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'I was dumped in a dustbin and left to die'

By [Susan Lochrie @greenocktele](#) Reporter



A FORMER Quarriers Home orphan who was dumped in a dustbin and later cheated death in a horrific accident has devoted his life to helping children and is now writing a book about his life.

Kenny McCallum, 75, recently made an emotional return to the place where he grew up.

The grandfather wants to tell his story of a happy childhood in the cottages built by the **Greenock** born 19th century philanthropist William Quarrier.

As a baby Kenny was rescued by binmen and taken to Quarriers, where he spent the first 15 years of his life.

More tragedy would follow in his life when he was working in a quarry and 3,500 tonnes of rock fell on him.

He fought back to health and used compensation to set up a youth club and fund holidays for young people.

Even today he still receives treatment once a week at **Inverclyde** Royal for the life-changing injuries caused by his crushed organs.

Now, following a poignant pilgrimage to Quarriers, he has looked back on his time at the home as 'the happiest days of my life'.

He said: "I had a wonderful time.

"We could join the scouts, there was school and we even had holidays.

"It makes me feel sad that there is nothing left of Quarriers now.

"Even the church has gone.

"I am sad it is all now just houses sold for money.

"I still remember the day I left, I was 15-years-old.

"Quarriers gave me two big suitcases full of clothes and my birth certificate, set me up with a hostel and I had a job in a bakery."

Born in 1944, Kenny was taken to Quarriers after being abandoned.

He said: "I was put in a dustbin in Dunblane when I was born.

"The mum was a servant in a big house.

"They had no choices whatsoever and just had to do what they were told. She would have hid her pregnancy."

In recent years revelations about Quarriers home and details of a catalogue of historic abuse have come to light.

The scandal now forms a major part of the Scottish Government child abuse inquiry.

But Kenny said: "I can honestly say that I didn't experience anything like that.

"In our cottage we were well looked after by Mr and Mrs Todd, who were an older couple."

After leaving Quarriers Kenny built a life for himself as a farmhand and then working in the quarry, settling in Argyll and Bute.

He said: "My childhood has definitely had an impact on me my entire life.

"But I believe in being positive and putting a smile on your face."

Kenny met and married his wife Kay, who had two older children, Hugh, now 45, Lynn, now 43, and the couple had a son together Brian, now 36.

His life would change again following an accident in February 1985.

During an explosion, thousands of tonnes of rocks fell on Kenny.

He survived but was left with terrible injuries from his waist down and permanent damage to his major organs.

Kenny said: "It took 20 men, four ambulances and **police** officers to get me free.

"To this day they don't know how I survived but I did."

Kenny now suffers from heart and kidney trouble as a result of his accident and goes to IRH for treatment once a week.

He added: "As far as I know I am the only person to ever had had their urethra organ halved in two.

"I am a miracle!"

When Kenny received a compensation payout he used the money to build a youth centre and send children in his community on **holiday**.

Kenny added: "I had always wanted to give something back and help children, so this was my opportunity.

"We used to go on trips to the panto and on holidays.

"It was something I was really proud of."

The family were left devastated when Kay died at 49 after she collapsed due to an aneurysm.

Kenny, who is now busy writing his book about his upbringing at Quarriers, said: "Kay spent all these years caring for me.

"She was a wonderful lady, we had a lovely life together".