

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

BKX

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is BKX My maiden name is My date of birth is 1943.
My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I went into care as a baby. I was never told that I had a family. I had no idea, until I got my records from Barnardo's, that my father died when I was a baby. My father worked in Glasgow, with Rolls Royce. He was 53 years old when he died, from aortic disease. My mother was 26 years old when I was born. They had three children together. I have an older brother, and an older sister, MPC MPC is just under three years older than me and is eighteen months older than me. My mother decided to keep and put my sister and I in a home. I have a half-sister, who is five years younger than me.
3. I found out later that my mother and father were not married. My father had a previous marriage. My mother moved to Scotland from England with my father when he got the job at Rolls Royce. My mother was left stranded when my father suddenly died. Everything was taken out of the house because the things were on hire purchase. My mother came down to Wolverhampton where her family lived. She moved in with my grand-parents who already had other grown-up children and grand-children living with them. There were eleven people in this small house. My grand-parents decided to put

the girls in a home, keep the boy. I don't know why we didn't go into care in Wolverhampton.

Life in Care - Scotland

Comlongon Castle, Dumfries

4. Doctor Barnardo's kept babies at Comlongon Castle, until they were school age. For the first five or six years, MPC and I were both in Comlongon Castle but not together. I didn't know MPC then. I don't know whether MPC knew about me. I didn't know I had brother either. I stayed at Comlongon Castle until I was five years old, when I went to Glasclune, in North Berwick.
5. I have good memories of Comlongon Castle. When I went back there as an adult, it still looked the same as I remembered it. Comlongon Castle was beautiful. There was a balcony that the staff put all the babies' prams on, to get their bit of sunshine for the day.
6. My first memory is from when I was about three or four years old. I have funny memories, like stealing the gardeners hammer and throwing it in a bed of daffodils. I was a bit naughty. There were quite a few children, boys and girls.
7. There were always seven or eight ladies dressed up like nurses, with caps and an apron. Comlongon Castle was comfortable, I have no bad feelings about that stage of my life. There was nothing abusive that I can remember.

Routine at Comlongon Castle

General Routine

8. We slept in big rooms, dormitories. I think it was girls in one dormitory and boys in another. Sometimes we shared beds, we were so tiny then. The routine was very rigid and regimented but not painful. You had to make your bed before breakfast. Then you'd have a bible reading. We shared baths.
9. The dining-room was big and had a beautiful fireplace, with a big mirror above it. The staff discovered a secret compartment behind the mirror. The staff asked us all to sit down, cross-legged on the floor, so we could see what they were going to find. There was beautiful bone china hidden in the secret compartment. I was quite fascinated by that.
10. The staff organised us to be ready for meals, they herded us into the dining-room. The food was wholesome, meat and three veg. Breakfast would be cereal and juice. I was fed well. No-one was forced to eat at that early stage, that came later on, at Glasclune.
11. We wore normal clothes and shoes, although they were hand-me-downs. There wasn't a uniform as such. There was a place where the staff would fit shoes to your feet.
12. We went on some outings and to a pantomime once. Games and activities would be planned. I had a little black metal pram I pushed around, a dolly and a three wheeler bike. Those things were shared with the other children. I didn't have any personal possessions. We played in the gardens or in the building, depending on the weather. There were books about to read and the staff would read stories. I learned to read later, at Glasclune.

13. There were prayers at meals and you always said Grace. We went to church on Sunday. The church was Presbyterian although I think Barnardo's is Church of England.
14. When I was about four years old, I went to hospital to have my tonsils out. I remember going into hospital very well. After the operation I was lying on my pillow saying that I wanted ice-cream. I got my ice-cream but I felt very sorry for myself. There was another child sharing the bed with me, at the other end of it.
15. I had bedwetting problems. I wasn't punished for it in Comlongon.

Leaving Comlongon Castle

16. My sister, MPC was already at Glasclune, North Berwick when Doctor Barnardo's decided that I was old enough to go there. I didn't know I had a sister until Barnardo's were removing me from Comlongon Castle to Glasclune. The staff said to me that I was going to move to Glasclune. That didn't mean much to me. I protested bitterly that I didn't want to go and I cried. I had become secure where I was.
17. The staff said I would meet my sister, to encourage me. That didn't have a big impact on me. I didn't understand anything about sisters and brothers. It didn't mean anything to me, I was an individual little girl.

Glasclune, North Berwick, East Lothian

18. Glasclune was a beautiful home. My first impression was walking through the front door of this mansion and seeing this beautiful hallway. The hallway was where we all used to congregate on special occasions, for Christmas and things. It was all oak panelling, I was impressed with that. I thought Glasclune was lovely.

19. As you walked into the hallway, to the right was the big dining-room and to the left was a play-room for the children and a downstairs bathroom and toilet. There was another room off the play-room where we sometimes went to play games. There were stairs up to the next floor, where the dormitories were. There were several big dormitories. The dormitories went in age groups. There were about seventy or eighty kids, boys and girls. There were several bathrooms.
20. My sister MPC and I didn't get on very well. MPC used to do things like throw salt in my eyes. I thought, if this is what having a sister was like, I didn't want to have a sister.
21. MPI was the matron in charge when I first arrived at Glasclune. I think she was at Glasclune on her own, I don't recall a husband. MPI wore a pin-stripe suit. She looked like a bulldog, that's what I always thought of her. MPI looked elderly to me, maybe in her fifties. MPI wasn't at Glasclune for too long, she left or retired a year or so after I went to Glasclune.
22. After MPI BDO/SPO came to Glasclune. They were the Superintendents who ran the home. BDO/SPO were in their late thirties or forties. They had their own, separate apartment, on the second floor. I never saw BDO/SPO very often. She was away somewhere else in the home doing things. BDO/SPO had two children, . They were about my age. I got on quite well with . was a cry baby. mingled in with us quite a lot, they were part of the crowd. They weren't special or treated differently.
23. I think most of the staff lived in. There seemed to be a staff member for each group, all female. More than one member of staff dealt with me. There was always different staff around you. There was a Mrs Kenny who was there a lot. I can't remember the names of the other staff but I can remember their faces.

24. My negative memories all begin in Glasclune. Glasclune was quite traumatic. I was terrified of the whole thing. There were no questions asked, I just did what I was told. The regime was very strict.

Routine at Glasclune, North Berwick

First day

25. I think staff from Glasclune came to pick me up from Comlongon Castle. When I arrived at Glasclune, it was quite overwhelming for me. I cried and said I didn't want to go into the home. It was when I went to Glasclune that I first got to really know my sister. MPC had a little pink plastic tea set that she shared with me. MPC offered me a cup of tea. That was my introduction to my sister. MPC didn't know me and she was being forced to look on me as her sister. The staff guided me and told me what I had to do. I met all the other children.

Mornings and bedtime

26. We slept in dormitories. In the first dormitory I was in, there were about ten children in single beds, all girls. MPC was in a different dormitory, because of her age. A lady, one of the staff, would come in and say, "Good morning." We'd have to say, "Good morning" to whoever it was. You had to make your bed straight away. Then you went downstairs.
27. Downstairs was a huge eagle, bible stand. We would stand and stare at that, waiting for BDO/SPO to read us the bible. Then there were prayers. I would start to faint because I hadn't eaten. I needed to sit down and have breakfast.
28. The older ones stayed up later than the younger ones. The younger ones were off to bed quite early. A staff member would be supervising. You didn't get a story read to you at night, the staff were too busy getting us off to bed. I imagine it was quite a handful, getting all those people in a dormitory settled.

29. There were several baths in the bathroom. We had a bath every day. We were kept clean. We had our own toothbrush and Gibb's pink toothpaste in a tin. I loved the smell of it.

Mealtimes / Food

30. We all went into the same dining-room and had our tables to sit at. The food was brought to us. Breakfast was basic, a bit of cereal, porridge or toast and a drink. We had a cooked lunch at school. Dinner was quite reasonable, vegetables, mashed potatoes and meat. On Sunday afternoons, we had dripping on bread. It wasn't good for you but it was nice with salt and pepper on it.
31. Sometimes the staff made you sit there and eat the food, if there was something you didn't like. Sometimes you would vomit because you didn't like it. It's not a good thing, force-feeding anyone.

Clothing / uniform

32. We had a school uniform, a black pleated tunic, white blouse, tie, white socks and black shoes. We had our own individual clothing in Glasclune. You had one special dress for special occasions. I had a blue taffeta dress. The clothes were alright. I don't think any of the clothes or footwear were new. You wore your clothes until you grew out of them. Our name was in the clothes. There was a huge room full of shoes. The only time I got taken out to go clothes shopping was when I was leaving England to come to Australia. The staff took us to a place to get everything new.

School

33. Starting school was daunting. I had to meet new people at school as well. The school was a public primary school, North Berwick Junior Primary. There were things about school I enjoyed. I was average at school, from my school reports.

34. The children from Glasclune were teased mercilessly. We were called the 'Banana Kids' because we were Barnardo's. We were made to feel we were a bit different to everyone else at school.
35. There were always punishments at school, like if you had words with the child next to you or in the playground. You would have to hold your hands out, one on top of the other with the palms up, and be hit on the palms of your hand with the two-tongued leather strap. That happened at an early age. I didn't like the headmistress, she was the one who gave me the strap. The headmistress was brutal.

Leisure time/Trips / Holidays

36. I liked reading, playing games and the high jump. There were books at Glasclune and you could sit by the window and read. I played dollies. We nicked fruit from the orchard. We were children, we did naughty things just because we could. I remember there were girls around me a lot of the time. The boys were kept separate.
37. There were some lovely times at the beach in North Berwick. We had swimming lessons and went swimming, during the course of the year. We went to the pantomime in Edinburgh. We went ice-skating, that was such a thrill. There were always a few activities.
38. From the age of nine, until I went to Australia, MPC and I went on holidays with a couple called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. We called [REDACTED] Aunt [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Uncle [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were in their late thirties or forties. They would take MPC and I out of Glasclune. They were in Stranraer. They met us somewhere halfway, Glasgow or somewhere. We went there every holiday. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were really nice. They had no children when MPC and I went there. Later, they adopted a boy, [REDACTED]. I never met [REDACTED] because, by then, we were getting ready to come to Australia.
39. [REDACTED] was a big, rosy-cheeked farmer. MPC and I used to tickle him because he didn't like being tickled. It was an innocent thing to do. [REDACTED] was always giggling and

carrying on over that. We went to a few Highland Gatherings. Aunt [REDACTED] was especially nice. I didn't like coming back home, to Glasclune.

Birthdays and Christmas

40. Christmas is one of my few happy memories of Glasclune. Christmas was exciting. You always had a stocking on the end of your bed in the morning, when you woke up. In the stocking were walnuts, apple, mandarin and some sweets. There was the most beautiful Christmas tree in the hall.
41. You were allowed to make a short Christmas list of what you would like. I always said a stamp album and a fountain pen. They were the main things I wanted. I got them. I got a beautiful doll which was used in the Nativity play. These things were for me to keep. There was a gift for each child on the Christmas tree. A lot of donations were gifted to the home. We had a nice Christmas dinner.
42. On your birthday, you always had a cake and everyone sang 'Happy Birthday'. You got a gift.
43. At Halloween, we scraped out the orange pumpkins and put a candle in it.

Healthcare

44. Judging by my health records, Barnardo's was very particular about healthcare. There were regular check-ups for everything. A doctor came to the home to examine us. I had bronchitis a lot and I was always being checked for that. Once, when I was about eight or nine years old, I burned myself with an iron. I stupidly put the iron up to my jumper and it burnt through to the skin. It wasn't serious but I had to have the doctor look at it. We went to the dentist regularly.
45. We were out on a Sunday walk and I broke my ankle running down a hill. The staff didn't believe I'd done much to it, so they were twisting my ankle this way and that. I was screaming with pain. The staff checked my ankle later in the afternoon and

realised that it was swollen up, like a football. I went to hospital in Edinburgh and my leg was put in a cast. I was in hospital and then I got the mumps.

Religious Instruction

46. There were prayers at meals. We went to church on Sundays. At Christmas time we went to church twice, in the morning and in the evening. We had smarter clothes and polished shoes for church.

Chores

47. There were a lot of baths to clean and I did a lot of cleaning of baths. I think I was too young to be cleaning baths. I cleaned hand basins. We did all the cleaning, sometimes in the morning. I polished shoes. There were eternal inspections of everything, by the staff. If you didn't do the cleaning right, you did it all again. I learned quickly in life to make sure I did it right the first time.

Bed Wetting

48. The staff didn't have much tolerance for bed wetting and you were always punished. You were made to feel really bad for doing it. Once, when BDO/SPO were running the home, the matron in charge of the dormitory tied my knickers around my face. The matron left me sitting there, on a chair in the middle of the dormitory. It seemed like ages that I sat there, a couple of hours, probably more. I don't know the lady's name. I was quite young at the time and hadn't been at Glasclune that long. The bedwetting went on for a few years. I was wetting my bed from five to eight years of age. There were other children who wet themselves.
49. When I was eight or nine years old, I was given a bluebird of happiness brooch for my birthday from Barnardo's. I thought the brooch was beautiful. I wet myself and the staff took the brooch off me. I never got it back.

Discipline

50. I was always being punished for something or another. I was quite mischievous and I can remember all the mischievous things I did. We walked past the kitchen which was a big, old-fashioned kitchen with a stone floor. We saw a loaf of bread on a board, with a knife. We went in and nicked a slice off it and ran for our lives.
51. Our dormitory was near [BDO/SPO] apartment. [BDO/SPO] stored all their biscuits and things in a cupboard. We found a key for [BDO/SPO] cupboard on the floor, near our dormitory. I got the key, opened the cupboard and got this tin of biscuits out. I took the tin all the way downstairs, out of the home, into the back garden and up to the treehouse, with a baby's blanket over it. A whole heap of us munched the biscuits in the dormitory as well. We left evidence everywhere, crumbs. We got punished for that. We had to stand against the wall outside the dormitory, for quite some time. It wasn't a horrendous crime.
52. Sometimes I'd be physically punished by Mr [BDO] because I hadn't done my chores right, usually by being hit with the ruler. Mr [BDO] hit me on the knuckles, three times on both hands. I hurt. I was crying.

Abuse at Glasclune, North Berwick

53. Miss [MPI] beat me on one occasion. When I had broken my ankle and had the mumps, I was isolated in a dormitory. I was the only one in there. The coal fire was going. I had a brown and white checked apron. When you're stuck on your own for all these hours at a time, you want to be doing something. I decided to wave the apron in front of the coal fire. It caught fire, just as the matron, Miss [MPI] walked past. Miss [MPI] came in and asked what I was doing. I sat on the floor, cried my eyes out and wet myself, in fear. Miss [MPI] enjoyed seeing me fearful. I was fearful of what she was going to do to me. Miss [MPI] punished me severely for that, even though I had a sore ankle and mumps. Miss [MPI] whipped me hard on the bum, quite a few times, with some sort of stick. It hurt.

54. When BDO/SPO took over, it was Mr BDO who beat me. He would take me to the second room on the left, in the foyer area, where we played games. Mr BDO hit me a lot with a ruler and with a leather strap, three on each hand. Mr BDO hit me on a regular basis, there was always something wrong. He derived a lot of pleasure from that. Other children got punished as well.
55. I can't even remember what I had done wrong but I was hauled into the bathroom by Mr BDO. I was made to strip and bend over a bath. Mr BDO hit me with the back of a brush on my bottom. There were just the two of us in the bathroom. I was nine or ten years old. I was terrified because I didn't know why I was being punished. I was so fearful, thinking, what have I done?
56. Mr BDO was always caressing the teenage girls who were developing breasts, myself included. I was eleven to twelve years old. He would come up behind you and his hands would be around and over your breast area, feeling your nipples. I saw Mr BDO do it to other girls. He would do it in the foyer where everyone was mingling. Mr BDO did that on a regular basis, when the opportunity arose. I was too frightened to say anything and who do you say it to? You know it's not right. You live in fear in places like Glasclune because the staff are the ones in charge, they give out the punishment. How do you turn to someone like that, confess that you're worried and don't like what they're doing? I don't recall anyone at Glasclune ever asking me anything. The girls didn't talk about what Mr BDO was doing. We were all too fearful. People like Mr BDO prey on that.

Abuse whilst on holiday at the [REDACTED] in Stranraer

57. My Aunt [REDACTED] had a relative, I assume he was her brother, we were asked to call him Uncle BKU. He seemed old to me. I can still vaguely see him in my mind. Uncle BKU didn't live with Aunt [REDACTED] he lived a few miles away, on a farm. From when I was nine years old until I was twelve years old, Uncle BKU would take MPC and I into the fields. Uncle BKU would sit on the brick wall, sit me on his lap and put his hands up

my knickers. On every occasion we went to Stranraer, if we were to meet up with Uncle **BKU** this would happen. It happened more than once or twice or three times.

58. Uncle **BKU** did this to **MPC** too. It was many years later that it suddenly came out, between my sister and I, that we'd both experienced it. **MPC** was with me when I was on Uncle **BKU** lap but we never discussed it at that time.
59. I was so innocent. Something in your brain says, is this right or wrong? You question it. I was confused. You realise when you get older it was wrong. How does a young girl approach an adult and say, "This happened to me today"? I always lived in fear of being punished. I don't think anyone would have believed me anyway. Now I realise how wrong that was.

Migration

Selection Process/Information

60. When I was twelve years old, **BKU** asked me if I would like to go to Australia. I said, "Yes, I'd love to." I had no idea where Australia was. I didn't realise just how far away Australia was. I just thought of the thrill of it all. I was on my own when I was asked. My sister didn't want to go. **MPC** was fifteen years old. In my records, it says that I seemed thrilled that my sister didn't want to come. **MPC** ended up with me, so at some point she must have changed her mind and wanted to go. I don't know if Barnardo's talked her into it. I'm glad it worked out the way it did. My sister was the only precious family I had when I came to Australia.
61. To be approved to go to Australia, there was a medical and an intelligence test. The tests were in Glasclune. Barnardo's approved me to go.
62. After we were approved, there were a few weeks before my sister and I were taken, by train, to Barkingside in Essex, England. **BKU** or someone from Glasclune took us. On the train, we met a woman from Sydney. My sister and I were talking to

woman and told her we were going to Sydney, Australia. It was a long journey but it was an enjoyable experience.

Leaving Scotland for Barkingside, Essex

63. I wasn't told I'd be going on a boat for six weeks until I arrived at Barkingside. At Barkingside, there was a group of around thirty children, from age ten to sixteen years. MPC and I were the only ones from Glasclune. There were a whole heap of cottages. MPC and I were in Bath cottage, with six or eight other girls. Boys were in a separate cottage. I don't know if everyone from our cottage went to Australia. Some of the girls were working age, sixteen or seventeen years old, they came to Australia in our party.
64. We stayed at Barkingside for three weeks and the staff gave us lessons. A big map of Australia was put on the wall. The staff would point to Sydney with a stick and say that you were going to Sydney. I had no idea of how vast Australia was. We were given a brief history of Australia. We had basic reading, writing and arithmetic lessons. Barkingside was exciting in a way. There was the thrill of it all. Something different was happening every day.
65. I found out I had a mother, a week before we left the shores of England to come to Australia. Suddenly, I had a mother and a brother. I was twelve years old. That was traumatic for me. That was when MPC found out too, she was fifteen years old. That's when I started to feel an emotional wreck. I felt like that for a while.
66. Barnardo's said to my mother to either visit or write a letter before MPC and I left England. My mother chose to write a short letter and put in a photograph of herself and my brother. The letter was posted to the cottage and handed to me. The letter was for both MPC and I.
67. I opened the letter. I was bewildered. There was a photo of my mum. There was a photo of my brother, in choir robes. was ten or eleven years old in the photo. The letter and photo changed my whole way of thinking. The happiness I was

looking forward to, in going to Australia, changed because I had this knowledge. It was awful. No-one spoke to me about the information. I didn't get any counselling.

68. MPC was fifteen or sixteen years old at this time. Finding this out must have been awful for her. She was handed over to Barnardo's when she was three years of age.
69. I sailed off to Australia with this newfound information. When I got to Australia, I was supposed to not be concerned about finding out I had a mother and a brother, not be curious or enquire about it. The attitude from Barnardo's was, BKX doesn't know her mother, so why would she be concerned? How dare I be talking about it?

Leaving Barkingside, Essex, for Australia

70. We went to Tilbury docks. There were about thirty children of various ages. Tommy Trinder, the comedian, came to see us off. I have a photo of MPC and I, with him and the other children, before we went on the ship, the S.S. Orontes.
71. On the boat, I was seasick every day. It was miserable. It wasn't such a pleasure cruise after all. The staff who looked after us on the boat were Miss Bickmore, she was a nice lady, and a Mr Garrett. I was in a cabin with six bunks. I was in the top bunk. We were all girls in the cabin.
72. The younger children were confined to a certain area of the ship. I went on deck, when I felt like it. We didn't get free rein, although my sister did because she was older. There were another two girls who were MPC age, and and and were almost adults.
73. My sister was sixteen years old, at an age where she would be interested in boys. I was following her around, being a pesky younger sister. She was smoking when she shouldn't have been. My sister turned around and told me to stop following her. She stubbed the cigarette out on my hand. I thought that was awfully mean. I was a nuisance to her.

74. We stopped at all these different places, such as Port Said, Naples and Colombo. We were well supervised and went on day trips. Sometimes the boat would be in port for a couple of days. When we got off in Colombo, they warned us not to eat the pineapples because they could give you a rash. The first stop in Australia was Freemantle. I loved that, we went out for the day. The main street is quite historic and there is a lovely clock. We met a lot of people in Freemantle who came to greet us and take us out on a bus. The bus driver ran over a dog. That was traumatic for everyone. We stopped in Perth, Western Australia and went to the famous forest there.
75. It was April, Easter, when we arrived in Sydney. It was autumn so the temperature was quite mild. The heat wasn't overwhelming.

Life in Care – Australia

Barnardo's Home, Burwood, Sydney

76. We landed about the 26th of April, at Sydney. When we arrived at Sydney, my sister and I were separated straight away. MPC went into a job with [REDACTED], of the [REDACTED] firm. I didn't get told anything about MPC. I didn't see her for a long time. We were separated again. My sister was in the work force and I was at school. Burwood is about an hour's drive from Sydney harbour. [REDACTED] was with me. She was about my age. Burwood was all girls. I stayed at Burwood from when I was twelve years old until I was fifteen years old.
77. Miss Bickmore, who came out with us from England, was in charge of Burwood. Miss Bickmore was a nice lady. I got to know Miss Bickmore on the boat journey. An ex-Barnardo's girl sent me some black and white photographs a few years ago, where I'm sitting in the garden at Burwood with my head resting on Miss Bickmore's shoulder. Miss Bickmore was a comfort to me. Joyce and Tom Price were the heads of Barnardo's in Australia. I had contact with them too. Joyce and Tom Price, more so Mrs Price, came to Burwood regularly.

78. The first summer in Australia was horrendous. It was a bit of a shock. I'd never known so much sunshine. All I remembered was rain and snow in Scotland. I didn't like Burwood. I wasn't happy there, in the end.

Routine at Barnardo's Home, Burwood, Sydney

First day

79. We went to the home in Burwood. When we arrived, I saw all these hippeastrums in bloom. I thought they were beautiful. I thought the home was lovely, it was an old building with a lace veranda. Burwood was a big, beautiful place. There were dormitories. All the girls there were business girls, that's what they called them. The girls were out to work. There were eight to ten girls aged eighteen and over and [REDACTED] and I, who were twelve or thirteen. The routine was always regimented.

General Routine

80. I shared a dormitory with the older girls. It was the usual routine. Institution stuff. You got up in the morning and made your bed. Everything was always under inspection too. Bedtime was later but we were still tightly watched.
81. The food was good, I always enjoyed it. It was a bit better in Burwood.
82. We had baths every day, showers weren't much of thing back then. The staff were real sticklers for hygiene, keeping clean and always having a good, clean appearance.
83. Mrs Price would come to Burwood and play the piano. We would all sit around and sing songs with her. Mr and Mrs Price lived not far from Burwood. I could cycle down to their house. I went from Burwood to stay with Mr and Mrs Price in their private home for a few weeks, in Roseville, Sydney. Mr and Mrs Price were nice. Mr and Mrs Price had a daughter my age and I got on quite well with her. I was unsettled at Burwood.

84. I read and played games. We weren't allowed to go into Sydney on our own. The staff would take you anywhere you went.
85. We had a school uniform. Barnardo's gave you clothes to wear. You had no choice. You wore them whether you liked them or not. You were becoming more self-conscious about how you looked and interested in the opposite sex.
86. When I arrived in Australia, I went to Burwood Home Science School. When I was fifteen years old, I went to Hornsby High School in Sydney. I didn't mind school. I managed all right. I didn't leave with any qualifications. I was an average student.
87. Christmas at Burwood was not so exciting and happy. My birthday wasn't celebrated quite the same as it was at Glasclune. I wasn't given any presents.
88. All the possessions I had at Glasclune, I lost. When I came to Australia, I didn't have anything.
89. I was looked after, health wise. Barnardo's always took you to the dentist or the doctor whenever you needed to.
90. I didn't feel it was quite so religious in Burwood as it was in Scotland. You were always given a penny to drop in the penny dish at church. I used to clink the penny into the other pennies but keep it. You could get a lot for a penny back then, in Wilson's Sweet Shop.
91. A lot of my young life consisted of cleaning. In Burwood we swept, mopped and cleaned bathrooms. We did that at weekends. It was a chore.

Contact with sibling in Australia

92. I had very little contact with my sister, MPC. My sister was busy in her world and I was busy in mine. From my records, Barnardo's seemed to think MPC had neglected me and hadn't kept in touch with me. That is true, she didn't. I'm not blaming

her for that. Barnardo's asked my sister to make the effort to come and see me. I don't remember seeing my sister at Burwood but she came in to see me at work when I first started work.

Contact with mother in United Kingdom

93. I didn't have time to write to my mother before we left for Australia. I was a prolific letter writer, when I arrived at Burwood. I found writing helpful because of the way I was feeling about finding out I had a mother and a brother. Through my records, I found out that Barnardo's were having to ask my mother to write to me more often and keep in contact. My mother had stopped writing. The impression I got was that my mother was being forced to write to me and she didn't want to.
94. I spoke to Tom Price about my mother. I said I needed to know more about her. I was making a lot of enquiries. Barnardo's weren't forthcoming. They weren't helpful to me at all. Barnardo's fobbed me off. From my records, I know the Prices' were corresponding with Barnardo's in the United Kingdom. There are letters saying that I'm very concerned about my mother, perhaps someone in London can sort something out and go and see my mother. I think I was being a pest. I wanted to pursue my mother.

Abuse at Barnardo's Home, Burwood, Sydney

95. [REDACTED] and I would go out in the garden. The gardener would be gardening and would expose himself. You called it 'flashing'. He did that two or three times. The gardener was about thirty or forty years old. [REDACTED] and I thought that was wrong.

Leaving Barnardo's Home, Burwood, Sydney

96. I moved to Burwood to Normanhurst. There was a home there called Greenwood. Greenwood was for older girls. There were cottages for boys as well. I was only at

Greenwood for a short while, until I went out into the working world. I started work when I was fourteen going on fifteen. From then, I was out boarding.

Boarding arranged by Barnardo's

97. Barnardo's put you out to work. They found somewhere for you to live and you would board there. I went to a place called Asquith and boarded with a lady called Mrs [REDACTED] in her own home. The boarding place was found for me through a friend of Tom Price's, MPJ [REDACTED] Mrs [REDACTED] was MPJ [REDACTED] mother.
98. MPJ [REDACTED] was a bit touchy-feely. He made comments like, "I can see your knickers." I would say that my knickers were pretty, weren't they? MPJ [REDACTED] told me off for saying that. Now I realise, how dare he even mention that. One night, I'd been to MPJ [REDACTED] and his wife's house. I was friends with their daughter. MPJ [REDACTED] brought me home to his mother's house, where I was boarding. He was too close to me when he said to me to be a good girl. MPJ [REDACTED] was caressing me. I felt it was wrong. I didn't like the comment about my panties or the caressing.
99. I got a job in an office in Sydney as a secretary and at the same time I went to a business college, for twelve months. I did typing. I worked in that job for fourteen months.
100. I moved to a few different places after boarding at Mrs [REDACTED] Barnardo's helped me find the places to board and to get jobs. I was still under their care until I was 21 years old.

Life after being in care

101. I met my husband, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] came from England. He left home when he was sixteen and came to Australia as part of the Big Brother Movement. [REDACTED] came to Australia on his own, with a group of other Big Brother boy's. He went out into the

countryside and worked on a farm. [REDACTED] and I met in the guest house we were both living in, in Sydney. I wrote to Barnardo's to ask for permission to get married. I was nineteen years old, going on twenty years old. Barnardo's gave me permission. I was married to my husband for 44 years.

102. [REDACTED] wanted to go back to England to live, he was homesick. In 1963 I was pregnant with my eldest daughter. I wanted to go back when I was pregnant, rather than with a little baby. I had been away from the United Kingdom for seven years. I was going back to the United Kingdom first, before [REDACTED] and I got in touch with Barnardo's. I asked Barnardo's if I could stay in the home at Glasclune. I had a friend, [REDACTED] who was staying in Glasclune, and I was going to stay with her. Barnardo's wouldn't let me stay at the home but [REDACTED] was allowed to stay. From my records, the reason was that I wasn't good enough. New people were running the home, [REDACTED] QON/QOQ and Mrs [REDACTED] QOQ wouldn't have me there.

103. When I got back to the United Kingdom, I didn't want to stay there. It was too cold and wet after the Sydney beaches. I stayed for fourteen months with [REDACTED] parents in Walthamstow. I persuaded [REDACTED] to stay in Australia and I came back. I think we had a better future in Australia than in Walthamstow. We had three beautiful children, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. My children have all grown into lovely human beings. I have a loving family. The house I'm living in now, I've been in for 35 years. As an adult, I've had a very happy life. I feel blessed. I met the right man.

104. I was, more or less, a stay at home mum. That's what I wanted to be, a full-on, hands-on mum, for my children. I had part-time jobs, when my youngest son was a baby, at the local delicatessen.

Impact

105. [REDACTED] MPC and I didn't know each other at Glasclune and we didn't get on at first. I didn't like [REDACTED] MPC and she didn't like me. We were never close because of our separation. Now, we love each other. [REDACTED] MPC and I couldn't imagine life without each other. [REDACTED] MPC

is my sister and she's been a godsend to me throughout the years. She was the only family I had. I didn't meet my family in the United Kingdom until I was 55 years old.

106. For the first few years of our lives, MPC and I met then separated, met then separated. That's how it was. It's understandable why we didn't get on very well for a few years. Deep down in my heart I always knew MPC was my sister. We had the same mother and father. MPC and I shared what we had been through, being in institutions. It was difficult. You can't form warm relationships with anyone.
107. The staff at Glasclune were not very nice. I don't ever remember feeling warm and comforted. The only good that has come out of my experience, is that it has made me into a very strong person. I'm able to deal with anything. In the early years of my life, I had a few insecurities all because of my childhood. There was one emotional trauma after another. I couldn't mix well with people. I've improved over the years. I've learned a lot in life. I'm quite savvy.
108. There were some nice times at Glasclune but, sadly, the thing that you wanted was missing, the emotion, the love, the hugs, the kisses. I was afraid to show my emotions in the end. I always vowed I'd make up for that with my own family. My family got love, hugs and kisses. I was very loving with my family. All the time, I must have been subconsciously thinking, this isn't going to happen to my family, they'll get the attention I didn't get.
109. One of the cruellest blows that ever happened to me was being given the letter and photograph from my mother at Barkingside. I got to Australia because I didn't have much choice after receiving the letter. I felt devastated. I was lonely. I felt empty. I felt cheated and deceived. Barnardo's shouldn't have done what they did to me. There was no support about how I felt at all. I was dealing with all these emotions that I didn't know how to handle. I was stuck in a home in Burwood in Sydney with working class Barnardo's girls. There was only one other girl who was my age who came out on the boat with me. When I eventually did enquire about my mother, in Sydney, my records from Barnardo's say the staff don't even know why I'm worried about my mother because I don't know my mother. Barnardo's just disregarded my enquiries.

110. Barnardo's knew everything about my mother. They never told MPC and I a thing. I didn't ask about my parents when I was in Scotland. Barnardo's never said that our parents had died, I presumed they had. I used to tell all the girls at school and my friends that my parents were dead. I said that because I was in a home, to make me feel better.
111. I felt so isolated when I came to Australia, that I found it hard to settle. I left school and went out to work. It was hard. As each year went by, always in the back of my mind were my mother and my brother. It was a traumatic change for me, coming from Scotland to Australia, for lots of reasons. I cried in bed. I was homesick for Scotland and I was thinking about my mother and my brother. It still makes me cry to this day. It was cruel what Barnardo's did. It's shocking.
112. I suffered with my feet for the rest of my life because I had had to wear the wrong footwear at Glasclune. You were forced to wear shoes that didn't fit your feet.
113. In 1998, meeting my mother in the United Kingdom was over-whelming. The meeting was a bit strained. I didn't think my mother was very loving towards me, not as much as I would have liked. I think she was overwhelmed. My mother wasn't a young woman any more.
114. My mother and I really got to know each other, in the end, with the help of the Child Migrant's Trust giving us assistance to get over there. Out of the nine visits I made, Child Migrants helped on three occasions. I got on quite well with my mother, considering I thought I'd never get to know my mother. It was quite a journey, those last twenty years of her life. We got each other's sense of humour. My mother was very affectionate in ways with me. She would say, "Hello my beauty" and cup my face with her hands.
115. I've never blamed my mother for putting us in a home. She was given twelve months to take us back. My mother would have had to pay Barnardo's money for my upkeep in the first twelve months. It became obvious my mother didn't have the money, so I

was kept in the home. I think my mother had to live with this terrible guilt that she was forced to hand two children over. I always reassured my mother that I never once held it against her. What must it have been like for her, to be left stranded, with a wee baby, a three year old daughter and a little boy? My mother had no choice. She did what she thought was best. I have no regrets.

116. I feel my life's been one big journey. It's been completed because of meeting my mother and my brother. I love my brother, [REDACTED] I've seen [REDACTED] every time I've been over to the United Kingdom. [REDACTED] adores my daughter, [REDACTED] who he's met a few times. [REDACTED] and I talk on the phone. He's always asking when I'm coming over again. I'm waiting for confirmation from Child Migrant's as to whether they are going to give me another trip. The first thing I'll do when I hear, is to ring [REDACTED]
117. My half-sister [REDACTED] is a lovely person. She has always been extremely defensive about my mother. [REDACTED] doesn't want to believe that her mother gave two children up. [REDACTED] has always had a problem with that. My mother and I were never allowed to discuss anything about that in front of [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] didn't say that but you got the feeling that was a no-no.
118. My relationship with [REDACTED]^{MPC} blossomed when we both started having children, in our early twenties. I had [REDACTED] first. [REDACTED]^{MPC} didn't have children then. [REDACTED]^{MPC} idolised [REDACTED]^{MPC} married two or three years after me and had two boys. For the first time in my life, there was family. I felt, I had a little girl, I'm married. I visited [REDACTED]^{MPC} and she visited me. We got closer from there. Now, it's wonderful. I love all [REDACTED]^{MPC}'s family. They are all so sweet to me and my family. My children and I are sweet, and lovely, to [REDACTED]^{MPC} family. It's all good. I'm enjoying life. I'm going to be a great-grandmother for the first time in April.
119. I've come out the other end and I'm okay. There was a lot that wasn't okay for so long. Too many people got away with too much. Everyone goes through trials and tribulations and they experience things that aren't good, some worse than others. I've picked myself up and tried to be strong. I've accomplished a lot that I'm happy and proud of, my family, my sister and her family. For the first time, I've found people

around me that listen to me and care about me. I'd never been cared for like that before. My family means the world to me. I have all my friends and I live a nice life. I'm happy.

120. I could so easily have gone off the rails when I was a teenager, at sixteen and seventeen years old. No-one was looking over me the right way. I stayed on the right side of the tracks and met the most wonderful man. Everything has come together beautifully.
121. It's only in recent years that's I've opened up to my family about my experiences. It's the most cathartic thing I've ever done, getting it out. I'm glad I wrote that letter to [REDACTED]. That was the beginning of this journey. I feel good I did that. I don't wish to gain anything from talking about my experiences, I just want it to be useful for the future.
122. On my first trip back to the United Kingdom, I said to my husband that I was going to write a book. I would call it, [REDACTED].

Other action taken

Nationality/ Passport

123. I have an Australian passport. Barnardo's were helpful with the information that was required to get my passport. I have Australian citizenship. My husband and I both became Australian citizens on the same day. I'm very proud to say I'm Scottish, that will never go away. I was born in Scotland and I have twelve years of happy memories of Scotland. The trips we've made to Scotland have really confirmed that to me. There's something about Scotland. My sister ^{MPC} [REDACTED] sees herself as Scottish but she wasn't born in Scotland, she was born in Southport. ^{MPC} [REDACTED] is Scottish through and through. I receive an Australian state pension and an Australian government pension.

Redress

124. I haven't received a redress payment from the Australian or British governments. There is talk about redress from the British government for Child Migrants because of the fact that they sent us out to Australia.

Treatment/Support

125. I got in touch with the Child Migrant Trust through Barnardo's. I started to receive magazines from the Trust. I've been in close contact with the Trust on a number of occasions, over twelve years. I've had counselling with the Trust. The Trust has been absolutely wonderful. I've been on the phone for hours, talking to them, especially when I found my brother. The counsellors let you talk, they advise you and listen to you. I've spoken to different people, it just depends who is available. Talking about things is the best way to help yourself. That's what I've been doing, trying to help myself.

Records

126. I got my records from Barnardo's about twenty years ago. Barnardo's gave me information that I could apply for my records. Barnardo's vetted the records first and blacked out things they didn't want me to see, like family addresses. Getting my records was devastating. It was the cold way Barnardo's made their reports on you, like you were nothing, just a number. It was awful, the way they wrote the reports, almost like you weren't there. It's like the reports are not about you.
127. I got the records from Barnardo's in Australia. They had got information from Barnardo's in the United Kingdom, collated it and sent what they thought you could see. There are quite a lot of records but I do feel some of it is missing. There was a lot about my family that I would have liked to have known more. I don't think Barnardo's were telling me everything,

128. There is information about my mother, when Barnardo's interviewed her. Barnardo's commented that my mother was a fine looking woman, well-kept but evasive about certain information Barnardo's wanted from her.

Tracing family in the United Kingdom

129. Early on in the piece, when I was at Burwood, I was writing to my mother. The last letter I got from my mother was to ask me to stop writing or she would get her solicitors on to me. This was in 1971 or 1972 when I was in my late twenties. My mother had decided to cut me out of her life. I had not ever spoken to her on the phone at this point. My mother was hiding MPC and I from her family.
130. I pursued my mother. I eventually talked to my mother on and off on the phone. I knew my mother had a daughter, MPC from her second marriage. I was always asking about my brother, MPC. My mother refused to tell me where he was. I found that very frustrating. Much later, when I started speaking to my half-sister MPC by phone, she wouldn't tell me where MPC was either.
131. In 1998, my sister had gone over to England with her husband early in the year, in May or June, to see what they could find out about our family. My sister was 58 years old. MPC landed on my mother's doorstep in the rain. My mother opened the door. MPC asked my mother if she knew who she was. My mother said she was MPC. My mother said to MPC that MPC her daughter, was in the house. My mother told MPC not to say a word. MPC had to lie and say she was a friend of a friend of a friend, who was visiting.
132. The only reason it all changed was because MPC loaned MPC an umbrella. MPC and her husband had walked in the rain and had got soaking wet. MPC gave MPC her phone number and address. MPC said MPC could ring her when she was leaving and she would pick up the umbrella. It took a while, but when MPC got back

to Australia, she wrote to [REDACTED] saying that [REDACTED] knew who she was. It all came out in the open.

133. Later in 1998, when I was 55 years old, [REDACTED] and I decided to go to the United Kingdom in the hope of looking for my brother. My husband and I were going to search all avenues, to see what we could find out. My mother still wouldn't tell me where my brother was.
134. Before we left for the United Kingdom, we found my brother through an advertisement in a help column, in a Glasgow newspaper. Friends that I have in Edinburgh put the advert in for me. The advert described my brother, without too much information. We knew things such as he was divorced and had a daughter. There was a contact number for our friends in Edinburgh. A little old man on the Isle of Skye was a friend of my brother. The man was reading the help column as he was screwing up the paper to put it in the fire. He thought, if he didn't know better, that sounded like his mate, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was my brother. The man never thought any more about it and put the paper in the fire. He told [REDACTED] about it. [REDACTED] rang the newspaper and got them to read out the advert and got the contact number. [REDACTED] rang my friends. [REDACTED] didn't know he had two sisters. My mother had kept us a secret. My mother had told [REDACTED] he had two step-sisters who were sent to New Zealand for a good education, with the Freemasons.
135. I rang my mother two nights later to speak to her about finding [REDACTED] I gave her 48 hours to get over the shock of [REDACTED] ringing her. She didn't want to speak to me. Being a letter writer, I proceeded to sit down and write three foolscap pages to my half-sister, [REDACTED] I wrote in the letter that I had been abandoned twice already and a third time wouldn't make any difference. [REDACTED] rang me and wanted to abuse me. I said, "Don't." [REDACTED] was defending her mother. That was all very difficult.
136. In the letter, in bold print at the top, I had put my phone number and wrote, 'ring me'. My brother rang me, at 4.30 am. We cried for half an hour. [REDACTED] was overwhelmed. He was happy.

137. On our trip to the United Kingdom, I met my mother and my brother for the first time. [REDACTED] offered to pick my husband and I up at Heathrow airport. She came with her son. That was a big moment, when I met my half-sister and my nephew at the airport. [REDACTED] was nice to me. My mother stayed at home at [REDACTED] place and I went to meet her there. I ended up making nine trips to the United Kingdom. My mother was 98 years old when she died in 2016. My sister MPC [REDACTED] was upset that I had got over to the United Kingdom first, to meet my brother.

Lessons to be Learned

138. I'd like to think, in the future, people will be vetted and trained more thoroughly, so that children cannot be exposed in the way we were ever again. We were very exposed, we weren't being helped. That shouldn't be allowed to happen anymore.
139. Institutions should allow for children's feelings and emotions. There should be warmth and understanding, even if the staff can just put their arm around your shoulder and ask how you are. There was none of that for me.

Other information

140. My life is well on its way. If people can learn from it and if whatever I have said can help anyone and improve the way things are done for the kids of the future in homes, I'm happy.
141. 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.....BKK [REDACTED].....

Dated.....24/05/2019.....