

Department of the Senate
P. O. Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Page 1 of 6

ROBYN MARGARET WEBB



Senate inquiry into "Commonwealth contribution to former forced adoption policies and practices."

I Robyn Margaret Webb am a citizen of the Commonwealth of Australia resident in Queensland.

As an Australian citizen, the Commonwealth affords me protection from the unlawful and harmful actions that threaten my right to life, liberty and justice from those who would deny me thee rights, within and without, the borders of Australia.

On February, 25th, 1963 I was admitted to King George V hospital for Mother's and babies.

At the time of adoption, I was neither aware nor made aware of the

following facts: -

- That I could choose to keep my baby.
- That I could have 5 days to hold my baby before reaching a decision.
- That not holding my baby could have severe and ongoing psychological consequences that could influence and even determine my entire life.
- That financial and other support was available to unwed mothers (now known as single mothers)

- That legally there was a period of time in which I could revoke the arrangement. (My mother only revealed this to me, when I had found my daughter 28 years later).

From the moment of delivery I was not permitted to hear, see, touch or smell my baby.

I was very confused at the time, due to the many drugs I was given.

I have no recall of signing the adoption papers at the time and it would appear that I was made to sign on the second day.

I received no counseling at the time.

I was directed to make a statement for the police without any advice as to the purpose and ramifications of this action.

My mother, seeing my devastation and grief over the loss of my baby, attempted to get my daughter back for me. Although this was within six weeks, she was told she was too late. (again I only found this out when I met my daughter)

I am only now beginning to make sense of the symptoms, which resulted from my separation from my child. I didn't know where my feelings of deep

pain arose from or that they were normal and had in fact already been documented.

Some of the symptoms I have been living with are: -

- Hollow emptiness
- Extremely low self esteem
- Feelings of unworthiness and shame.
- Lack of boundaries as a victim of sexual abuse and physical abuse.ⁱ
- Deepening depression, leading to both substance abuse and several attempts at suicide.ⁱⁱ
- Deteriorating family life.
- Grieving in silence, feeling very alone.
- Hostility, guilt and anger.
- Grief, anguish and despair increasing with time.
- Inability to conceive again.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Over-achieving to the point of collapse, in an attempt to prove my self worth.

For 28 years I didn't know if my daughter was dead or alive. This caused me considerable distress. The search for her consumed me.

As soon as I had her birth certificate I struggled to research her background.

Our reunion was highly emotional and extremely stressful for all parties.

That was 20 years ago, and during this time, I have had very brief but wonderful visits with my daughter. Due to my daughter's family situation she had been unable to tell her husbands parents of my existence, (this has now been addressed. We still have not shared a Christmas and only some birthdays with my daughter only, although I am able to send presents and receive them – but only as a “friend of the family”. My daughter has since told my grandchildren the truth. After 14 years I finally got to meet them for the first time and then another 2 years passed and my daughter invited me into her home for the 1st time and I got to meet the children again. I am allowed emails and only if it is under extreme circumstances I am allowed to ring.

The grief grows with each grandchild.

Why did we have to go through all this pain? It has been known since 1939 that premature separation of mother and child is traumatic for everyone involved.

I have been living in a fog and I am started to piece my life together, now I have a truthful reference point.

I write this in hope that other mothers will be fully advised, as to the unnecessary suffering caused by adoption.

I am adding in hospital reports and although I have tried to get the statement from the Police Department regarding my statement, (this was required due to my age) my attempt has been unsuccessful.

My greatest longing is share my life with my daughter and her family. To be a mother and watch my grandchildren grow. Photos are not enough to satisfy my needs.

I moved from New South Wales for several reasons: -

The main reason, so I would not cause my daughter any concern that I might turn up unannounced, so by distancing myself I would give her peace of mind. The urge to see my grandchildren was becoming too tempting. I wasn't sure how I would handle seeing them and not being able to touch them.

Next, I had confronted one of my rapists by letter. Finally received counseling (the report will be forwarded, as soon as it becomes available).

I am enclosing the non identify details of my daughter's assault, I do this as there seems to be some correlation between adoptees and birth mothers becoming victims. (At age 19 my daughter suffered as a victim of attempted murder, sexual assault, inflicted grievous bodily harm and malicious wounding, this was revealed to me at the time of our first meeting, and my daughter made it clear, that she did not want to discuss this again).

My daughter also fears repercussions from this man, as we have no way of knowing if he has been released from prison. Although she has had a name change as a result of marriage and moved far from the area where the attack took place, there may be a possibility of him searching for her, as it was her evidence that imprisoned him.

-
- ⁱ Report from hospital
 - ⁱⁱ Court order
 - ⁱⁱⁱ Infertility

I will forward these if & when required.

Yours sincerely

*Robert McWells
nee McCall*

29th March, 2011