

Mae Crawford

Tape goes straight into Interview

Q. So tell me about Lucy what was she like?

16:04 - 16:19
A. Lucy was very bright, very busy lucky girl and brought so much joy into our lives and when we lost her it's just been terrible since then.

Q. She was a wee late one?

16:22
A. She was indeed yes she was, we all enjoyed looking after her, the 4 of us and had a great time with her. Someday I hope we will be able to look back on those memories and think what a great pleasure she gave to us all. 16:37

Q. And you say the 4 of you because, when a child arrived that late to a family it's not just the parents it's 4 people can celebrate that. What was her birth and her first year like?

16:51
A. It was busy house; it changed the house to our family very much. 16:58 She brought so much joy and she was a very special little girl, we will never forget the joy that she brought into our lives. 17:10

Q. What was that was special about her?

A. Her life, being there a little red ^{head} haired running round, everybody running round after her, just being there and being part of our family, part of the group.

Q. And I suppose a little girl like that joining in, if you like, there's qualities that you can see in that, because it is a later ^{adults} edition to the family, people can identify all those things, you can respond. You are not emerged in the birth in the early years, it becomes part of you.

A. Yes that is very true. Yes definitely, very much so.

Q. And she had obviously at 12 months begun to walk and talk, so that was more of her character.

A. Yes,

Q. How was that for the family?

A. She was always busy, everybody ran round her. When Lucy appeared everybody dropped everything else, and we helped, we had such a wonderful time with her, and

Q. Did you spoil her?

A. Very much so, yes she was spoilt, but in a loving way and she knew everybody loved her in the house, and she loved us back, with her special

Q. Her being

A. Just being there, yes, yes

Q. And then as in all families, like all little children she became ill on one occasion. Take me through that.

17: 19:05
A. She had been vomiting at child minders and the child minder rang me and I went and collected her and brought her home, and then she didn't eat any tea she wasn't in great form but she wasn't sick again. So we went to bed and she slept all night, the next morning she didn't want any food, or didn't want to drink much. My husband decided that he would stay at home with her so I went to work. So I felt, I was happy with that, that my husband was looking after her, which was normal and whenever I came home I felt that she still wasn't very well, so I rang my own GP and I had given her a drink before we left the house, and along the way in the car she was sick. So I to stop a few times in the road and I brought her into our own GP in the health centre in Enniskillen, the doctor said, he looked at her. I think what happened Lucy ^{came along in} i.e., the corner of the living room whenever he saw that, he said.... She'll be fine don't worry about her.

20:58
So we left, I remember going out through the door saying to Neville we are very we are fussing too much. So we brought her home and then later on I felt that she wasn't getting any better I was just so worried about her, I thought she was getting hotter and I had given her calpol and her temperature wasn't going down. So I rang the out of hours

2121 doctor..... and we brought her in and the doctor there said, she looked at her and said she would need a drip and to bring her on up to the hospital. ^{West Dow} So we accepted that and that's what we did, we brought her up and we were there about 7:30pm. The doctor tried to get the drip in and he couldn't. He had several attempts and by I think it was about 9:00pm he said she may have to go to theatre, to get a line in for the drip.

2128 The doctor O'Donogue arrived and he give her some..... a drink she drank that and the drip wasn't set up until 11:00pm. The drip was set up and the doctors left, so we brought Lucy down to the bed and she was sleeping and very dozy, not much life and her eyes were glassy and we asked Doctor Malik at that stage to come back and look at her and he did, and he said her eyes were fine and that was just after 11:00pm, just after the drip had been set up.

2135 At about 12:15am she vomited and I was quite worried, what, why is she being sick and she's sleeping and the nurse just dismissed it and said no she will be fine, not to be worrying and she left. Then about 2:15am she had a terrible bowel movement which really frightened me and I had to go and find a nurse because there was no one about and she came down and she said didn't know what it was. I was very frightened and said I wanted to know what it was, and she came back and said she would have to move Lucy to a side ward, because she didn't want the rest of the patients to be infected with gastro enteritis.

I had to move Lucy to the side ward at the bottom, and we were left then again and about 3:00am I was just sitting watching Lucy on the edge of the bed and she was still sleeping and she very still, and the next thing she give 3 loud breaths and her body went rigid and she(pause in tape). I lifted Lucy up and I, her body was rigid and heavy and I couldn't open her mouth and her hands were turned the other way, so I put her down, I had rang the bell at this stage, and no one came, so I put her down and went out and look up the ward and there was no nurses, and I just shouted for help. Eventually a nurse came and she stood at the door and said oh my God, so then the next thing another nurse arrived with equipment and then it was just panic.

After that Doctor, O'Donogue arrived and Doctor... was there and the nurses, the doctors were asking for equipment, Dr Odtezan was very

frustrated because he obviously did not have the equipment there to revive Lucy. He was very frustrated. The nurses I felt and I know that they did not know what the equipment was that he was looking for and we were told to wait outside.

My parents were there at that stage and at no time were we told what was happening to Lucy, what her condition was, we had to ask everything and when we did ask we were not told anything, we were just told that they were working with Lucy and then at 5:00am she was moved to intensive care and weren't really given a reason we where just told. So we sat round intensive care, they said they were working with her all the time and after 6:00am around that time I just felt I was doing nothing because I didn't know what was wrong, I didn't know what was happening and the two doctors where sitting in an office and we went in and we asked the hospital and I, what was happening and where was Lucy and what where they doing to help her. We had asked for a helicopter to take her, they did say at that stage they were going to send her to the Royal, for a scan, but we wanted the scan to take place in the Royal and the, sorry I wanted the scan to take place in the air, and they said the scan would take place in the Royal hospital, because then if there was anything they could do, she would be there, and then they told us that she wouldn't be going to the Royal Hospital until 9:00am, and this was 6:00am in the morning so we asked for a helicopter to bring Lucy. We were told, we were dismissed, we were told that it didn't happen.

So then the Dr said Lucy would be transferred till 9:00am until some one else was able to come in and cover in the area, and I asked whether I said didn't you or another anaesthetist, could they ring and ask. They said no they couldn't do that, they would not do that, so we were quite annoyed, so then the next thing one of the doctors lifted the phone and said Lucy would be going to the Royal as soon as possible. / I hadn't seen Lucy at this stage and we went in to see Lucy and she was just, She was dead, she was hooked up to machines and everything, but there was no life. / 28:54

28:57

Q. Did you know that at that time?

29:00 - 29:09
A. I didn't want to believe it, but now I do know that she died at 3:00am at the hospital.

Q. You were a concerned parent, over anxious about your concern, it was gastro enteritis, and you brought your child to the hospital to be cared for.

A. That is correct.

Q. Did they care for her?

A. No, there were no observations taken. No notes, we now know that, Lucy wasn't that ill until the drip was put up, we now know that the wrong drip was given to Lucy. It was given at the wrong rate, too much of it given to her and there was no observations taken and no checks upon her progress, throughout the night.

Q. So the treatment led her to

A. Yes, it did, we know that now, the coroner had an inquest and the care Lucy got was substandard.

Q. Of course you have repeated a couple of times, you know that now, but you didn't know that at the time, did you accept on face value what the doctors were telling you. The accounts afterwards and the subsequent pathologist report.

A. After Lucy died, we were in such shock because she wasn't that ill, she had gastro enteritis and we evoked the complaints department and we worked with Mr Millar who wrote letters and who has tried to get answers but there were no answers worth coming from to spare enlighten. Just before we went to see Mr Millar we asked the hospital to speak to Dr O' Donogue who had set up the drip, and we met him one day and he arrived without Lucy's notes, said he couldn't understand, he didn't know what happened and he could not understand it. And we were left blaming ourselves and we have blamed ourselves for a long time.

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We then went to the complaints and we got nowhere. We were put round in a circle but pinpointed, it was no pinpoint, no answers coming forth, so then we felt we had to go and to a solicitor which we didn't want to do, because we are just ordinary people and all we wanted was

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our answers, what happened to our little girl. ^{32:41} And it has been a long road and ^{the Spanish subject} the trust have brushed Lucy's death under the carpet for so long, they don't want to be accountable for her death, but they have to be accountable they are accountable, because you cannot take charge of some one's life and through it away and then just say o' it's okay don't worry about, just get over it. This was our little girl and she was so special to us as a family and we could not let that go. ^{33:37}

- Q. At what stage when you were beginning to ask questions did you sense that you weren't getting the answers, where you getting no answers or where you not getting the right answers, did you sense that there was a block?
- A. We kept, we got letters from but there was nothing in it to say you know what happened to Lucy. They then started talking about reviews , investigations, they had done an internal investigation, they then put on a review, carried out by Dr Quinn, that was back in either 2000/2001, but we have yet and this is 2004 and we have yet to see that review. Our solicitor wrote to on the 26th of February 2004 looking for the review and we still have not received the paper work relating to that review.
- Q. Fundamentally some of the questions that have been answered in your mind about what happened, has it been a direct result of the questions you've asked, or the result of the death of another child.
- A. That's correct
- Q. Could you take me through how the process came about if you like, that you learned or had it confirmed sense in your mind there was heightened.
- A. Lucy died April 2000, and we tried to get answers what happened to her, and then it was only in 2001 that Mr Millar wrote to the coroner and he felt there was a similarity there, into Lucy's death and Rachel Fergus's death. But we had asked Mr Millar for an inquest, but we were told that the inquest that we would have at that stage in 2000 after Lucy's death would be relating to Lucy's care in the Royal Victoria hospital and not in the.....

Q. So you were arriving at a forum to try and ask questions and they were denying you the ground if you like to have that forum on.

A. That's right.

Q. And how did you feel about that?

A. Devasted. We didn't really want to go through an inquest but we felt that this was the only thing that was open to us, so the only door that was open to us, the only door that was open to us, because theTrust there doors, they aware of and still are, firmly shut. But may have not have known as much as we know now, and I accept that but it's all this, brushing under the carpet that that Trust in Enniskillen have and have caused us, on top of everything dealing with the death of our little girl we have had to cope with all this as well, and which has been just a terrible time. 37:32

Q. So this is a system that is letting you down twice?

A. Yes, and even now after the inquest they still won't, I haven't got an apology, I got an apology for there cause, sorry

...Apology for the failure

A. yes, that's the word, apology.

Q. Shall I just take you through that point again?

Sorry about that,

No, no not at all.

Q. I was asking you about the system letting you down twice, I mean medically, your daughter died in there care,

A. Yes

Q. and how have they reacted since?

A. Since the inquest we still have got no answers from them and no apology from the Trust. We got an apology into the failure of their investigations at that time, but no apology into our daughter's death, and we know and they know that they are at fault.

Q. What would you like them to do now?

A. We would like to meet them and if they are human at all, we would like to meet them and speak to them about what happened to Lucy, and I still want an apology. I want them to tell me how they are going to make us feel better as a family to get back to have a life again, how to be I want them to show me what they have done to try and prevent this from happening again, that no other family is going through what we are going through and I just want honesty and truth and to face us, and not hide behind the doors.

Q. And the process that you have gone through has included all of those things, obstruction, closing doors. What would you have wanted to see from the start? Let me take you back to the circumstances, if it is to happen to somebody again, what would you want to see from the moment the mistakes were made.

A. First of all accessibility for parents to be able to go and talk to these people, for them to listen to the parents and to give answers in an honest and truthful way because they are accountable. They took my little girl in they were to look after. I handed Lucy over to them and they were to look after her, because I am not the professional they are the professionals not me.

Q. I want to back track on ½ points. You have no forum for questioning; it was the complaints procedure, which clearly didn't give you any satisfaction.

A. No.

Q. So the next point you could get some satisfaction was the coroner's inquest, when that was re-opened.

A. Yes

Q. Take me through that process and particularly the fact that the doctors didn't turn up,

A. The inquest I felt was the only forum, or the first forum we have had to speak about Lucy's death, not only her death but the way we had been treated, and we were grateful to the doctors who told the truth at the inquest I was very saddened that some of the nurses did not tell the truth. Dr Evans, Dr Sumner and Dr Jenkins provided their information. I was particularly moved when Dr Otterson stood up and told the truth, I am very proud that he did that, and Dr Otterson he actually brought Lucy, he was my anaesthetist at Lucy's birth.

63:04

On the Thursday Dr O'Donogue refused to give evidence, and we were just devastated that we were not going to get the full answers, and I would have respected Dr O'Donogue if he had got up and told the truth and be honest but it didn't happen.

63:32

So where do we go from here?

Q. Before we go to that, the basis of the inquest you went to the witness box and you were challenged in the witness box.

A. Yes

Q. How do you feel today when you find yourself challenged in the witness box when the man who was ultimately in charge of the care of your child wasn't..

64:02 - 64:34

A. I feel these people are above the law, that they were accountable for my daughter's death and they were allowed not to speak, and not to answer questions, and not to be cross examined the way I was cross examined by the S.P. and barrister at the inquest. I don't know how these people can live and (sorry I didn't mean to say that)

Q. I want to take you through that again, I want you to go through all the original testimony if you like, one or two arrears I want to re-visit and particular one that is important. I'll ask you again.

A. Is it about particularly about Dr O' Donogue?

Q. No I think the point is how you feel for being put in the witness box, all the while to be challenged over your views, of what happened and the person who is ultimately responsible for the care of your daughter, wasn't forced to ask those questions and you don't have to conclude anything, you can if you wish leave it hanging.

A. Yes, okay.

Q. So how did you feel about that you went to the witness box in an honest and open way yet the person who was responsible for the care of your daughter was allowed not to answer questions about her death.

A. I feel that it was our forum to speak out to be able to talk, the first time we were able to talk about this and to get, and to let the coroner know that not only we have to deal with Lucy's death but the aftermath, the closed doors, and nobody would listen to us. The inquest give all people involved and opportunity to talk about what happened, and how they dealt with Lucy. We had doctors from England and Wales who spoke, who was able to tell us and explain what happened to Lucy, on the Thursday Dr O' Donogue decided not to give evidence. He had put up the trip and we could not understand this. We were quite devastated that he did not take the opportunity of saying what he wanted to say and answering questions the way we had to answer questions.

Q. Devastated is the way you describe it, but this was the forum to identify the accountability in all these issues, this was and I understand he is allowed not to fully..... But given it was the only forum available to you, was this the end of the road, then from your point of your view?

A. I feel that hesorry I don't know what to say here.

Q. So you went to the inquest just take me through the process and the fact that man that was ultimately responsible for the care of your daughter, did not have to answer questions the way that you did?

A. We went to the inquest and we listened to what everybody was saying that was involved with Lucy, we were all cross examined including

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myself, by the barrister, on the Thursday morning the coroner said that Dr O'Donogue who was charge of Lucy's care had decided not to give evidence. We were devastated that he had decided not to, because this was a forum where we were going to get all our answers as we thought.

Q. So this was a double blow if you like?

A. Yes, we thought an inquest is a place where you get the answers, your questing and you get answers and everybody has to take part, if your called you must take part. Dr O'Donogue didn't. We don't understand that we still have not been given any reason why he did not get into the witness box and be cross-examined like everyone else during the week.

Q. and as you say you were devastated.

A. Just could not believe it, because this was the person we thought we will get answers from, and I thought, I would have respected him if he had got up and told the truth and that's all I wanted, the truth, but it wasn't to be.

Q. So while you now know more answers, it's through your own investigative work.

A. Yes

Q. And externally from the trust that you have achieved these answers, Is that a fair assumption.

A. Yes, yes my husband and myself had all the work to do on our own, through our solicitor, yes.

Q. What Mae has been the affect of this?

(knocking on floor.....)

Q. What has been the affect on this on all your family?

03153 - 55113

A. Lucy brought so much joy into our lives, and whenever she dies the life just left us all, it's been a difficult life since Lucy has left us, it's try and get on and people say you have to get over it, you have to move on, and I know other children, other parents have lost their children, I accept that but I find it's so difficult when you looks a child. As a parent, your job is to, you bring this child into the world and it is your job to look after this child as a mother that is the way I feel about it. And then for us having to try and get answers it has put a strain on the household.

Q. Could..... Trust have done anything to alleviate that strain?

55123 - 56052
 A. Yes I believe that after Lucy's death they had come up to us and said listen this is what happened, we are very sorry, this is what we have done now to prevent this from happening again, and how can we help you as a family to get over Lucy's death and to deal with this. I feel that we wouldn't be 4 separate as we are today.

Q. And instead theTrust elected to do what?

A. Put Lucy's death under the carpet first of all, didn't want to know, any questions we were asked we were side lined. They say they have investigated it. They have had reviews which we have had no input to whatsoever. They have just at times ignored us. I have on several occasions myself tried in different ways to try and get them to speak to us, and to maybe give them an inkling as how our lives have been. Because of what they have failed to do for us. But I feel that they have to be more accessible to parents or to anyone and to be accountable for what happens in hospitals today, and especially accountable for death of our daughter Lucy.

Q. Do you understand why they might have behaved the way they did, can you understand the processes perhaps, that litigate towards that?

A. They have to change the way they are, they have to change, they have to come and talk, they have to believe in there own procedures, the complaint we put in the beginning we were to get an answer within 20 days. It's nearly 4 years now. They have to change there complaints procedure and there instead of sitting behind an office behind a door

they have to come and make it more accessible for parents, people who have lost loved one's or they can deal with complaints are trivial I would believe in my book but they could not and will not deal with Lucy's death.

Q. Just final broad question. What do want to hear from...Henrietta Campbell?

A. I want to know how she can help us recover as a family after this terrible ordeal; I would like the procedures changes, the complaints procedure. If someone has a family tie, they have to stand aside, and must be fully investigated at the time, not 4 years down the line. I would like her to, I would like to ask her if she ever seen the review, because Dr Quinn eyes, provided for Espair & Lakeland.

.....(confirming next question) tape goes quiet.....