

HIA Ref - NL5

Name [REDACTED]

Date

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

Witness Statement of NL5 [REDACTED] – NL5

1. My full name is NL5 [REDACTED] and I was born in Belfast on the [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I have just recently celebrated my 88th birthday.
2. I have never married and have no children of my own although I consider all the children I have helped to raise over the years as my own. This is particularly true of NL28 [REDACTED] about whose arrival to Nazareth and care I will describe more later.
3. I have read the Statements supplied to me from the Inquiry and have found this very hurtful and distressing and my health has been badly affected by the resurrection of untrue allegations of mistreatment against me. Some of these matters were the subject of Police investigations which I am reminded by the papers were in 1996 and again in 2012. Those times were also very stressful and I thought that all this was over then.
4. I should state at the outset that I never smacked or assaulted any child in my care. I deny all of these allegations and I will so far as possible respond to each of the statements below. I would also state that I never saw any abuse or excessive punishments of any child by any of the Sisters or by NL4 [REDACTED]. It has been described that I worked with NL4 [REDACTED] or was her “side-kick” and this is not true. We worked with separate groups and interacted only at meal or playtimes. I never considered corporal punishment of a child to be my responsibility but left that to the nuns and it always seemed reasonable and appropriate to me.

Personal History

5. I am one of nine children and I felt I might have a vocation and entered Nazareth in my twenties for about a year. After this I decided that this was not the life for me and I returned home to live with my parents and a sister and brother.
6. I was and remain very religious however and remain a committed Roman Catholic to this day.
7. It was not considered appropriate by my late father that a single girl work outside the home and so after I left the convent I cared for my fathers home.
8. I learned that a neighbour was taking a child out at weekends on a sort of “fostering” arrangement from Foxes Lodge – which was the babies home prior to Bethlehem – and I have always been fond of children and enquired about this as something my family might do. This would have been about two years after I left the convent.
9. I recall that we started to take a little girl out at weekends – her name was [REDACTED] and I cannot recall her maiden name. I have lovely memories of those times and we kept in touch over the years to this day.
10. One weekend when I went to collect [REDACTED] from Foxes Lodge, [REDACTED] SR104 met me and said the children had chicken pox and couldn't go out and she suggested I might go along to help SR34 [REDACTED] with the sick children. I did this and SR34 [REDACTED] was so overworked that I stayed for a week to help out. I was then asked if I would consider coming to stay and I said I thought Daddy would be too upset if I left home again. I went home however and missed the work and the children and went back to help SR34 [REDACTED] – after a few weeks I started to get paid. This was £3 per week and we all worked from 6am until after 10 pm. The days were long and the work was hard but I loved the children and working with SR34 [REDACTED]. My bedroom was situated at Foxes Lodge for a few years until the ages 3-5 was moved to the Concert Hall behind Nazareth Lodge until Bethlehem was built.
11. The only training I received was on the job. I have no childcare training or qualifications although I attended a course run by a [REDACTED] on nursery care that he held at Nazareth Lodge. Some time later [REDACTED] who was the Parish Priest of St Paul's was looking for someone to help him run a nursery he had opened at Islandbawn Street in West Belfast. I think [REDACTED] must have given my name as someone who had done the course This led to my initially helping out there and after a while I was asked to do this regularly which I did for many years after that from 9am to 12pm travelling from Nazareth in the mornings and returning afterwards. Taking two buses for each journey.

12. Despite my age I have no difficulty with my memory although I have a problem remembering the exact year something may have happened.
13. My memories are that we all worked hard to raise the children to have good morals and manners and I was strict about that – without ever feeling it necessary to hit a child. Corporal punishment was not used on me as a child and it was not something I thought was necessary. I loved the children and considered it much more than a job as it was my whole life since I lived in.
14. I have read of complaints about the food as well as the allegations of abusive treatment and I can only say that we as staff had the same food as the children and I feel we did well on a limited budget and all were well fed and well nourished.
15. After years of having my bedroom in Foxes Lodge when it closed my bedroom was moved and I lived in the main Lodge where I worked for the remainder of my time until we all left in 1999 when it was closed.
16. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED].
17. From the time [REDACTED] came to Nazareth I was appointed as his carer and from then my time with the other children was much more limited as [REDACTED] required round the clock care. I still see [REDACTED] regularly – he is now living in care and is 62 years of age – and I consider that my calling to Nazareth was God's way of me meeting [REDACTED] who I love as if he is my own child to this day. No-one could manage [REDACTED] as he took to me from the start and nobody else could manage him.
18. He still telephones me – and even though he can't talk he understands me.
19. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED].
20. Also at some point I came to care for [REDACTED] who was [REDACTED]. He was with us for while then left and came back again. I know that I took him on the train to Dublin at one time to another home there. He and [REDACTED] would have slept near me as they needed care and were often up during the night.
21. I will now comment on the specific allegations

22. I have met [HIA 21] several times since he left Nazareth and I have spoken to him about his time there. He visits me quite often. He has told me I am a scapegoat and not to worry. I have been distressed to hear the things he said were done to him by [NL4] [REDACTED] and when he said I must have seen these things I asked him how I could possibly have when I didn't even work alongside her – she had a different group of boys. I have been told that [HIA 21] resiled somewhat in his oral evidence from that of his written words when he characterised me as “no angel either” by admitting that this was an exaggeration but I want to emphasise again that I never hit any child.
23. [HIA 21] does say that I slapped children and lifted them by side burns – I deny this utterly. But this sounds to me like something that might in those days have been done in the schoolroom.
24. I have been invited to reunions of Nazareth Lodge and got a standing ovation from the gathering on the last occasion. For many many years I set up the room to celebrate the reunion and I look forward to seeing the boys now grown men. I do not feel that if I was a hated abuser of children they would have responded to me in this way.
25. I cannot imagine why [HIA 21] would think I witnessed abuse but I did not and I have told him this. I thought he accepted this as the truth when I told him.
26. I have also told [HIA 21] that I am very upset and distressed at all these lies and that if God spares me I want to come along and tell the Inquiry this myself. I spent this last Christmas under the Dr's care due to the increase in my blood pressure, which went up to 190, caused by reading the papers that the Inquiry passed to my Solicitor. Much of the material and many allegations I had never heard before and I deny any untoward conduct absolutely.
27. I am in contact with about 25 or more of the children who spent time in Nazareth and have fond memories of our time there. I hope the Inquiry will hear from some of these people too.

[REDACTED] – HIA 110

28. I can not say much about [HIA 110] – he was not in my group. I recall that he was a gentle child and perhaps a bit slow. I would only ever have seen him at mealtimes or in the playing fields.
29. [HIA 110] says that the food was not “up to much” and I can only repeat that we all ate the same food - staff, nuns and children alike.

30. [HIA 110] says that I abused him and this is not true. I deny that I ever struck [HIA 110] as alleged and I deny that I was rough.
31. [HIA 110] mentions use of a ruler and I had no call to have this item in my time at Nazareth. I believe he is confusing me with someone at the school as I similarly would not have been asking him questions or getting him to read and write. I know that [NL4] mentions she had a ruler but I did not.
32. People did donate toys at Christmas time but I have no memory of [HIA 110] stealing these and I repeat that I never struck [HIA 110] or any child. The toys [HIA 110] always new and often some of the donations [HIA 110] have to be sent to the dump. All our children had plenty of toys and nearly all the children went out to families for Christmas and got toys from that also.
33. I have been told that the Inquiry has heard from other boys that Christmas gifts given to them or donated would be taken off them again after Christmas and this is just not true. The children kept their gifts and their pocket money.
34. I don't even remember what happened to this boy – most automatically went to Kircubbin in the August when they would turn 11. I have had no contact or seen [HIA 110] since his time in the Lodge.
- [REDACTED] - HIA 422
35. [HIA 422] was not in my group. He was in [SR 47] group Our Lady's and I [HIA 422] have had very little contact with him.
36. This boy's statement makes only one reference to me and he says that I beat him for making [NL28] cry. First of all he seems to be confusing [NL28] with [REDACTED] as [NL28] was [REDACTED] – [REDACTED]. He also did not really cry and most of the other boys loved him.
37. I deny that I beat this boy or any boy regularly or at all. I do not know why he would make this up about me. I have had no contact with him since that time. I don't recall his name coming up either time the Police interviewed me.
38. I don't really remember this boy – I remember the name but can't put a face on him.

39. I remember this boy well. He was in my group when I had only the seven children. Before that I had much larger groups. There are a number of allegations made by HIA 104 and I will try to deal with these in order. I do want to say that these allegations are different to those he made to the Police or which were raised with me by the Police in 2012 and I deny that I ever struck him and I have never kicked another human being much less a child. I do not know why he would accuse me of this although I am now aware that he has some sort of claim in against the home or the nuns.
40. I do not recall HIA 104 being an altar boy. And anyway Mass was in the morning and there would be football played in the mornings – the children would just be getting up.
41. I have been reminded by another boy that the incident where I allegedly beat this boy for missing mass was perhaps an occasion when Cardinal Conway came to the school and the boys were all taken from the playing field to attend this mass in the evening. I was not there on that occasion and the other boy tells me it was SR34 who went out to the field to bring the boys in.
42. Gerry himself cannot recall if he was reprimanded by myself or SR34 for playing football with rubber pieces. I deny that it was me and I never saw SR34 excessively beat a child. I don't even think we had the sort of rubber ends that he is describing on the chairs. But I do not deny that I was strict and would not have allowed football to be played indoors. I understand that HIA 104 says he was very fond of SR34 generally and I think it is strange then that HIA 104 cannot remember which of us allegedly beat him so badly on this occasion.
43. HIA 104 describes me as NL4 side-kick – again I did not work with NL4 as never in her presence if she abused a child and again I believe this whole incident is fabrication.
44. If HIA 104 perception is that he was in bed on nights when it was light outside all I can say is that all of the children went to bed at similar times and my group was no different. We all had an early start and bedtime was around 6 or 7pm. I certainly did not put children to bed early as a punishment and I don't think this has been alleged by anyone.
45. The children in all of the groups went out for playtime, came in for meals and were washed with their groups and put to bed together.

46. In the summer months when the nights were lightest outside we were not in Nazareth as alleged by [HIA 104] s we went to Ballyhorman for the whole time from the end of June until the [HIA 104] August and so again I think [HIA 104] is either mistaken about this or is making this up. It was nearly 9 o'clock or later when the children went to bed in the summer as all the staff enjoyed a lie in.
47. Of the longer nights in the spring the children's bedtime did not change but this is because the routine during the school year was necessary for the orderly running of the home. It is of course also possible that [HIA 104] heard other groups making noise as they got ready for, and went, to bed and that they were not playing outside.
48. I do not recall [NL4] father or mother dying although I do remember when her brother died and I most certainly never informed personally her of a family bereavement. This would absolutely have been done by the nuns.
49. I did put a cloth on [HIA 104] pillow at night as he drooled or dribbled a lot in his sleep – he seemed to have a lot of phlegm and to make it more pleasant for him I would put a dry cloth on his pillow. He is the only boy who had this problem and so the only one I treated this way. It was not done to all my boys and it was to both make it more comfortable for the child and protect the pillow. This was certainly not intended as a punishment – but exactly the opposite.
50. I do not deny that I would often gently waken some of the children to take them to the bathroom at night. These would have been the ones who maybe had wet the bed before. I would carry the younger ones and I most certainly did not line them up in the cold corridor or half dressed to do this. I would consider it cruelty to let a child lie in a wet bed or in wet pyjamas.
51. I did not work a “shift” as suggested instead I went to bed after all my work with the children and other chores were done.
52. I deny that I checked children's underwear as alleged. The children took their school clothes off after school and put their play clothes on. At wash-time any soiled underwear would be collected and taken to the laundry.
53. Mass was not a daily occurrence in mine or any group as it was only the nuns who went every day. My group had no chores as I was fussy about the beds being made properly and preferred to make them myself. I have read that [NL4] group cleaned floors but my group did not.
54. I deny that I ever threatened to tell [HIA 104] mother not to come to visit him – in fact I don't even remember [HIA 104] ever having his mother visit him.

55. I am now aware that HIA 104 says I was his main problem at Nazareth. I cannot account for his personal perception of me except to say that I was strict but never cruel. I treated the children as if they were my own and I had the same high standards of behaviour as my parents had with us. My only training or experience came from my own family background and I expected no less of the boys in my care than my parents had of me.
56. I would deny again that I made my children do any physical chores such as polishing floors and I did not “stand guard” and supervise this as suggested or at all. Some groups did some light chores but not my group.
57. HIA 104 has described cleaning a boiler or chimney. We had oil central heating and no fires so I think this cannot be true. There were big boilers outside in a separate building that a man from Killyleagh came in especially to clean and service. No one else cleaned or touched these boilers as they would have been very hot and it would be far too dangerous for a child to have even been in the boiler room so I think HIA 104 is mistaken about this happening at Nazareth if it happened at all.
58. I am advised that HIA 104 says I made the boys make their beds and smacked them if they didn't do it properly. This is not true. I have already commented that I like beds made a particular way – children cannot do this and so I made the beds myself. I admit I am bit of a perfectionist and I know that in the other groups the children did make their own beds but not in mine.
59. I do not believe HIA 104 is being truthful about his time in Nazareth Lodge if he says I assaulted him and I look forward to being given an opportunity to respond and hope that I am medically fit to do so.
60. I was at Nazareth from 1956 until it closed in 1999 and of course not every boy will remember me fondly but I would say that I was as strict as any natural parent would be and I only wanted the best for my boys.

██████████ – HIA 259

61. This boy indicates that he was in my group. I just wish to state that I simply do not remember this boy at all.
62. He describes me as leaving at one time and a friend of mine coming in – this did not happen. I think he is confusing me with someone else or making this up.

63. I loved all the children in my care and I was strict about manners and morals but I deny that I never showed affection to the children in my care. I was affectionate with the children.
64. No children were allowed to come and go freely – we were responsible for their care. My group were no different.
65. I have already commented that all of the children went to bed early as we all had an early start – this was in the winter months - but again in the summer months we were not at Nazareth but in Ballyhornan.
66. I deny that I ever dressed a child inappropriately for the weather or intentionally had them play outside in the frost without proper warm clothes. I was strict about preventing chest infections and would have made sure my boys were warm and not out if it was too cold or damp.
67. I wanted the children to look well and not feel different at school from the outside children and not all staff were as particular as I was. I liked my boys to wear a shirt and tie to school.
68. My group were not called the Whippets. The story about the whippets arose in this way – there was a boy called DL40 - a lovely boy and an Irish dancer – he made up a rhyme about my group “7 little whippets great and small and NL5 owned them all “. DL40 was about 11 or 12 and he made that up himself since I had seven boys at the time.
69. I should say that none of these allegations against me by this boy have been raised before with me and I again deny that I ever struck this or any boy in my care.

HIA 132

70. HIA 132 was in my group with SR34 .
71. I remember him as a good boy and easy to work with. He was the loveliest child.
72. I recall him and his his brother, two sisters and I believe an uncle and Grandmother arriving from Scotland. I think his sisters were in Nazareth House and that they did very well.
73. When he was older HIA 132 worked as a salesman and he would come in each evening on his way home from work for a meal. I would have been in the kitchen when he called . He gave me no impression that he resented me for anything I had ever done

- when he was in my group. He seemed to enjoy coming back and spending time in the kitchen with us.
74. He would also come at weekends and the weekend cook [REDACTED] was also very good to him. I recall that he even spent time at her home.
75. The accusations made by HIA [REDACTED] are untrue. I never physically abused him as alleged or at all and I did not see him being abused by SR34 [REDACTED].
76. I did meet another boy NL14 [REDACTED] and he told me that he'd met HIA [REDACTED] NL14 [REDACTED] said he was disgusted with him. He told me HIA [REDACTED] had said "Have you put your claim in yet" meaning about his time in care. NL14 [REDACTED] knows there was no ill treatment. I hope the Inquiry are going to hear from people like him also.
77. I note that he says our boys in SR34 [REDACTED] group and mine were called "the dainties" - this is true. I had heard this. This was because my group were always well dressed and well behaved. I was proud of my group and tried to instil in them a sense of moral character and to behave properly. I taught them manners and kept them clean. Not all the boys were as well behaved as my group. I achieved this through encouragement and praising the boys and making them feel a sense of self worth. I think scaring a child is terrible and I do not believe I instilled fear in my boys.
78. I deny that I made any child lie covered with a blanket as alleged. It did not happen. I have now been told that some of the boys allege that it was the older boys who bullied them and made them do this. If I had witnessed or been told of older boys bullying younger ones I would have told SR34 [REDACTED].
79. All of the children went to bed early and whilst they may all complain now it was necessary for the orderly running of the home to have the children all fed and washed and in bed early as we all had an early start to the day.
80. I deny that the children I cared for were ever beaten with a stick. And I deny that either SR34 [REDACTED] or I walked around the dorm with a stick supervising the children. We had much work to do when the children went to bed and hadn't time to do the kind of patrolling suggested.
81. HIA [REDACTED] would be a boy I would have found it hard to believe would lie about his treatment and his lies have hurt me deeply. Apart from this claim business I don't know why HIA [REDACTED] could make this up.

Mainly I remember them because their elderly grandparents would come very often and regularly [REDACTED] by bus to visit the boys. I would have made them a cup of tea. The people [REDACTED] called the grandparents [REDACTED]. They seemed very tiny and very elderly to me at that time but were probably younger than I am now.

90. HIA 152 [REDACTED] says I struck him in the face for keeping me awake with his coughing. This is not true. He wasn't even in my group or my dormitory. I don't have any idea why he would make this up about me.

91. I have seen one or other of the [REDACTED] boys at the annual reunions – I don't know which but this is the only contact with them since they left Nazareth with the exception of meeting one of them at a funeral (described below)

[REDACTED] – HIA 19

92. I repeat that HIA 19 [REDACTED] and his brother were not in my group and my contact with them would have been limited to mealtimes and if I saw them in the playing fields. I was very often busy with either NL28 [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] also and had my own group of boys to care for.

93. I deny the allegations made by HIA 19 [REDACTED] – I don't believe he could have been abused by an older boy as he alleges as the eldest in the dormitory would have been 11 not 17. At age 11 all our boys went to Kircubbin.

94. I remember no pillow fight as alleged that led to a beating of a number of boys and I deny that I ever participated in punishing children with a ruler or a stick.

95. I understand that some of the boys have alleged that they didn't even have pillows on their beds in Nazareth. Now this about a pillow fight. The truth is that they did all have a pillow and I recall no fights.

96. I have read the allegations made by HIA 19 [REDACTED] about the laundry and I do not ever recall even being in the laundry at the same time as NL4 [REDACTED] never mind conducting the kind of cruelty suggested by him in trying to scare the children.

97. I do recall meeting HIA 19 [REDACTED] at a funeral – he says this but I wouldn't have remembered which brother - but I deny that he tried to talk to me about Nazareth and that I brushed him off. He just told me he was at mass for the mother of a friend. He asked me where he would get a leaflet – I directed him to the side of the church and that was the last I saw of him, he did not talk about the home or try to.

98. I do not believe my age was the reason the Police declined to prosecute me if this is what HIA ¹⁹ is intimating. I believe that they realised that in over 40 years of caring for hundr ¹⁹ boys a few have suggested I was rough or have made more serious allegations but I have told the truth and none of those matters are true. I am aware that NL4 ¹⁹ concedes that she may have slapped a child or used a ruler but I have always and continue to deny that I ever did and if she did this then she didn't do it in my presence.
99. I hope that I am fit enough to attend the Inquiry and tell my side of the story. I have fond and cherished memories of my life at Nazareth and many happy children went through our hands and have become responsible and decent adults. The suggestion that I don't want to talk about my time in Nazareth as alleged by HIA ¹⁹ is untrue. I just do not want to hear lies about things that either didn't happen or that I certainly did not witness.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this my witness statement are true

[Redacted signature area]

Signed

12/1/15 dated by Michele / age
Schäfer

HIA Ref - NL5

Name [REDACTED]

Date

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995Witness Statement of [REDACTED] – NL5

1. My full name is ^{NL5} [REDACTED] and I have just recently celebrated my 89th birthday and until recently my health was excellent. Since hearing of the allegations made by a number of former residents I have been very stressed and my blood pressure is very high. I also feel unsteady on my feet a lot of the time.
2. My health has deteriorated requiring medical attention since the start of this and hearing all the lies that have been told about me and I have found it so stressful to hear that additional allegations were made orally. I do not feel this is fair unless I have an opportunity to reply and I am not even sure now if I will be fit to attend the hearing to defend myself and my reputation in person
3. I have provided a statement dated the 12th January to this Inquiry and have been asked to comment on the allegations made against me by two additional boys
4. My Solicitor has indicated that this is hopefully going to be over soon and that I can provide a final statement once all the evidence is over because I also wish to comment on the evidence given orally to the Inquiry by the boys I mentioned in my original statement but I understand that this statement is required urgently to address allegations made by that will be heard on the afternoon of Monday 26th,

[REDACTED] HIA 41

5. This boy was not in my group and by his statement he indicates that he was in Sr Vincent's group. I would have had very little to do with him
6. I have not met ^{HIA 41} [REDACTED] since he left Nazareth.
7. In my opinion his description of his time is pure fantasy. No child ever answered the phone or the door or was in charge of the Parlour. This was my job.

8. If I was on the ground floor at the time he describes with the [REDACTED] children then I think Sr Vincent had already left. Sr Vincent's group were on the top floor and it is even less likely that he would have been around to answer the door. To be honest I can't ever remember even seeing this boy in the parlour.
9. In fact I recall only one child spending much time at all in the parlour – [REDACTED] NL 150. She sometimes did her homework there. SR173 [REDACTED] was ve [REDACTED] nd of [REDACTED] NL 150 – she was a special needs child – she had a sister NL 55 [REDACTED] in another home and [REDACTED] ed her to come to Nazareth which did happen later.
10. I absolutely deny that I was “brutal” or that I abused any child in my care. HIA 41 [REDACTED] mentions the [REDACTED] children and I am still in contact with both girls NL [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I would not believe they would describe me the way this man does. 233 [REDACTED]
11. I was approached by [REDACTED] a number of years ago – I didn't immediately recognise her and wondered how she had recognised me and she said it was my voice. She was very complimentary about her time in Nazareth and we have stayed in touch. She has been to my home for dinner. I know I was strict about manners and was fussy about cleanliness but [REDACTED] said specifically to me “NL 5 [REDACTED] you never raised your voice to us”.
12. There was no “intercom” installed and SR 30 [REDACTED] would not have been in a position to have installed any such thing. There was a telephone used to contact upstairs.
13. I am not a “friend” of Father Brendan Smyth and I am and was unaware of any abuse of any child in Nazareth by him or anyone.
14. I met Fr Smyth a handful of times. SR 30 [REDACTED] has met him when she was doing vocation work and she suggested he might be a good priest do do a retreat at Nazareth so when he came for 3 days I would have looked after him as any visitor – making his tea etc.
15. I thought Fr Smyth was based in Kildare or somewhere so when he had called a few times around 6 o'clock to the Lodge and would stay over. I asked him how he was able to be in Belfast at that time and he said he had to come to Belfast for his tablets. I accepted this explanation.
16. Apart from these few times only other contact I ever had was that I received a thank you card from him for looking after him on his visits and he asked me to pray for him that he needed prayers. I thought he was thinking of leaving the priesthood or something and was shocked to learn the truth when the story came out about him. I had never even heard the word paedophile before.

17. I know very little about the allegations against Fr Smyth and did not follow the story as I hardly knew him so I don't know why [REDACTED] would say that he abused the [REDACTED] children in my group. This did not happen. I have already said I remain in touch with the [REDACTED] and think they would have mentioned this.

18. I attach a copy of a card I received from [REDACTED] after we met up again and describing me as a "very kind lady" and "like a mum to us all." I would say this is much more representative of how all of the children I have met since my time in Nazareth have given me the impression they thought of me and it is most certainly not as the monster abuser that I have been alleged by others to be.

[REDACTED] HIA 16

19. HIA 16 was not in my group as a boy and I would have seen very little of him at Nazareth except perhaps at play time or at meal times. I deny each and every allegation of abuse by HIA 16

20. [REDACTED] was a child. Apparently after his

21. [REDACTED]

22. I met Kevin [REDACTED] I was coming out of Woolworths in Ann Street so it is that long ago. I saw and recognised him and he greeted me. He was with a lady and we chatted – he was friendly and gave me no impression that he had had a horrible time at my hands. I told him to look after himself.

23. I was surprised then in 2012 when the police put the allegation to me that I had supposedly hit this boy in or about 1963. Not the extensive allegations he now makes about myself and NL 4

24. I have always denied ever striking any child and that remains my position. I also can honestly say I never saw NL 4 strike this or any boy.

25. I will comment further on the oral evidence as outlined to me by my Solicitor as soon as possible.

I believe that the facts stated in this my witness statement are true

[REDACTED]
Signed

26th 1st 2018
Dated

HIA Ref - NL5

Name [REDACTED]

Date 8 February 2015

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

Witness Statement of [REDACTED] – NL5

1. My full name is [REDACTED] and I have just recently celebrated my 89th birthday and until recently my health was excellent. Since hearing of the allegations made by a number of former residents I have been very stressed and my blood pressure is very high. I also feel unsteady on my feet a lot of the time and an optician recently diagnosed an eye condition that is caused by high blood pressure.
2. I have provided statements to the Inquiry dated the 12th and 26th January and have been asked to comment on further allegations made against me by an additional boy.
3. I do wish to eventually comment on the evidence given orally to the Inquiry by the boys mentioned in my other statements but I understand that this statement is required urgently to address allegations made by HIA 269 [REDACTED] that will be heard on the morning of Monday 9th February.

[REDACTED] HIA 269

4. This boy was not in my group and by his statement he indicates that he was in [REDACTED] SR 47 [REDACTED] group and so I would have had very little to do with him.
5. I cannot put a face to this boy and I'm sure I have not met HIA 269 [REDACTED] since he left Nazareth.
6. I absolutely deny that I was "rough" or "violent". I know that I was fussy and strict about manners and morals and boys being clean and behaving well but I truly do not believe any more than a natural mother would have been. I took very little notice of boys not in my group as I had enough to do with NL28 [REDACTED] and my own boys.
7. Again I would emphasise that I received a standing ovation at the last reunion of children who lived in Nazareth and many have stayed in touch with me over the decades and visited me in my home.

8. I note that this boy did not go the Police and that these allegations are being made against me for the first time.
9. I note his allegations are very generalised and and that this boy does not accuse me of striking him and it remains my position that I did not strike this or any boy. I also can say I never saw ^{NL 4} [REDACTED] strike this or any boy. I believe corporal punishment may have been administered by the nuns in the school but I never saw this.
10. I am sorry if this boy was struck as he alleges but it was not something I did or was aware of others doing.
11. I am not surprised that this or other boys remember my name as I was the longest serving member of lay staff and whilst other boys have said the nuns were abusive I am pleased to note this boy does not say that.
12. I know that memory is subjective and selective and that my memories of my time in Nazareth are not going to be exactly the same as anyone else who was there but until this Inquiry I counted those years from 1956 until 1999 as the happiest of times.
13. I feel sick that I devoted my life to raising these boys in their time of need only many decades later to be accused of being someone I am not. I worked long hours on little or no salary to help raise many dozens of boys to be decent young men and I was proud of my role in doing that. I am saddened by that any boy would feel that I was rough or violent and do not accept that I was.

I believe that the facts stated in this my witness statement are true

[REDACTED]

Signed

8TH Feb 2015

Dated

1 speak for my brother, who is deceased, but again I never
2 saw anything whilst I was there involving my brother in
3 these types of matters. I am appalled at these
4 allegations and can only reiterate that I did not carry
5 out the assaults as alleged in their statements."

6 So that's what he has told us in response to what
7 you have said about him.

8 **A. Uh-huh.**

9 Q. Is there anything else you want to say other than what
10 you have said?

11 **A. Just basically what I said. Definitely it was the two**
12 **[name redacted] brothers that were in charge of us in**
13 **the dormitories, and what I said about covering the head**
14 **and what happened to me personally, it was definitely**
15 **the [name redacted] brother done that.**

16 Q. Well, at paragraph 12 of your statement, if we could go
17 back up to that, you talk about one of the members of
18 staff there at paragraph ...

19 "NL5" -- and I am just going to use her first name,
20 NL5 -- "was one of the civilian staff. She wasn't
21 a nun."

22 You say:

23 "She is now elderly", and you give her age, "but she
24 was wicked herself and was not nice to children. She
25 used to hit us with the edge of wooden rulers and stuff

1 **A. That's correct, yes.**

2 Q. Thank you very much.

3 MR LANE: You've mentioned the charge boys. Were they
4 actually called charge boys at the time? Is that how
5 you referred to them?

6 **A. Well, I don't know if the nuns called them charge boys**
7 **but we called them charge boys, because they were in**
8 **charge. Every time the nun -- a certain nun went down**
9 **to prayer they automatically took over and were in**
10 **charge of us anyway.**

11 Q. You mentioned the two brothers, but were all the older
12 boys in charge or was it just particular ones?

13 **A. Just them two particular ones. I can't remember any**
14 **older ones than them, to be quite honest with you. The**
15 **others were my age group, around 7 and 8 at the time.**

16 Q. People like NL5 and so on, what job title did you give
17 them? Were they ever known as charge girls or anything
18 like that?

19 **A. Well, they were staff.**

20 Q. They were staff?

21 **A. Charge boys weren't staff --**

22 Q. No.

23 **A. -- but NL5 was staff. She said she never came into**
24 **another group on her own. I'm sorry. She's not telling**
25 **the truth there. Definitely not.**

1 "This is the only bad thing I remember SR34 doing,
2 because overall I adored her, but I think on this
3 occasion she was in a blind rage because of what I had
4 done."

5 What -- what was it about her that you adored?

6 **A. She just was very nice to me. That incident is the only**
7 **incident that ever happened with her and the rest was**
8 **just very caring.**

9 Q. You put that down to the breach of trust, that that just
10 sent her over the edge?

11 **A. Yes, yes.**

12 Q. You said to me earlier she seemed to take you under --

13 **A. Her wing.**

14 Q. -- her wing.

15 **A. Yes, she did, yes.**

16 Q. But your experience of her with this particular singular
17 incident was not the same as your experience with NL5.

18 **A. No, no.**

19 Q. NL5 is "NL5", and it seems, subject to receipt of her
20 signed statement, that she worked in the home between
21 1956, when she was in her 30s, and -- perhaps in her
22 20s -- 20s through to 1999. So she worked for a very
23 long time in the home. The reference for that, Members
24 of the Panel, can be found at 60823. It seems she would
25 have been in her 40s approximately during the time that

1 **A. The grave was.**

2 Q. -- the grave was.

3 **A. No.**

4 Q. She has said to the Inquiry, as I said to you earlier,
5 HIA110, that she was surprised at you making allegations
6 against her, because she always thought you were very
7 friendly towards her.

8 **A. No, I wasn't.**

9 Q. Your general approach might be being friendly to people.
10 You didn't tell her you were sending her to the wrong
11 place --

12 **A. No.**

13 Q. -- and you have never been rude or unpleasant to her.

14 **A. No.**

15 Q. That's not really how you interact with people.

16 **A. No.**

17 Q. But she -- you also say about the -- an occasion -- if
18 we look at paragraph 9 at 501, please, you say that the
19 food wasn't good.

20 **A. No.**

21 Q. You describe it like semolina, frog spawn.

22 **A. Yes.**

23 Q. You didn't like the food, but you had to eat it or else
24 you got hit across the face by either NL4 or NL5.

25 **A. Yes, that's right.**

1 I understand it --

2 **A. Yes, yes.**

3 Q. -- of a lack of affection or warmth. You say SR34 would
4 have threatened to give you six of the best --

5 **A. Yes.**

6 Q. -- if you cried.

7 **A. Yes. You weren't allowed to cry or show emotion.**

8 Q. Was that just to keep everybody in check because of the
9 numbers --

10 **A. Yes. Well --**

11 Q. -- or do you have a view as to why that was done?

12 **A. Well, just to keep you quiet and not to have any
13 problems from you. I remember that, SR34 saying that to
14 me.**

15 Q. You also mention that -- paragraph 4, if we go back,
16 please, to 585 -- that she was involved -- and I know
17 that you had you attribute NL5 also to be involved in
18 this --

19 **A. Yes.**

20 Q. -- but at night-time that you say that she was involved
21 in using a stick if you made a sound at bedtime.

22 **A. Yes, exactly.**

23 Q. You also describe NL5 as involved in this.

24 **A. Yes.**

25 Q. Am I right in saying they weren't necessarily -- one was

1 **A. Yes.**

2 Q. -- however that would be arrived at, but you describe in
3 paragraph 8 then the routine in the home.

4 **A. Yes.**

5 Q. You say that that involved, amongst other things, the
6 polishing of the floors.

7 **A. Of floors. That's right.**

8 Q. I was asking you in your time had the -- was that now
9 the electric buffer arrangement?

10 **A. Well, I don't remember -- it is probably now or after
11 I left that probably came in, but I just remember using
12 blankets, cut-up blankets, and moving with your feet for
13 hours doing it.**

14 Q. Which was -- which part of the home did you generally do
15 that in?

16 **A. I done the dining room and also the big long corridor on
17 the ground floor when they were wooden.**

18 Q. Now this --

19 **A. Polishing floors in the hall, big long hall and also the
20 dining room.**

21 Q. Now NL5 addressed an allegation of being made clean the
22 floors --

23 **A. Yes.**

24 Q. -- by another boy, not you.

25 **A. Yes.**

1 that you remember, Sister. A young member of staff.
2 Now two of the people who would have been there at the
3 same time as yourself are two ladies called NL4. Now
4 she was, in fact, three years younger than you. There
5 was another lady, NL5, who was, in fact, nine years
6 older than you. Do you remember either of them in the
7 home when you were there?

8 **A. I do not remember NL4 being with the group. In fact,**
9 **I don't remember her being there with the children in**
10 **general, and I think I should have seen her. We shared**
11 **the one dining hall.**

12 Q. So you just have no memory of her?

13 **A. No memory of her. So ...**

14 Q. But you do remember NL5?

15 **A. Oh, I quite definitely remember NL5, yes, and**
16 **I certainly wouldn't remember NL 5 as a cruel person.**

17 Q. Yes. You know from information that has been given to
18 the Inquiry that a number of people have complained
19 about her treatment of them.

20 **A. Yes, yes. Uh-huh.**

21 Q. But that doesn't accord with your memory of her.

22 **A. That certainly doesn't. I could, you know, be quite**
23 **strong on that point really.**

24 Q. Did you actually work with her, Sister?

25 **A. She would have actually worked with the Sister who was**

1 in charge in her group.

2 Q. [REDACTED] SR 34 ?

3 A. [REDACTED] SR 34 and Sister -- who is now dead. Both are
4 dead actually, and I would have -- all of us would have
5 had contact with [REDACTED] NL 5, because she would -- through the
6 dining room, because she had been there quite a while,
7 and she would have taken on duties as regards going to
8 the kitchen, seeing that things were right, seeing that,
9 you know, food -- she had extra duties as regards --
10 that she took on herself as regards (inaudible) and
11 I have never -- I certainly -- I mean, she certainly --
12 there was never any child in my care that I would have
13 had occasion to -- she wouldn't have had occasion to.
14 That was the idea of having Sisters in each group, that
15 they would ...

16 Q. The Sisters were in charge of discipline. Is that what
17 you are saying?

18 A. Discipline. Yes, that was really, yes.

19 Q. I was wondering, Sister, about the relationship between
20 the Sisters and the staff. I mean, what -- was there
21 a hierarchy that the staff would have deferred to the
22 Sisters?

23 A. I don't agree with that that there would have been, no.
24 I can't -- you know, that would surprise me.

25 Q. That wasn't your experience.

1 **A. Naturally we were part of the establishment and, you**
2 **know, they would have seen it as such, but as regards,**
3 **you know, being high-handed or feeling that they weren't**
4 **part of the group was just ...**

5 Q. Well, paragraph 7 of your statement, Sister, you say at
6 186... -- sorry -- ..63, going back to the earlier
7 statement if we may, 1863, you say that the Sisters and
8 staff were responsible for the general care and
9 behaviour of the children, and you talk about breakfast
10 and supper. In paragraphs 8 and 9 you give a bit more
11 detail about the staffing, and you say:

12 "That there were four units with a Sister and staff
13 in each one."

14 **A. Uh-huh.**

15 Q. "Three of the teachers taught in the school whilst I was
16 with what was called the Marion group. As I did not
17 teach, I would have spent time in the dining hall and
18 after school in the playing field and recreation hall."

19 Then you go on to describe the layout there.

20 Now one of the things I was wondering, I was asking
21 about, do you ever remember medical treatment and dental
22 treatment for the children?

23 **A. I remember children being taken to clinics.**

24 Q. And I think you made mention of one --

25 **A. [REDACTED] would have been taken for speech therapy.**

1 really, but as for the care -- you know, they would have
2 seen to the physical needs of the children really, and
3 because there were sixteen and only two of them, and
4 sometimes there was only one staff on duty with the
5 Sister, you know, your whole time was occupied really
6 with caring for them.

7 Q. Just going down there to paragraph 9, you say that you
8 knew the name of NL4 and that's NL4 --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- but you didn't know her and you say she had left the
11 Lodge before you arrived in 1975.

12 A. She had.

13 Q. You don't believe you ever met her or don't know her
14 personally.

15 A. No.

16 Q. You do believe NL5 worked with SR34 and you think she
17 took care of a small group of younger children in the
18 late '70 when you were there.

19 A. She did.

20 Q. You also knew that she looked after a particular boy who
21 had very particular needs --

22 A. Yes, very deprived.

23 Q. -- you set out there in your statement. What you
24 remember about NL5 was that she was -- when you were
25 first in the nursery school in 1975, she was one of the