

## Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

BFA

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is [REDACTED] BFA [REDACTED]. My maiden name is [REDACTED] BFA [REDACTED]. This is what I was known by whilst I was in care. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1961. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

### Life before going into care

2. When I was little I stayed with my mother and father [REDACTED] near to Dalkeith. My mother's name was [REDACTED]. She later had the married names [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. My father's name was [REDACTED]. I am the second oldest of five children. I have an older sister, [REDACTED] and two younger sisters [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I also have a younger brother [REDACTED].

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

3. [REDACTED]

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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35. When you were six you had to leave Ravelrig. This is when I moved to Glasclune.

### **Glasclune Children's Home, North Berwick**

36. Glasclune was a beautiful building with the beach nearby. When I first arrived I absolutely loved it. My sister [REDACTED] had arrived about a year before me.

37. Initially I slept in a dormitory. After this I was moved into a bedroom.

### **Routine at Glasclune**

#### *First day*

38. On my first day at Glasclune two of the older girls showed me around the home. I played in the playroom upstairs. I was then told to put my wellies on and I was taken to the beach. I also met [REDACTED] BFJ [REDACTED] I had to call her Mrs [REDACTED] BFJ [REDACTED] Mr and Mrs Maize were in charge of the home.

39. The other staff I remember were Mr and Mrs Leeper also Jack Mann. Mr and Mrs Leeper were brilliant. Mrs Leeper would alter your clothes for you. she would get us

to help with the laundry and give us a sweet. Mr Leeper would tell us stories about the war.

### *Mornings and bedtime*

40. Staff would get me up around half seven. I would have a wash, change into my school uniform and go for breakfast. After this I went to school.
41. I normally went to bed about nine or ten during the week. I had the choice when I went to bed. On a Friday we were allowed to stay up until twelve and watch the late film on TV.

### *Mealtimes/Food*

42. I would describe the mealtimes as military. You had to sit quietly and weren't allowed your elbows on the table. You sat at the table along with any other family members who were at the home. There were three course meals that were very good. I enjoyed them.
43. The home gave us money for our lunch at school. When I was older I started using this to buy cigarettes. We would also be given meal vouchers for school and sell these to the other pupils.

### *Washing/bathing*

44. There were three baths. Two were together the other was in a cubicle. As I started to develop I liked to use the one in the cubicle. I didn't feel comfortable using the ones outside.
45. The staff would fill the bath for you. It was always your own bath water. This would be supervised by the staff. I was able to fill my own bath once I was older.

### *Clothing/uniform*

46. I was provided with a school uniform and other clothes. When I was older I was allowed to buy my own clothes but you needed to make sure you had a receipt.

### *School*

47. I initially went to North Berwick Primary. I then moved to North Berwick High School. I wasn't treated any different because I was from the home. I did become very good at skiing school as I got older.
48. I had hearing problems at school. In primary five the teacher put me to the back of the class. This was no good to me so I just started doing my own thing and didn't pay attention to the class. The home knew about my hearing problems but nothing was done about it. When I was 28 I had to go for an operation on my ear. I was told that this should have been dealt with when it was first known that I had a problem.
49. The staff at the home would make sure that your homework was done before you were allowed out to play.

### *Leisure*

50. I used to go to a disco in North Berwick. I met a man called [REDACTED] when I was there. His real name was [REDACTED] and he was eighteen. He walked me back to the home. Jack Mann saw me and told [REDACTED] that I was only thirteen. [REDACTED] didn't seem to mind. Jack would have known what age [REDACTED] was. Jack said he was going to call the police but they never came to the home.
51. I thought I was in love with [REDACTED] and ended up having sex with him on the beach. [REDACTED] would tell me how much he loved me. The staff would try and split us up but we wouldn't. After I had gone on holiday for a couple of weeks [REDACTED] had moved on to someone else.

52. One of the house father's [BLB] would take photographs of us. He wouldn't always ask if it was okay. Sometimes we would be on our own other times it would be in a group. The photos were very good and we would buy them from him when we were given our pocket money. I later found from my friend [BLB] that [BLB] had abused one of the boys, [BLB] at the home. I was never aware of this when I was at the home. I do remember that I was jealous when [BLB] would take [BLB] on holiday.
53. We were told that [BLB] was leaving the home and I asked him why. [BLB] told me it was because Barnardo's thought that he was living his childhood through the other children. I never had any problems with [BLB]
54. I don't know if the police knew about [BLB] [BLB] only told me that he was in hiding. I don't know what age [BLB] was when I was at the home.

#### *Religion*

55. When I first arrived at Glasclune we would have to wear our Sunday dresses to go to church. We would also be given money to donate when we went to Sunday school in the afternoon.

#### *Chores*

56. On a Saturday or Sunday we would have to clean our bedroom. We would use a brush and mop to make sure everything was shiny. I would also help the cleaners. This was because I liked talking to people.

#### *Trips/Holidays*

57. We went on holidays to Butlins at Fylie and also to a cottage in South Wales. The staff would go with us on holiday. One of the staff had family that owned a farm near to Alnwick. We would visit there as well.

58. I would sometimes go and stay with one of my aunties at the weekends. This would be a family aunt not a foster aunt.

*Birthdays and Christmas*

59. Only special birthdays, like a sixteenth, were really celebrated. The other ones you could invite one person from outside the home to come for tea.
60. Christmases were always celebrated. There were lots of parties for the children.

*Visits/Inspections/Review of Detention*

61. My mum would visit me with her new husband, [REDACTED], and my baby sister. They would take me to a pub in North Berwick. Me and my sister would be made to stand on a table and sing to make money for my mum.
62. I would get regular visits from social workers but it was the same as before. It was a different one every time. I think the social workers came from Barnardo's in Edinburgh. I never told any of the social workers about being hit. I was too embarrassed and I don't think they would have believed me.
63. There was a psychiatrist called Doctor Rogers who would come and monitor us. He would make an assessment. When I left the home I found out that he had said I was looking for love. That was the reason why I was giving my body away.
64. When I was about nine we were discharged from the home for a short time. I became a nanny for my baby sister, [REDACTED]. I was expected to look after her as soon as I got in from school. This meant I could never do my homework.
65. When I was back at the family home there was a social worker who visited. I don't know her name but she worked from the council offices at Dalkeith.

66. We ended up going back into Glasclune when the Salvation Army found my three sisters, brother and me alone in a van near to London. My dad had taken us down there but had been arrested for car theft after leaving us in the van.
67. We were put back on a train to Edinburgh. Our auntie picked us up at the station. My auntie had her own children and it was too much having us as well. The social work came to take us away but my auntie said that my youngest sister, [REDACTED], was to stay with her as she had never been in care before. The rest of us ended up back at Glasclune. It was the same staff there as before.
68. When I was thirteen I started going for weekend respite care with a foster family. The woman, who I called Auntie [REDACTED], was married and had her own children.
69. One Christmas I went to stay at my Auntie [REDACTED]'s. I had a septic finger when I was there and Auntie [REDACTED] took me to the hospital. The home had to agree to it being lanced, which they did. Auntie [REDACTED] wasn't happy with me going back to the home that night because of the anaesthetic but the home insisted I had to. They said they would meet me off the bus.
70. I got off the bus at North Berwick but no one was there to meet me. I had to walk most of the way home myself with my suitcase. I was still under the effects of the anaesthetic as well. A bus driver gave me a lift the rest of the way. He knew one of the staff at the home and was furious. The staff just said that they had missed the bus.
71. Auntie [REDACTED] went to one of my reviews. She was shocked when [BFL] was calling me a whore and a slag. The reviews were every six months but I was never present at one. My GP, a psychiatrist, [REDACTED] BFK/BFL [REDACTED] would all be at these reviews.
72. I tried to talk with the staff about my problems but I think they found me hard work.

### *Healthcare*

73. If you needed a doctor or dentist then it would have to be arranged for you to go and see them. If there was something wrong with you and you couldn't go to the doctor he would come and see you at the home. One time when I was at school I was stung on the leg by an insect. My leg swelled up and I had to go back to the home. The doctor came and gave me two sleeping tablets. This was to let me rest but they didn't work on me.
74. The dentist would come to the school every six months to give you a check-up.
75. I used to have warts on my hands and had to go to the children's hospital in Edinburgh to have them removed. I would get the bus on my own to the hospital.
76. I remember being next to the waltzers at the shows. One of the girls from the home and a boy from the shows were larking about. The next thing I remember was being hit on the head. I was knocked out for about three or four seconds. I told **BFJ** **BFJ** when I got back to the home. She thought that I was making it up and just sent me to bed. This shouldn't have happened. She should have made sure that I was okay.

*Running away*

77. One day at school **████████** and myself had forgot our library books. The headmaster said we had ten minutes to get them from the home and be back at school. We had no chance of doing this so we ran away. We managed to get all the way to **████████** in Midlothian where my dad stayed. I saw him in the street with his new girlfriend. He phoned the police straight away and we were taken back to the home. This made me feel like I wasn't wanted by anyone.
78. If I did anything wrong I would run away. Other times I would just run away for something to do.

79. Sometimes the police would take me back to the home. I never said anything to them about what was happening at Glasclune.
80. When I got back to the home I would be hit around the head by [REDACTED] BFL [REDACTED]. She would then drag me upstairs by the arm and put me to bed.

*Other information*

81. As I got older and developed as a woman I started to become sexually active. I was involved with boys from outside the home. I enjoyed the fact that I was getting attention. I think that the home were aware and tried to stop it but I just carried on.
82. If you did something wrong at the home you would be sent to bed without any supper.

**Abuse at Glasclune**

[REDACTED] BFK [REDACTED]

83. When I was thirteen I was punished by [REDACTED] BFK [REDACTED]. I can't even remember what I had done. He pulled my pants down and hit me on the backside with his hand. This made me feel really uncomfortable. He shouldn't have been doing that to me when I was that age. His wife [REDACTED] BFL [REDACTED] was there when he did this.

[REDACTED] BFL [REDACTED]

84. On one occasion when I came back from my respite care with the foster family [REDACTED] BFL [REDACTED] was waiting for me. She was asking me where the stuff was. I told her that I didn't know what she was talking about. [REDACTED] BFL [REDACTED] then slapped me across the face. I later found out my little sister had robbed the sweet shop and hid what she had stolen in the sand. I never even got an apology from [REDACTED] BFL [REDACTED].

85. Another time I had been in bed sick. I was taken downstairs for a wash. BFL was on the stairs wearing a new outfit to go out that night. I was sick all over the dress. BFL went mental at me. After this she would humiliate me every opportunity she could.

86. BFL knew what I was up to when I was out. When I got back to the home she would demand that I gave her my underwear. She would then say it was going to be sent for forensics. At the time I believed her. This was her humiliating me again.

BFJ

87. BFJ was my first housemother when I arrived at the home. She would hit me with the slipper if I did something wrong. One time at breakfast a girl didn't eat her porridge. BFJ put it in front of her at lunch and dinner time. She didn't get offered anything else.

BFZ

88. One night there was thunder and lightning. My sister [REDACTED] was frightened of this and I went into her bed to comfort her. I was woken by one of the boys, BFZ BFZ who used to stay at Glasclune. He said he was looking after us as the staff were having a party. BFZ told me to go back to my own bed. The next morning I spoke to Donna Ferriot and asked how the staff party was. She asked why I thought there was a party. She managed to coax out of me why I had said that.

89. I later found out that BFZ was having sex with my sister and other girls at the home. [REDACTED] didn't seem to mind this.

[REDACTED]

90. [REDACTED] became my stepfather after marrying my mother. I remember an occasion when I was home for the weekend. I was tired and went through to bed. We all had to sleep in the same bed. [REDACTED] was in bed already and I thought he was drunk and asleep. When I got into bed he tried it on with me. I told BFJ

about this when I went back to the home. **BFJ** said that I was making it all up and it was a disgusting thing to say.

91. When my mother married **[REDACTED]** we were invited to the wedding and allowed home. I didn't even get to the wedding I had to babysit my little sister, **[REDACTED]**. The first night we slept in a separate room. The next night we were told we had to sleep in the same bed as my mother and stepfather. I wasn't comfortable with this because of what had happened before. My step father put his hands down my pants but I had my period. He said to my mother, "We are on dangerous ground here". So my mother knew what was going on as well.
92. When we got back to Glasclune I was asked by **BFJ** what the wedding was like. I told her what had happened to me. She called me a liar and said that I was trying to break up my mother's marriage.

**BGA** and **BGB**

93. **BGA** and **BGB**, who are twins, used to stay at Glasclune. After they left the home they would come back and get into the girls rooms by climbing the drain pipes. They would have sex with the girls. I know this because I was in the room and saw **BGA** with my sister **[REDACTED]**. When **BGA** and **BGB** were coming back to the home they would have been aged about eighteen or nineteen.
94. The morning after I saw **BGA** in the room **[REDACTED]** and myself told Donna Ferriot what had happened the night before. The police were called and we were all taken to Haddington Police Station to be examined. All the other girls including **[REDACTED]** were furious and were threatening me and **[REDACTED]**

**QFB**

95. **QFB** was a staff member at Glasclune. I think he was about eighteen years old. I had a crush on **QFB** One night when I knew **QFB** was going to be on duty I went into the staff room to wait for him. I was hoping that something was going to happen

between us. When QFB came into the room he was with BFH . BFH was one of the children at the home. He was about six years old. I would say now that BFH was being dragged into the room. QFB asked me to leave as he wanted to speak with BFH I now know that QFB was abusing BFH This is because I have recently been in contact with him although he is now known as BFH He told me what had happened to him. BFH also said that my brother BFH had been abused by QFB

### **Reporting of abuse at Glasclune**

96. I told Auntie [REDACTED] what was happening to me at the home. She brought it up at the reviews she went to but nothing was ever done about it.

### **Leaving Glasclune**

97. When I was sixteen the staff made it clear that they wanted me to leave the home. I managed to get a live-in job at one of the local hotels. I needed that as I had nowhere else to go. I had too much to drink one night and started to hallucinate. Mary, who had been my housemother, came to the hotel. She slept on the floor of my room to make sure I didn't fall out of the bed. I ended up losing my job after this.

### **Woodfield Hostel, Edinburgh**

98. Because I was only sixteen and under supervision until I was eighteen I ended up being taken to a hostel at Colinton in Edinburgh. It was run by nuns but I didn't know the name of this place until I saw my records. From these I found out it that the home was called Woodfield Hostel. I hated the place. My older sister had messed it up for the rest of us. She had stayed with my gran, my mum, dad and aunties. She spoiled it for the rest of us with her actions.

99. When I was still at the hostel [REDACTED] contacted me. She was pregnant and asked me to go and stay with her, which I did.

### **Life after being in care**

100. Not long after I moved in with my sister I met my first husband. He was a nasty piece of work and very abusive. I started drinking a lot. I eventually escaped from him and moved to London.
101. I became involved in prostitution. This didn't bother me one bit as I had been giving it away for free for years. My pimp was knocking ten bells out of me so I phoned Glasclune. I spoke with one of the housemothers, [REDACTED] BKP and told her what was happening to me. She wasn't interested and told me to phone the police as it was nothing to do with them anymore. I wanted help and it hurt that they didn't want to.
102. I had two children, a boy and a girl, to my second partner although I wasn't married to him. I ended up in Ireland with him but had to come back to Scotland for money. My partner wouldn't let the children go with me. About three months later he was arrested for rape and put in prison. My two children had been in the van when he did this.
103. I eventually got my children back but they were out of control. I ended up having to put them into foster care. When they were four my children were adopted. My daughter got back in touch with me when she was eighteen. She told me she had been in a children's home at Cardiff for a short time. The person in charge was [REDACTED] BFJ My daughter told me that [REDACTED] BFJ had been cruel to her when she was in that home.
104. When I was married to my second husband I had another son who is now my full time carer.

105. I have had a number of catering jobs. The best job I have had though was as a care assistant for the elderly. I had to give this up as I had a bad back. This is another thing that I have been told should have been identified when I was younger.

### **Impact**

106. I trust people too easily. I can't stand rejection and if this happens I will cry my eyes out. I have spent most of my adult life wondering why my mum and dad didn't love me.
107. I was never given any cuddles at Glasclune. I cuddled a staff member once and it was like I had burnt her.

### **Reporting of Abuse**

108. About five years ago I went to the police in Manchester and told them what happened to me at Glasclune. They took a statement from me and said it would be sent to Scotland. I haven't heard anything since.

### **Records**

109. In 1990 I managed to obtain my records from Barnardo's. A social worker brought my records to the house and offered me counselling. My second husband said that he would provide any counselling if it was needed. My records weren't accurate and didn't reflect my time in care.
110. When I had told the home about being abused by [REDACTED] it had been changed to say that he had slapped me. I still have a copy of my records.

**Other information**

*Counselling*

- 111. I have been to a number of counsellors. None of them helped me. When I went to see a regression counsellor at Prescott House Mental Hospital. She opened me up about my past. Initially this helped but there was an incident at the hospital and the counsellor had to leave after being assaulted by one of the patients. It wasn't fully explained to me what had happened. Because of this I felt abandoned and ended up trying to commit suicide.
- 112. In 2006 my doctor put me in touch with a different counsellor. This counsellor has helped me to deal with things.
- 113. I suffer from depression and take anti-depressants.

**Lessons to be Learned**

- 114. I think my time in care would have been better if there was more teaching about real life. I think a lot can be learned from how other countries, such as Germany, run their care systems.
- 115. 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.

BFA

Signed

Dated 4<sup>th</sup> July 2018