

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

HJK

Support person present: No

1. My name is HJK my maiden name was HJK. My date of birth is the 1948. I am 69 years old. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.
2. The first institution I was resident at and want to tell you about was an all-male remand centre possibly in Dumbarton where I was in 1961. I do not know the name of the establishment and I was only there for a weekend. The second establishment was Balgay Approved School for girls in Dundee where I was resident for two terms between 1961 – 1962 and 1962 – 1963.

Background

3. I was born in Bonnybridge, Scotland. My parents' names were and . I was the second oldest in the family. My brother was four years older and was my mother's son but not the natural son of my father. My other two brothers and were twins and younger than me. They are all still alive.
4. I have been married three times and have three children, seven grandchildren and thirteen great grandchildren. My first husband is deceased.

Life before care

5. I did not get along with my mother who had no time for me, but was devoted to her boys. My father was a normal loving man. When I was age eight my brother [REDACTED] started to sexually assault me and raped me on regular occasions. This would happen in my bedroom in the house. [REDACTED] was about twelve years old at the time. I had a bedroom of my own in the house.
6. I can recall two separate occasions when [REDACTED] offered me for sex to his mates. On the first occasion I was at the local park. He was playing cards with his mates. Fortunately the other boys told him not to be so disgusting. The other occasion I was at my aunties and I would be older than eight . He again offered me to the boys that were there who fortunately declined.
7. The abuse continued all the time I was staying at home. [REDACTED] would come to my bedroom. I know that my father did not know about it because he would have done something about it. I am unsure if my mother knew.
8. My mother did not really like me and she made this obvious. She was all for her sons. In 1961 she made an allegation that I had stolen twenty pounds from her. In those days there was no family I knew that had that amount of money and the allegation was false because I knew that I had not done it.
9. I appeared at Stirling Sheriff Court and I can't remember what exactly went on as far as a trial went. The upshot was that the Sheriff told my mother that the trial was over and that she could take me home. My mother told the Sheriff that she didn't want me at home.
10. I can remember being taken down some stairs from the court by a police officer and placed in a cell. I was very upset. My mother had rejected me. I was locked up in a police cell for something I had not done. I was terrified of what was going to happen next. I was thirteen years old and had never been in trouble with the police before.

11. Some time passed and then a man came to the cell and took me out to his car. I was taken to a place that was a locked establishment and I was shut in a locked room that was like a prison cell.

All boys remand centre possibly in the Dumbarton area

12. I do not know the name of this institution and all I can remember was that it was for boys only. I was placed in a locked room and was not allowed to socialise with the boys apart from meal times when I was supervised. The reason I think it was in the Dumbarton area was the time it took to get here and the view I had from my window. The window had some sort of bars on it but when I looked out I could see a big rock which I think may have been the Dumbarton Rock.
13. I can remember sitting beside two boys from the Raploch Estate in Stirling. Their names were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I think on reflection that I was only there for a weekend certainly it was no more than a few days.

Abuse at unknown boys home

14. When I arrived at this institution I was met by two members of staff. There was a smaller fatter one who wore a cardigan. I think he was about forty years of age. The only clothes I had were the ones that I was wearing to court. He made me strip off in front of him. He then started touching me.
15. He came back to the room and continued abusing me by touching me. He came back in the morning and watched me washing and dressing. He then took me down for breakfast and made sure I stayed away from the boys who were resident there
16. The same man took me back to my room and locked me in. He stayed in the room where he raped me. This same man kept coming back to my room and continued to rape me and abuse me for the few days I was resident there.

Reporting abuse at unknown boys home

17. I couldn't tell anyone as the wee fat man was about the only contact I had when I was there. I didn't tell the people who came to pick me up. There was no one to tell and who would believe me. That was basically my routine for the short time that I was there. I was kept locked up and only allowed out for supervised meals. I certainly couldn't tell my mother or father.
18. My mother would not have believed me and my father would have gone mad and tried to get at the man as my father was very fond of me. I was worried about what my father would have done.

Leaving the unknown boys home

19. I think that I was there for a weekend before they found a place that was more suitable for me. Two men came to my room and took me in their car to Balgay Approved School in Blackness Road, Dundee.

Life at Balgay School, Blackness Road, Dundee 1961 – 1962.

First day at Balgay School 1961 – 1962, and early memories.

20. I still do not know why I was sent there all I can remember was being at the court in Stirling. I remember that I arrived in the afternoon. I was met by two people. . Mr GIS was SNR and the other Miss McIntosh was SNR. I thought here we go again am I going to be abused by them. I was very apprehensive because of my previous experience.
21. Nothing could have been further from the truth they were very nice to me. They arranged for the matron to come and collect me and show me where I was to sleep. Matron first checked my hair for nits. Then I was issued with a uniform and shown to

the dormitory where I was going to sleep. Matron explained to me what the routine was.

22. The establishment was an all-girls school and I would estimate that there were at least thirty other girls. There were two different dorms for different aged girls. There were probably eighteen girls in the younger dormitory and about twelve in the older dormitory. The home was a large building set in its own grounds. There were plenty of facilities for playing sport including tennis courts. There was a large quadrangle where you could play. The school classrooms were also contained within the complex. I don't know who ran the home . It was not a religious school.
23. I was to be very well treated in my first spell at Balgay . I was very happy to be there. Everyone was really good and it was like living at a boarding school. When I was there I met my future sister in law [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was there for all of my first spell at Balgay. In later life [REDACTED] married my brother [REDACTED] although they have long since split up. I am still very friendly with [REDACTED].
24. I can't remember anyone running away although it would have been very easy to do so as you could just walk out unchallenged. I can't recall any people with bed-wetting problems or how they might have been dealt with.

Routine

Mornings and bedtime

25. You would be woken early in the morning for breakfast then you would attend the school which was in the grounds. None of the rooms locked and you could come and go out of the building as you pleased. You could go into town or the cinema. You were expected to attend school.
26. You had to keep your own bed tidy but you were not required to do additional cleaning. It was like living in a hotel compared to what I had been used to. Everyone

including the other girls in the school were very nice and I enjoyed being there and getting away from my brother [REDACTED].

Food

27. The food was very good with as much as you wanted to eat. You had three meals a day and I don't recall any incidents of force feeding or punishments for not eating things.

Uniform

28. You were issued with a school uniform which consisted of a black blazer, a black skirt, a white blouse and black shoes. You wore this uniform through the week and your own clothes at the weekend.

School

29. The school was in the grounds of the home and I can remember that my teacher was called Mrs Blatt. She came from Germany and was very good to all the girls. The school was very normal and we were taught the usual school subjects. I didn't sit any exams when I was there. I don't remember any formal discipline and I was never subjected to it. If you did something wrong you would get a row from the headmaster but that was it.

Pocket money

30. I don't remember being given pocket money although I suspect that I must have been given it because I always had money to go to the cinema or to buy sweets.

Holidays

31. There were normal school term holidays where they gave you the money to go home on the train. You didn't go home at weekends.

Birthdays and Christmas

32. I don't remember my birthday being celebrated at Balgay but I do recall someone having a birthday cake. You were always at home for Christmas.

Visits/Inspections

33. You could get visits from your family and I remember my mother and father coming to visit me. My mother would be there reluctantly because my father made her come. I could see she didn't want to be there.
34. I don't recall a single visit from a social worker or any official coming to see me. There was no contact with the courts as far as I am aware. I didn't know why I was there but I was happier to be at Balgay than at home.

Medical care

35. There was plenty of medical and dental help available. I had my tonsils out and also I remember I had a crown put on my tooth when I accidentally broke it. We also had matron to go to if we needed medical care.

Abuse or peer bullying at Balgay School 1961 – 1962

36. On my first spell at Balgay Approved School there were no incidents of abuse and this was a very pleasant experience. I didn't want to leave. There was no peer bullying. The girls came from all over Scotland and we all got on with each other.

Leaving Balgay School 1962

37. I don't know how it happened but I was sent back to live at home. I was very frightened to be going home as I was worried that [REDACTED] would start abusing me again and the consequences would be much worse as I could get pregnant.
38. I didn't like being home and wanted to return to Balgay so I started skipping school and misbehaving in the hope that I would be sent back. I had my wish because in the [REDACTED] of 1962 two men called at my house and took me back to Balgay.

Life at Balgay School 1962 – 1963

39. I was back at Balgay Approved School and happy to be there and away from the family home where I was constantly worried about what might happen. Everything was the same as it had been when I had left a few months earlier. I felt safe until there was another incident whilst I was at the home.

Abuse at Balgay School 1962 - 1963

40. There was only one incident and it only happened once. I was friendly with a girl from Bathgate and on two occasions she asked me to go with her to one of the teachers own houses. I think that I thought it was quite normal practice to go the teacher's house and that we were allowed to do it.
41. I do not know the name of the teacher but would describe him as being tall, good looking, thirty years of age. He was married but when he took us to his house his wife was not there but was out at work. The house was quite near Balgay.

42. The first time I went there he took the girl from Bathgate through to the bedroom while I was told to sit on the couch. I didn't think much about it. The second time I was taken through to the bedroom and I had to have sex with him. I was either fourteen or fifteen at the time. I didn't want to do it but had little choice as this was a teacher.

Leaving Balgay School 1963

43. When I turned fifteen I left Balgay and went back home. I already had a job waiting for me which I had arranged through my friendship with [REDACTED]. I had no fear of my brother as my friend [REDACTED] was married to him and staying with him at the family house.

Life after care

44. I always remember it was a Friday night and I was back at home. My brother [REDACTED] introduced me to his friend [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] told [REDACTED] to take me "ben and do what you want". I ended up pregnant to [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] married me and my mother seemed to like him. I gave birth to my daughter [REDACTED] when I was sixteen.
45. I had a terrible life and within two years I had two more daughters. I was regularly beaten and abused by [REDACTED]. We were evicted from our house, we had no money to buy food and were starving. It all came to a head one day when he hit my youngest daughter. He was lying in a drunken sleep and I put all the kids in a pram and went to Larbert to my sister in law [REDACTED] house.
46. My brother [REDACTED] wouldn't let me in but [REDACTED] took me in. [REDACTED] arrived and was going to attack me. The police were called and I remember the police officer telling [REDACTED] that he would turn his back for a few minutes and let him sort out the problem. I remember [REDACTED] saying that if he did that he would ensure that the policeman went to jail. [REDACTED] is now deceased.

47. At the end of the day I had to go back and live with [REDACTED] as I had nowhere else to stay. I managed to remain there till I was about 22 but all the abuse and the beatings continued. I had to get away from him. I went to stay with a friend in Denny. They took all our social security money but at least we had a roof over our head. [REDACTED] tried to get me back and on one occasion he threatened to pour a kettle of boiling water over my head. A man I knew at the time called [REDACTED] warned [REDACTED] off and I wasn't bothered by him again.
48. I met my second husband [REDACTED] who was very good to me. He provided well for me and my family. He was very good to the children. I was working at five jobs at the time to help make ends meet. I know that I had married him reluctantly as I didn't love him. I think he also knew that.
49. When I was thirty I met my present husband [REDACTED] who I am still married to. We have been together for nearly forty years and he changed my life around. I have had a great life since. I have seven grandchildren and thirteen great grandchildren. I have travelled to many parts of the world with [REDACTED] who worked as an engineer.

Reporting abuse

50. I have never reported what happened to me in my early life. The only real opportunity I had to report it to the police was on the occasion when they came to my brother's house in Larbert when I was being pursued by [REDACTED]. But they were not interested and wanted to turn their backs on what was happening as they considered it a domestic matter.
51. I have told my husband [REDACTED] what happened to me in Balgay but I have never told him about what happened to me with my brother [REDACTED] when I was very young. I would be concerned what the family might do to my brother [REDACTED] if all this came out and they were made aware.

Impact

- 52. Last year I had occasion visit the court in Stirling to ask for directions. I was instantly reminded about what had happened when I appeared there as a twelve year old. I remember looking at the dock and seeing the stairs that took you down to the cells. I didn't stay long as the memories returned and I walked out very quickly.

- 53. When I married [REDACTED] I just accepted that this was just part of my life and how it was going to be. I couldn't tell anyone what was happening. It was when Jimmy Saville appeared in the news that it brought it all back to me. It caused me to start crying one day when I was doing the ironing. I went to my husband [REDACTED] and told him what had happened to me in care although I still couldn't tell him about [REDACTED].

Records

- 54. I have never tried to access my records but I now know how to do this. I feel that now I have told my story I can get my records and it would help to fill in the blanks and confirm where I was and the times I was there.

- 55. 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] HJK

Dated..... 4.1.18