

PRIVATE

HIA REF: 306

Witness Name: HIA 306

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 306

I, HIA 306 will say as follows:-

Personal Details

1. I was born on [REDACTED] in [REDACTED] County Derry. My mother was from [REDACTED] and she was called [REDACTED]. She was a single mother and I found out in later life that she never married. She moved to Birmingham after I was born. She was about twenty years old when I was born.
2. I was placed in an orphanage in Fahan, County Donegal when I was eleven days old. I was fostered as a young child by an elderly couple who lived in Donegal. They were called [REDACTED] and they were [REDACTED]. Unfortunately they became ill and I was then placed in St Joseph's Children's Home, Termonbacca. I have seen records with my admission date to Termonbacca noted as 28 April 1946. I am not sure if this is correct as I recall in later life I spoke to a neighbour of the [REDACTED] family and he was able to confirm that I had stayed with them for a period of time and he recalled that I was there as a young boy and attended school whilst I was staying with the [REDACTED] family. I had always thought therefore that I had gone to Termonbacca when I was a little bit older than two years old.

PRIVATE

3. I had no contact with my mother throughout my childhood. I always wondered who my mother was but knew there was no point asking the nuns at Termonbacca.

St Joseph's Children's Home, Termonbacca (28 April 1946 – 26 January 1953)

4. I remember a few things about my time in Termonbacca. I recall being beaten with a leather strap by SR 86. She is the only nun whose name I can recall. About two years after I was sent to Australia I recall she visited Clontarf for a holiday and she recognised me from the home in Derry.
5. On one occasion when I was eight years old she saw me lift a mattress up on one of the other boy's beds as I was looking for a comic book which I knew he kept there and she accused me of "fiddling". I had no idea what she was talking about and I told her I was trying to get a comic book from under the mattress but she gave me a hiding. She was the head nun at the time.
6. We worked hard in the home scrubbing floors on our hands and knees with no shoes and socks on. On one occasion I got a splinter from the wooden floor stuck under my big toe nail. We were going to see a silent movie that day and a nun said that if I could not put my shoe on I could not go to the cinema so I forced it on and they had to cut it off me when I got back from the cinema. I never received any medical treatment as a result of this incident.
7. I remember also when I was about eight I sustained an injury at Termonbacca involving three holes in my knee but I cannot recall now what caused this injury. I used to have to get injections for this injury but I never received hospital treatment. It was treated by the nuns. I never recall any visits by a Doctor to the home at any stage.
8. About a month or so before we departed for Australia we were told that we were being picked out to go on a trip. I recall being lined up and the nuns saying "you, you, you, you, you're for the hall". I had no idea where I was

PRIVATE

going. I cannot recall which nun or nuns broke the news to us or selected us for migration. I was not aware of any other boys from the home being sent out to Australia before me. I knew nothing about Australia. I was never asked if I wanted to go and my mother's consent to my going was not sought. The consent form was signed by [REDACTED] SR 85 [REDACTED] from Termonbacca and witnessed by a Catholic priest, Father Stinson.

9. We were told nothing about Australia other than the fact that we would ride horses there and that we would be able to pick fruit off the trees.
10. There was a medical examination held about a week or two prior to departure but I cannot recall where it was held.
11. We were fitted out with nice clothes and given two pounds each by the nuns on the day we left Termonbacca. We got a train to Belfast or Larne where we caught a ferry. A priest called Father Stinson came to the station with us. He took the two pounds the nuns had given us from myself and the other boys and we never saw that money again.
12. We got a ferry to Southampton and we stayed overnight there and got on the ship the next day. It was called the SS New Australia and it sailed on 26 January 1953. There were about eight Irish boys, eight Scottish boys and eight English boys on this trip. A lot of the boys were crying as they got on the ship as we did not know what was happening, where we were going or why we were going there.
13. Three civilian women accompanied us on the ship. I am not sure who they were but they might have been linked to a Government Department. One stayed with the Irish boys and the other two looked after the Scottish and English boys separately. There were no priests or nuns travelling with us from the home.
14. We were well treated on the ship. The food was good and there was a swimming pool and a cinema. We would sneak into dances but we were not

PRIVATE

supposed to be there. I was allowed to sit with the Captain which was exciting. They organised mass on the ship but I had to be bribed with sweets to go as I did not like attending mass.

15. I had red hair and fair skin so I got really bad sunburn on the ship. I turned nine years old during the journey to Australia. When we arrived at Fremantle it was extremely hot. It was 22 February 1953.

Clontarf Boys' Town – (22 February 1953 – 11 March 1960)

16. One of the Christian Brothers, BAU 6 met us with a truck at the port and transported us to Clontarf. We were packed into the truck like cattle. BAU 6 became the Head Brother in 1954.

17. Upon arrival at Clontarf the Brothers lined us up to decide who was going to which home. They split siblings up. I remained at Clontarf. We arrived on a Sunday and were given Monday off but had to start school on Tuesday. As soon as we returned from school that day we had to get into our work clothes as we had chores to do. I was covered in blisters from the sunburn I had sustained on the ship and when I told BAU 13 that the clothes I had to wear were hurting my blisters he gave me a beating with a big strap for complaining about work and he burst the blisters and left me in further pain.

18. At Clontarf there was regular physical violence towards the boys from the Brothers. Beatings were commonplace for me and I also saw the Brothers beat the other boys as well. I always got the impression that they hated the Irish boys even though most of them were Irish themselves.

19. I was sexually abused by a man who worked for the Brothers called AU 14 AU 14 He had never married and he was trusted by the Brothers to take the boys out on trips in his van. He would take three or four of the boys out together on the third Sunday of every month and he would let us sleep in the van with him. He sexually abused me for a couple of years. He bugged me

PRIVATE

and he tried it with some of the other boys. I got really frightened but did not feel I could report it to the Brothers as they trusted him.

20. I was never sexually abused by a Brother but I knew that it had happened to other boys at Clontarf.

21. There were good and bad times at Clontarf and I stayed there for seven years. I had a few friends in the home and I keep in touch with two now, HIA 302 and AU 15

22. The Child Welfare Department were supposed to check on us during our time in Clontarf. Their visits would be announced and we were made to dress in suits during their visits. They did not come regularly and I never saw them after I left the home.

23. I do not recall any involvement whatsoever from the British Government or Northern Ireland authorities following our transfer to Australia.

24. As soon as I turned sixteen I was told by the Brothers that I had to leave the home. I left on 11 March 1960. The Brothers arranged for me to work on a farm in New Norcia run by the Benedictine monks. BAU 6 told me on the day I left the home that I would never make anything of myself and that I was not welcome back at Clontarf. I felt lonely and at times suicidal working there. I worked on this farm for eight months and never received any pay the entire time I worked there. I then joined the army for six years from 1960 – 1967.

Life after care

25. After the army I returned to Perth and the St Vincent de Paul Society provided me with accommodation for a week. The ex-Clontarf boys met at a coffee shop on Hay Street in Perth and I met a few of them and we made arrangements to live together with some of the Bindoon boys in

PRIVATE

accommodation on [REDACTED]. I got a job as a storeman in Subiaco where I worked for five years. I had a few jobs over the years but always remained in employment.

26. I married a [REDACTED] lady when I was twenty and she was eighteen. We were married fifteen years and she died at an early age. She suffered from depression and committed suicide. I started drinking then for about two years but I then convinced myself to give up drink and now I only have the odd pint of Guinness. We had two sons and a daughter so I looked after the children. I now have grandchildren and I have great relationships with them and all my children. I found it difficult to show affection after my time in care but having grandchildren has softened my personality over the years. I am now retired and enjoying my grandchildren.

27. I did not have a birth certificate when I was moved to Australia. In fact I had very little paperwork over the years. I contacted the Child Migrants Trust in 1994 and they located papers for me and they also found my mother in Birmingham. They also advised that my father was [REDACTED]. My first trip to Ireland was in 1995. I stayed in Nottingham near the Migrants Trust offices. During my first meeting with my mother she was cold towards me and the meeting did not go well. She told me my father was deceased but I was not sure whether or not to believe her.

28. I then went to Ireland to visit family and I stayed at Termonbacca as I had nowhere else to go. In fact I stayed there almost six months as I was trying to re-establish contact with my family in Ireland and I knew this would take time. The male residents at Termonbacca were awful to me. I recall one guy who worked as a cook called HIA 144 and he and another married guy called [REDACTED] were nasty. They would have stabbed you in the back.

29. Before I went to visit my mother I went on Radio Foyle and Pat McArk, the Editor of the Derry Journal, contacted me. He came to the home to visit me and I stayed with him for the weekend. I still stay with him when I go back to

PRIVATE

Ireland. He passed my details on to a social worker called Rose Black and she came to see me and she had located my two uncles and my Aunt [REDACTED]. My mother had two brothers called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. She took me to visit my uncles and my aunt [REDACTED]. I got a great reception from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] but a more lukewarm response from Uncle [REDACTED]. I stayed with [REDACTED] for a couple of weeks but I think he was talking about me behind my back as my mother was extremely irate at my having imposed on her brother.

30. My second visit to Ireland was in 1998 and I stayed with my cousin [REDACTED] in Draperstown. [REDACTED] is [REDACTED] daughter. I stayed with her again when I visited in 2004. I made two further trips in 2010 and 2012 and I am returning to Ireland for a cousin's wedding during August 2014.

31. I kept in contact with my mother by letter and tried to build up a relationship with her. However, she died on 29 December 2009. She left [REDACTED] and her niece everything she had in her will. I contested it to be recognised as her son and [REDACTED] has not spoken to me since as he did not get everything. He did not consider that I was entitled to anything.

32. I went to counselling for twelve months to try to cope with my feelings about my past but I did not consider it a very helpful experience. I now prefer to turn to my family as spending time with the children makes me happy.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed _____
 Dated 28-10-2013

Commonwealth of Australia

DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION, AUSTRALIA HOUSE, LONDON.

Child Migration.

Sections A and C of this form are to be completed by the approved voluntary organisation in the United Kingdom. Section B to be completed by the parent or guardian of the child.

SECTION A.

1. Name in full **HIA 306**
(In block capitals, surname first)
 2. Full Postal Address **St. Joseph's Home, Termonbacca, Londonderry**
(In block capitals) **N. Ireland.**
 3. Age **8.4.** Date and Year of Birth **[REDACTED]** Place of Birth **Co. Derry.**
 4. Sex **Male.** Weight **[REDACTED]** Church Denomination **Catholic.**
 5. Furnish name and address of parent, guardian or next of kin
(If father is living his name must be given) **Mother Superior, St. Joseph's Home**
..... **Termonbacca Londonderry N. Ireland.**
 6. Is there any record of mental disease in the child ?
 7. Has he or she at any time been subject to fits ? **No**
 8. Educational standard **2nd Standard. Good.**
- Signed **SR 85**
For and on behalf of **St. Joseph's Termonbacca, L. Derry.**
(Name of Sponsoring Organisation)
Date **25.11.1952.**

SECTION B.

PARENT'S OR GUARDIAN'S CONSENT (FATHER IF LIVING)

I, **SR 85**
(Insert full name, occupation and address)
of **St. Joseph's Home Termonbacca, Londonderry, N. Ireland.**
the { father
mother } of **HIA 306**
guardian
hereby consent to my child/ward proceeding to Australia under the Commonwealth Child Migration Scheme.

Dated this **25th** day of **November, 1952.**
Signature **SR 85** **St. Joseph's Derry.**

*Witness **Gerard Hunsan** Qualification **Catholic Priest**

Address **146A St. Stephens House, London, S.W.1.**

*The witness to the parent's or guardian's consent must be one of the following :—

- A Mayor, Magistrate, Provost or Justice of the Peace.
- A Barrister, Advocate, Solicitor or Notary Public.
- A Minister of Religion.
- A Registered Medical Practitioner.
- An Officer on the active or half-pay or pension lists of any of His Majesty's Naval, Military or Air Forces.
- A person on the active or pension list of the permanent Civil Service of the Crown, who is, or was at the date of retirement, in receipt of a salary of not less than £450 a year.
- A Manager, Chief Cashier, or Accountant of a Bank.
- A Teacher at a school recognised by the Ministry of Education or the Scottish Education Department.
- A Police Officer not below the rank of Sergeant.

[PLEASE TURN OVER]

Ref. No.

Group Nomination No.

Commonwealth of Australia

DEPARTMENT OF IMMIGRATION, AUSTRALIA HOUSE, LONDON.

Child Migration.

Sections A and C of this form are to be completed by the approved voluntary organisation in the United Kingdom. Section B to be completed by the parent or guardian of the child.

SECTION A.

1. Name in full **HIA 306**
(In block capitals, surname first)
2. Full Postal Address *St. Joseph's Home, Limerick, Limerick*
(In block capitals)
3. Age *4.4* Date and Year of Birth **HIA 306** Place of Birth *Limerick*
4. Sex *M.* Weight Church Denomination *Catholic*
5. Furnish name and address of parent, guardian or next of kin *Mother Superior*
(If father is living his name must be given)
St. Joseph's Home, Limerick, Limerick
6. Is there any record of mental disease in the child? *No*
7. Has he or she at any time been subject to fits? *No*
8. Educational standard *2nd Standard* *Good*

Signed

SR 85

For and on behalf of *St. Joseph's Limerick, Limerick*
(Name of Sponsoring Organisation)Date *25.11.52*

SECTION B.

PARENT'S OR GUARDIAN'S CONSENT (FATHER IF LIVING)

I, **HIA 306**
(Insert full name, occupation and address)
of *St. Joseph's Home, Limerick, Limerick*

the *father*
mother
guardian of **HIA 306**

hereby consent to my child/ward proceeding to Australia under the Commonwealth Child Migration Scheme.

Dated this *25* day of *November 1952*

Signature

SR 85

*Witness

Beryl Benson

Qualification

St. Joseph's Catholic Priest

Address

14611 St Stephens House, Westminster. S.W.1

*The witness to the parent's or guardian's consent must be one of the following:—

A Mayor, Magistrate, Provost or Justice of the Peace.

A Barrister, Advocate, Solicitor or Notary Public.

A Minister of Religion.

A Registered Medical Practitioner.

An Officer on the active or half-pay or pension lists of any of His Majesty's Naval, Military or Air Forces.

A person on the active or pension list of the permanent Civil Service of the Crown, who is, or was at the date of retirement, in receipt of a salary of not less than £450 a year.

A Manager, Chief Cashier, or Accountant of a Bank.

A Teacher at a school recognised by the Ministry of Education or the Scottish Education Department.

A Police Officer not below the rank of Sergeant.

[PLEASE TURN OVER]

SECTION C.

In the event of the child named in this application leaving Australia before the completion of 2 years residence (unless he/she is repatriated for medical reasons within twelve months of arrival) Australian Catholic Immigration Committee. (name of sponsoring organisation) agree to repay the financial assistance granted in respect of an assisted passage.

Signed Beryl Stinson
(Representative of Organisation in the United Kingdom.)

Date 25. 11. 52

On completion, this form (in duplicate) should be forwarded with a certified copy of the child's birth certificate to:—

THE CHIEF MIGRATION OFFICER,
AUSTRALIA HOUSE,
STRAND,
LONDON, W.C.2.

Male, aged 8.

C. of A.	
Department of Immigration	
London	
Recommended.....	A.
W. K. Harvey, Interviewing Officer.	

Selected by Catholic
Group Immigration.

Medical arranged

Average type of child

Very clean and neat.

appears reasonably intelligent.

(a) Speech: average for age.

(b) Height: appears normal.

(c) Education: average for age.

C. of A.	
Department of Immigration	
London.	
Approved Assisted Passage <u>Child Migrant</u>	
W. & S. Ltd 2000. <u>Spent for</u> Chief Selection Officer	

CATHOLIC FAMILY CARE SOCIETY (N.I.)

OFFICES: 511 ORMEAU ROAD
BELFAST
BT7 3GS

Telephone: (0232) 691133



164 BISHOP STREET
DERRY
BT48 6UJ

Telephone: (0504) 368592/362475

CHIEF OFFICER: MRS PATRICIA McGROGAN

6 June 1994

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL
ADDRESSEE ONLY

SR 2

Officer-in-Charge,
Nazareth House Children's Home,
Bishop Street,
DERRY BT48 6UW

Dear **SR 2**

Re: **HIA 306** DOB **[REDACTED]**

Further to my telephone conversation regarding the above named former child migrant, I would like you to know that **HIA 306** states he is coming to Ireland in July 95. He plans to stay at Termonbecca formerly Nazareth House Derry for 10 - 12 weeks.

HIA 306 has traced his mother **[REDACTED]** and states that she lives in Birmingham. He will be visiting her during the first week of his holiday. He is interested in tracing other relatives who may be living in Ireland. A copy of his letter is enclosed.

HIA 306 has asked for details of his stay in Nazareth House prior to going to Australia. If you have any details of his admission etc., I would be grateful to get them from you. I have written to **HIA 306** and advised him that Nazareth House Sisters live in Bishop Street which is close by to Termonbecca. I gave him your telephone number 261976 and advised him that you are the contact person and that you will be very happy for him to visit Nazareth House during his stay.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

Sister Noeleen

Sister Noeleen
Social Worker

HIA 306

Dear Sister Noeleen.

Thank you very much for your prompt reply. I will be staying in Derry for 10 or 12 weeks from July 17th and I will be staying at Nazareth House Londonderry. I don't think the sisters are there any longer.

Sister, I would like to find out how old I was when I was put into the care of the Sisters.

I have located my mother she is living in Birmingham, England, in which I will be visiting for the first week.

Sister I would like to find out who my grandparents are and if I have any other relatives living in Ireland, such as Uncles Aunts or some one. My mother's full name is [REDACTED] and she will be [REDACTED] on the [REDACTED] 1995. Mum was never married so I have her maiden name.

I would be most grateful if you can help me trace any of my family in Ireland. If you wish I could come and see you at your above address which is in Bishop Street Derry

Yours Sincerely

HIA 306

CATHOLIC FAMILY CARE SOCIETY (N.I.)

OFFICES: 511 ORMEAU ROAD
BELFAST
BT7 3GS

Telephone: (0232) 691133



164 BISHOP STREET
DERRY
BT48 6UJ

Telephone: (0504) 368592/362475

CHIEF OFFICER: MRS PATRICIA McGROGAN

25 May 1995

SR 2

Nazareth House Children's Home
Bishop Street
DERRY
BT48 6UW

Dear **SR 2**

RE: **HIA 306** D.O.B. **[REDACTED]**

I found an entry for the above named in the CCWC Register of children sent to Australia from Northern Ireland.

NO.	SAIL DATE	REG. NO.
[REDACTED]	28/01/1953	[REDACTED]

ORDER	LOCATION	CONSENT	DES / INSTITUTION
Nazareth House	Londonderry	No	Clontarf Boys Town

HIA 306 has written to our Society requesting help in tracing his family tree and for information on him prior to going to Australia.

I would appreciate you researching old records for any additional information that you may hold on **HIA 306**

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely

Sister Noeleen

SISTER NOELEEN
Social Worker

**NAZARETH HOUSE CHILDREN'S HOME
BISHOP STREET
DERRY
BT48 6UW
TELE/FAX NUMBER 01504 261976**

12th June 1995

Sr. Noleen
Social Worker
Catholic Family Care Society (NI)
511 Ormeau Road
Belfast
BT7 3GS

Dear Sr Noleen

RE **HIA 306** - D.O.B. **[REDACTED]**

Please find listed below all the details we have concerning the above named. Please note this boy was admitted to St. Joseph's Termonbaccho and not Nazareth House as stated.

Name	HIA 306
Mother	[REDACTED]
Occupation	Servant
Born	[REDACTED] - [REDACTED] General Hospital
Baptised	12/02/44 - [REDACTED] Roman Catholic Church
Admitted	28/04/46
Adopted	20/10/48 By [REDACTED] [REDACTED] County Donegal
Re -Admitted	18/08/50 - Re-admitted due to the two people who adopted Michael being admitted into hospital.
Recommended By	Rev. Hugh Boyle P.P.Desertmartin
Discharged	26/01/53 - Australia

If you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

SR 2
Officer in Charge

HIA 306

Mother Superior.

Hope you are keeping well. I used to go to school at Bishop St when I was a wee boy. I was put into an orphanage at the tender age of 11 days old. I was first put into a little place called Ferry then I was fostered for a couple of years then put into Termonbacca. I then left to go to Australia on the 26 January 1953 at the age of nearly nine years old. I turned 9 on the 22nd Feb while on the ship. I have been back Home twice now. Once in July 1995 for 4 months and again in January 1998. Hopefully with the help of God I can return again to see all my family & friends.

Sister would you be able to do me a huge favour. I have got a good friend back in Derry, his name is **SND 70**. We were very close, but since I have been back in Australia from my last trip I haven't heard from him. He always wrote to me before. I am a bit worried that something has happened to him.

My other friend **SND 122** who works with you may be able to give you some information about the whereabouts **SND 70** is. **SND 70** gave me his address as **[REDACTED]** I have written

quite a few letters but no response.

Well Sister I will finish now hopefully
you can help me to locate **SND 70** maybe if **SND 122**
SND 122 had a talk to another good friend of
mine his name is **SND 122** knows him very well.

May God bless you all and hopefully
I will be back home one day very soon

HIA 306