

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

■■■■■

Support person present: No

1. My name is ■■■■■. My maiden name was ■■■■■. My date of birth is ■■■■■ 1950. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in the Western Hospital in Possilpark in Glasgow. The address was ■■■■■. I thought I was an only child all my life but a few months ago, I found out that I have three half-sisters and a half-brother. We have the same mum but different dads. ■■■■■ is oldest, she is 89 and lives in England. I am in a lot of contact with her. My sister, ■■■■■ is next, she is 78 and lives in Pennsylvania in America. My brother ■■■■■ is 86. He lives in England. My youngest sister, ■■■■■, died four or five years ago. I think she would have been roughly 74.
3. My dad was stationed in India during the war, that's where he met my mum. My mum was born in India. Her family were quite high ranking in the army. When the war finished a lot of people decided to come back over to Britain.
4. My birth certificate states that my mother was ■■■■■. However, she was known as ■■■■■. I can't work out why there is a different name on my birth certificate. When my parents met my mum was still married. In those days you couldn't get divorced so she must have changed her name to ■■■■■. She would have to have changed her name to get to Scotland with dad or she wouldn't have got on the boat. They stole someone's ID or papers. Apparently a lot of that went on in

those days. It's the only answer I have because after the war things were so hard for everyone and people were trying to get out of India.

5. One of my nephews found the passenger list. My dad was [REDACTED]. My mum is on the passenger list as [REDACTED]. It was 1948. Her name should have said [REDACTED] on my birth certificate. That was her legal name. It's hard because there is no one to ask as everyone has died. The closest I've got is my cousin [REDACTED], his mum. I have an Uncle [REDACTED] who died a couple of weeks ago.
6. I went into hospital when I was a toddler because I was malnourished. My mum couldn't cook properly so she wasn't giving me proper food. She came from a wealthy family in India where servants did everything. She could cook rice and gave me lots of sweets and cake. She was doing the best she could do but I got sick and apparently I nearly died.
7. One of my earliest memories is of being about three. I can remember being in the lounge sitting on one of those kitchen folding chairs and falling through the space in the chair and getting stuck because I was so little. I can remember my mum and dad having a row about what my mum was giving me to eat. He was saying I had to have proper food.
8. When I was three my mum became ill. I can remember holding my dad's hand as I went into a building to visit her. I can remember sitting on her knee and how lovely she looked with her make-up and perfume. I would recognise her perfume if I smelled it today. She had jet black hair and was wearing lipstick. She was pretty. She sat me on her knee and said "so you're my little girl?" I never saw her again. There was another lady there who, thinking about now, might have been her carer. I can't remember her looking sick and she wasn't in bed or anything.
9. She died when I was four or five. I don't know how long it had been since I saw her when they told me she had passed. She had cancer. She had been living in Glasgow. The last trace of her was in Springburn.

10. My dad took me to stay at my gran's in Lanark. I didn't see a lot of him as he didn't come to the house. I can remember my grandad saying that he wouldn't let my dad in the house. I don't why but he was a bit like the black sheep of the family. So I used to go and meet him in the Main Street every so often, at weekends. He was one of six.
11. My Uncle [REDACTED] used to sit me on his knee, he would bounce me and sing Danny Boy. It made me cry and cry. My nan used to tell him to stop making me cry. I found out that my mother used to sing that to my other brothers and sisters. My sister, [REDACTED] told me I must take after mum because she had the most beautiful singing voice.
12. I went to the grammar school in Lanark. I passed everything at school. I was good at some things. I wore glasses and was a timid girl so I was bullied by the other kids at school. I used to go out the back gate of the school and go down the lane as I knew the kids would be waiting for me at the front. They used to tease me and say "go and tell your nana, nana" because I didn't have a mum.
13. My nan was very strict, like they were in those days, it was just the way it was then. If I was a bit naughty or came home late, I used to get the belt sometimes, it was one with two tongues on my bottom. That's how it was in those days but I was well looked after. My Aunt [REDACTED], my dad's sister, took me on holiday so I never missed holidays.
14. My Aunt [REDACTED] who lived in Falkirk wanted to adopt me but my Uncle [REDACTED] refused. They were all a bit afraid of my dad and just didn't want any trouble.
15. I went to Sunday school every week and I was in the school choir. I was one of the best singers in my Grammar, not to blow my own trumpet, but I always got the lead role in the church choir or at school. One time I said that I wanted to be a pop star and I remember my nana whacking me. I can remember telling the man in the employment agency I wanted to be pop star. In those days, a woman ended up in an office, a factory or a shop. My first job was in a knitwear factory at the bottom of the street I lived in. I worked in Woolworths too.

16. My music teacher said I would've gone far. It's the biggest regret of my whole life. I watch TV shows now and I cry because that's who [REDACTED] is and it's gone. I'm 71 now but I love modern music especially techno and dance. I used to do karaoke with a friend and I'd get standing ovations.
17. When I looked across the fields, I could see Smyllum Orphanage from my bedroom window. My nan used to threaten me with going there, she would say "if you don't behave you're going over the hill to the nuns". A lot of parents said those things in those days.
18. A couple of times I snuck out because my friends were only allowed to come to the door, they weren't allowed in the house. I can remember one night I snuck out the bathroom window and she found out and locked the door. I think she made me sit outside the house. It was typical teenager stuff especially if you're from a home where you're not allowed to do certain things. I wasn't a bad kid. It was a very strict upbringing but I was well fed and had great Christmases. There was no difference there.
19. I went to live with my dad when I was sixteen because my gran was getting older. He lived in a little two bedroom flat in [REDACTED] in Carluke. We had a fireplace with the brass canopy on it. There was a big carpet square with polished wood around it. I had to polish it. If he came home and things weren't right I'd get a belting. He would be angry because he was so clean and pedantic. He used to run his fingers along the canopy to check for dust and if there was I'd get it. He broke a broom handle over my hip once and I've still got a lump there.
20. I stayed with my dad for around a year. He used to belt me and punch me quite a bit. I could never say I hated him but I was terrified of him. He was well spoken and immaculately dressed. He had been in the army. The problem was a lot of men came home with 'shell shock' and that's what he was suffering from. I can understand now that he had a lot of problems.
21. The sad thing was the first time I ran away I went to the neighbour downstairs. She told me that they often heard me screaming but people just minded their own business.

The second time I ran away I went straight to Carluke Police Station. There was nobody in. The policeman came back from being off-duty. I told him about my dad but he said he didn't believe me. I can remember saying "please help me, please don't ring my dad". It was the days of 'children should be seen and not heard'. My dad came to the police station. He was always well spoken and well presented. The policeman said "take your daughter" and told me to behave. I thought I was going to get the beating of my life when he got me home but he didn't. He didn't beat or yell at me that time. I don't know if he was scared I'd actually gone to the police or if he knew he'd gone too far. He was actually quite calm.

22. I ran away a lot. I can remember sleeping in the streets or the public toilets. I would walk around the streets naively and be taken back to the police station for a nice hot meal and a cup of tea. The police would say come on in the car. The last time I ran away, I don't think the police took me back to my dad, or my nan's.

Unknown Children's Home, South Lanarkshire

23. That's when they must have taken me to a children's home. It was a proper orphanage. I think it was a house in Lanark. I just remember there being little kids. I think they had been made to take me because they didn't normally take kids my age. I think if I'd been younger, they would have found a foster home for me but no one wants a teenager.
24. I can't remember anything else about it there. I wasn't there for long. I ran away. I was in a horrible state of mind. I was panicking and scared because I'd been brought up by my nan with my home comforts.
25. I ran away with another girl from the home. She wanted to go back to her family in Glasgow, so we went to her family's home in the Old Gorbals. I think they had too many children and couldn't afford them. The house was filled with sticks of furniture and the walls were peeling. It was a slum. Her mother told us she was sorry but she had nothing for us.

26. She went her own way and I was picked up by the police eventually. I don't know if I was taken back to the children's home in Lanark or if I was taken straight to the remand home. I have a vague memory of going back there but I'm not sure.

Beechwood Girls Remand Home, Tollcross, Glasgow

27. I ended up going to a home in Tollcross in Glasgow. It was a large, double fronted house with a door set back with a garden gate. It didn't look like a school or an institution. It was more like a house that had been changed into a children's home. It was on a small incline with the lawn sloping down. We used to see the buses going by.
28. I have looked it up recently and found out that it was at 451 Tollcross Road in Glasgow and was called Beechwood Girls Remand Home. I found out that there was only one girl's remand home there. It's the only place positioned where I know I was. There isn't good write ups about it. It was run by the local council. They changed the name to an assessment centre in later years.
29. It was all girls. It was more like a large family so there were about a dozen girls. I shared a room with one girl. We were about the same age. We got on well and used to chat at night and whisper in case we were caught talking. I can't remember a lot about the other girls. A lot of the girls were younger. I think the youngest was about ten. Apparently she was a little bit of a bugger who was causing trouble.
30. I was scared. A lot of the girls were scared of nothing, some of them had assaulted police. I shouldn't have been there, I had done nothing wrong.

Routine

31. I think we had to get up early, it might have been five or six. You had chores to do before breakfast and if you didn't complete them, you missed breakfast. They didn't leave it on the table for you, the table was cleared. We ate in the dining room at quite a large dining table. I can't remember anything about the meals but I was always

hungry. It was breakfast, lunch and dinner, that was it, there was nothing in between. I used to think "when is tea?"

32. You had to work for your food, I can remember having to polish the wooden floors in the morning and buff the stairs. I had to use a broom handle with a big, heavy block of wood on the end with velvet around it. Me and another girl would take turns and polish the wood floors and stairs. I can't remember if we did it for a couple of days. I can't remember the other chores. If you didn't get it done, you'd miss your breakfast. I mean that was wrong.
33. I hadn't ever got undressed in front of anyone but you had to take your clothes off and have a bath with the others. I suppose there would be a lot of kids who would come dirty and full of lice. I got in the bath and it had some disinfectant stuff in it. I was embarrassed because I was a young woman. It was traumatic.
34. They gave me 'hand me down' clothes that had been donated. You had nothing of your own. It was embarrassing to me because I came from a good working class family. They were like clothes you got from an 'op shop', they were donated from good hearted people. I had a grey skirt which was below the knee. I was in mini-skirts by then, it was the sixties. The jumper which matched would have had a hole in it. They tried to give you the best they had but it was very embarrassing and demoralising. We were even given undies, they were baggy bloomers. They weren't for a hip chick like me.
35. There were classes during the day but I only remember the sewing class. It's the only class that sticks in my mind. I was past school age by then. I had left school when I was sixteen. I could have done my O Levels but for whatever reason I didn't.
36. The headmistress was very warm, pleasant and motherly. I can't remember her name. She would say "hello IIW". The headmistress was lovely. I remember going into her office, feeling scared but she was pleasant. One of the ladies was quite stern and strict in the way she spoke to us. She seemed middle aged.

37. There was no cruelty or abuse in Beechwood. It was hard for me because it was much like old style poorhouses. I was just an innocent girl who wasn't used to that way of life. They were supposed to care for us.
38. I don't think there were any punishments except if you didn't finish your work, you missed your meal.
39. You were given a medical check-up, every so often, when the doctor came. I was only there for a short time before I had a check-up. We had to queue up outside the room near the dorms. We had to strip down to our underpants and take our bras off.
40. There were tradesmen working in the building. One of the tradesman walked past us heading to another part of the house. I was standing waiting in my knickers with no bra on. The man didn't look at any of us, he just minded his own business, but I wonder what he said to his family when he went home. It was really embarrassing. Another girl who I shared a room was there too. She was also developed. I had never stood in my undies in front of anyone in my life. It was wrong, I don't know why we couldn't have just undressed in the room or even kept our bras on. That would've been embarrassing enough. You don't get undressed in your doctor's waiting room.
41. You didn't have visitors because it was a remand home. It was only a short stay place. Most girls were only there for a few weeks and then they went to court. We weren't even allowed out of the door, not even into the garden. I would have loved to go out. I remember thinking we're so near outside but we can't even put our noses out the front door.
42. I can't remember any fun things. I just remember cleaning and the three meals a day. I don't know if we even had church services in the home. I don't remember anything about religion. I've just got vague memories of being taken to church.
43. I have a feeling I must have run away because I can remember being caught and being back there. I don't remember doing it or how I did it. I got a lift in a truck and the man reported me because he felt sorry for me. He rang the police.

44. I didn't get into trouble. The headmistress spoke to us all as a group, I can remember she said she felt sorry for me, she said 'I wish [redacted] is a sad story because she is just looking for someone to love her.' She must have been doing some thinking and was very understanding. They must have had some of my background story, that I was brought up my grandparents and I didn't have a mum and basically didn't have a dad.
45. I wasn't treated badly there but they were very strict. Life was hard. I don't know who made the rules, it was just the way of thinking then, you were made to feel lucky you were taken in. You had to work to earn your keep. It was a case of not being there for fun or sympathy. I might only have been there for a week or two.

Leaving Beechwood

46. I can remember going to Lanark Sheriff Court from Tollcross. The sheriff, Sheriff Gillis, was lovely. I can remember thinking "please, please don't send me back to my dad's". I can't remember what the sheriff said but he was very pleasant. The sheriff also spoke to someone who I think was a social worker. He said "we can't send you back to your dad's" I remember those exact words. I can't remember if the sheriff told me where they were sending me. I don't know if they did in those days.
47. I went in a car with a driver, I was in the backseat. I felt like a prisoner because there was a lady and a man on each of side of me. I cried and cried because I didn't know where I was going. The young chap gave me his handkerchief. I can't remember anyone in the court speaking to me and asking what I wanted to happen. In those days, even at sixteen or seventeen, children were seen and not heard. Children didn't have a voice.
48. It was a certain way of life, it was the culture. A lot of Scottish families back then had strong women who ran the house but you were still loved and looked after. We loved our kids just as much. I was brought up by my nan so that if you fell and hurt yourself, it was "get up, you're fine". It's changed now.

Langland's Park School, Port Glasgow

49. I can remember being surprised because I thought I was going to a prison. Langland's was an approved school run by the Church of Scotland. It was just a big red stone house. I'd call it a mansion. We came off the Glasgow Road and the Clyde was on the right. We drove up a beautiful big driveway which split and went into the cemetery which went right round the back of the house. On the left there was a house for the headmaster, Mr Davis, who lived with his wife and kids. There were gardens all down the right hand side. There was a tennis court behind his house with gardens and lawns at the back.
50. The house had two separate sides, both had bay windows. You could walk through to each side so you could mingle and go to other girls' rooms. The centre bit was like a big assembly hall.
51. I was in a two bedroom dorm which was at the front of the house. At night we would look out the window and I watched the boats going up and down the Clyde. You could see across to the shore on the other side. It was all girls. There weren't a huge amount of girls. It was Presbyterian.
52. Mr Davis was lovely. The deputy head didn't live in the grounds. Mr Davis was tall and slim. The deputy head, was short and stocky. His name was Mr Davis too, we used to laugh about it. They were both Welsh and great singers.
53. I can't remember any names of the domestic staff. I just remember the lady in the kitchen. We set the table and made our own beds in the dormitories. We might have done the dishes too.
54. I can't be sure how many girls were there. The place was bigger than Tollcross but there weren't that many girls there. I think there was only one table for meals so there might have been about twenty girls. There was one girl who was younger than the rest, she might have been eleven or twelve. Most of us were roughly the same age.

55. At the start there were a couple of girls who I was terrified of. One of them was called [REDACTED], she was a bit of a bully but she for some reason felt sorry for me and she ended up taking me under her wing. I don't know why. I wore glasses and one girl broke my glasses.

Routine

56. There is a lot that I can't remember. I do know that we had some sort of classes, I think we had hobby type things. I can't remember what. We had a record player. However, there were no school classes.
57. I can't remember chores at Langland's. I can't remember lifting a vacuum or a duster there. I wasn't there very long. It might have been just over a year. I can't remember what month I went. I can remember the Halloween party so I was there for Halloween and Christmas. I can't remember having my birthday there but I must have. It wouldn't have been overlooked, they wouldn't have ignored it.
58. When they took me from Tollcross I still had the daggy clothes on. I didn't get my own clothes back. Even in Langland's, we got 'hand me downs, we didn't get wearing our own clothes'.
59. We were taken to swimming in Port Glasgow every week. It was great. I couldn't swim. There was a cupboard with a box of swimming costumes. I can remember once I was left with the ugly swimsuit, it was stretchy crimp line material. One strap was broken and they'd tried to fix it. I was quite fussy and liked to keep myself nice so that was an embarrassment. We would all rush to get the best looking swimming costume. We went to the swimming and the church every Sunday.
60. We had a lot of great times there, parties at Halloween and Christmas. I drew big witches for the wall because I was good at art. It was great there.
61. Just before I went to Langland's, it was when I ran away from Tollcross, I met this young man who was a musician. He was lovely. He played the guitar. When I went to

Langlands, he had told me if I needed a friend, I had his phone number. We were doing a concert and told the headmaster, Mr Davis and they invited him. We had a concert and he played music and sung, it was great.

62. The church was behind the cemetery. Everyone in the congregation knew who we were, the 'Langland's girls'. I used to wonder do they think we are bad girls? I can't remember how it happened but there was a family called [REDACTED] who went to church. I think I had started chatting to the daughter. Their kids were our age. They asked to take me at the weekends because their daughter really liked me and they felt sorry for me. If I had been one of the naughtier girls I wouldn't have been allowed to go. The father asked Mr Davis. So I used to go for weekends. I shared a room with the girls and had meals, go shopping with them. They were just a normal family. They took me back to the home on a Sunday. I think they got me on a Friday night or a Saturday.
63. As a treat, families would come to visit. A few of the girls didn't get any visitors because of the backgrounds they were from. My nan wanted to come but she was too old to come from Lanark to Port Glasgow. My dad came to visit once. I remember dreading it but he was okay. He seemed a bit sad and sorry.
64. I didn't ever run away from Langland's because I loved it. There weren't bars there. They shut and locked the gate at night. A couple of girls ran away, I remember it being in the middle of the night. The police brought them back and we were looking out the dorm windows.
65. There were no real punishments, there was nothing cruel there, it was more a case of talking to you and trying to get through to you. So it was more like counselling. They asked what was wrong and what could they do to help. The delinquent girls weren't made to feel like they had done something or wrong or were being punished. It was a place that tried to help you.
66. Mr and Mrs Davis were like a mum and dad figure. It was lovely there. They weren't strict, they were lovely and talked to us like equals. I can't remember any punishments

but there was maybe lack of privileges, like going swimming or you might miss something that we were doing like a treat. I don't have any personal recollection of that because I was well behaved. I didn't see anyone being treated badly.

67. When you came to be sixteen or seventeen they found you work. So I went to work when I was seventeen. I was at Langlands from 1966 to 1967.

Leaving Langlands

68. They got me work in a hotel called [REDACTED] in Port Bannatyne, just outside Rothesay, on the Isle of Bute. I think it was seasonal work and I was still under the care of Langland's. They were still my guardians. I worked as a housemaid. It was a place for rich people, a real old fashioned Scottish hotel, like a castle. It was posh and there was a posh staircase and polished timber everywhere.

69. I loved it, it was fantastic. We got the afternoons off once we did our work in the morning. At night time, we wore traditional housemaid uniform with black skirts, stockings and shoes, white aprons and white paper doilies in our hair. I got a five pound tip from a major and his wife once. It was a lot of money in those days, more than I got in a week. I didn't go back to Langland's after that. If I had misbehaved I would have been sent back.

Life after care

70. I got another job after that at another hotel in [REDACTED] on the Isle of Arran. I called it [REDACTED]. It was a tiny family run hotel with eight rooms and a public bar. I was a housemaid there too. I got on well there but I didn't like the owners, Mr and Mrs [REDACTED]. They were a bit snobbish. I wasn't happy there. The cook in the kitchen was called [REDACTED]. She was lovely. She did all the cooking, she was a good old Scottish woman. I worked with one other girl.

71. There was a young man who used to come into the public bar. His name was [REDACTED]. I was never very sure of myself in terms of looks or anything but I came off duty one night and we started talking. He asked me out and we started dating. He worked in the Bank of Scotland in [REDACTED]. He rented a room in [REDACTED]. I ended up pregnant, he did the right thing, and he told his family on the mainland.
72. The next thing we got married, it was lovely. It was 1968. I was eighteen. I had nothing, so he paid for everything. It was so special though. There were only eight people there. We had a really nice wedding. My landlady's husband gave me away. We went to the posh hotel at the pier, the Douglas Hotel. We went on the ferry to Edinburgh on our honeymoon because it was all we could afford. We stayed in Dunedin guest house near Leith Walk. I decorated our little red Hillman imp car with white ribbons on it. The captain knew they were picking up a wedding party on the ferry so they decorated the boat with flags on the funnels and sounded the horn. Some of our friends got a luggage trolley from the pier and put two chairs on it and they rumbled us down the pier. One of the guys had driven our car on already.
73. After we got married, we lived with my husband's dad and brother for a while in Kilmarnock. I ended up looking after all of them. After that, we bought a one bedroom flat then a house. My husband worked in [REDACTED] factory in Kilmarnock. The wages were about thirty odd pounds which was a big wage, we were doing alright to be able to buy a house. I worked in the newsagent, [REDACTED] opposite the bus station in Kilmarnock.
74. It was my husband's ambition to go to Australia, it must have been what he wanted to do all his life. He was never the type to discuss anything with 'the wife'. He was a very serious type of bloke.
75. I had a couple of little breakdowns, one was before we went to Australia, because I didn't want to go. I was only starting to find myself. I had friends and I was one of the young nationals. We went on trips to places like Culloden. I had some lovely friends there and my family was there. My daughter, [REDACTED], was about four and my son, [REDACTED], was one and a half. A counsellor came, a lady who spoke to him and said "listen,

look what you're doing to you poor wife, she's heartbroken." He said we were going and that was it. I was still very timid.

76. In preparing for going to Australia, we had to go to Australia House in Glasgow, they showed us videos of people swimming in Autumn but they were in Queensland, not Melbourne where I live.
77. We came to Australia in 1973. We had only lived in our new house in Kilmarnock for eleven months. When we arrived we went to the [REDACTED] migrant hostel. We were lucky we got a nice one which was only three years old. It looked like a big resort. Most of the hostels were old Nissan huts. You could cook in your own room. They did everything for you. The employment people came into the hostel to help you find work, you didn't even have to go to them. There was a clinic, dance hall. I was the social organiser. I used to book the bands and get the licence for the alcohol. We were there for just over a year. We ended up having one more kid, my daughter [REDACTED].
78. My husband, [REDACTED], ran the house. He gave me money for housekeeping for food. One day I had to go the bank to put money in, I was nearly in tears because I didn't know anything. I apologised to the girl at the desk and she did it for me.
79. We separated in 1990 but it was a few years before we got divorced. Nothing bad happened. We would still be together but I changed. I grew up. My husband was the intelligent one. He was very quiet, he always said he would happy living like a hermit up in the hills. I was more of a party girl who liked to sing and dance.
80. I'm an old fashioned romantic and he wasn't romantic. It means a lot to me, maybe because of a lack of love in my young life. I love deeply. I love spoiling my man with little treats. [REDACTED] was dead straight, to him a marriage was if there is food on the table and a roof over your head. We weren't really friends, we talked but there was no togetherness. I couldn't take it anymore, I felt so lonely. I couldn't take the lack of connection and love, and the lack of cuddling. Some days when the kids were at school I would cry my eyes out and bang my head against the window.

81. After we separated, he stayed in our lovely big house. He found me somewhere to live. I now live in a little unit. He owns it but I live rent free. I didn't go to a solicitor as I was still a nervous person with no confidence. My friends told me to go to a solicitor because I brought up the kids. I just took what he gave me. He's comfortably off.
82. I couldn't get a job for four years. It wasn't like the old days in Scotland, where if you saw a job, you rang up and if they liked you, got it. You've got to have certificates for every job.
83. I always wanted to join the police force in Scotland but I was half an inch under the height requirement. I tried when I came to Australia but it was the same rules. I gave up as I just turned forty.
84. My son encouraged me to sign up for a course in security. He signed up too. We did our security course together. I had to do a self-defence course. I worked in security from 1995 until recently. I worked in pubs and at events all Melbourne. After some time, I moved into site security because it is permanent. I worked in security which is ironic because I can't find security in life.
85. My youngest daughter [REDACTED] died of cancer fourteen months ago. She was only 46. We were close and very alike. I had to give up my job to care for her. I nursed her at my home for a year. My oldest daughter, [REDACTED], lives half an hour away. She's a bank manager and doesn't have any kids. She is so much like her dad. She hates giving hugs. I can't just pop round to see her. I only see her at Christmas. My son [REDACTED] lives in Queensland. I used to be close to my son but he moved away when he got married. He didn't want to be near any family. I text him all the time but he doesn't reply. I'm not sure what happened but I think it's because I didn't go to Queensland to visit him. I don't feel able to travel because of my nervousness. He's drifted away and doesn't visit me.
86. I've had a couple of health issues. I had a hysterectomy. If it hadn't been for a couple of my neighbours checking on me I don't know what I would have done. I thought I would have been remarried years ago. I have such a big heart. I just want some

laughter and proper happiness. I have a partner but he's not much of a romantic either. I'm angry at fate. I'm 71 years of age and I still feel very alone in a lot of ways. I'm heartbroken. I feel like nobody cares. I ask what was the point in having kids? They just leave you. I didn't get a card for my seventieth.

Impact

87. I can't really say that my dad's abuse has affected me or haunted me in any way. I have no animosity or feelings of despair or horror that I was in care. There was no abuse in the places I was put into. I'm not angry at the authorities. I was lucky. I know a lot of people grow up with a lot of rage.
88. I have a feeling of not belonging. I think that goes back to going to my nan's when my mum died. I still cry because there's nothing I can do. My life is nearly over. My fight is with my fate. Someone told me once I'm more of a spiritual person. I do believe there is something. None of us really know. I don't believe that we just appeared from the 'big bang theory'. I very much believe that we have come from somewhere and that there is a superior being. That is why I believe in fate.
89. It could have been worse. It was the fact that I grew up without my mum. I don't know who I am or where I'm from. I feel that's what's wrong with me, nothing to do with homes.
90. Some of my aunties used to tell me that I should be grateful my nana took me in. I've always felt like the poor relation. When I went to see my nan with the baby, she told me that she'd thought a lot about it and that she had been too hard on me.
91. I feel that I'm nobody special. I'm glad I found my family in England but I can't afford to go there. I'd really like to get to know them. I haven't built up a relationship with them yet. It's so sad in a way. I'm angry in a lot of ways because I don't really know who I am. For all those years I had a brother and sister in England and I didn't know. It makes me angry because in those days children were seen and not heard. You couldn't ask about things. I'm only finding things out now.

Records

92. It's never crossed my mind to get my records. My name must be somewhere, it'll be in the Mitchell Library in Glasgow. I've tried so hard but none of us can find anything. My cousin, [REDACTED], and his wife in England are good at researching and they've tried every avenue they can think of.

93. I would like to find where my mum is buried. It's unlikely she was cremated because she was a strong Catholic. I have done a lot of searching but I'm not even sure of the date she died. My step-nephew has been to the Mitchell Library trying to find out in the archives. We've tried all of the names she used but all I can find is the wedding to her first husband in India. My sister, [REDACTED], is heartbroken as she wanted to find my mum before she passes to put flowers on her grave.

Lessons to be learned

94. It was such a long, old fashioned time ago. There are still gaps with people of certain ages. There is nowhere to put them. It is a children's home until twelve then an approved school, which is basically a junior detention centre, there was nothing in between. There has to be something for the teen years. I know that is still an issue in a lot of places. There are a lot of gaps in the system.

95. The staff weren't monitored on a regular basis back then. The people have to really care. It has to be people who want to make a difference.

96. When I saw the Scottish Inquiry I wanted to give my wee bit about Langlands Park because I didn't want anyone to think Langland's was a bad place at the time I was there.

Other information

97. 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.....IIW.....

Dated.....24 March 2021.....