

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

PJS

Support person present: Yes

1. My name is PJS, my surname as a child was PJS. My date of birth is 1958. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Pre-amble

2. My primary, sole purpose is to speak to the Inquiry about the experiences I had while I was at Fornethy and to confirm and affirm the women who are protesting and looking for answers, apologies and redress. I read an article in the [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED] and it seems bizarre considering my considerable experience in this field that I didn't know the place I resided was called Fornethy, I couldn't remember. For some reason I thought it was more in the highlands.
3. I knew there were protests from survivors but I didn't link it until I read the article in [REDACTED]. A chill ran through me when I read it. There was a map on the article and that's when I realised where it was. The article was on [REDACTED] 2023 and there was a subsequent article two days later. The thing that compelled me to come forward was that the Inquiry had widened their terms of reference for Fornethy, but it was really from Police Scotland asking people to come forward. I had told my first husband, and my husband knew I'd been there over the years. It also came up when I was doing work with [REDACTED]. I was involved with [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] review or in care and subsequent work [REDACTED]. I was involved in setting up [REDACTED]. When we were setting up [REDACTED] for which I was also [REDACTED] again I felt that

residential homes such as Fornethy should be part of it. So this wasn't something that was hidden away. I was aware of it, I knew about it. My blood ran cold when I read the article and that was what compelled me to come forward. I called Police Scotland and asked if this was something they were dealing with and I was told that it was.

4. Everything I became aware of came about from either television media or printed media. I looked up online, which was helpful because when I saw the photograph of the building I realised straight away. It was a photograph of Fornethy and one of the headmistress', Margaret Fletcher. That's when it all fell into place.

Life before going to Fornethy Residential School, Kilry, Angus

5. I was born in the Gorbals, in Glasgow. I lived there until I was about five when the slum clearances happened. We were relocated to Castlemilk, which was in a new housing scheme there. It was new houses but actually it was a wrench and I think a lot of the people who were moved from places like the Gorbals to these peripheral estates or schemes felt very dislocated.
6. I was born into extreme poverty in a single end house. There was myself, my sister [REDACTED] who is ten years older than me, and my mum and dad. My father's name was [REDACTED] and my mother's name was [REDACTED].
7. Fornethy was a hell hole, but I actually lived in a hell hole anyway. My parents were very abusive and neglectful to my sister and me. There was a lot of interfamilial violence.
8. The one good thing about my mother though, she kept me clean. I've got a photograph because I want to acknowledge who I was back then. It's of me in my primary school class. The teacher in the photograph is the woman who saved my life. Miss McFarlane. I was at Netherton Primary School in Castlemilk. I was kept nice and clean and never came to the attention of the 'cruelty' as we called it, which

was the social work. I was always a very composed child, very quiet and studious, and I was clever. I'm the only person in my family to ever go to university.

9. My life was hell, and what I would have said to Fornethy was, "What are you going to do that's not happened before?" I don't know how I didn't have an eating disorder. I was a very frail child, I wasn't fed well at all. Being fed was very erratic, sometimes not at all. It's miraculous when I think back that the social work weren't involved. I was left standing outside the [REDACTED] pub in [REDACTED] night after night. [REDACTED] was away, she ran wild. My sister was also abused and she went on to physically abuse her kids as well.
10. It was a really awful, terrible childhood. My parents had little interest in my wellbeing and no interest in my education either. I don't know but for some reason, we didn't have books in the house but I managed to read. I feel some sympathy for my parents. My father grew up in a fishing village in the north east of Scotland. His mother died when he was young and he was illiterate. Both him and my mother didn't read books. Looking back as an adult, I wonder if Miss McFarlane, my teacher, saw something in me, I don't know. School was my life. Even in those days in housing schemes like Castlemilk, there was good schooling and Netherton was a good school. Miss McFarlane broke my heart when she emigrated to Canada. I was older by this time and had Mrs Angus and the headmaster Mr Nicol as teachers.
11. It was a very chaotic life and my touchstone was school. I actually had to get myself up in the morning and go to school. I don't know how it happened, it just happened that I was bright and I loved school. It saved me. I hated the school holidays because I wanted to go, and at least I got a meal because I had a free dinner ticket in those days. That was my circumstances.
12. Another thing was, I was so ashamed. People ask why do children not tell? I was so humiliated and ashamed of my life and my parents that I covered it up. I wanted my dad to have a job like the other men in normal families in the neighbourhood. It was a very itinerant, uniquely different life. There's a film called 'Small Faces' about gangs and the area was like that, squads running wild. At school I just kept quiet, so

when people ask why children don't tell, you just don't. You don't want anybody to know.

13. The only other place I'd been outside Glasgow before Fornethy was to Fraserburgh. My dad came from up there. He came to Glasgow during World War II. He was too old to go into the army, so he was conscripted down to Glasgow to drive fire engines during the war. When I went to Fraserburgh I would miss my mum and sometimes they would come up later on for my dad to see his relatives. It's interesting because that side of the family were quite respectable as was my mother's siblings. They were quite decent people. But they kind of cast us aside because my father was about eighteen years older than my mother. So both sides of the family split, they didn't approve of this kind of lifestyle that my parents seemed to have got themselves into.
14. I went to Fornethy for six weeks when I was ten or eleven years of age in 1968 or 1969. It must have come under some excuse like my parents were in hardship. They wanted rid of me. It wasn't for respite or care or illness in the family or other reasons that I've read why you would go to somewhere like that. They must have signed something but I wouldn't have had anything to do with that or any say in the matter. I can only imagine that my parents had heard about it and thought they would get me sent there.
15. I got an idea I was going somewhere as I had never known about having name tags in my clothes and they had to be sewn in. I wondered what that was about. I'm not sure but I think I would have been told I was going on holiday or something like that. It was different going to Fraserburgh. I didn't like it, but at least I was going to stay with relatives and I did get well fed. When I went there I was six or seven and my parents put me on the train. I had to get off the train in Aberdeen and walk to the bus stop to get a bus to Fraserburgh. I was streetwise, even though I was a quiet, gentle child. I knew how to survive. I did have a lovely auntie, my auntie [REDACTED]. She was like a mother figure. She was a cook and she baked.

Fornethy Residential School, Kilry, Angus

16. I didn't know anyone who had been to Fornethy. There was a girl that I saw there that I didn't know was from Castlemilk and I came across her in later years. I don't know her name. There were different areas in Fornethy, I think they called them houses. We slept in dormitories. It was very institutional, although there was a grandness to the house. I remember the quarters for the girls, the lines of beds like a dormitory. You had a small bed and a cupboard for your belongings. There was a wash area with baths, showers and toilets with wash hand basins all in a line.
17. I can't remember how many levels there were. I would say two, but I can't remember the layout or if the dormitories were upstairs. There were classrooms but again, I couldn't say if these were upstairs or downstairs. There was a big common room where there were games, board games, comics and things like that. They showed films like Laurel and Hardy on a big pull up projection screen and there was a record player. But I can't describe the layout of the place.
18. I don't know the names of any of the staff except Margaret Fletcher, the headmistress. I only know her name from seeing her photograph online. I don't know how many staff were there. I know there were from their different style of clothing. Margaret Fletcher was the twin set and pearls type, with a tweed skirt, that kind of look. That denoted her status. There were others dressed like that and then there were others that were dressed I would say like cleaning women, wearing domestic clothes. Every member of staff used their fists, it wasn't the privilege of the senior teachers or the domestic staff. I don't know if you would call those senior staff teachers. They took class, which is different from teaching. Violence wasn't the preserve of one tier, and you would have different tiers. There would be cleaning staff, cooks and those that took class. I cannot remember any of them showing any form of kindness. All of them were responsible for the violence in Fornethy.

Routine at Fornethy Residential School, Kilry, Angus

First day

19. I remember going into Glasgow and getting on the bus. My mother would have taken me there. I remember having a case and the name tags on my clothes. I felt absolutely dismayed and terrified. There were other girls on the bus. My memories are very patchy. I have no recollection of the journey. I now recognise it as trauma. I can visualise it, see it, but I can't really say much about it. It's that kind of cognitive dissonance.

20. I remember the house looked like a castle to me. I had never seen anything like it. There was a big staircase and I'd never seen a fireplace like the one in there. My mother cleaned some big house out in Newton Mearns so I'd been in a different kind of environment but nothing on this scale. We were ushered around and shown where to go and things like that. I remember being really scared because although I was really streetwise I was frightened of the other girls. I remember one girl was really horrible to me and I wondered how I was going to cope with it. She was about the same age as me. She didn't hit me, it was just verbal. It goes back to me being quiet. I think I would have been an easy target. I just took whatever I had to take.

21. I can't remember the ages of the girls there but they were all primary school ages. There were no teenagers. All the staff were female. There were a couple of men who I think would have been groundsman. They had nothing to do with our day to day. I knew there were different teachers, but I can't remember any names except Margaret Fletcher.

Mornings and bedtime

22. I'm frightened of spiders and I remember lying in bed one night and I saw a spider and I didn't know what to do. I just lay there wishing it would go away. I think there might have been a night light left on at bed time. There must have been somebody on duty during the night but I have no clear memories of any interactions. I would be

lying there stark still and dissociate from my life there. Stillness had dividends, although I was still hit randomly for no reason. That's what I did at home with my mother, I kept quiet not to get her riled. So I would have done the same in Fornethy.

Mealtimes/Food

23. Feeding wasn't a problem for me. Because I was regularly short of food I was glad to have something to eat to be honest. I'd never had a boiled egg in a shell and this was a huge novelty for me. I believe they would force feed but I can't remember seeing that.
24. The chilling thing was, we routinely got milk and digestive biscuits at night. I believe we were sedated because my memories are so patchy of Fornethy, in stark contrast to what I've told you about my home life. There's a lot of gaps. I could talk about my life at home in technicolour detail but with Fornethy there are so many unanswered questions. I'm not saying it's a fact but there's a lot about Fornethy that I can't remember.
25. We all ate together at round tables. There was a big fancy window in the dining room because it was an old house. There was a tuck shop, so we must have had some pocket money and you could get the sweets of the day. I don't know whether the parents gave the pocket money or whether it came from the council.

Washing/bathing

26. There were communal showers at Fornethy. I had never been seen naked to anybody other than my mother so this was embarrassing and humiliating. I don't know if we had a shower every day or if there was a set time for them. I know we had one on numerous occasions because I remember them as incidents as opposed to having a shower for cleanliness. You would be dreading it. I don't know how many girls were in the showers at any one time. There were staff members present. I was literally dragged out naked and slapped repeatedly, but I remember feeling more

worried about being naked than slapped. This happened on multiple occasions. It wasn't an isolated incident.

Clothing/uniform

27. You got a flowered pinafore to wear, which I didn't mind. We wore them every day. That defined you. I didn't see that as a problem until one day posh girls came in, who may have been families of staff there, and I noticed how differently dressed we were to them. I think we wore these pinafores over our own clothes. You maybe had a skirt on and your own shoes. They had wellingtons of all different sizes that we would wear going on the muddy walks because I didn't possess a pair myself.

Leisure time

28. There was a common room where there was a record player. I can't to this day listen to Jim Reeves, 'I hear the sound of distant drums'. It was awful. They weren't playing that to hurt us, I just remember that song being played. There was a projector and a screen and we watched Laurel and Hardy films. There were board games but I can't remember playing them. I think we were sedated when we were there, because I remember these things, the board games, the record player, but not a lot more. I couldn't tell you if this was on a week night or a weekend.
29. Every night we got milk and a biscuit. I thought that was brilliant. The milk was served in a little plastic beaker and it was either a granola or a digestive biscuit. I'd never had a granola before. I thought that was very exotic. I really think we were sedated. I have been through a lot of very good therapy over the years and I've never managed to fully answer things, I can only suggest things.
30. We did have a play time and there were gardens. There might have been swings, I can't remember. On occasions like that other girls and I would discuss our plans to escape. If there had been a bus route or something like that I could have done it.

31. The walks in the afternoon weren't leisure. It was a kind of penance. It would have been good if they were educational and taught us something about nature, but it was like Stalag 13. You marched and you weren't allowed to talk. I remember one of the slaps I received on a walk very vividly and I looked at the woman because I couldn't believe what she did.

Schooling

32. I remember we had classes in the morning, which I actually loved. There was a big blackboard and I think on the first or second day we were given a little white postcard and you had to copy what was written on the blackboard on to the postcard. On the blackboard were things like, 'It was wonderful' and 'We were having a whale of a time'. The white postcard was inspected, taken away and sent. Children have a great sense of morals of what is right and wrong. I knew it was a lie. I knew my parents were wrong. I knew I was living in a wrong life where people were doing things that were wrong. I think that's possibly why I've survived. I didn't blame myself, I knew they were in the wrong. I hadn't done anything to deserve this. We wrote these postcards on more than one occasion, I don't know exactly how many times.
33. I was used to a better education than that at Fornethy. If all the abuse is taken out of it then I think it would have been a useful routine to have something like that, school in the morning and play in the afternoon. I remember the jotters we used to get, with the little squares on the pages. I think we were taught basic English and a bit of arithmetic.

Healthcare

34. We all had red marks from being hit because it was never just a slap, it was a wallop. These places attract these types of people, but I can't remember any health care person there.

Religious instruction

35. I remember we were taken to a church on a Sunday. We walked there. I'm not religious but in Glasgow there's obviously a divide and I think it was all Protestants that were sent to Fornethy. I can't remember if we said any prayers at mealtimes.

Work

36. I think we might have done some chores. I wouldn't have seen that as a problem actually if it was done without getting battered. I think there would be an expectation that you would spread your bed out.

Bed Wetting

37. I didn't wet the bed but other girls at Fornethy did. Their pants were held up and then the girl would be taken away and I think made to wash them themselves. This would have taken place in the morning. This happened to me once because I had a stain on my pants. It was humiliating.
38. We obviously had more than one pair of pants, and I've mentioned the labels sewn in with your name on them, so they knew who the pants belonged to and would see them when they went to the laundry. I would imagine underwear would have been laid out on the bed for you in the morning when the laundry came back.
39. I could hold the toilet in, that's why I didn't wet the bed. If I needed the toilet when my parents were in the [REDACTED] pub or [REDACTED] Bar at [REDACTED], that would have been a problem because they would have had to get me to a toilet. So I learned to hold it in and that would have been the case at Fornethy. I was also frightened seeing what happened to other girls who did wet the bed.

Visitors

40. There were no visitors. If there had been a visit what were you going to say, "They're battering me here". You wouldn't do that. Other than the little girls that came in all decked out with ribbons in their hair, I can't remember anyone coming to visit.

Family contact

41. Apart from sending the postcards to my parents I had no family contact while I was at Fornethy. My parents wouldn't have bothered anyway, to be honest. We didn't have a phone at home. I didn't know what a phone was.

Discipline

42. There was no official discipline there, you were just slapped hard indiscriminately. I think like any normal school if you were being disruptive you would be made to stand outside the door. At my own school I never received the tawse as I was a model pupil.

Running away

43. I was a little scared of some of the girls who were rougher than me. I always kept very quiet to avoid any clashes. I do recall girls that I got on ok with, but I wouldn't say that we became friends. We used to plot how we would try to escape, but we never did it. If I hadn't been in the country I could have escaped, having taken two buses on my own to see my grandmother in Glasgow. So I could have escaped but Fornethy was in the middle of nowhere.

Abuse at Fornethy Residential School, Kilry, Angus

44. On a Sunday, I don't know if it was staff's children or relatives or children from somewhere else, but children would come in at lunchtime. There was a huge, big dining room and they were seated at a fancy table away at one end of the room and

we were at the other end with our pinafores on. I remember looking at these girls and smarting with hurt. They had ribbons in their hair and lovely clothes on and we were just the lost children from the slums. It was so humiliating. As an adult, I cannot believe that was not something that was done to be derogatory, humiliating and elitist. I knew that, even then, looking and feeling ashamed. I'd never had a hair ribbon ever.

45. The headmistress, Margaret Fletcher, and other staff were wantonly cruel for no reason other than I feel we were not human to them. We were in their care, they had locus parentis and were paid by Glasgow Corporation. If any did have a teaching or care qualification there should be records with some regulatory body. Who was on the board? Why was there no inspection? Why were there no reports from social work and education? There appears to be no records, have they been destroyed? I think that's something historically we must examine. That's the learning part.
46. The fear and terror that we all had is so classic and awful. I think they really excelled in unexpected verbal and physical violence. I knew I could read the room with my mum, you knew to get out or shut up or distract. In Fornethy it was random, unexpected violence with no provocation whatsoever. I was like a mouse but even if a child had misbehaved, you do not slap and punch them across the head as happened to me on numerous occasions. Within my mother's code of conduct and violence, she always said, "never hit her on the head". So the head was out of bounds except when I was at Fornethy.
47. I thought the staff at Fornethy were going to be like the wonderful Miss McFarlane. I thought they were going to be like teachers and I would be ok but I wasn't. I was slapped really hard across the face repeatedly. This was shocking to me. Even though my mother and father were violent towards each other and to my sister and me, it was somehow worse because these people were teachers and strangers. I was anticipating it to be like school but in a different environment. These women were cruel and vicious.

48. We had long walks in country lanes. I can possibly understand that they were trying to tire us out. We walked two by two. I remember being tired and you weren't allowed to talk and again I remember incidents on these walks of just being slapped across the face and head. We were just walking. I hope there's nobody got any neurological damage as a consequence of this because it wasn't a tap.
49. The other experience of abuse that seemed to be a theme was being dragged from the shower naked and slapped repeatedly. I mean they really yanked you out of the shower. I later thought it was to do with puberty as I was starting to develop but reading in the press other girls seemed to have had similar treatment. Even though my background was abusive, this was fresh hell. Communal showering and bathing was something I'd never experienced and I was embarrassed and humiliated. It was a terrible feeling being shouted at and battered in the showers.
50. Why did we have to show our underwear? I remember someone coming into the classroom with my pants and holding them up because there was a stain on them. I was then marched out of the classroom to the sinks and made to wash them with a member of staff standing over me. They did this to other girls too. I cannot fathom why this was common practice. It was part of this regime of degradation and humiliation.
51. I witnessed lots of girls being slapped. There was a particular event that shows the compassion in myself and others. We were out of the showers and there was this girl and she had, as we would say now, mild learning disabilities. She was a big girl, she had a lovely face. She had a kilt and had put it on inside out. The staff tore into her and slapped her about. I remember witnessing this as a child, knowing it was wrong. I was feeling worse for her than if it had happened to me. This encapsulates the level of abuse carried out by these women to a vulnerable girl. We were all vulnerable, but this girl was definitely vulnerable. I went over to see if I could comfort her, or to try and let her know that she would be ok.
52. I met the girl later in Castlemilk when I was at secondary school. I didn't know she was from there. Castlemilk is huge, it had the population of Perth back in the day.

Her and her mother were in their garden. I went across and said hello. I think I communicated through her mother because I realised she had additional needs. I just said "Hello". On some unconscious level I just wanted to be kind to her and acknowledge her. I didn't mention the incident. The image of that girl stayed with me my whole life.

53. I felt I was away forever, always scared and terrified. There was this anticipation, not knowing the anger, the vitriol and the hatred and brutality in these women. I was a very quiet and studious child, I would never have stepped out of line. There was no excuse for their behaviour, even if a child did misbehave.
54. I don't believe I witnessed sexual abuse and I certainly didn't experience it but I'm aware of some women who have brought it forward. As an adult working in this field I know there was every opportunity for that to happen. It was a classic environment for sexual abusers. To me this sexual abuse potentially mirrors the alleged sexual abuse and assault of young boys and men at Palmerston Place, who grew up in care settings where those alleged were dealt with during Operation Planet. I would suggest that the headmistress and these women were facilitating sexual abuse at Fornethy for whatever reason. But it didn't happen to me.
55. It's important to stress that Fornethy was a vicious hell hole and it breaks my heart. I don't feel sorry for myself, I feel sorrow for myself and I feel sorrow for those other women. I don't need to know them. It's not because I don't want to, although I'm a very confident, outgoing person. I lead a very private, quiet life. I like order and privacy. I have fantastic friends and colleagues. I'm well loved. But this place was hell, and it can't be minimised by saying, "Oh, you were only there six weeks". That doesn't cut it at all. One act of violence can harm a child and cause trauma.
56. For me the initial betrayal was that my parents sent me there. It was hellish at home, but I could navigate that. I could go to school, I could get out, I could do other things, but at Fornethy I felt completely trapped.

57. I can only say I was hit at Fornethy on multiple occasions, I couldn't be specific, but it was out of the blue, for no reason. I think if it had been only the once it would have been very stark. Usually with adults you would get signals, there were no signals there. I never got the belt at my own school, I was so well behaved. Fornethy was appalling and a hell hole. It was disgusting and it's hideous that these people did this. For Glasgow Council trying to abdicate itself from any responsibility is terrible. There should be an apology.

Reporting of abuse at Fornethy Residential School, Kilry, Angus

58. No-one spoke to me about what happened at Fornethy when I returned home. My parents didn't care, so there was no point.

Leaving Fornethy Residential School, Kilry, Angus

59. I went home from Fornethy and resumed my normal life. I can't emphasise enough how I felt about school at home.

Life after being in care

60. I've had a hellish life, but I've also had a charmed life. I don't know now it all happened. I didn't come through it unscathed. I had panic attacks when I was at university. Fortunately I had a really lovely boyfriend called [REDACTED] who I lived with. He came from a decent home and he loved me. I've never been harmed by anybody, a man or a woman since I left home. I always felt I was doing time during my life at home. I knew as a child there was another world out there because I watched films and I read voraciously.
61. I was lucky as I ended up in the art scene in Glasgow in the seventies. I knew all these artists and playwrights and I became part of that scene. I had this other world and books. I had this other drive, I don't know where it came from. Poverty is not about money. Poverty is about lack of opportunity and people not believing in you. I

go back to Miss McFarlane and my secondary school, Glenwood, as an important part of my life. Glenwood is no longer there.

62. People write things about life in these housing schemes but we had good teachers. Keir Bloomer was my History master and he went on to become part of Get It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC). Mr McLeod was one of our teachers, he became the head of Bearsden Academy. There was an influx of good young teachers. We were reading books, we had a debating society. Girls weren't allowed to wear trousers. That was debated. A lot of the pupils from that school have done well. It's a comfort for me. I even dream about my school. I loved it so much. Again, I never came to any harm there. I gained in confidence because my intellect was recognised and I was respected.
63. My first degree was in fine art. I worked in art galleries in Edinburgh and London. I had a different life. I got fed up with the excesses of the art world and I'd always been very political. I was offered a job in New York but I didn't want to do that.
64. I thought about doing psychology. I was part of campaigns, Amnesty and things like that. I had this socialist urge and while I was at secondary school I thought I wanted to do something worthwhile in my life. So after working in art galleries I put myself through social work training and qualified in 1990 [REDACTED].

Impact

65. It's sometimes helpful to be able to tap into that deep river of where this stuff is and be able to access it to help me not to forget. It is who I am. It's part of me. I've been incredibly successful and lucky in life. I have been married to [REDACTED] for thirty years and before that I had a marriage with another wonderful man, but the impact of trauma is still there. I am a survivor but it's not just my story, there's lots of different stories.
66. If someone says, "I know how you feel", I think that they can't know. They can have some indication, they can empathise and feel like a human being. I believe that there are similar components, similar experiences and feelings in behaviour and difficulties

that can arise from an abusive experience in childhood. Everybody survives in a different way. So whilst there are common themes, I'm sure that what I tell the inquiry will correspond to other people who have been at Fornethy because of the systemic nature of abuse. It's uncannily routine in these kinds of institutions.

67. The other thing I want to reflect on about my time at Fornethy is that of course it had impact. I think because I came from such a violent and disorganised home life that Fornethy didn't harm me to the same levels it would have harmed other girls. But I think if you came from a semi-decent home, not as feral as mine, that regime there and the kind of things happening that I've describe, I absolutely assert that would cause those women long term consequences of trauma.
68. We understand and know that a lot of survivors, particularly of sexual abuse, start to disclose abuse when they have had a child, and when the child gets to a certain age they admit that it happened to them.
69. I haven't come through unscathed. That's why I campaign and that's why [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I could see there was an opportunity there. I don't use myself as a model for child abuse or in-care experiences. But that is there and that's what drives me and focuses me on trying to make change.
70. I don't believe in a hierarchy of abuse but I'm constantly astounded at the survival of people that have come through it and seen much worse than me and are good people. I've also known people who have taken their own lives and I understand why they did. They just ran out of hope. I can't say that Fornethy ruined my life, it didn't. Neither did my childhood. It has impacted my life but I have always been in loving relationships. Nobody has ever hurt me or hit me ever again. I just threw myself into the art scene and built myself a new life with creative people and engaged in therapy.
71. There is always an impact and I disagree with the term closure. You come to terms with trauma. It's finding a settled place, or space. I don't go around telling people I'm

a survivor and nor do I deny it. So I have come to terms with it. I can tap into it. It's never not there.

72. I have recurring dreams and it's normally about somebody coming through the door. I'm obsessed with the door being locked. These are well known results of trauma. I think I have an intellectual understanding but I also, more importantly, have an emotional understanding of it. So to conclude, I think Fornethy contributed to this trauma. It was a different kind of hell. I didn't have my teachers, I didn't have the things that I could feel safe with. I was unsafe when I was there and everybody else was unsafe.

Treatment/support

73. I've had some therapy. I've had different degrees of counselling. I had it early on as my boyfriend [REDACTED] and I had good jobs and we had money and I engaged in the early doors of person-centred counselling that was coming to the fore. I was lucky again as I had a good therapist. That's where it began to make sense, the feelings of despair. I was a highly functioning, articulate, able person but there was still this inner me that was this abused child at home and at Fornethy. So that's what therapy is about, a lot of it is about making sense of things.
74. My most recent course of therapy was after being diagnosed with [REDACTED] ten years ago. It's interesting how a lot of stuff came flooding back from my childhood. That's why I feel there should be open-ended counselling, therapy. Sometimes you go away then you come back, that sort of thing. I've dealt with some male survivors and all they've wanted was one session just to tell you what happened. That's their outcome, that's what they want. They don't want years of therapy.
75. The therapy certainly helped me but I was actually highly functioning and managing my life. It wasn't that I was in denial about who I was, in fact I was really proud of what I'd achieved. I broke ties with my family. I had to. I'd go back and they would try to draw me in or attack me. It's a hard thing to do, to orphan yourself as an adult but I had to do it for my own safety and my own mental health.

Reporting of Abuse

76. Following reading articles in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] last year, I rang Police Scotland. I gave the agent a few details from the [REDACTED] articles and the fact of DI Mark Lamont's statement that anyone who suffered abuse at Fornethy was encouraged to come forward. It was arranged for officers to come to our home. PC's Steele and MacIntosh attended and I provided them with some background details. I was told it would have to be someone more senior that I spoke with and that I would get a call from a DC Laurie Preston from the Non-recent Sexual Crime Team, Public Protection Unit who was leading the Fornethy abuse inquiry through the unit. I believe she is based in Dundee. DC Preston called me and the conversation was fairly detailed. It was arranged for a local officer to come to my home to take a formal statement. On 13th October, DC James Shearer attended and noted a statement from me. He told me my statement would be forwarded to DC Preston and if there was any further information that came to me I was to get back in touch and equally if they wanted any further information they would call me. She did make me aware there was one member of staff, a domestic, who had been arrested and she was going to be appearing in court, so there must be some surviving people. I have had no contact with the police since I gave my statement.
77. I spoke to Thompson's solicitors in confidence and told them I had been at Fornethy. I didn't want to take anything up with them as solicitors. I just told them that if it was any help I was giving a statement to the Inquiry and the police. I don't think I have anything I can pursue in any criminal or civil actions. The only way I would get involved would be if there was any kind of corroboration or Moorov type thing and they wanted me to help with that. I would do that. I feel for me it's a moral obligation to do this. To enrich the Inquiry you are going to hear all sorts of voices and every single one matters as much as the other. That's why I've come forward.
78. The reason I went to Police Scotland and now the Inquiry is to validate and corroborate what happened, because I'm telling the truth. This happened and Fornethy was a hell hole and it should not have been allowed. It has to be exposed. It gave me an insight into how awful it would have been for me to have been taken

into care. Although my home life was terrible, I could go to school, I could get a sense of worth to a degree through another means. It's not why I went into this type of work.

Records

79. I have no knowledge of any records.

Lessons to be learned

80. I think what the Inquiry will do and will have to do is get an understanding of how these institutions attracted certain kinds of people and enabled them and allowed abuse to occur.
81. I have to say this again, I'm telling the truth. I know what happened at Fornethy and those women went through that. There has to be some degree of responsibility and accountability, in whatever form. I understand that most people are dead but we must have this recorded. I think what the Inquiry is doing is wonderful. This is a historical and social document, to reflect back on how society treated children. That's the legacy for the Inquiry. Every survivor I've met, including myself, wants to make the world a better place for children today, and tomorrow's children. I don't want them to have to endure this. I also want there to be a mechanism where they can speak out, maybe before they are sixty-four or sixty-five, like me.
82. Glasgow City Council should give an apology and not excuses. I want it known that the women of Fornethy are telling the truth. I hope by telling my untold story some survivors of abuse will be heard and believed in the future. I think that's a legacy of the Inquiry, that this is a historical document that is being published as it goes along. A place where, when I'm gone and others are gone, there will be research that can be used for good. For all sorts of things, whether that be in the forensics, whether that be the human story. For me the story that really needs to come out of the Inquiry is the human story and the shame of this legacy in Scotland's history.

83. I did say the Glasgow City Council should be owning up. It's not wholly about money, it's about an apology, about acknowledgement and some degree of accountability. Their handling of it has been appalling. It wasn't on their watch, but there is a duty of care as you hand over. [REDACTED] call it legacy in the government and that should be passed on and it should be handled appropriately. In this day and age nobody can refute or deny that all of this went on. There's too much knowledge and information therefore in the climate that we are in for them to still be in a position of denial or abdicating responsibility or accountability. I think this is wrong. Bad people did bad things and society looked the other way. That's it in a nut shell.

Campaigning career

84. When I qualified as a social worker I got a job in [REDACTED] Hospital. I had done a placement there and they wanted me to go back. So that's how I got into mental health. I had wondered about working with older people, those were my two interests. A marvellous chap called [REDACTED] one of the people who was at the forefront in the field of trauma and false memory joined and it was great. He wanted me to join [REDACTED]. So that career found me, rather than me finding it. What I witnessed there, and it wasn't being acknowledged, but I knew they suffered abuse and there was no language perception. It was really [REDACTED] coming in. He has really championed me [REDACTED] and the stuff I've done in campaigning. He sadly died too young. So we started to say these people aren't mentally ill. This is a case of cause and effect. Of course you have mental health problems and issues like anxiety and all the other things, sometimes linked with psychosis, but its origins are from being put through the kind of things in childhood. I didn't really want to work in hospitals, I didn't like the statutory nature of it and sectioning people. It just wasn't for me.
85. I got a job [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] a Mental Health Charity and [REDACTED] respite care service. And again the staff there said, "PJS [REDACTED] has everybody been sexually abused that comes here?" Nobody was going looking for this, it just became. People started to disclose because they felt safe. I set it up like a guest house. I got artists to

come through and do creative things. Because I worked in a gallery I could run a business. So I put my business head on and my creative mind into the project.

86. There used to be petitions from survivors to No.10 and nothing happened and I suggested we [REDACTED] with the approval of the board, [REDACTED] and from that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I was amazed how many were interested.

87. [REDACTED] after five years, Malcolm Chisholm, MSP, commissioned a short life working group with a series of recommendations for the government. [REDACTED] the national strategy, that was announced, it was called [REDACTED] in those days. I was asked to act as a professional adviser. [REDACTED]

88. So that's what keeps me going. I know in this brief time we are given that I feel I've achieved something, My life hasn't just revolved around the art world. I've worked with wonderful survivors throughout the years.

Hopes for the Inquiry

89. The damage is untold. I myself could have been in addiction. I've witnessed in others the journey that could have been mine. By some luck, or fate, and I'm a very optimistic person, it hasn't been. Even when I was diagnosed with [REDACTED] I thought, 'I'm going to travel through this hopefully'. I don't have this sense of 'why me?'. I can only put it down to having such a creative and enquiring mind. I would like to say the women and those in all the other care homes and the men from private schools, who

have joined the cross-party group, the hell they have gone through is just sadism. I'm so pleased that the Inquiry widened its Terms of Reference and took that on for the boarding schools and the Fornethy survivors. It exposes that abusers will find the right environment and we need to stop those opportunities arising.

90. I would like there to be open-ended therapy offered to survivors. I used to say I worked with children, but they were yesterday's children, adult survivors, because it's the child that's in the room with you, particularly in court cases. I'd like children to have the opportunity of creativity, and recognition that I was given from my teachers which empowered me, gave me an indication that I was worth something, when I was worthless at home or at Fornethy. I would like that captured somehow.

Other information

91. 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: PJS

Dated: 3rd June 2024