

I would like to participate in the committee's investigation into the practice of forced adoptions during the 1950s to 1970s.

I was 16 years old when I fell pregnant. My mother arranged with a "Salvation Army friend" to have me installed (or committed) to a "Salvation Army Home for Unmarried Mothers" in Sydney (I cannot remember the actual name of it).

There we worked daily in their laundry "ironing sheets" until we showed signs of an imminent birth. (This period of time could go on for months and at no time were we permitted to leave the premises of the "HOME").

I have to give the nurses credit for showing compassion during the birth period. I was given a sedative and someone stayed with me the whole time until I gave birth.

Unlike other homes, my baby(son) was given to me the next day and I was permitted to sponge and dress him. I actually had access to him for a short period of time (exactly how long I forget) until the day a woman who spoke with a foreign accent collected him from the home (I could actually see this woman leave the home carrying my baby and I can still remember the agony of her ignoring me as I pleaded to hold him just one more time).

My son "FOUND ME" years later following his placing of notices in newspapers. (I had always been too frightened to do the same because of the shame I felt at being labelled (AN UNMARRIED MOTHER) .

I have since married and have four children. It is very special that we also have a close relationship with my "first son" and his family.

It has taken me a long time to open-up and talk about my "discretion" However in doing so I feel free inside myself that I have acknowledged my "extra son".