



Verneta Lohse

7-8-03

To whom it may concern

The first Home my sister Diana and myself where in was when our Mother went into hospital to have our first brother Gordon, Diana was five and I was 22 months, that home was in Manly somewhere and then there was another one called Seabra at Bondi when our brother John was born eighteen months later Diana 7 years and I 32 years, then in 1954 we where all six of us in hospital with Diptheria for a few months, when we all came out of hospital except John he was in for another 4 months for he was very sick he nearly died, we went back to our little one bedroom, lounge, kitchen house in 13 Gypps St Balmain.

The reason our mum put us into the last home was because our father drank all the time and on weekends would bring his drunken mates home and some times during the week nights our mother and eldest sister Rhonda who was only fourteen at the time talk about it and thought Diana 11 years, Rayleen 9 years Verneta 8 years, Gordon 6 years, John was 4 years, Gordon & John went to St Michaels at Baulkmin Hills, our father was not giving our mum money so she worked at Balmain Hospital from 6am - 6pm we were going to school with out shoes, no lunch, our father would say sit on his mates lap so mum was worried for us.

(2)

the last home was Mater Die ~~Cypharag~~
Orphanage at Navellan. - read, Gordon, a long
way from home, Diana Rayleena Vermetant
in together our sister Rhonda & mum took us
into Central Station where we got the train
it was so sad to see our mother on the plat-
form crying and waving good-bye to us, we
didn't know when we would see her again, we
had to get 3 trains in them days, it took
about 3 hours to get there, so up the drive
we went in a cab, we had one bag
between the 3 of us, out of the cab we
got Rhonda meet Mother Anthony Blair and
went in to sing some papers said good-bye
crying she got back into the cab and went.

Mother Suffice took the 3 of us over to the
childrens side and we were met by another
Dister, she took our bag though our clothes
on the floor and gave us other clothes, after
fixing up our clothes we went out side and
another Nun from the childrens kitchen told
us to go down to the shed and bring up
some wood, when I got down there they were
big logs I said I can't carry them they are
too big so down she came she pulled my
hair and punched me in the middle of the
back, that was the first day of six years
of touches and abuse that we will never
forget.

The Nuns were supposed to be good
Samaritans, (they where the care takers.)
The first week on the Sunday Night they
put up a roster, Diana was on the Nuns

Kitchen, Rayleen the childrens Kitchen and I was on the Laundry remembered our ages we were so young to be getting up every morning at 5 AM doing all this hard work, full stoves and NO washing machines all by hand and a copped to boil, you had to kneel down on the wet stone floor to pray so it would boil, sometimes you would be on the ironing room to do all the kids clothes and some of the Nuns, if you were on the kitchen you never went to school until after lunch and then back there until 8pm. I remember one time when I went over on my ankle it was so bruised and swollen but still had to hop over to the Nuns kitchen and work you just had to do it, I can't tell you all the things we had to do as our weekly job it would take too long.

There was visitors only once a month aloud to come up and see you, so mum came as much as she could with was nearly every month, one time she got up there about 3-30pm for she missed one train and one of the nuns told her she would have to leave in the same cab that she came in, we were so upset, she was crying and so were we for you would have to wait another month.

One time, the only time our father came up to see us he was drunk and punched my mother in the face so Mother Anthony Blair came down and told him he had to leave so that was a nice time for us.

Six years is a long time for a little girl to have no parents love.

The Nuns always told us that we were scum from Balmain and would never amount to ~~nothing~~ Naughting our parents didn't want us so we were put there, always putting you down, we done everything all the work the nuns didn't do much at all only supervise us to do it all, and it was never good enough, another time I remember when we first 'got' there, when we were at home in Gypps Street Balmain Diana, Rayleen, myself slept in the top Bunk and two brothers and sometime Mum slept in the bottom bunk and Rhonda had own bed, so in the home I would go and get in bed with one of my sisters, I got caught one night so Sister pulled me out and I and my sister had to stand outside bed door to well into the night.

When I was about 14teen my little brother John went for holidays with some people for Xmas it was 10th January he was in a boat down at Bobin Head and the boat went over and he drowned, so I was taken out of the home to go to his funeral, I had not seen him since he was 4 years so when I think of him he is always only 4 years old the last time I saw him he was 10 years old, after the funeral I went back to the home left there on my own, ~~how~~ no one knows what I felt so alone, no one to talk to, my sister had left by then, I had another year to go, you left when you were 15 years old.

My sisters and I were there for 3 years before the orphanage ^{was} turn into a school for Mental Retarded children, so what the Nuns did was ~~to~~ place all the girls into other orphanages or foster people care but left 8 girls behind to do all the work and look after in the end 10 kids, some were pretty badly retarded, one I had to look after had to have a nappy on her every night which I had to put on her ^{her} so she wouldn't wet the bed, if she did I would have to wash the nappy and sheets in cold water winter or summer and this same child had braces on her legs, some in the day and change for another pair for the night, she slept in them, can you imagine what this was like for a 12 year old to have all this responsibility so young, No school after they changed so from 12 years on I never went to school and none did the other girls that were left behind, 5th ^{year} class is the last I remember being in, so ^{you} can just think of how hard that made my life and future was going to be like, that was the hardest thing I had to come to terms with, I still have trouble getting through life it never ends. It has been very hard on my two children.

I could write on and on but it would become a book.

I can't tell you how hard these good Samaritan Nuns were with all these poor little girls, imagine if this was you.

little girl or boy, this is why we have to let you know so you can stop this ever happening again.

I often think how different my life would have been if I had have had a good Education and my kids life to.

I hope my letter ^{can} makes a different.

Hope to hear from you with any Questions I can help you with.

Mrs Verneta Lohse

(Claw) bare leaves of Australia
PO Box 164 Georges Hall
NSW 2198

I didn't have time to think about what had happened to us for I was to busy bring up my children on my own.

I remember every day having a shower (most of the time if you didn't get in first it was cold summer or winter) the nun would stand there and watch you. but teach you it was a sin to look at each other and to hide your body.

One time I will never forget is when I got my period I thought I was going to die I was 11 1/2 years old, I tried to hide it but in the end I went to one of the older girls and she said everything would be all right next thing one of the nuns came and taken me to a room where there were buckets a sink and some cupboards she gave me a bag with 12 small towels like face washers and told me just put them on your pance change them a few times a day wash them ~~and~~ put soap on and sock them to get the stain out, and with that she left me there never told me anything just that I will get them every month so when the mental retarded girls that you were in charge of got you had to show them (most of the time you changed them and ~~sh~~ washed their out to) never told us anything about life.

I would like to say one ^{thing} it has been so good since clan started I have been there since the first day it was so good to talk to people who had been through things like you and worse, no one nose what we have been through only them, I never talked about it through my life, never told my children, only just since I have been to clan, my ~~side~~ heart goes out to all the members.

I am a good person, not into drugs, alcohol, mental
 I have always tried to do right thing in life
 to the best I can, being a member of clan has
 made a difference to my life, Jeanne and Leonie
 and all the people behind them do such a good
 job - only someone who has been through
 the same thing would understand what it
 is all about (thank you God for clan)

My kids have suffered for I could never
 help them with home work, their father left
 Glenn was five months and Sherie was three
 years old so I brought them up on my own
 they never see or heard from him since, the
 only thing they have is old wedding photos
 so they see what he looks like.

My sisters and I have had a very lonely
 life, I worked out I have been in a
 relationship seven years of my 57 years, my
 sister and I are all on our own not one
 of us has a partner.

Well if I keep going this little will end
 up being like a book, one day I would like
 to write my story, there has been so many
 things that has happened in our lives,
 Now I have to write my sister Diancas story
 for she can not read or write, there is so
 much more to say but I will leave it
 here.