

**Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry**

Witness Statement of

FEP  
[REDACTED]

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is FEP [REDACTED]. My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1949. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

**Life before going into care**

2. When I was born I stayed with my mother in [REDACTED]. She was a farm servant. We stayed in a wooden house. My older sister [REDACTED] was there too. I also have a half-sister on my mum's side, who is deceased. On my father's side I have three half-sisters. I didn't go to school while I was with my mum.
3. While I was there, my mother's partner, Mr [REDACTED] sexually abused me. For my well-being I was sent to stay with [REDACTED] an auntie of my mother's, in Banff. I was four or five years old. My mother gave her ten shillings to keep me. My aunt was an alcoholic and she wanted more money, an extra 2 shillings.
4. My aunt always went to the pub and took me with her. There was a baker there that saw me and gave me cakes and pies because I was starving. She stopped going to the pub and drank in the house so I stopped getting fed. I started going to a local tip to feed myself.
5. The local authorities took me and put me back with my mum. She had split up with [REDACTED] and was staying with her sister, who had two children of her own. With my

mum and [REDACTED] there also my auntie said there wasn't enough room in the house for me.

6. I was six or seven years old when I went into Clydeville orphanage in Buckie. I stayed there for eight or nine months. I thereafter went into foster care when I was eight years old.

**Clydeville Orphanage, Queen Street, Buckie**

Secondary Institutions - to be published later

7.

8.

9.

10.

11.

12. Secondary Institutions - to be published later [REDACTED] When I stayed with my auntie I went to Banff school. When I was with Mrs ESU [REDACTED] I went to [REDACTED] School.

13. I have no idea why I went from the orphanage into foster care.

#### Foster care at [REDACTED] Banff-shire

14. The foster placement I was put to was in [REDACTED] Banffshire. I stayed with Mrs ESU [REDACTED] I stayed there from when I was eight years old until I got married when I was twenty four. She had about nine children of her own. A lot had grown up and left. Three were left in the house. They were [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and JCW [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was the youngest, he was sixteen or seventeen years old. He's dead now. He had just left school as I came in.
15. We stayed in a three bedroom council house. There was a living room, kitchen and three bedrooms. Mrs ESU [REDACTED] had a room, JCW [REDACTED] had a room and the boys all shared a room. [REDACTED] had his own bed and I shared a bed with [REDACTED].
16. Mrs ESU [REDACTED] would be fifty to sixty years old. She was the mother figure, she looked after me. She just contacted the social care if I needed trousers or shorts. She would take me shopping for clothes, but she didn't buy anything, because anything I needed or required was funded by Mr FPS [REDACTED] the children's officer.
17. I eventually called Mrs ESU [REDACTED] mother. I was so confused with the word "mother". I went from my mother, to my aunt, who I had to call mother, then back to my mum, and then to Mrs ESU [REDACTED] So to me the mother was the person running the house, the mother figure.
18. Mrs ESU [REDACTED] was good to me because to be honest she put up with a lot as I was a very naughty little boy. I did anything to get attention. Her and the boys were fine but JCW [REDACTED] was the most abusive bitch I've met in my life.

*Mornings and bedtime*

19. When I got up in the morning Mrs <sup>ESU</sup> gave me a cup of tea and a slice of bread. The boys were usually away to work. I walked to school then walked home at lunch time. It was just my mother and me in at this time.

*School*

20. I went to  Primary School and  Secondary. I missed school once and I got a thrashing, so I never missed it again. I loved my school days, I'd go as far as saying it was a good experience.
21. Because I was an orphan I got called a lot of names like "The bastard boy", and I was scared to talk back because I knew if I spoke back to anyone I'd get beaten up. I was bullied and had stones thrown at me, etc. I didn't fight back, I was scared. I told Mrs <sup>ESU</sup> about this, in fact it was reported to her.
22. Mr Dick, the headmaster gave me a note to give to Mrs <sup>ESU</sup> about my behaviour, which the social care were tracking. So if I got a note saying I'd misbehaved my mother would say, "Come on <sup>FEP</sup>, you've got to stop this", but <sup>JCW</sup> would step in. I hate saying her name to be honest with you. I think Mrs <sup>ESU</sup> was supportive of me, although she sat back and watched her daughter beat me. As a mother you shouldn't do that, but it was her daughter and I was only the stranger.
23. I got these reports from school on a daily basis to see how I was behaving and mixing with other kids. I don't know why I got them. After a while it was a weekly report. It was put in my school bag and I had to show Mrs <sup>ESU</sup> These were from the headmaster, Mr Dick. What I'm led to believe is that the social care were requesting these daily reports.
24. When I was at school I loved running, badminton and I went to a gymnastic class on a Thursday. This was an escape from the house. It was after school. I got reports

from these clubs too. I was good at badminton and gymnastics but I loved running. I was the top athlete in the school.

25. We were a protestant school. Like a lot of village schools we had inter school sports once a year. There was a Catholic school in [REDACTED] that was the top school for athletics. My headmaster pointed to a boy and said, "That's [REDACTED], he's the top athlete in their school". [REDACTED] walked over to me and said "Are you FEP [REDACTED]? I've heard you're a good runner, I'm going to beat you". When he said this it made me really determined and I beat him.
26. That was the first time somebody from the school had beaten someone from that school. Mr Dick patted me on the shoulder and said "Well done". That pat on the shoulder stayed with me and still does. It was the very first time I got a pat for doing something well. I was ten or eleven years old. It was just a bit of recognition but it made me feel so proud.

#### *Holidays*

27. I went to a local caravan park on the odd holiday with Mrs ESU [REDACTED]'s oldest son, [REDACTED] and his wife [REDACTED]. They were both working so they'd go on a holiday and invite his mum and me.

#### *Birthdays and Christmas*

28. At Christmas I got presents, I'm not sure who from. I think it would be Mrs ESU [REDACTED] and the family. I also got a present on my birthday. Unbeknown to me, my birth mother had contact with the social care. She had been sending up Christmas and birthday presents to me, through Mr FPS [REDACTED] and he'd told her that he would give them to me. I'm still waiting for them. I don't know who held on to the gifts. Mr FPS [REDACTED] told her I was getting them.

*Visits/Inspections*

29. Mr FPS used to visit for a report every six months. That's why JCW wouldn't bash my face. I didn't tell him about the abuse. I was scared because JCW was always there and if I told him, as soon as he was out the door I'd get it again.
30. Sometimes Mrs ESU would call the social work to say I wasn't behaving and Mr FPS would come and visit. He would shake me about and tell me to behave myself.
31. I saw my birth mother once. She came to Mrs ESU's door. I got upset. I was nine or ten years old. I didn't want to see her because I was taught that she hated me and had abandoned me. I was told she wanted to meet me, but from what I'd been told I didn't want to speak to her.

**Abuse at [REDACTED], Banff-shire**

32. The abuse from JCW started more or less from the first day I moved in until I was sixteen or seventeen. That's when she got married and moved to a house with her husband in Buckie. She then sometimes got her husband JDJ to thrash me out in the back garden if I spoke back to them.
33. One Sunday JCW and her husband were at the house because they would come and visit on a Sunday, as people did. If I was cheeky or even if I spoke back she would say "JDJ give him a thrashing", and he would take me out to the back garden and thrash me, kick me and punch me.
34. Every night, any night, for whatever unknown reason she would batter the muck out of me. She would hit me with pokers, shovels and sticks. Many a night she would break a brush over my back, throw me under the table, throw lumps of coal at me, kick me, pull my hair, throw me against walls. Anything you could think of she would do to me. For years.

35. The beatings would always happen in the kitchen. The first thing JCW would say when she came back from work was, "How was he today, what's his report saying?". She'd look at the report and that was me. There was an old fashioned fire place in the house, with ovens at the side. There was a poker next to the fire. Mrs ESU stood next to her daughter when she beat me, watching her. She said or did nothing to stop her.
36. An older daughter, who was married and worked in the same factory as JCW, pulled her off me many a time. If it wasn't for I wouldn't be here today. JCW would shout and swear, "I'll fucking kill you, I'll fucking kill you", and she would have. She was married but visited the house. I loved She's dead now. Her and her husband were great to me. They spoiled me. They took me to football matches and things like that. She intervened every time she was there. She hated seeing me getting touched.
37. One Sunday JCW and her husband visited and she said, "How are you?", and I said "Nothing to do with you", so she said, "JDJ belt him", but luckily and her husband, who was also called were there the same day and told him to leave me alone and had a word with JCW This was when I was sixteen, so it still went on then. Twice she asked her husband JDJ to assault me. He did it once. The second time stopped him.
38. It was for anything at all. All I would have to do was speak back and she'd go for me with whatever was handiest, poker, shovel, even lumps of wood. Anything at all. "I'll fucking kill him", was frequently said. If it wasn't for she would have. The abuse was on a daily basis. Why would my foster mother watch her daughter beating me. I was too scared to tell the social work department.
39. The boys and sometimes intervened but they worked away a lot on farms. So they'd only be there the odd time. JCW was the main abuser in my life. Physically and mentally. When I was eight years old she would be about eighteen or nineteen.

40. JCW worked at [REDACTED] woollen mill. I came home with my report from the headmaster and gave it to Mrs ESU [REDACTED]. When JCW [REDACTED] came home from work she took over. She hit me with a fireside poker, not in the face, but on the chest, arms and legs.
41. She abused me on a daily basis. For anything, sometimes for no reason. If she had a bad day at work she would say, "FEP [REDACTED] get the poker". Mrs ESU [REDACTED] sometimes gave JCW [REDACTED] belt to beat me with. She always did it in the kitchen and she never hit me in the face. Back, legs, arms, anywhere but the face.
42. After the beatings I was told to go to my bedroom and I broke my heart. I did a lot of housework, top up sticks, coal, gave a hand with the washing. This was for pocket money but I never got any. I had toys and books. Not much but I did have them. My bedroom became like a prison cell. I was scared to leave it. My relationship with JCW [REDACTED] was always one of fear. There was no kindness shown by her at all.
43. A lot of kids at school called me "The bastard boy". I would talk back, get in trouble at school and get a bad report and then JCW [REDACTED] would thrash me. I was a very shy boy at school. I never spoke to anyone about being bullied at school. I was scared to open my mouth.
44. When JCW [REDACTED] left, there was only Mrs ESU [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in the house and they were only there at weekends. The atmosphere was much better. What a difference, because none of the boys touched me.
45. When I was taken into care by Mr FPS [REDACTED] I can remember he took me away in a blue car. He tied me down to the back of the car seat like an animal. He also used to push me about. He threatened me and took hold of me and shook me saying, "You'll go back into an orphanage if you misbehaved". I cried. My mother and JCW [REDACTED] seen this but they weren't bothered. He'd shake me by the shoulders. I remember this from when I was six in the car with him and when I was eight, when I misbehaved and Mrs ESU [REDACTED] called him.

46. A long time after leaving care, I discovered that on a regular basis my birth mother had been paying the council £2.00 a month to find a home for me, which they did, i.e. the foster home. My foster mother was getting twelve shillings and sixpence from this. From that money I was supposed to get a shilling pocket money on a regular basis, again from my mother, but I didn't get it ever. I don't know who got the money, but I never received any pocket money.
47. For all these years Mr <sup>FPS</sup> and Mrs <sup>ESU</sup> made me think that my mother had abandoned me. That my mother hated me, and all this time they made me think my mother hadn't been in touch with me. I think this is because my foster mother thought that if I went back to my mother, which was possible, the council would lose their £2.00 and she would lose her twelve shillings and sixpence. By this time my mother had remarried and settled with another man.
48. Mrs <sup>ESU</sup> has said that according to Mr <sup>FPS</sup> my birth mother had wanted to meet me. I was so confused because Mr <sup>FPS</sup> told me on more than one occasion that my mother had abandoned me and wouldn't take me. I had a mother figure in my life. My birth mother was the one who had abandoned me. This is what I'd been taught.
49. Mrs <sup>ESU</sup> did ask me if I wanted to meet my mother, although she told me that my mother had abandoned me so I was very confused.
50. I only found out in 2015 that my mother wanted me back but Mr <sup>FPS</sup> and Mrs <sup>ESU</sup> had taught me to believe my mother hated me, abandoned me and didn't want anything to do with me.

### **Leaving Foster Care**

51. I left school when I was fifteen but I was still in care until the age of eighteen. Mr <sup>FPS</sup> came to see me for the last time when I was eighteen and told me I was no

longer in his care. I stayed with Mrs <sup>ESU</sup> until I got married when I was twenty four.

52. I got a job in the woollen mill. I worked in the wool store. <sup>ESU</sup> and <sup>JCW</sup> worked there too. Luckily I wasn't in the same department as <sup>JCW</sup>. I worked there from when I was fifteen until 1983. I went to work off shore in October, 1983 as a steward. I was also a member of the territorial army for a number of years. I worked in the officers mess there. I've served the Queen and I've served Princess Anne.

#### Reporting of abuse at <sup>ESU</sup> Banff-shire

53. I have reported the abuse by <sup>JCW</sup> to the police, however I haven't heard any information since I reported it.
54. I never reported the abuse to the social work. I was too scared.

#### Life after care

55. I continued to have contact with Mrs <sup>ESU</sup> when I went back to visit. The funny thing was, when I went back I visited <sup>JCW</sup> and I asked her advice on decisions I wanted to make. I always wanted <sup>JCW</sup> approval. I don't know why. This went on until five months ago.
56. <sup>JCW</sup> is 74 and I'm still scared of her. I last spoke to her five months ago on Facebook, hoping to get an admission from her.
57. Throughout my life, up until five months ago I've run to <sup>JCW</sup> for help. I always went to <sup>JCW</sup> for advice. All the time. I was told by Paula Hamilton that this is what abused kids do. I'd always ask her permission, because I was scared of her. I spoke to her in the street and asked her why she used to beat me all the time and she said, "Beat you, I could have killed you <sup>FEP</sup>, many a time". I said, "Yes <sup>JCW</sup> that's very true". So

five months ago I asked her on Facebook, "Do you remember when you beat me?", and she said, "I never touched you".

58. I couldn't tell anyone. I married my first wife [REDACTED] in 1974. I had three children, two boys and a girl. [REDACTED] who is forty, [REDACTED] thirty seven and [REDACTED], who was killed in a [REDACTED] in 2001.
59. When [REDACTED] asked who his granddad was I contacted Moray Council and I was told they had no other information on me other than the fact that I had been fostered.
60. I got married a second time. I don't remember much about it. It was a bad two years of my life. My wife was a bully. I was put in jail twice. Her son was a drug addict. Her daughter was a drinker and a smoker. They bullied me. They would punch me, spit on me, demand money from me. I was a [REDACTED] with Moray Council and my wife accused me of interfering with a young kid. I had a bad life for two years.
61. I stayed in Buckie before I met my third wife [REDACTED] five years ago. We were married in 2012. Since I met her I've changed. I felt I became somebody. I don't receive counselling now. I got counselling from Paula Hamilton, which helped. I saw her privately, after I got my records. She has been brilliant. Because of Paula Hamilton and [REDACTED] this is where I am today. I had ten sessions with her and the council reimbursed me the money. It cost £800.
62. My mother had another two children, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was put out for adoption when she was weeks or months old. She's about four or five years younger than me. I don't have contact with [REDACTED] She's a lot younger than me, maybe in her fifties. I have three sisters and a half-brother on my dad's side.
63. I met [REDACTED] my cousin, who knew my mum throughout her life. I met him a few weeks ago and he confirmed that my mother pined for me for years and did not abandon me. My wife [REDACTED] had tracked [REDACTED] down.

## Impact

64. For years I was a quiet, shy boy. If somebody said boo to me I'd run a mile. I'm 68 years old and I'm still a kid at heart. I'm a child now. I'll never grow up. I think I'm trapped in a childhood.
65. When I went to work offshore I was still getting bullied because I wouldn't talk back. My bosses knew about it. I was a shy man. I took all the dirt that was thrown at me. I was in catering and washed dishes, I made beds. I was washing dishes one day and a guy, a chef, said that a pan wasn't washed properly so he threw it back in the sink so the water splashed in my face. Things like that happened regularly. I had to look after the top brass because my boss trusted me to do a good job.
66. I had to leave offshore working. I had a mild heart-attack because I was getting bullied. I then went into security work at a [REDACTED] as a security officer. I did that for a number of years. I then moved to Montrose and got a job as a night porter in one of the hotels and I still did security work. I was also still in the territorial army. I loved looking smart, but that was a front. From all the bullying I'd had I felt like I was a nothing. When I put the uniform on I was somebody else. But normally I had no confidence and felt like a nothing.
67. I have had lots of counselling over the years, through BP in the rigs, due to the bullying. I was a man but I would still cry because I couldn't handle the abuse. A top psychiatrist from London came up to see me. We had a meeting in a BP office in Aberdeen and he asked me what this was all about, saying I was a big man now. He knew my background, I never realised. So he went into my background in foster care. I wasn't aware that BP knew all these things.
68. I was seen by a psychologist. They knew of my past, so I got counselling. It was helpful at that time. It was helping until a guy I was with in a helicopter, who'd been talking about children being raped, said he'd love to have sex with a young boy. I took him by the throat and I was reported to the doctor.

69. My father died in 1991, so I never had a father figure in my life. I never met my sisters on my dad's side. One of the sisters, [REDACTED], said they always knew about me, but the other two don't want to speak to me.

## Records

70. I got access to my records two years ago and it was only then that I found out my mother had been writing letters to me and after all those years the council said they had nothing. I was always taught and made to think that my mother hated me. I was taught this. My mother died a few years ago and I went to her grave and I said, "You, you bitch, thank God you are down there", because she hated me, that's what I was taught, but all the years she wanted me back, wanted to be in touch with me and they denied her access to me. The social care system raped me of my childhood. For sixty years of my life.
71. Susan McLaren denied any knowledge of me or that there were any records. I have asked a number of times since I was a young man and married, "Who's my father?". Susan McLaren said, "Sorry <sup>FEP</sup> [REDACTED] we don't know anything about you, all we know is that you were fostered". Then suddenly I get all these papers back, including my father's name and address.
72. When I got my records two years ago there was a letter from my mum in 1958 asking if she could visit me and mentioning my birthday present, a pair of sandals, that I never got. I found out that my mother was sending letters to Mr <sup>FPS</sup> [REDACTED] asking why <sup>FEP</sup> [REDACTED] wasn't responding to his presents and asking if I got them. Mr <sup>FPS</sup> [REDACTED] told her I had and that maybe I didn't want to talk to her.
73. There is one document in my records from 1965 that [REDACTED] well it doesn't say his name it says the oldest son, thrashed me. I can't remember this. [REDACTED] was alright to me. It was always <sup>JCW</sup> [REDACTED] but there's nothing on the social work records saying she touched me. It's only [REDACTED] and <sup>JCW</sup> [REDACTED] that are left in the family.

74. I would like the Inquiry to find out why these two people, Susan McLaren, from the Moray social work department and Lawrence Findlay, a director there, withheld all my records and denied even meeting up with me, even speaking to me. They denied any knowledge of me. Then I got my records two years ago. Kathy Henwood has been good but the other two are still employed by Moray council. Since I was about 28 years old I have been trying to get my records.
75. I'd love those two people to be removed from their positions and apologise to me. How dare they treat me like that and keep those records from me.

**Other information**

76. 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.

FEP

Signed. \_\_\_\_\_

Dated. \_\_\_\_\_

23/10/17