

STATEMENT FOR MARY RAFFERTY.

From the middle of the last century, women were sent or came to us seeking refuge and we provided it. Some of these women remain with us still. We did not seek them out but we were there to provide shelter when no one else in society was willing to be of assistance. The women in our care were always free to leave and our records show that the majority of them did so. Families were always free to visit.

In 1989 we needed to build suitable accommodation for our own ageing sisters and those women still in our care and to provide this we had to dispose of some of our property of which the cemetery was a part. We had a strong desire to provide a permanent resting place for our residents into the future even when we were no longer in existence as a religious order. The decision was to do this in Glasnevin Cemetery where we already had a burial plot. Another reason was that information at that time was that the new Airport road was to be built across our property. We have since built a modern nursing home for our sisters and women in our care

A decision was taken to exhume and re-inter the bodies of 155 women some 10 years ago. This ceremony was approved by all relevant authorities and we have had no queries from families about our decision in the intervening time.

One family took the remains of a deceased relative to a family plot at this time. The remaining 154 were respectfully cremated and laid to rest in Glasnevin Cemetery at a public ceremony. I can confirm this absolutely.

The initial headstone on the plot was changed and this has led to some discrepancies with the names on the new headstone. This matter is being rectified at present and I have been assured that the new headstone will be completed very shortly.

Sr. Ann Marie Ryan.