

PRIVATE

HIA REF: 89

Witness Name: HIA 89

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HIA 89

I, HIA 89 will say as follows:-

Personal Details

1. I was born on [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]. There were 8 children in my family – I had 2 sisters and 5 brothers. I didn't know who my mother was until I came out of care. The first time I met my father was when I was about 19.

Nazareth Lodge (24 April 1943 – 24 September 1953)

2. I was placed in Nazareth Lodge when I was 2 years old. I was there until 1953 and left when I was 12 years old. All my brothers were in Nazareth Lodge except [REDACTED] the eldest. My sisters [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were in Nazareth House.
3. Once I reached 6 or 7 years old the bad things started. I got beaten for things such as not doing what the nuns asked me to do, for example, if I didn't clean the floor to the nun's satisfaction.
4. I was hit on the palms of my hands and backside. The nuns would use sticks, straps, hurley sticks – anything they got their hands on. SR 118 and SR 100 beat me the most.

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5. We would get up about 6 or 6.30am and go for breakfast. For breakfast we got bread and dripping and maybe a cup of milk, but it wasn't very much. I was always hungry and the food was always of a poor standard. We then went to school on the same site. The teachers were the same nuns.
6. **SR 118** would shout or beat us even though we weren't doing anything wrong. If work wasn't done right God help you. You would get battered on the floor. **SR 118** would usually use a hurley stick, an ordinary stick or strap to beat us. **SR 118** was a wicked old woman.
7. School finished between 3 and 4pm. After school, the nuns would either make us to do work or allow us to go out to the playing field at the back of the home. Other than a football there were no toys to play with. We made up our own games.
8. One of my main jobs was cleaning a large Terrazzo corridor. I had to sweep, scrub and polish it. There were two boys at one end and two at the other – it would take about 2 or 3 hours to clean and the nuns would regularly come out and check on us. I was 8 years old and the work continued until I left when I was 12.
9. The weekends were the same except we had no school. We had to do more jobs around the home. When we weren't cleaning we passed the time in the dining room.
10. After dinner we usually went to the playing fields and then to the chapel for benediction before bed.
11. The rooms had nearly 30 or 40 boys in each room. I think there might have been 5 or 6 dormitories. There was nothing wrong with the bedding or the heat.
12. At night if you were caught talking the nun who was supervising would come and give you a whack. **SR 118** and **SR 100** were in charge of my

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dormitory. They had their own rooms beside the dorm and took the night duty in turn. If they could not see which boy was talking they would beat every boy in the dorm as punishment.

13. I was abused by two other boys in Nazareth Lodge. They were called **NL 46** and **NL 47**. I cannot recall their first names. I was about 9 years old and they would have been around 14 or 15.
14. **NL 46** made me go to his bed and he tried to get me to put my hand on his private parts. I started screaming and ran away from him.
15. Around six months later **NL 47** tried to get me to do the same thing. Again I screamed and ran away.
16. After both these incidents **NL 46** and **NL 47** physically abused me. They slapped and punched me whenever they felt like it because I didn't do what they wanted. They bullied me and made my life hell. I didn't tell anyone because no one would have believed me and nothing would have been done. I do not know what became of these two boys.
17. It was my job to take up a large jug of hot water up to an old nun called **SR 149**. **SR 149** She looked after the chapel. It was unbelievable the abuse that woman made me suffer. She used to beat me with a whip.
18. I remember I was late with the water one afternoon and she hit me across the face with her crutch. The boiling water from the jug went all over my body and hands and scalded me. I was taken to the Mater hospital and I was kept in for about 2 or 3 weeks.
19. On another occasion **SR 149** pushed me down the stairs and I broke my arm. I spent about 3 or 4 weeks in the Mater hospital following this incident. No one asked me how the injuries happened on either occasion. I was between 7 and 11 years old.

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20. Whilst my brothers were in Nazareth Lodge I never saw them until I was about 12. We were in different classes. My sisters came down to the Lodge with the other girls from Nazareth House on special occasions about twice a year. They told me they were my sisters and I spoke to them every time they came but we weren't given the chance to form proper relationships and I didn't really know them.
21. I had no visitors in all my years in Nazareth Lodge. My first trip out was when I was about 12 and my older brother [REDACTED] came and took me and my two brothers out for the day.
22. We wore the same clothes day in day out. I wore shorts until I was about 10 or 12 years old. I had holes in my shoes.
23. At Christmas we didn't get anything different, maybe a bun and a glass of orange.
24. I didn't see any inspectors or welfare officers in Nazareth Lodge.
25. I left Nazareth Lodge when I was 12 years old and I was moved to Rubane House because of my age.

Rubane (1953 – 1958 approximately)

26. [REDACTED]

27. [REDACTED]

28. [REDACTED]

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29.

30.

31.

32.

Life after care

33. I was told I was leaving on the actual day. I had no notice. I put on my suit and travelled on the bus to Belfast to meet the welfare officer Mr Murphy. Mr Murphy was a nice man. He never came to see me before this. He arranged lodgings and a job in a [REDACTED].

34. After I spent 6 years in the army I worked as a chef. I have regular contact with my brothers and sisters. I am divorced from my wife and I have two grown up children [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

35. If I can't sleep or I am in a bad mood I am always thinking about my time in the home. Remembering the nuns causes me stress and anxiety. As long as I live I will never forget them.

36. I reported my experiences of being in care to the police in [REDACTED] Cheshire in 2007. I think they have been in contact with the PSNI. My solicitor is called Ciaran McAteer and Company.

37. I have attended counselling in Belfast on two occasions which was arranged by my solicitor. However I did not find it very helpful.

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Statement of Truth

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

Signed

HIA 89

Dated

28-2-13