

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

LWB

Support person present: No

1. My name is LWB My date of birth is 1967. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Family background

2. My mother and father are and My mother is still alive but my father has passed away. I have four brothers and one sister. I am the oldest child. is one year younger than me, is three years younger, and are five years younger, and is 10 years younger than me.
3. My mother had three sisters and one of them was LWM who I called Aunt LWM Aunt LWM was born on 1939. She had a long term partner of over forty years called . They never married. Aunt LWM had five of her own children. Other relatives took and brought up her children and she went to England for a while. One of Aunt LWM daughters was was six years older than me. I was brought up initially by my mother and was brought up by my gran. was more like a sister to me than a cousin. We were very close. Aunt LWM came back from England and only became involved in life when she was about fourteen years old. She only really became a mother to when she was about nineteen.
4. My mum and dad got a flat which we moved into and everything was fine until I was about nine. At that time I was abused I told my

mum and dad but my mum and [REDACTED] didn't believe me. I swore on the bible to my Aunt LWM She was the only one that believed me. I spent a lot of time with Aunt LWM

5. When I was eleven years old I was taken into care. I had been skipping school and stealing. I was in care until I was 14 years old. I remember Aunt LWM telling me when I was about fifteen that she had been in care but she didn't go into any more detail about it. I was at a new school and wasn't fitting in. Because she had been in care Aunt LWM could relate to me and understand how I was feeling.
6. When I got out of care I really did not get on with my mum and I just shut her out of my life. My mum never came to any of my children's panels. My dad always came but he was dyslexic and couldn't read or write. He was an alcoholic. My Aunt LWM started coming to the children's panel and she is documented at some stage as being my legal guardian along with one of my dad's best friends. If ever I had any issues I always ran to my Aunt LWM rather than my mum.
7. By the time I was sixteen I was staying on and off with my mum, my Aunt LWM and with other friends. I was sent to prison when I was eighteen but only because I was stealing to make sure my siblings had clothes to wear and food to eat.
8. My cousin [REDACTED] died in [REDACTED] 2010 at the age of fifty. My father died a few weeks later. When they died, the lights went out for me and Aunt LWM and we just kept each other going. We became very tight to each other. Aunt LWM was more like a mother to me than my own mother was. I have nothing at all now to do with my own mother.

Initial disclosures by Aunt LWM

9. My Aunt LWM was known as [REDACTED] as a child. She went to St Paul's Primary School in Frederick Street in Aberdeen, and also went to Woodside Primary. Aunt LWM told me when I was fifteen that she had been in care as a child. She was in

Nazareth House, Glasgow from the age of six until she was eight. She then went to St Clair's Residential Home which as far as I know was in Aberdeen. That was run by nuns as well. She told me she ran away when she was fifteen and deliberately fell pregnant. She didn't go back.

10. I remember her telling me even back then that when she was in Nazareth House she was haunted by the little children crying and screaming. That must have lived with her and haunted her nearly all her life because she told me about it again on the day that she died. The way she spoke I think she was talking about babies crying. I tried to tell her that it wasn't her fault but it made no difference. She didn't really tell me any more about her time in care at that time.
11. It was probably a couple of years after ██████ passed away in 2010 that Aunt LWM asked me about my time in care and I told her. She then started opening up to me and told me about what happened to her when she was in Nazareth House in Glasgow. I can't bring myself to say what she actually told me because it will be too upsetting for me. Aunt LWM was made to do things to Sister LWV I just can't comprehend how a nun could do to a child what Aunt LWM told me what they did to her. She mentioned priests as well but I cannot remember their names or what they did.
12. Aunt LWM was in Nazareth House, Glasgow I believe from the age of six until the age of eight or nine. She then left there and went to St Claire's. I thought this was in Edinburgh but I have also been told it is in Aberdeen so I am not sure. Aunt LWM said that St Claire's wasn't much better than Nazareth House but didn't say much else about it. All she said was that she endured beatings in there.

Aunt LWM admission to hospital

13. Aunt LWM was diagnosed with cancer around ██████ 2017 and was put on radiotherapy. I went with her to her treatments in ██████. She went for three weeks. She was not well ██████ and the doctor

thought she had a chest infection. On the morning of [REDACTED] 2018 I spoke to her on the phone. She could hardly breathe so I phoned for an ambulance for her. She was taken back into hospital and her oxygen levels were desperately low. She was diagnosed with COPD and emphysema. We hoped that her oxygen levels would improve to allow her to be discharged from hospital but that never happened.

Aunt [REDACTED] LWM diary

14. When she was in hospital she gave me more and more information about her time in care. I was aware that Aunt [REDACTED] LWM kept a diary because I had seen her with it in her house. She kept it secret before she went into hospital but then gave it to me. Initially when I visited her she would be writing in her diary and she would tell me what she was writing. I have provided the Inquiry with the diary. After a couple of days it became apparent that she was struggling to write and I offered to write things for her.
15. Aunt [REDACTED] LWM asked me to write down her memories for her then signed that page. A copy of this page is now numbered WIT.003.001.2761 and dated [REDACTED] 2018. She said she wanted to unburden her ghosts.
16. Aunt [REDACTED] LWM made me put my right hand up to god and promise to get justice for her. She cried when she was telling me what happened to her in care. Often she was too upset to carry on and needed to take regular breaks. She didn't believe that anybody would want to hear her story. She didn't think anyone was interested or cared. Her thoughts were that nobody cared back then so why would they care now. She seemed to listen to me and wanted me to take it forward. She told me to give the diary to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, to the people who I trusted. She knew I was speaking to the Inquiry by this time.
17. One time she told me something which she asked me not to record in the diary, but I am not sure why. She was embarrassed. She told me she wet the bed as a child and they put the wet sheets over her head. She also endured beatings. At first these

beatings were in the laundry room. Another thing was they gave her a toothbrush to clean the gaps between the tiles.

18. Something else which I am not sure if I wrote it in the diary but she told me that she had mutilated her own chest so that Sister [LWW] couldn't fondle her. I saw the scars all over her chest after she died when we were dressing her for the funeral.
19. She told me that she went to see a doctor when she was in Nazareth House. They tried to make her feel that she wasn't 'right in the head'. The doctor just asked her what was troubling her mind. I wrote that in the diary.
20. I can confirm that the pages which are now numbered WIT.003.001.2758, and the pages WIT.003.001.2762 through to WIT.003.001.2766 are all my writing. On all of these pages I have written down what Aunt [LWM] asked me to write. The other numbered pages are my Aunt [LWM] writing. I do not feel that I am able to go through every page where I have written things as it is too distressing for me. Aunt [LWM] condition visibly deteriorated until neither of us could do it anymore. Aunt [LWM] died on the [REDACTED] 2018.

Impact

21. I know that Aunt [LWM] was badly affected by her time in care. I think the first ten years of her relationship with [REDACTED] her partner, were okay but I never saw her cuddling him or even giving him a kiss on the cheek. The only people she could cuddle were [REDACTED] and I. I know it was difficult at the start for her to even cuddle us. Aunt [LWM] and [REDACTED] even slept in separate rooms. He walked out on her several times. [REDACTED] is now 83 and disabled. There is no doubt that Nazareth House killed my aunt.
22. Aunt [LWM] could never tell me face to face that she loved me. She was never shown love or taught how to give out love, when she was brought up in care. She didn't

know how to show love or tell other people she loved them. She didn't think she was worthy of anybody's love. I do know that she loved me and [REDACTED]

23. [REDACTED] and I used to go to [REDACTED] church to light a candle for our late grandma. Since Aunt LWM told me what the nuns did to her I can't go to [REDACTED] any more. I have never been back since because it is a Catholic church and there are nuns and priests there.

24. Aunt LWM religion was never affected by the abuse she suffered. The only thing that kept her going was her faith in Jesus.

Contacting the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

25. Last year I was visiting my brother in prison. I was approached by a woman who had been in care and was a survivor. She knew my brother [REDACTED] had been in care and I told her that I had been in care. She told me about the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry and gave me a flyer on Future Pathways. Aunt LWM found out that I had had dealings with Future Pathways and the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. We discussed it and she asked why I felt that I had to do it and not just leave the past behind me. I told her that I felt I had to do it. I said that I needed to go back and look at my life to help me heal. Aunt LWM wanted me to get justice for her too.

Other information

26. 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... [REDACTED] LWB

Dated... 24.5.18