

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICIARY

AFFIDAVIT OF ANNE QUARM

in the matter of the appeal against conviction of the late William Quarm

At 1 Knockintorran, Isle of North Uist on 7th September 2023

With the aid of video conference before Kathryn Mary Blaikie, Solicitor and Notary Public of Quill Legal, Hudson House, 8 Albany Street, Edinburgh, EH1 3QB

COMPEARED ANNE XXX QUARM who being solemnly sworn and examined depones as follows:

My full name is Anne Quarm. I reside at GRO
GRO

My date of birth is GRO

I am the widow of the late William Quarm, known as Bill, formerly residing at XXXX and who died on 23 February 2012.

I make the following statement in support of the appeal against conviction of the late William Quarm on a charge of embezzlement.

I work in the Stepping Stone restaurant, Benbecula, 5 nights per week from 11am until close and I have done this job for 26 years.

I married Willam Quarm in 1970. We worked together in various businesses. In 1994 he took over the Post Office and Shop at Bayhead, North Uist. Bill did this because he had been out of full-time work for many years. He had been the Estate Factor then we worked at the hotel and ran the pub for 10 years. When he left that role he was 40 – 50 years old and too old for every job to start out in. It was a difficult time in the 80s. We were asked to run the Lochmaddy Hotel for 3 months as Bill had worked there years ago. We ended up at the hotel for 3 years.

The shop was available to lease. Bill thought the hours would be easier and at the time I was doing B and B from our house. I wasn't keen but Bill thought it would be easier on him. He had been doing various jobs but nothing steady or long-term.

We went back to Cladachu and I helped him on a Saturday afternoon in the shop only. For 14 years he was a loyal servant to the Post Office and community and it was a great shock when he came home to say two men accused him of taking money. He said they came in for an audit with no warning and said there was money missing.

I said 'how on earth could money go missing if it didn't come here?' He said he didn't know. He was always working from 7am until night.

I was not aware of any financial problems in the Post Office. In the shop there were some issues with fuel and customer and business accounts and sometimes have to wait 3 months for payment. Times were hard for him to make ends meet. There was no question to me he would have taken money from elsewhere.

We had 30 acres of land then and Bill was selling plots for about £30k. We had sold plots previously and he was waiting for money to come in from RBS.

I have been asked what Bill needed the money for. I think he was just continually selling land here when people wanted to buy but I have a bad memory and can't remember 100%.

I never went along to court or any legal meetings. I just remember Bill would take a packed bag every time he went to court and was told he would most likely go to jail. He knew if he went to jail he would never come out. It was terrible seeing him go and not know if he would be coming back.

Bill said it was almost being thrown down his throat that he was guilty and he had to admit it and even if he did he could go to jail.

I think he was shocked at being accused of something he didn't do and believed he didn't do and he had no real answer to it. They had all this written evidence to say the money was missing. I think he thought it must be missing because where could it have gone.

Bill's lawyer, Gordon Seaton, stayed at my B&B many times and I couldn't believe he said Bill should plead guilty. Since Mr Seaton found out the Post Office evidence is faulty, he has not come into the Stepping Stone again.

Bill would tell me that Mr Seaton was not on his side.

He didn't have the strength to go to another lawyer and I had full trust in Mr Seaton but was gobsmacked he didn't go out of his way to help Bill. I lost my home and Bill's pension.

After court and community service, [GRO] We didn't know [GRO] He would go out sweaty to his community service and I was always worrying if he would come back.

Bill never said to me that he took the money but I think he felt the evidence was overwhelming. He was so conscientious with his work. He would tell me for example that lots of people in the community had amounts of money you wouldn't believe, but he didn't even tell me who the people were. He was always responsible and there is no reason he would have done anything untoward.

ALL OF WHICH IS THE TRUTH AS THE DEPONENT SHALL AFFIRM

Anne Quarm

Deponent

K M Blake

Notary Public