

Code A

Died 24 January 1996

RESTRICTED

Form MG11(T)

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WITNESS STATEMENT

(CJ Act 1967, s.9; MC Act 1980, ss.5A(3) (a) and 5B; MC Rules 1981, r.70)

Statement of: **Code A**Age if under 18: **OVER 18** (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: **RETIRED RMN**

This statement (consisting of page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Signed: **Code A**

Date: 08/11/2004

I live at the address known to the Police.

I am the daughter of **Code A** who died in the Gosport War Memorial Hospital on 24th January 1996 (24/01/1996).

My father was born in Hemel Hempstead. He had two sisters, one who died as the result of an ectopic pregnancy whilst in her 20-30's and the other who died of cancer in her late 50's.

My father was a submariner in the Royal Navy. Whilst in Canada he met and married my mother Audrey. They had my brother Paul, and the family came to England in 1947.

My parents had three children, Paul is the eldest and I have a younger sister Virginia CRESDEE.

My father suffered from severe depression for a great deal of his life. He made several attempts to end his life and had to be admitted to hospital for treatment.

He was admitted to Knowle Hospital, Wickham on a number of occasions throughout the 60's, 70's and 80's and received ECT treatment.

My father was physically, a very strong man and it was mainly due to his strong constitution that his attempts to end his life failed.

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2004(1)

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My father retired from the navy after twenty-two years service and then worked as an instructor at the Nautical Training School, T.S. Mercury, on the river Hamble.

My father loved sailing and he enjoyed his job but when the training school closed he seemed to lose his purpose in life and withdrew into himself.

Sometime around 1993/1994 my father was admitted to Alverstoke ward at Knowle Hospital. He was very depressed and had no motivation. My mother had been caring for him at home and the strain this placed on her was giving concern to my father's psychiatric nurse, John ALLEN and his social worker, Jackie whose surname escapes me.

Because of this, a decision was made that my father would be discharged to a rest home.

My father left Knowle and went directly to Hazledene Rest Home where he lived until he was admitted to Mulberry Ward at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

My father became progressively worse whilst at the nursing home. He would not socialise with any of the other residents who were predominantly women. He remained in his room and rarely spoke to anyone. He wasn't rude, he just wouldn't initiate any conversation. He would be the same when the family visited. He stopped eating and drinking properly and was eventually admitted to Mulberry Ward which is a psychiatric ward at the Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

My father continued to deteriorate mentally and physically. He didn't respond to treatment, he seemed to have given up.

The nursing staff in the ward were excellent and took great care of my father.

The family visited regularly, Virginia and I would take it in turns to take my mother into visit my father.

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After a period of time, Dr Vicky BANKS told us that my father had a chest infection. She informed us that the clinical team had considered and rejected treating my father with ECT (Electro Convulsive Therapy) because of his physical condition. She told us that there was nothing more that could be done for him on Mulberry Ward and that he was going to be moved onto Dryad Ward.

I knew that my father was not eating or drinking. He would lie in bed all of the time and ignore everyone. He believed that he had parkinsons disease.

I understood that my father was going to Dryad ward for terminal care. This was never actually said to me but my knowledge of the type of patient that Dryad took led me to believe this.

I visited my father regularly with my mother and as a family we watched as my father died through what I would describe as 'self neglect'.

He had become extremely frail and just seemed to have lost the will to live.

I remember asking the nurses if he was in any pain and if he had any pressure sores because he was immobile.

The nurse told me that my father's skin was breaking down and that he cried out when the nurses turned him. I remember that 'morphine' was mentioned to me for pain relief but I cannot recall if I was told that my father was already receiving it or was going to receive it.

I knew that his body systems were breaking down and that he would have been uncomfortable. I was not alarmed by the thought that my father was being given morphine. I considered it to be appropriate care.

The nurse turned him regularly and I recall that he had a blister on his ear.

My mother was spoken to about the use of a 'drip' and was kept informed about my father's

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condition and how grave it was. I have no recollection of ever seeing a drip being used in relation to my father, so I assume that my mother was referring to a syringe driver.

The family acknowledged that invasive or aggressive treatments would be inappropriate in my father's case. By this I mean to force feed him or to use ECT to try and lift his mood.

I remember that it seemed to take my father a long time to die. I expected him to die as he was in a debilitated state, wasn't eating or drinking and had a chest infection.

My father died on 24th January 1996 (24/01/1996). His death was certified by Dr Jane BARTON and his cause of death was given as bronchopneumonia. He was cremated at Portchester Crematorium on 30th January 1996 (30/01/1996).

I have been asked if I ever spoke to a doctor during the time that my father was in Dryad Ward. I didn't speak to a doctor as I was kept fully informed of my father's condition by the nursing staff. Had I felt that I needed to speak to the doctor I would have taken the necessary steps in order to do so.

My father's GP was Dr ASBRIDGE, who had a very good understanding of my father's condition and was very supportive of my mother.

I think it is pertinent to mention that I am a retired qualified Registered Mental Nurse, having nursed the elderly mentally ill for most of my career. At the time of my father's admission to Mulberry ward and subsequently, Dryad ward, I was the 'G' Grade clinical manager at the Phoenix Day Hospital within the Gosport War Memorial Hospital.

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