

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

AEI

Support person present: No

1. My name is [REDACTED] AEI [REDACTED]. My surname was [REDACTED] when I was a child. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1959. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. My family moved from Johnstone to [REDACTED] Road in Paisley when I was about one and a half. I don't remember living in Johnstone. I lived with my mum, [REDACTED], dad, [REDACTED], and my five older siblings. When we moved, my mum was expecting [REDACTED]. My oldest sister is [REDACTED] who is seven years older than me, then there's [REDACTED] who is six years older than me, [REDACTED] who is five years older than me, [REDACTED] who is three years older than me, and [REDACTED] who died about nine years ago and was two years older than me.
3. Our place at [REDACTED] was a room and kitchen. I remember the big room had two double beds, one on each side. There was a single bed and a settee. At the kitchen area, there was a cupboard for dishes, then there was an alcove with a red curtain on it, next to the front door. There was a wee mattress and covers in the alcove and that was where I slept. I think my dad slept on the single bed, my mum slept in with the smaller children and the bigger ones slept on the other bed.
4. I remember there were two white, chipped looking sinks by the window with a ringer in the middle. My mum used to wash us in the first sink with the soap. Then she'd move us to the second sink to wash the soap off and dry us. The oldest went in first.

I got the dirty water because I was the youngest. We used to splash each other and I remember my father shouting, "Any more splashing and you're going in the ringer!" Everybody was laughing. It's a nice memory.

5. When [REDACTED] born, we moved to [REDACTED] Paisley. [REDACTED] born in [REDACTED] 1960. I remember them as toddlers. Other babies came after that. I have five younger siblings in total. ABE was born in 1961. My mum lost a baby, [REDACTED] in 1962. She was a lovely baby, like a wee doll. My older sisters used to take her up and down the street in her pram. My mum was going to the shops. Everybody was commenting on what a beautiful baby she was. By the time she got back home, she was dead. She was four months old. My mum had lost her first born baby as well to cot death. [REDACTED] was born in 1964 and [REDACTED] was born in 1965.
6. My mother was so busy looking after children, there wasn't time for her to draw breath. It was always crowded at home, but we had more rooms at [REDACTED]. There was a long hall, a living room and a separate kitchen. I think there were two or three bedrooms. My dad was a scrappy. He had a pram and he collected scrap. He never had a solid job. I know he was in the jail a few times. I don't remember that, but my older sisters told me.
7. My dad was in the jail when my mum died and he never made it to the funeral. My mum started to get ill after [REDACTED] born. She was told not to have any more children, but she had another four. She had tuberculosis and died in 1969.
8. My sister [REDACTED] gets called [REDACTED]. She went into Hansel Village in Ayrshire early because she had learning difficulties. She took mum's death the worst. She used to do all of my mum's messages and go to the cheapest shops for her. She ran round in circles to get the cheapest option for bread or rolls. When the rest of us started going into homes, my granny tried to keep as many of us at home as she could. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] stayed with her. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were mill girls and [REDACTED] eventually got a job working at [REDACTED]. But my granny was old. She died

six weeks after my mum in 1969. [REDACTED] went into approved school. He was always getting into trouble, setting fires in schools and things like that.

9. I went to primary school for two weeks when I was at home. I went to St. Fergus' Primary School in [REDACTED]. Maybe my older sister took me. I didn't like it and I ran away, down the hill towards home. I shouldn't have crossed those roads. I went up the stairs and all I could smell was the dirty nappies.
10. My next memory is sitting outside [REDACTED]. I was wearing a baby blue cardigan. Somebody had knitted the cardigan for me to go with the navy blue skirt I had for school. All the neighbours were bringing me sweeties because I was going away. I remember a white van coming along and I got in it. My brothers and sisters stayed at home. I don't know why I was taken and not the others. There was a man and a lady in the van. They might have been social workers, but I don't remember them coming to the house.

Nazareth House, Kilmarnock

11. I can't remember my first day at Nazareth House, but it was like an old hospital with square windows. It had gravel at the front, a fence round it and a long avenue surrounded by trees. At the back, there was grass and trees which were separated from fields by a wall. Nazareth House must've been on the edge of the town because there were fields nearby. The fields went off into yonder. It was built on three levels. I think the bottom floor was where the nuns had their quarters, then you went up the stairs to the living room, playroom, kitchen and bathrooms for the children. The bedrooms were up the stairs on the top level.
12. There were at least twenty children there, maybe thirty. It was boys and girls. My sister, [REDACTED] came in for a while. She was fifteen when she was there. Other than [REDACTED] I think it was all little children at Nazareth House. The nuns usually called us by our surnames. We were known as the [family name] children. It was, [family name] this, [family name] that."

13. A mother superior ran the home. I think I saw her when I came in but I never saw her again. When we went in, we were told the rules. They told us we had to do our chores, about lights out and being up at a certain time, to eat what we were given and be thankful, things like that. It was staffed by nuns. I think priests came in as well, but just for chapel. I remember two nuns at Nazareth House. Sister LGO was fat. She had a big waist with the crucifix tied round it. Sister LHZ was tall and skinny. She also had the rope tied round her waist with the cross on it.

Routine at Nazareth House, Kilmarnock

Mornings and bedtime

14. There were dormitories with spring beds, metal beds like you'd get in a hospital. The number of beds depended upon the size of the room. I think one dormitory had twelve beds, one had six and one had four. I think there were six children in my dorm. There was a room upstairs where one of the nuns would sleep to keep an eye on us. Bedtime was set at 7 o'clock. Lights out was at 9 o'clock, even for [REDACTED] who was fifteen. We were told to say our prayers and ask God for mercy, but we were left to say our own prayers.
15. In the morning, we were woken by a bell at 7 o'clock. We got up and dressed, got washed and brushed our teeth. We stood in a line when we were ready, to be checked by Sister LGO. If we hadn't washed, we'd be whacked. We'd go down for breakfast and say prayers at the table. I don't remember going to school in Kilmarnock. We never left the place so we must have been schooled in the convent.

Food

16. We all ate our meals together in the dining hall. Breakfast was porridge and sometimes cereal. Lunch was watery soup. I remember getting a lot of potatoes at dinner time. We got chips now and again as a treat. They'd make big pots of stew and mince. At mealtimes, the nuns would walk round the tables with their hands on

their hips. Nobody talked. It was completely silent. After every meal, we had to wash the dishes. Three girls would be allocated to the washing and three to the drying and putting away. The boys did the lifting. [REDACTED] had to lift heavy churns of milk, even though he was small.

Washing

17. There were lockers next to sinks, but I didn't have any possessions of my own. I don't know what the lockers were used for. There was carbolic soap to wash yourself with. There was a separate room for showers and a curtain separating the showers. We showered two or three times a week, unless we wet the bed. Children who peed got a shower every day.

Leisure time

18. There was a lounge downstairs for visitors and a playroom with a telly. After dinner, we watched TV for an hour or so in our jammies. The nuns were always around. You had to check before you spoke because you felt like they were scrutinising you. If I told my sister I'd been hit by a nun and a nun heard, I'd get another clout. There were boxes with toys in them, like balls, jigsaws or books. Nothing spectacular. We weren't allowed out the front of the house. Mainly, we got out to the back. There was a swing on the grounds and we could kick a ball about. Sometimes, we got a chance to talk outside because the nuns stayed inside and watched us from the window. Nazareth House was like a prison. We never got out of there.

Chores

19. We did the dishes after mealtimes. We also did Hoovering, sweeping and dusting on a daily basis, after we finished our lessons. The children did the laundry. I don't think I did it at the beginning, but before I left I remember being in the laundry with big machines and a boiler. I was classed as a bigger kid by then. We didn't get a day off.

Religious instruction

20. We went to a chapel in the convent once a week. Priests came in from outside. I must've made my first communion at Nazareth House but I have no recollection of it.

Birthdays and Christmas

21. The only Christmas I remember is the one before my mum died. She came to visit three weeks before and brought us all a gift. Seeing her was better than any present. Otherwise, birthdays and Christmas weren't celebrated.

Visits/Inspections

22. We didn't have any connection to a social worker when we were in Nazareth House. We weren't encouraged to write home. We knew letters would be vetted if we tried to say anything. You were allowed to walk around the grounds if you had visitors. We only got one visit at Nazareth House and that was the only time I ever got out of the front door.
23. My mum was ill and she wasn't fit enough to visit. She had TB. She knew she was dying and she managed to come up to visit us at Christmas time in 1968, three weeks before she died. We hadn't known she was sick, but I knew when I looked at her that day. I held her hand and she was so thin. I remember we had a photograph taken outside, next to the statue of the virgin Mary. My mum was wearing a green coat with brown fur around it and a green bobbly hat. She had a pair of furry boots. The coat was hanging off her. My mum, my dad, [REDACTED] and ABE were in the photo.

Siblings

24. My sister, [REDACTED] came into Nazareth House for a while. I think it was in about 1965. [REDACTED] came in around that time as well because my mother was getting really ill. ABE also came into Nazareth House, but she was young and doesn't remember

much about it. She wasn't there for long before we got moved. ABE used to shake all the time and I'd try to cuddle her. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were in another home because they were just babies. At Nazareth House, they tried to separate us. We always tried to catch up with each other to talk. When we tried to talk, they would swing the rope with the chain and they would batter us. They would pull us by the ear. We weren't encouraged to talk to our siblings.

My mother's death

25. My mum died on [REDACTED] 1969. Sister LGO received the information that same day. She shouted, 'family children to the wash room.' [REDACTED], ABE and I all trooped into that washroom with the lockers. By that time, [REDACTED] had gone to Hansel Village. Sister LGO said, 'family children, just to let you know, your mum died yesterday. Back to work.' She dismissed us with her hands.
26. We stood there, stunned. We didn't know whether to cry or what to do. [REDACTED] bolted away. The lockers were open and he hit every one of them on his way out. He didn't want to cry in front of us. He ran and he ran. We started crying because we didn't know where he'd gone. The police found him three days later in a stable. He'd slept there for two days, underneath a horse.
27. We didn't get to go to the funeral. The nuns never mentioned our mother's death again. Six weeks later, my granny passed away. Sister LGO broke the news to us again in much the same way.

Abuse at Nazareth House

28. I don't remember my first day, but I have a horrible and clear memory about a month after I arrived. We used to eat in a dining room with six children at each table. One day, I had celery on my plate. I'd never tasted it before and I just didn't like it. I ate everything else on my plate, but I didn't eat the celery. Sister LGO came up and

asked me why I wasn't finishing what was on my plate. I was scared to talk but I said I didn't like it. She told me to eat it. I sat there and I didn't say a word.

29. The next day, she dragged me into the dining room at breakfast time, in front of all the other children. The celery was put in front of me. Sister LGO said, "You will eat that." It was put down before me for breakfast, dinner and tea. She was getting to the end of her tether. Eventually, she pushed it towards my head to eat it. I wouldn't eat it. I ended up being sick all over the table. She was hitting me all over the back of my head with her hand. After that, I got a meal the following breakfast time. To this day, I can't eat celery.
30. Sister LGO was so angry that I didn't eat the celery. She locked me up in isolation for the whole night. She walked me out to a metal fire escape and took me to a level even higher than the bedrooms. She took me to a room with a mirror in it. She kept on telling me that the devil was in the mirror. I was terrified. There was no light in the room. There was a bed with blankets. I was locked in. There was no toilet. I just held it in. I would open my eyes and I could just see the devil and the fire coming out of the mirror. In the morning, Sister LGO came to get me and dragged me out by my ear, into the showers. It was the most horrific thing, to be locked in that room at the age of six. Even now, I can't have a mirror in my bedroom, in case I wake up to go to the toilet during the night and it brings back memories.
31. Sister LGO pulled me by the ear a lot. Girls that had long hair were pulled by their hair. The nuns wore a crucifix round their waists. They would swing it and hit you with it unexpectedly for no reason. Sister LHZ kept a cane or a riding crop all the time. She would hit you every time you passed her. You could hear it swishing. She'd do it for no reason. I would just be setting the table and she'd come up and hit me. She did it to other children as well. She did it to me numerous times. I used to have welts on my legs all the time. I was never bad in Nazareth House. I was too afraid to be bad.
32. On one on occasion, [REDACTED] and I were in the corridor. It was a big long corridor. We saw Sister LHZ coming. We knew we would get it because she hit us for no

reason. [REDACTED] said, "We'll need to hide." We jumped into a cupboard and hid. She didn't see us. We managed to escape that time. The physical abuse carried on right up until we left. I was hit two or three times a week. It just depended who was there and where you were at the time. If the nuns were in a mood, you got hit. Every kid there got penalised one way or the other.

33. My sister, [REDACTED] was a bed wetter. She was very nervous when we were at Kilmarnock. Bed wetters were severely punished. If you wet the bed, you had to take your sheet along to the wash room in front of everybody. Everybody would be watching you. They would wear their wet pyjamas on the cold floor and then boys and girls had to walk back from the wash room, naked. Wee girls would be looking at wee boys saying, "They're different from us." We didn't know that at that age. Bed wetters were shouted at and humiliated.
34. We were shouted at all the time. We didn't get spoken to like a person or a child. The nuns were the bosses. We had to do what they told us to do. They didn't encourage laughter, but I don't think anybody laughed much. We were always full of fear, which was worse than any injury. I felt alone all the time. I was glad when my siblings came.

Leaving Nazareth House

35. My siblings and I left Nazareth House on [REDACTED] 1969, three months after my mum passed away. I don't know how it came about. Nothing was said to us, we were just told to get our stuff together. I was wearing a blue velvet dress with a lace collar. [REDACTED] was wearing the same, but her dress was red. [REDACTED] was wearing a brown corduroy suit. The nuns at Nazareth House had dressed us up in smart clothes to show that we were well taken care of. We'd never worn those clothes before, not even at Christmas or birthdays. We were taken to Smyllum.

Smyllum, Lanark

36. Smyllum was like a castle. It had turrets. It was cream and brown. It was split into houses. Four of the houses were in the big house and two other houses were separate. When we first arrived, we were in St. Joseph's House. We were there for about two years until it got renovated. We were then moved to Roncalli House, which was one of the houses out with the main building. I remained in Roncalli House until I left at the age of sixteen. My sister, ABE was separated from us and put into St. Kentigern's House.
37. Smyllum was built on three levels. The parlour was on the ground floor, but children didn't go on that level except when they first arrived. There were two houses on the first floor and two on the second floor. St. Joseph's was at the very top of the building. Each house had its own kitchen and wash room. All the houses were quite separate from each other. Sister AEG was the mother of our house. As well as nuns, there were civilian staff. The civilian staff who came into our house were FBN and AGR and FBP. Two came in at a time. They never did any work. We did all the work.
38. There were about thirty children in St. Joseph's house. I think there were over a hundred kids in the whole place. The ages ranged from young babies right up to sixteen.

Routine at Smyllum

First day

39. [REDACTED], ABE and I were on the same journey to Lanark. [REDACTED] and I went into the big house and ABE went into a smaller house. I don't know why they separated us. ABE was so quiet, she was pining for her siblings. She was taken away from us as soon as we arrived. We didn't think we could ask any questions, but we wondered where she was going.

40. [REDACTED] and I were taken into an ornate room, like a chapel. There were crosses, gold cups and trophies. It was called the parlour. The mother superior was sitting in a chair above us, like a judge. She looked us up and down over the top of her glasses.
41. My first impression was that Smyllum looked nice, with the fields all around. It looked as if it could be a fun place. [REDACTED] wasn't keen. He whispered to me, "I don't like it here. We're not staying." He'd already ran away once from Nazareth House. I thought that if he had managed it once, I could go with him. We started planning our escape.
42. Sister [REDACTED] AEG was our house mother. After our particulars had been noted, she took us up to St. Joseph's house. Everything was matter of fact. She told us the rules and we had to get on with it. The rules were also written on the wall of the house. She allocated us to a room and a bed. Boys and girls were in separate rooms. I was also allocated to a separate dormitory from [REDACTED]

Mornings and bedtime

43. I think the biggest dormitory in Smyllum held six children. There were single beds and a locker and a wardrobe, which were shared between two children. The ages in my dormitory varied. Later on, when I had [REDACTED]'s cot beside me, I had to move nearer to the window to make space for him. Sister [REDACTED] AEG gave me [REDACTED] to look after when I was thirteen. When I got older, I moved into a twin room with [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
44. In the morning, Sister [REDACTED] AEG or one of the staff would wake us up around 7 o'clock and we got ready to go down for breakfast. Bed wetters were made to walk past everybody and take their wet sheets away to the laundry. My sisters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were bed wetters. They had to put everything in the wash basket in the boiler room and walk back, naked. It was humiliating. We would try not to look.

45. We had chores to do before we went to school. The boys made sure the bins were cleared up and the girls made sure the room was tidy. The older children helped the younger children to make their beds. Sister [REDACTED] AEG would come and check the beds. She would shout at the older girls if it wasn't done right.
46. Lights out was at 9 o'clock. Some of the boys used to have a torch and they would try to read comics. When I stopped running away, I was given more privileges. I was allowed to read a book and stay up an hour later.

Food

47. The children in the house ate meals together. I remember setting the table for 24 children. We had cornflakes and things for breakfast. We got lunch at school. The dining hall in Smyllum Park School had long benches.
48. When we came in from school, we did our chores. By the age of twelve or thirteen, the girls got the vegetables ready for dinner. There was a walk-in pantry next to our kitchen. The meat was usually already in the oven or we would have stews and mince. I could make soup. Sometimes on a Sunday, I cooked the roast as well. That's how I learned to cook. I remember the food being a bit better at Smyllum than at Nazareth House. If a child didn't like the food, it was just put in the bin.

Washing and hygiene

49. There were sinks with soap and showers. When I got a bit older, about fourteen, I went into a room for two people. I shared with [REDACTED]. By that time, we had started our periods. We needed privacy. We still weren't allowed to take a shower whenever we wanted. We just had to have a shower when we were told to. We could ask, but if it was too late or too early, we weren't allowed.
50. I was scared when I started my period. I didn't know what it was. It went away and I thought, "Thank god for that." Then it came back a month later. I used rags. I didn't know how to approach the staff. Eventually, I spoke to one of the staff, [REDACTED] FBN She

told me it was okay and it was nothing to worry about. I asked how I should keep myself clean. She took me up to the room where the clothes were kept. There were also sanitary towels. She told me to take a couple and put them in my locker.

School

51. When I first arrived at Smyllum, I was still at primary school. There was a school within the grounds. It was very old fashioned and there were tall windows that didn't let much sun light in. There was a teacher called Miss IAR and a nun called Sister FAM I only went there for a year until I went to secondary school. I liked primary school. I liked learning, but I didn't like the teachers. There was a lot of religious instruction drummed into our heads. We were always being hit by the ruler in school. If we got a sum wrong, we would be hit on our hands with the ruler.
52. I went to St. Mary's Secondary School in Lanark. It was five minutes down the avenue from Smyllum. I walked there with [REDACTED] who was roughly the same age as me. I thoroughly enjoyed secondary school. The teachers were nice. I particularly remember the history teacher, who had long, red hair. She made the lessons so interesting. She got us to play a part in what she was talking about. There wasn't as much religious instruction in the big school.
53. We did our homework in the playroom. We helped each other out. I passed what I needed to pass at school, I knew what I needed to know to get a job. I had to learn cooking and cleaning in the home.

Clothing

54. We got cast offs, things that were too small for somebody else. There was a cupboard with shoes and clothes. You would go up there and try things on. Whatever fitted you had to do. I don't remember getting any new clothes. I don't remember having anything I could call my own.

Work

55. The civilian staff sat and smoked and drank cups of tea while we did all the work. They did nothing. The only time they did any work was when we were at school and they had to cook. When we came in from school, we did the rest of it. [REDACTED] and two other boys would go and collect the tatties from the tattie house. They were in a big brass bucket. We had to peel them in three sinks and put them in pots.
56. When I was thirteen, Sister [REDACTED] AEG gave me [REDACTED] a ten month old baby, to look after. He was beautiful. He was my charge and I was told to look after him from 7 in the morning until 7 at night. I was like a wee mammy to him. I loved him. I got him ready in the morning and changed his nappies. If he was teething, I was up with him through the night. I bathed him and fed him. He would sit next to me at the dinner table in his high chair.

Leisure time

57. After a couple of years, I was able to read books. There was a shelf with kids' books on it. [REDACTED] and I were book worms. There were books by Enid Blyton and other children's authors. [REDACTED] liked books about pirates and adventure. He liked comics too, the Dandy and the Beano. I liked the magazine Jackie. We were allowed to read for an hour before bedtime.
58. The books were kept in the playroom, which also had a TV in it. There were some board games, which had been donated. There were ordinary toys. We were allowed out to the grounds at playtime. I played netball. We used to make up our own games. [REDACTED] and I used to climb trees, play football and play rounders. If we weren't back at the right time, we'd be punished.
59. We got a shilling for pocket money. We had to earn it by doing chores. At the weekend, we were allowed to go into town. Two and a half pence got us into the pictures on a Saturday. The other two and a half pence was spent on a sweetie in the rock shop, or we could save it.

Religious instruction

60. Religion was pumped into our heads, that it was important in life. It was forced on us. We had to go to Mass every morning before school during Lent. I thought there were more important things in life. When I left the home, I never went to chapel again unless I went to weddings, funerals or christenings.
61. There was a time when something was happening to the church in the grounds. We were sent up to St. Mary's Church in the town. [REDACTED] and I were sent together. When we came back, they'd ask us what the sermon had been about. We didn't all go. Two of us went to the park and the other one would go to Mass to listen to the sermon. [REDACTED] and I listened and remembered everything that had been said. [REDACTED] didn't listen so we got caught out again because of her. She didn't know what the sermon had been about, she didn't know which hymns had been sung. We knew we were caught. We just had to take it. We got hit with the plastic sandal.

Holidays and trips

62. We started going on holiday to Girvan a year or two after I went into the home. We went there every year because a mini bus was donated to the home. I've got a photograph of us there, sitting in our bathing costumes. I had a black one, [REDACTED] had a blue one, [REDACTED] had a yellow one and [REDACTED] had dark trunks. [REDACTED] was sitting in his pram. I must've been about thirteen.
63. All the children from Smyllum stayed in the hotel at the front in Girvan, right up to the attic. We just slept there. We had to go round the corner to Harbour Street and get our meals from the school. We went to the beach and we went swimming in the sea. Sister ^{AEG} [REDACTED] and one of the staff came with us. I remember getting ice cream on the beach.
64. We got to go to my sister, [REDACTED] wedding in 1972 and my brother, [REDACTED] wedding in 1973. I was a bridesmaid at [REDACTED] wedding. They were nice days. My

dad was allowed out from the hospital and he really enjoyed them. He was so pleased to see us. I think it gave him a boost because we were all together. That was the first time we'd seen him since before my mum died.

65. In 1973, there was a school trip to Belgium, France and Holland. It was £50. Sister [REDACTED] AEG managed to get the money for me. I did more chores to earn it. The trip was brilliant. I think it was the year Waterloo by Abba was out and I remember hearing that song. We got on a hovercraft. It was the first time I'd ever been abroad. It gave me a new lease of life.

Birthdays and Christmas

66. There were too many children to celebrate birthdays in the home. My dad would bring us gifts for our birthdays. One year, he brought me a jumper. He brought us chocolates as well. I would put them in the play room and let everybody have them because some people never got visitors at all.
67. At Christmas time, it was mainly about the birth of Jesus and the religious side of it. I remember a Christmas tree with baubles and the old fashioned decorations we had made at school. We got one present. I don't think it was anything spectacular, maybe a book or an annual. We had Christmas dinner, which was a chicken. I used to cook it.
68. The last couple of years before I left, my siblings and I got out for two weeks at Christmas. The social worker arranged it. We went to my sister [REDACTED] house. When I was thirteen, fourteen I was chasing [REDACTED] and I fell on a wine bottle there. My father was up to high do. I was taken to the hospital and I got stitches.

Visits/Inspections

69. My father had a nervous breakdown after my mother died. He hit the drink. He was a danger to himself and other people. He was locked up in [REDACTED] Hospital in [REDACTED] for three years. We didn't see or hear of him throughout that time. My sister, [REDACTED]

got a job in the laundry at [REDACTED] so she could see him regularly. My sisters, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] explained it to us. They told us dad wasn't well after mum had died. They told us why he wasn't able to come and see us and that it was against his will because he was locked up.

70. We were pining for our father. We asked the social worker if it would be possible for us to go and visit him. He took us to see him on one occasion. [REDACTED] ABE and I went to [REDACTED] Hospital. My dad came running up to us. He sat us down and asked us how we were. He asked somebody in a white coat if he could take us to the canteen and for a wee walk around grounds. The person asked him, "[REDACTED] will you run away?" My dad said, "No, I'll not run away, I've got my daughters with me." He was told he was on trust. He loved showing us off to everybody. [REDACTED] came over to see us as well. We had about two and a half hours there. It was great. I enjoyed that day so much.
71. When my father got out of the hospital, he came to visit us. He came at Christmas, Easter and for our birthdays. He never missed our birthdays, although they were spread throughout the year. My birthday is in [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] My father was allowed to take us out. He'd take us wherever we wanted to go. Sometimes we would go to the loch and sometimes we would go into the town. It was great. I looked forward to the visits. My father was so pleased to see us. Seeing my dad made such a difference.
72. My siblings who weren't in the home visited now and again, but they were busy with their own families. I remember [REDACTED] coming up when she was expecting [REDACTED] We weren't encouraged to write any letters. We didn't have access to the phone.
73. My Uncle [REDACTED] was accused of murder in 1961. He was in Carstairs. When he was allowed out, he came to visit us. I only saw him for a little while before I left. He came with my dad and a police officer. He always brought us chocolates.

74. Mr Brannigan was our social worker. We saw him two or three times a year and whenever we ran away. He never took us out of Smyllum. He spoke to us at the dining room table in the home. If we were in trouble, he saw us one at a time. Sister AEG would be hovering about, but she never sat down with us. Mr Brannigan asked us how we were. We never said anything to him about any abuse. It felt like he couldn't get out quick enough. We just told him what he wanted to hear. When he asked why we ran away, we told him we didn't like it at Smyllum. Nothing more was asked.

Siblings

75. ABE was in St. Kentigern's house. She used to come and chap the door of our house. She would ask if she could speak to AEI or Sister AEG would say, "You don't live her. Go to your own house." She would shut the door in her face. ABE used to just cry. It was impossible to see her in the home. It was discouraged. We only got to see her up the town. We used to sit next to each other at the cinema. ABE was really quiet. She depended on us. I don't know why the four of us couldn't have gone to the same house or one of us could've gone with ABE I don't know why the nuns wanted to separate families.

Healthcare

76. Doctor FBJ came into the home. He had a room and would see us when we were ill. I don't know what illnesses I had. I remember him telling us we had lazy eyes. We had to go to the hospital if we had broken limbs or anything like that.

Running away

77. In July 1969, [REDACTED] and I ran away. We walked along the railway line, trying to get to Glasgow. The train station wasn't far from the home. We would jump every time a train came. We got as far as Carstairs. It took us hours. Late at night, somebody saw us and the police took us back to Smyllum. I remember the light going on and the nun coming out. Sister AEG had been waiting for us. When the police had left,

she grabbed us by the ear and took us up to St. Joseph's. She battered us with a plastic sandal on the backside and the backs of our legs. She lifted my skirt up to make sure she got my legs. She said, "I hope that was sore." And it was sore. We also had all of our privileges were taken away. We didn't get any pocket money.

78. I started talking to [REDACTED], another girl in my house. She was twelve and I was ten. She told me things about her family and I told her things about mine. We found out we weren't orphans. Her mum was still alive. Because Smyllum was called an orphanage, we thought everybody there was an orphan. In October 1969, She asked me if I wanted to run away and I said I did.
79. [REDACTED] and I tried to thumb a lift. We were on a corner of a big road, trying to get to Glasgow. A car just came round the corner and the driver didn't see [REDACTED]. She went up in the air. I was stunned. I fell back against a wall. I couldn't believe what was happening. I was shaking like a leaf. The police and the ambulance came. She was still alive when she went in the ambulance. She died three days later.
80. I was taken to Law Hospital to be checked over. Sister [REDACTED] AEG and another nun came to the hospital. Sister [REDACTED] AEG went away to see a nurse or a doctor and said, "I'm coming back, [REDACTED] AEI." I sat in a wee chair and waited for her. I think the other nun took me back to the home and Sister [REDACTED] AEG stayed at the hospital. She went back and forward to the hospital until [REDACTED] died. After her death, we didn't see Sister [REDACTED] AEG for a month. Somebody said she went away to do penance.
81. The staff informed us when [REDACTED] passed away. Her family took her home to Glasgow for the funeral. Her mum wanted her to be buried near her daddy. Nobody spoke to me about her death. I went up to the toilet or bathroom, where I could get some privacy, and cried. It could've been any one of us or the two of us. It was horrible to see it in the flesh. It took the wind right out of my sails. I didn't run away for a while after that. When Sister [REDACTED] AEG came back, she was different. She didn't have much to say unless she was giving you a row. I got beaten with the plastic sandal again, because I had ran away. I didn't speak to Sister [REDACTED] AEG after that. I just went my own way.

82. The following July, [REDACTED] caught [REDACTED] and me stealing food from the pantry. She wanted to come with us. We walked along the railway to Carstairs and we got to a farm. We had to climb over a fence. [REDACTED] went first. I went next. [REDACTED] got panicky and said, "I can't do it." [REDACTED] and I tried to pull her over, but she fell into jagged nettles and screamed. A man came out and asked us what we were doing. He thought we were stealing the tatties. He took us into a cottage. There was an older woman there and a cat jumping about. He gave us a piece of gingerbread and a lemonade, then ten minutes later the police arrived.
83. When we got back, Sister [REDACTED] AEG [REDACTED] was in one of her moods. She really went to town and beat us badly. [REDACTED] had never had a beating before. She didn't run away again. She didn't like getting hurt. I had red marks on my legs. The police never spoke to us when they picked us up. They just took us back.
84. [REDACTED] and I ran away with my cousin, [REDACTED]. We kept getting caught when we went along the railway line, so we just walked up to the town. We came to the police station and sat around the corner from it. When we didn't return to the home for 9 o'clock, the police were contacted. We saw them go out in the car to look for us. They were hours, scouring all over the place, and we were sitting outside the police station the whole time.
85. I ran away four times in total. I stopped running away when I had my charge to look after. I was about thirteen, fourteen. I was enjoying looking after [REDACTED]. It took my mind off things. I also had visits from my father to look forward to. [REDACTED] stopped running away around that time too. He was supposed to go to a football match in Motherwell with some priests. They said he wasn't to go for some reason so he smashed all the greenhouse windows. Because of that, the priest took him to a boys' home in Glasgow. He was away from us for a wee while, about a month. When he came back, he wouldn't tell us anything. He was very solemn.

Abuse at Smyllum

Sister [REDACTED] AEG

86. Sister [REDACTED] AEG used to hit us with a plastic sandal. That's the only thing I remember getting hit with. It was kept in a brush cupboard in the hall. It would hang up in there. She would batter us on the backside and at the backs of our legs if we ran away and when we skipped Mass. It would leave me with red marks. I used to have to put dusters on my feet and polish the floors as a punishment. [REDACTED] and I turned it into a game. There were swing doors so we would slide right through them. She caught us and dragged us both by the ears, back to the corridor.
87. Things changed in the two years before I left. Sister [REDACTED] AEG started to treat me like a person. She still pulled other children by the ears and hit them when they got into trouble. It could be every day if chores weren't done or things weren't done as they should be. It happened to every child.

Sexual assault by [REDACTED] LMS

88. In the summer of 1971, I was twelve. My cousin, [REDACTED] was in the home with me by that time. She came in after us. [REDACTED] was mouthy and galling. She was the leader of the gang and bossed [REDACTED] around. Her dad, [REDACTED] LMS, came to visit her. He was married to my mum's sister, [REDACTED] I think he was in his forties. I didn't know him from Adam. We didn't know our aunts and uncles because we had grown up in homes.
89. He was allowed to take [REDACTED] out for the day. He asked if [REDACTED] and I wanted to come out too because we were cousins. We didn't think anything of it. It was a wee day out and taking us away from our routine. He took us to a place called the Loch. It was about a mile away from Smyllum. It had white rowing boats with benches on either side. There was an island in the middle with trees on it. We rowed the boat to the island. We started picking flowers and were going to make a daisy chain when we got home. We put the flowers in our dresses. My uncle asked

██████████ and ██████████ if they wanted to go and row around the island. He said he'd watch them.

90. He got them into the boat and they were rowing. There was nobody else on the island. When they were far enough away, he got me by the shoulder. I got a fright. I wondered what my uncle was doing. He pushed me up against a tree. I could feel his weight. He was a big man, he was heavy. He was pulling on his belt. He pulled his thing out and pulled my knickers down. I was screaming. He put his hand over my mouth. I couldn't see. All I could see was a wee bit of the sky through the trees. I slid down the tree and I felt a pain in my back. I don't think he raped me because I don't remember him going inside me. I remember him lying on top of me and making noises. I thought I was dead.
91. I ran away, but I couldn't get off the island because it was surrounded by water. I pulled my knickers on and they were all covered in leaves. I was shaking. I didn't know what to do. My sister and cousin came back. I never uttered a word. We got into the boat and I was rowing to get away faster. I couldn't get away fast enough. When we got to the shore, they walked and I ran on in front. I told my sister I hadn't been able to get any more flowers.
92. I didn't say anything to anybody. I didn't report it. I went into the washroom and had a look at myself. There were leaves there and I tidied myself up. I tried to look at my back but I couldn't see it. I had a wee mirror in my wardrobe. I had a bruise down my back. Nobody saw it. I didn't even tell ██████████ and I usually told him everything, but he might have done something and got himself into trouble.

Leaving Smyllum

93. When I turned sixteen, Mr Brannigan wanted to know if I was going to a hostel or to family. My brother, ██████████ got married in 1973. We had been allowed out for the wedding. I'd spoken to my sister, ██████████ at the wedding. She was willing for me to stay with her, her husband and her wee girl. I was sixteen in ██████████ 1975 and I left

Smyllum when I finished school in June. I wasn't given any preparation for leaving. I think Mr Brannigan took me to [REDACTED] in his car. Sister [REDACTED] AEG wished me good luck and shook my hand. She wasn't the type of nun to give hugs. I felt excited to get out, but I was worried there was nothing there for me at the other end as well.

Life after being in care

94. My dad wasn't fully better when I turned sixteen, so it wasn't viable to stay with him. I went to stay with my sister, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] would get me out of my bed and tell me to get a job. I wanted to get a job anyway. I needed to get used to going through the motions of filling in job applications and going for interviews. I hadn't had any training for that kind of thing, but I went up to the job centre and they helped me. I managed to get a job within six weeks. I worked in a clothes shop. I got on really well with the staff. I liked the routine I was in. I was there for three years.
95. I continued to go back to Smyllum to visit my younger siblings. I went as often as I could. When I was expecting [REDACTED], [REDACTED] was still in Smyllum. I went to visit her with [REDACTED] ABE [REDACTED] got in with the wrong crowd when she left. She was drinking. She was easily led and found it hard to adapt after leaving an institution.
96. [REDACTED] came out of Smyllum a year after me. They went to stay with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] ABE got out the year after that. She went to stay with [REDACTED] at first, but it was too crowded so she came to stay with [REDACTED] and me. When I was seventeen or eighteen, I went to see the council with my dad and asked if we could get a house. They asked how many people would be staying there. I told them we needed a house for my father, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] ABE [REDACTED] and me. They gave us a three bedroom house. It was just down from [REDACTED]. My dad was so happy there.
97. I worked in the clothes shop for a while. I loved having my own money. I got £28 for my first wage. I gave £3 to my dad for digs and I was able to save most of the remainder. A friend in the shop told me there was a job going in the oil works, not far from where we lived. It was the same hours and double the wages, so I decided to

go for that. We both got the job. They had a wee leaving do for me at the shop. I liked it there and got on well with them. I met my husband at the oil works.

98. I was the only one in the house working. The rest of them hadn't managed to get a job. They asked me to get a hifi on tick. I told them there was no way I was getting into debt. I bought a second hand telly for my dad, that was all. After being in Smyllum, I enjoyed having the freedom of my own independence. I liked having my own money.
99. I met [REDACTED] when I was nineteen. I'd had one boyfriend before I met him. [REDACTED] was 34. He'd been married before and he had three boys in Australia. When I told [REDACTED] the age difference, she was shocked. I reassured her that it was nothing serious yet. My family knew of [REDACTED] as his parents stayed in the Ferguslie area of Paisley, so that was a bit of a softener. I was working in a pub at night as well as my job at the oil works. I liked working. [REDACTED] was quite the gentleman and would walk me home from work. He knew I'd been in the home and wasn't sexually active. He took his time with me. Our son, [REDACTED] was born in 1980 and our daughter, [REDACTED] was born in 1984. We didn't get married right away. We got married in 2000.
100. [REDACTED] and I were both made redundant after a year at the oil works. We both got jobs straight away. I went to work at [REDACTED] the bakers when [REDACTED] was fifteen months old. There was a nursery just next door. I worked there until [REDACTED] was four. After [REDACTED] was born, I went to work for [REDACTED] the bakers on [REDACTED] I tried working night shifts at the airport for a while, but I couldn't get into the routine. [REDACTED] couldn't get the weans up and dressed so it wasn't working out.
101. [REDACTED] sister, [REDACTED] had moved in with us by then. She suffered from Multiple Sclerosis. She died in 1993 at the age of 37. After the airport I started working in schools, cleaning, so that the hours worked around the kids. I also worked in the Eye Infirmary, helping the old folk have their dinner and cleaning up after them. After that, I worked in the [REDACTED] Restaurant for eight and a half years. I just took jobs wherever they were.

102. My grandson, [REDACTED] was born in 2010. I finished up at the [REDACTED] in 2011 so I could help my daughter by looking after [REDACTED] when she was at work. By that time, my husband wasn't very well. He suffers from arthritis and has just been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease. I'm now a carer for him.

Reporting of abuse at Nazareth House and Smyllum

103. When I was a child, I was too scared to say anything about the abuse in case there were repercussions. There was really nobody I could talk to. I would never have told my father. He suffered from a mental illness and it would have brought it all back. He was diagnosed as suffering from schizophrenia. He died eighteen years ago. When we were older, my sisters and I discussed it, but we didn't want to tell him because we didn't want to set anything off. We shielded him from everything.
104. After I left Smyllum, I used to speak to my sister, [REDACTED] about the physical abuse by the nuns. My sisters were still there. I worried that they were alright. They seemed okay when I visited them and then Smyllum shut down in 1981. I told my husband about the abuse in Nazareth House and Smyllum as I got to know him. He knew I'd been in the homes and I wasn't like other nineteen year olds.
105. The first time I told anybody about what [REDACTED] LMS did to me was when I told my husband. I told my husband ten years after we first met. I heard a rumour that [REDACTED] LMS died in 1987. I left it for a year and then I told my husband what had happened. I didn't tell him before [REDACTED] LMS died because my husband might have sought him out, even though he didn't know him. After I had spoken to my husband, I started to speak to my sisters about the abuse. It opened things up because I had spoken the words. I told my sisters individually. I told [REDACTED] first because I was closest to her.
106. The police came to take a statement from me last week. They came from Glasgow. I think they had spoken to my sister, [REDACTED] ABE and Theresa McGrane. Until that point, I had never given a statement to the police about the abuse. [REDACTED] has never

opened up to his siblings, but he also gave a statement to the police. I'm hoping he was able to open up to a stranger.

Impact

107. When I left care, I didn't know my older siblings as well as I should have. I hadn't see them at all when I was in Nazareth House. I'm now very close to my siblings. We survived it and we're still here. Most of my siblings have happy lives and nice children. The nuns didn't get us.
108. I was brought up as a Catholic. We had to go to church in the homes. When I left Smyllum, I didn't go to church at all because it had been forced on me so much.
109. I loved school because I liked to get away from Smyllum. I liked the freedom. I loved learning. I think that helped me when I left. I've always worked when I've needed to. I've just got on with my life, working and looking after my children.
110. My time in care made me very wary of people. I don't trust people until I get to know them. I was very naïve when it came to sexual relationships. We didn't know as much as other children on the scheme who had mums and dads to explain things to them.
111. I was very protective of my children when they were growing up. I didn't let them have sleepovers. I'd let them sleepover at my sister, ABE because she had two daughters of a similar age to [REDACTED] I let their friends come on sleepovers at our house, but I wasn't keen on letting them stay with strangers after what had happened to me. [REDACTED] used to go in such moods. She'd say, "Mum, you're the worst mum. You won't let me do anything." She didn't understand. I didn't want my children knowing what had happened to me when they were little. Now that they're adults, they've heard us talking about our childhoods and they know more about what happened.

112. Sometimes, I do think about being in care. When people show me pictures of holidays they went on as weans, it reminds me of what we didn't have. They have snaps of mum, dad and the weans. We just have that one photo of us on holiday in Girvan. We lost our family unit.

Records

113. I don't have any records from my time at Nazareth House in Kilmarnock. I sent away and asked for them but they replied, saying they didn't have anything. I'd love to get the photograph that was taken three weeks before my mother died. In 2014, my sister and I went down to Mill Hill in Luton, hoping to get our records from the Sisters of Nazareth. We stayed overnight at the convent. All we got was a wee photograph of each of us and something about our baptism. We've not even got our original birth certificates. Apparently, all the records got burnt in the 1980s. You'd think all the records would have been moved to a safe place. You can't get them back, the memories.
114. Around 2014, we got our notes from Smyllum from Renfrewshire Council. We paid £10 to get them. There was a folder containing things like my school report from primary school. My social worker's writing was terrible and I couldn't read the notes. These things are important. I have no medical records. I don't know if I had illnesses as a child. I'm hoping Future Pathways can help me obtain more of my records.

Final thoughts

115. I went to see Sister AEG twice. I saw her in 1985 when my son was four and my daughter was one. My son [REDACTED] had been asking about his grandparents. I had to tell him he didn't have any grannies. I had to explain that I'd been in the home and Sister AEG had been my mum for a long time. He asked to see her. Because of the poll tax, Sister AEG had to stay with three other nuns in [REDACTED], Coatbridge. I got there with the two kids and she was very nice. She asked us to stay

for a barbeque and something to eat. [REDACTED] asked if she was his granny. She said, "If you want." I also went to see her in Lanark with ABE [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in 2011.

116. Children should be listened to because most of what they say is true. I hope care isn't like it was when I was a child. We needed somebody appropriate to talk to. Mr Brannigan wasn't the right person. Wee lassies can talk to a woman more than a man. Men are scary to wee people.
117. I hope that by coming forward to the Inquiry, I might help other people who are going through similar bad experiences. You can talk about it. You're not alone.
118. 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

AEI

Dated

26/1/18