear or a slap on the legs,” she replied: “Not answering”.

Asked if a shed was used as a “place of punishment,” she said: “Never.”

The inquiry is currently hearing evidence relating to institutions run by Quarriers, Aberlour and Barnardo’s.

At the start of the current phase, lawyers for Quarriers issued an “unreserved apology” to survivors of abuse.

Read more at: <https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/quarrier-s-paedophile-failed-to-offer-apology-in-court-as-abuse-victim-looked-on-1-4826735>