

**Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

LCN

Support person present: No

1. My name is LCN and my date of birth is 1951. My contact details are known to the Inquiry. I am married with one son who is 28 years old. I have no grandchildren. I am retired from the Post Office and do some part-time acting work.

**Life before going into care**

2. My mother was unmarried when I was born. I didn't meet her until I was twenty years old. While I was in Nazareth House I didn't even know she was alive. My mother's name was which became when she married. I never met her husband who died before I met her. He was not my father. My mother never discussed my father except to tell me he was called I eventually stopped asking about him because I felt it was just putting her in an awkward situation.
3. According to my mother I was born in a Salvation Army hostel in Glasgow before I was taken to Nazareth House in Aberdeen where I stayed until I was fifteen. I believe I was sent there because they had places for babies and toddlers, a nursery unit. I was an only child. She never did give me an explanation as to why I had been put there.

**Nazareth House, Aberdeen**

4. My first recollection of Nazareth House was Christmas in the nursery, and that it was always snowing at Christmas time there. The building had a boys' side and a girls' side. The nursery was for under-fives and was on the second or third floor. When you turned five you went to the boys' side. To me it seemed that up until you turned five you were looked after, and thereafter you were put into the big world.
5. I've no real recollection of my time there before I turned five. After that we slept in dormitories with six or eight beds in each. I think there were almost thirty boys there at the time, and I think there were maybe three dormitories for them. I would see the girls at school or maybe on a Saturday morning. In general the boys and girls would be kept separate.
6. I would know a girl from school but if I saw her in Nazareth House she wouldn't speak to me because they weren't allowed to talk to the boys while in the home. We would maybe speak to the girls in the summer when we went to the beach, but they would say "Don't let the nuns see us speaking". The girls were terrified of the nuns. I would say there were thirty or forty girls there.
7. Mother Superior ran the home, but I can't remember her name or the name of the nun's order but they ran the Nazareth House Homes. There were also civilian staff, some of whom were nice while others were nasty. You would get the odd monk there who would be there for a week or two on retreat, I think. They tended to keep themselves to themselves.
8. I remember one monk who was wearing his long cassock and had a big leather belt. He called me over and said "I'm here for two weeks. If I get any lip from you then you'll get this" and pointed to his leather belt. I've no idea why he said that.
9. I think there were between twenty and thirty nuns in the Nazareth House. Two nuns were LFB and LDR who were quite old. Another nun I recall was called LFD or LFD. She was Irish. I would say they were all dead by now.

10. In the boys' side there were two or three groups, though we all ate together and would watch TV together. Some things were good and others weren't.

### **Routine at Nazareth House**

11. A bell or a shout woke us up in the morning and you got washed, dressed then had your breakfast. Two or three times a week we would have mass to go to. I don't think it was every day. Some of us would then have chores to do. One of my chores was cleaning a set of stairs while one of my friends, whose name I don't recall, did the other set. I don't think we did chores at the weekend.

12. I don't recall much about breakfast time. I recall that once or twice we got burnt porridge which tasted foul, but I was forced to eat it anyway. They would try to force me to finish it, but I only took a couple of mouthfuls. If you didn't finish it they would shout at you. They would be quite abusive about it, but they didn't strike you for it. Other boys were also forced to eat the burnt porridge.

13. I remember a young Spanish female student called Maria said to the nuns that maybe they shouldn't shout at us, but the nuns were then abusive to her as well. I would say Maria was about eighteen or nineteen, and I think she was staying there while she studied English at college. The verbal abuse was horrendous. In fact I haven't spoken to a nun since I left the place in 1966.

14. We got a bath once or twice a week. The younger boys, up to eleven or twelve, all bathed together maybe two at a time. I don't know if that was done to humiliate you or not, but you got used to it. You wore the same clothes all week. When we were on holidays it would be khaki shorts and corduroy jackets. I think the clothes were home-made. I had a shirt that I'm sure was made from a curtain.

15. A man used to come in and cut our hair. He was usually quite good, but if you annoyed him then he gave you a rotten cut.

16. I went to St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School and St Peter's Secondary School. We had a school uniform. You would come home from school at lunchtime by bus. School was okay. I felt it was an escape and you always had your friends at the school. I got many prizes for my work at school which I left when I was fifteen. I sometimes felt I could have gone to university if I had stayed on.
17. Some of the other kids at the school would call us Nazis or shout German words at us because Nazareth House was sometimes shortened to "Nazi House".
18. Back at the home we would get tea, then help with the washing up. After that it would be homework then playing out in the yard. The homework wasn't supervised.
19. We were in bed for 9 or 9:30 pm. Definitely before 10 pm. Somebody would come round to turn the lights out. A man called [LDU] was always there at night, though I heard he wasn't actually a member of staff. He would come into the Nazareth House at teatime, stay till about 6:30 pm then go away for a while. He would come back later, and when he did he was always smelling of alcohol. He always looked as if he was looking for trouble. A guy like that should never have been allowed near a children's home. He was quite an aggressive type of person.
20. His wife [LHQ] helped out on the boys' side on, I think, a voluntary basis. A lawyer I later saw, Cameron Fyfe, told me that [LDU] wasn't a member of staff, but he was there seven nights a week.

### Bed-wetting

21. In the home they sometimes put rubber sheets on our mattresses which was attached to a big battery and an alarm and gave a shock if it got wet. Some of the boys said they got electric shocks and I used to struggle to get to sleep because I had a fear of getting electrocuted.
22. Eventually, when I was about twelve, I told them if they didn't get rid of the rubber mat I would contact the police. I never did tell the police as I never wet the bed except when I was six or seven. I think we all had these rubber sheets and I always felt they took pleasure out of what was a form of mental cruelty. Because I struggled to sleep at night I always struggled to stay awake in school.
23. I think that when you wet the bed the nuns would take pride in humiliating you. They would bring down those who had wet the bed to breakfast in their wet pyjamas saying "Look at that. He wet the bed". I don't know what they did with the wet sheets. You would get washed and dressed and sent to school feeling humiliated and miserable. I think the nuns also sometimes put the wet pyjamas on your head. I think it happened to me the once when I was about six years old.

#### Leisure time

24. If it was summer or a Friday or Saturday you might go down to the beach. The yard was quite large with a concrete surface and we would play football. We also had a field at the back which had a couple of goalposts.
25. You would get pocket money, but if we were going to the baths or the beach we would walk to save money. We would buy comics and swap them, and some people would hand comics into the home for us to read. I have no recollection of books or toys except for maybe footballs, which I think we all chipped in to buy.

26. We used to love watching "Top of the Pops" and, believe it or not, we used to love Jimmy Savile because of his weird hair.
27. We only went shopping if we had to get new clothes for first communion or confirmation. I remember they bought me a suit for when I was leaving on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] 1966, though as they were buying it for me I didn't even know I was leaving.
28. I remember being taken to the cinema only once to see "The Sound of Music". We probably went to see that because it had so many nuns in it.
29. We weren't taught any life skills like cooking or anything like that.

#### Holidays

30. We sometimes went on holiday to Dumbarton. I think it was St Patrick's Boys' Club. In return, a group from there would sometimes visit us in Aberdeen. It was good visiting them as it got us away from the Nazareth House. I sometimes stayed with the McCallan family in Bellsmyre in Dumbarton. I think they were a Catholic family and were really nice. I think it was just the boys who went.
31. While in Dumbarton we would go to an old church at night that had a snooker table. It was great fun though I found it strange as, later in life, you would be frowned on if you hung about a snooker hall. We also went on trips on the Waverley paddle steamer to Dunoon and Craigendoran. I remember Dunoon was full of American sailors.
32. Sometimes we would go for walks, and would maybe build a bonfire and have tea and sandwiches. Some of the nuns would come down with us on the train to Queen Street station where we would then walk to Central Station then get another train to Dumbarton. The nuns would go back to the home after dropping us off. I think we went to Dumbarton three or four times.

33. We also went to Invergordon. It was similar to Dumbarton in that we stayed with families. I stayed with a guy called [REDACTED] Him and his wife were so nice. [REDACTED] used to play for Celtic.

### Medical Treatment

34. There was a nun at Nazareth House who was a trained nurse who would give you any injections that were required. She was a very pleasant person, but I can't remember her name. I remember her boiling the needles to sterilize them.

35. There was a woman who came into Nazareth House at night. She wasn't a nun but I think she was a trained nurse, and would be in between 10 pm and 8:00am. She was an older woman who looked after a dog that hung around the home. She also looked after some of the old ladies who stayed in the old folks' part of the home.

36. There was a doctor in the home who I saw once or twice, I think, just for general check-ups. I also saw him after [REDACTED] LDU beat me up, to see if I had any broken bones.

37. I went to hospital once because of a blister on my tear duct. I also went once because of an ingrowing toenail. It was the nuns who took us to hospital if we had to go there.

38. Nazareth House had a dentist, a Mr [REDACTED] LJU who had a surgery in the home, though he brought his own equipment with him. We were a bit scared of him, but I think that was just because all children are scared of dentists.

### Religion

39. Before you went to bed at night-time you would say various prayers out loud. It was the same in the morning. Sometimes you said them in Latin but you were

only doing it parrot fashion. There was mass three or four times a week in the morning and there were RE classes. I always thought there was too much religion.

### Christmas and birthdays

40. We would get presents at Christmas like selection boxes, train sets, Dinky cars or model aeroplanes. There were also decorations and a tree and a Christmas meal. I wasn't always there at Christmas, but I remember getting chicken which I had never had before.

41. On your birthday you would get taken into Mother Superior's office and given a big bag of sweets from big jars of them that were kept in a cupboard. I don't remember getting birthday cards or a cake.

### Visitors / inspections

42. I didn't get any visitors though some of the others did. Sometimes their parents would take me with them for the day. I always assumed my mother and father had passed away as I hadn't been told otherwise.

43. There were no social workers early on but later on, in the last year or two, I would see a children's officer from Glasgow called Mr McEwan. We would speak one-to-one in an office. He would see me every couple of months and I thought he was quite a nice man. My recollection is that the conversations with him was just general chit-chat.

### **Abuse at Nazareth House**

44. I can't recall a specific punishment code, but you knew not to step out of line. You tended to live in fear of what might happen. I know a couple of the boys who got hit for dogging school. I think I only dogged school once because I



quite liked school. I wasn't caught on the one occasion. I think I did it because I knew I was leaving, and I did it for the sheer devilment of it.

45. In the morning, if you didn't shout out your prayers loud enough, you would get shouted at or maybe get a clout on the head from the nuns though I was never clouted for that.

46. There was one particular incident. One night me and this other boy, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] were fighting when Mrs LHQ came in. She was an abusive type of person. She was screaming at us but the fight had split up by then. She must have told her husband LDU about it though I don't know what she said. Later that day LDU grabbed me in the corridor and dragged me into a cupboard or it may have been a wee bathroom. He was effing and blinding at me and punching me. He then stripped me naked and battered me black and blue. I thought I was going to die. Eventually a nun found me but she didn't even question what had happened. I was covered in red marks. I told her he had assaulted me.

47. When LDU was assaulting me he was saying "You think you know it all". He just ripped the clothes off me and battered me with his hands, fists and feet. He didn't sexually abuse me.

48. My friends, especially [REDACTED] heard me screaming but the nuns didn't come to my rescue even though they must have heard me screaming. I think when the nun came in it took her a wee while to realise I was naked. [REDACTED] said he couldn't understand why the nuns hadn't come to my rescue.

49. Next day I got told I was going to school. I didn't notice I had a big hand mark on my face. I got on the school bus and the driver asked what had happened to me. I told him it was LDU. The driver said "Don't say anything else". When I got off the bus the driver took me to a teacher who in turn took me to the headmaster. The headmaster's name was something like Mr LFA or Mr LFA but I remember he was a really nice man. I think this was in 1962.

50. The headmaster asked me to take my shirt off in front of a school nurse and then called the police who took me back to Nazareth House. When we got there a wee Irish nun asked me why the police had brought me home and started giving me trouble for having reported the matter to the police. I told her it was the headmaster who had called the police. I think her name was Sister LFD

51. I saw LDU that night and he offered me a ten bob note but I refused it. It dropped to the ground and he picked it up. I would say LDU was in his thirties or forties and I was terrified of him. He was an evil wee man.

52. I believe the police spoke to LDU but I only know this because later in life I got a letter from the police. It said that they had investigated the matter but I don't know if LDU was prosecuted or not. I think the police must have interviewed me in the home about the incident because I don't remember going to a police office.

53. We continued seeing LDU in the home nearly every night after that and, while it seemed as if he was trying to be more friendly with me, I refused to have anything to do with him. I point blank refused to speak to him. He was a nasty man.

54. On a Sunday afternoon if you didn't get visitors the nuns would tell you to sit on your bed and not talk for hours, even on a summer's day. I think it was done simply because they didn't know how to look after you simply because you weren't going out.

55. If the nuns thought you had done something bad during the week you would have to do what I called the "Saturday afternoon special". You would be called into the room next to Mother Superior and you would be made to kneel close to the wall for hours. Every now and again, as you knelt there, nuns like FAF and LDW would give you a back-hander onto the back of your

head causing you to hit your head off the wall. I saw this happen to several boys.

56. This seemed to stop when I was eleven or twelve after I was approached by a nun and I said "Here we go again, the Saturday afternoon special". It just seemed to stop after that.

57. This happened to me several times. I would see other boys who had gone out and they would tell me what they had done and I would reply "That's strange. All I got all day was back-handers from the nuns". I think I just considered it normal. Sometimes you would get hit and you would think that at least it was over with. But sometimes they would pass you four or five times and you never knew just when they were going to hit you. One or two of the boys cut their foreheads because of it.

58. There was another thing that happened that I wish to mention. There was an old air-raid shelter in the grounds where they kept all the cleaning materials like soap, washing flakes, brillo pads etc. An elderly nun called [REDACTED] LGY worked there and we were all terrified of her, especially the girls. At about 9:00 am on a Saturday morning we would take a note of what the nun in charge of the boys required us to get from the stores. Every time we went along [REDACTED] LGY just shouted at us and always in a nasty manner. Even some of the staff were scared of her.

59. I remember a few months before I left, when I was fifteen, I went in to the store and as usual [REDACTED] LGY was shouting at me. I said to her "if you don't like doing your job why don't you leave it?". For some reason she simply didn't speak to me till I left.

## Leaving Nazareth House

60. I left Nazareth House on [REDACTED] 1966. A couple of days before that they told me I was getting fitted for a new suit. I didn't actually know I was leaving until the night before I left when they told me I was leaving and going to Glasgow. I didn't even know I had left school. I didn't even get the chance to say I was leaving to some friends I had arranged to see over the Christmas period.

61. On the day I left, I was put in a taxi with [REDACTED] and taken to get the train to Glasgow. I was told I had now left school by one of the nuns and she said that I was now to go get a job. I found that rather weird.

### Life after being in care

62. It was arranged for me to go to a hostel in Cleveden Drive in the west end of Glasgow. I was there on and off for three years. It was okay. The hostel was mainly for teenagers. You got fed and had a fair amount of freedom.

63. Mr [REDACTED] LGZ from the hostel, was a bit of a drunk and could be abusive. He used to ask me about my parents and, because I took a good tan, would ask me if my parents came from Africa. The hostel was run by Mr Livingston and his wife and were really nice people. They were always talking to me and asking how I was. I think there were three or four to each room.

64. I think Glasgow Council paid for me being in the hostel though I also paid some of my wages towards it. I do remember one occasion there when there was another guy in the hostel who got into a fight with [REDACTED] LGZ and fists started to fly. I don't know what started it.

65. In 1968 I was sixteen and went into the army. A soldier asked me what home I had been in. I was stunned because I hadn't told anybody I had been in a home. When I asked how he knew, he told me that I was the only recruit who wasn't homesick and who fitted into the regimentation of the army quite easily.

66. For the first three years I would stay at the hostel at Clevedon when I was on leave from the army, which was once or twice a year. For the first eighteen months in the army I was stationed in Troon. After that I was all over the place. I was in the army until 1975.

67. Somebody in the hostel once asked me if I ever thought of trying to see my mother. I didn't even know if she was still alive. I found her and showed up unexpectedly. She wouldn't give me any reasons as to why I ended up at Nazareth House but I could maybe understand given she had been an unmarried mother.

68. I met my wife at the dancing in 1971, and got married in 1981. We have a son who is 28 now.

69. I stayed with my mother for a few years after I left the army and then got a bedsit. However, once I started doing shift work I moved back in with her. I was working with the Post Office and worked there for 32 years when I took retirement in 2008. I was 57.

## Impact

70. You do think back on what happened. I don't think a week goes by without me thinking of, for example, the assault by [REDACTED] LDU I was told he was still there about five years after I left. He is not the sort of person who should be allowed near a children's home.

71. I come across nuns now and again and my wife has pointed out that I never speak to them. I don't go to chapel now because I got sick of the way religion was drummed into you. I think you should talk about religion, but you shouldn't have it rammed down your throat.

72. My time at Nazareth House has had an impact on me though it seemed to prepare me for the army as I knew how to follow routine and I never got home sick.
73. I never sought nor required psychological help. I've been in touch with INCAS which [REDACTED] got me in touch with. I meet with them once a year and have done so since it started about ten years ago.
74. About twenty years ago I read about an investigation going on and I contacted a lawyer called Cameron Fyfe who started looking into it for me. He wrote to my MP though he said we could only go so far because of the time-bar. I think he charged me £400.
75. The Aberdeen police contacted me one Sunday morning and said that LDU [REDACTED] LDU had been interviewed about the incident but didn't tell me if he had been prosecuted or not.
76. It was my friend [REDACTED] who suggested that I should go to Cameron Fyfe. I had met up with [REDACTED] again when we worked in the Post Office together. He said Cameron Fyfe was a well-known lawyer who was dealing with a lot of such cases. He was one of those "no win, no fee" lawyers so I wasn't sure why I had to pay him £400.

## Records

77. I have never tried to get my records. I think I'd be worried about what I would find out.

## Hopes for the Inquiry

78. My hope for the Inquiry is that it proves that those of us who went through this weren't telling lies. We've been telling the truth all along but people simply

wouldn't listen. I believe [REDACTED] LDU [REDACTED] is now dead so it's not as if I'm trying to get back at him. After all, he can't now be prosecuted.

79. All council or government homes should have checks done on a regular basis to speak to the kids on a one to one basis. Speak to the children's teachers. The nuns just ran Nazareth House but there was no control from the Council. The children's welfare wasn't looked after. I think it's different now. I think religious groups are the wrong ones to be looking after such places.

80. 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.

[REDACTED] LCN [REDACTED]

Signed.....

Dated..... 9-6-2017 .....