

My Name is Nigel Shew.
I was born in 1950 my mother died in 1955.
Leaving myself elder brother sister and a younger sister.
My father remarried and took on four more kids.
By the time we immigrated to Australia in 1958 another boy was born.
Nine kids in all.
By the end of 1959 my elder brother /sister ran away to Sydney.
I was a state ward charged with being uncontrollable.
Draw you own conclusions why.
Held over at Riverview Salvation Army home.
For few weeks on way to home Indooroopilly.
Whilst at Riverview I witnessed two boys flogged.
For running a way, they used a thick leather strap across their backs.
What sticks in my mind when arriving to Indooroopilly was giving up my shoes.
The walk to school barefoot a distance of one mile.
My feet were all ways cut sore and stone bruised.
I was called a weak pommy bastard.
I was Eight and a half years of age.
You lined up for every thing from the smallest boy front to the bigger boys at the rear.
When showering you lined up naked and you could see the big blue welts
On the backsides of the boys that had been punished.
All boys's had a number tagged on all their cloths etc.
Mine was 30.
We also had a job to do before going to school.
Most of the older boys worked before and after school and weekends.
I often wonder who was looking after who.
The food was not that good.
The cooks were un trained.
Weevils and other pest were a common addition.
I have memories of being hungry.
But the worst was being thirsty in the summer not allowed to have water long before bedtime.
Wet the beds were punished by having too wash there linen under a cold shower every morning winter or summer.
Life went on.

My troubles began at high school.
I hadn't seen my family for years.
I felt abandoned I was concerned about my younger sister.
I had no interest in school and they had no interest in me A (HOMEBOY)

I started wagging school I would meet up with my sister at her school in secret.

I started to be punished I was defiant I had my sister back.

The cane now didn't even make me flinch.

There were no counsellors in those days.

So you just had to make your own decisions.

I stole a pushbike and rode off.

The police brought me back.

I was severely caned and made to sit on a potato sack naked for one week.

I was then told I was a bad influence on the other boys.

So I would have to go to work.

I was fourteen and a half years old.

Shortly after I was living in a boarding house for men.

Supporting myself by working in a factory.

Being a state ward till I was 18 years old.

I surprisingly never heard from the HOME or the STATE again.

I found my own way.

I was very unprepared for adult life.

I lacked work social and communication skills which in return.

Caused anger, frustration and loneliness.

I used alcohol and sometimes drugs to try and ease the pain.

But that created more and bigger problems.

I am now married for the 3rd time.

My wife has been and is a great support for me.

Not dealing with my past has brought a lot of UN happiness in my life.

Though the organization called CLAN I have met other survivors of a very brutal and uncaring system.

I am now 54 years of age it is so long ago.

And it is amazing how the rights of children have changed in this country.

I believe in discipline and some of the youth of to day lack it.

But cruelty only gives you a lifetime of pain.