

## STOLEN CHILDHOOD

I have a lot of unanswered questions to my childhood, it haunts me to the point of mental illness, and the detrimental effect that it has had on my life and it will most probably follow me to the grave. Why were single mothers encouraged, cheated, lied to, and coerced into giving their babies up for adoption? There is overwhelming evidence to support this, and who had the right to make these demands. The evidence that was given at the senate enquiry into Forgotten Australians must be believed and the consequences that led to single mothers giving up their first born is unbelievable, the damage that has been done can never be undone. The whole nucleus of any sort of family has wilfully been attacked from the very roots of which it should have been protected from. No amount of money can compensate our suffering. There was a great stigma attached to single mothers those days and it is my belief that much pressure was forced and coerced onto my mother to adopt me out. I was her first born and she would have loved me with all her heart and she wasn't given a chance. I was born on 30/12/52 at Hillcrest in Freemantle, Western Australia. My mother was a single mother named aged 23 years. My father's name is an engineer. I have never met my mother or father, but at least I have been to where my mother's ashes were scattered, and at age 51, I was given a photo of her. I was adopted at the tender age of one year and eleven months, and have been told that out of sheer desperation that my mother abandoned me and gave me up for adoption. These circumstances were forced upon her, she was given no support network, she was left with no choice. My step parents moved to Victoria when I was still very young and were very cruel to me, especially my step mum, she was the driving force to my unhappiness, growing up as a child. She hated me with so much venom that I haven't seen her for twenty years and she only lives a stone's throw from my daughter's place whom I visit regularly. My step parents in their wisdom eventually took me to the children's court in Melbourne and told the Judge that I was an uncontrollable child and had me made a state ward and I was placed back into institutional care for the rest of my childhood and then into a hostel. I was an adorable child (see photo) and my birth mother should have been supported and encouraged to keep me, why didn't welfare help her? She was forced out of sheer poverty and my sisters in Perth have

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told me how she suffered all her life with depression and anxiety. Years later she gave birth to my sister on the same birth date that I was born and it was a constant reminder every year over her entire life that she had adopted me. My mother told my sisters about me and how out of sheer poverty that she was forced to give me up for adoption and she asked them before she passed away, would they look for me. After mum passed away my sisters found a photo in her possessions of three little boys in a bathtub and on the back of the photo there is a stamp W.A. NEWSPAPER, they wondered if this could be me. They searched the archives of that paper and they found the original article. My name at birth before my adoption was \_\_\_\_\_ and my mother had kept my photo close to her, all her life. If you read the history of adoptions in the fifties, it is well documented in the senate report The Forgotten Australians that single mothers were lied to, discouraged, forced and coerced into making decisions about adoptions that they would later regret and have to live with for the rest of their lives. Wasnt Redress WA set up as a direct result of this report? I too suffer from depression, post traumatic stress disorder, low self esteem, my public housing flat is like a pig sty and I barely get past day to day. I have had drug and alcohol problems, suicidal thoughts and gambling problems. I am very proud of my mum and what she must have gone through and I feel the heartache that she must endured. I feel that my friends a family do not understand my suffering, but at the same time I feel that my sisters in Perth who have an intimate knowledge of my case and my mother can attest to everything, fully understand my suffering. Who ran the Alexandra home? Was it owned by the government? Was it run by the government? I have been told that there is no record of me being in the Alexandra home as all the records have either been lost or destroyed, but I have read on the internet somewhere that there are records in the Batte library? Are there any records of the Alexandra Home or Hillcrest? Who holds these files? Do the Salvation Army have any files? The forgotten Australian report page 108 4.59 States "The removal of the baby and offering for adoption was often undertaken by duress or in some instances deception." Alternative options to keep the baby and legal rights were not explained. It was given that you had to give your baby up for adoption to stay in the home

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(Alexandra Home, Highgate). (The Matron) made it clear that my baby is not MY BABY-there was no way I was going to keep "it", if I wanted to stay in the home.I had nowhere else to go...There was no privacy in the home only in the bathroom, as we all slept in a dormitory and worked in the kitchen and laundry...Neither 'they' the 'welfare' nor any social worker came near me let alone explain any of the options available. e.g a special payment from the government to stay at home and look after a relative, the layette, the food assistance, baby bonus and child allowance and/or an additional benefit. Not wealth by any means, but at least a chance to get on our feet and stay together". (Sub 97)

There are many other submissions in The Forgotten Australians senate report that it was so common to deprive mothers and babies of their basic rights. Who was this matron? Who's orders was she following to force single mothers into adoption? Was it the practice of the day to do this at all these places? My mother described herself as a laundry assistant in the adoption papers, as mentioned in The Forgotten Australians, this article may have been written from her evidence for all I know? .Was I placed in foster mothers care Mrs \_\_\_\_\_ by my mother or welfare? Was I a ward of the state in Western Australia? Was my mother a ward of the state in Western Australia? Was Mrs \_\_\_\_\_ employed by welfare? Are there any records? Please read of both homes in signposts book? On the back of my adoption papers it states police report 14/12/54, what is in this report? Am I allowed to have a copy of this report? It states on my adoption papers, 'These are the only documents that can be forwarded to you from the courts adoption record on the authorisation of the director general', are there any other records that directly relate to me and am I allowed to have them? etc etc as you can see, I am aged 56 and I am still haunted by my childhood. Are there any other police reports? concerning me or my mother, or my father? I have always had a very troubled life and have always known that something going back to my very earliest roots was not right, I am and always have been a very troubled soul.