



[REDACTED]

21st August 2005

A policeman CAUSED the accident

Select Committee on Mental Health
To whom it may hopefully concern

I will give the purpose for my submission. A brief summary of our experience. Some suggestions on how it may be possible to improve it for others.

Having heard "He slipped through the net" so many times I have little option than conclude: for my father and those like him- There was no net There is no net! There was no justice; there is no justice. No one wants to know. It is more important to cover up than try to improve the system. More humane treatment is required for a mongrel dog than these poor people. Hope you can prove me wrong?

The last thing dad said to any of his children was "There are so many others out there from Morisset. what about them?" We wish to address the spirit of that last wish Heres hoping you do too.

Over 50 years ago Dad was involved in an accident. Subsequently he became violent towards mum [at the full moon] Mum ended up in hospital - was given the choice: sign dad over to the Master of Lunacy "at Her Majesty's pleasure or permanently lose her 5 children.

Dad was sent to Morisset and for many years we were actively discouraged from visiting.

Mum repeatedly requested dad's skull be xrayed, it never was. On one admission to another hospital a depression in the back of his head is noted. - Did He Have a clinical depression #?

After we had grown up some members of the family were allowed to take dad out on holiday etc.

Shortly before going to WA a meeting was arranged at my sister's home: -

WE were to have a new treatment for dad explained I was told. The social worker arrived and after asking a few questions of other members of the family; spent most of the time cross questioning me on my plans, motives etc for going into missionary work. Except from asking us what we remembered of dad if we were afraid of him, she didn't discuss him at all. I left the meeting with the impression [which I held for the next 30 years] that it had been an effort by my family to stop me from going to the mission and had nothing whatever to do with dad.

THAT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN THE ONLY CHANCE WE MAY HAVE HAD OF EVER GETTING DAD BACK.

Soon after my sister who had been visiting dad regularly [2 weekly at least] arrived to find dad gone no one would tell her where. Eventually he was tracked down at Armidale. We all visited him there he was happy as he had his own chores and took a pride in doing them, he was 70 or so.

Dad was not allowed to attend my wedding in 1992 nor was he ever allowed to attend any other similar "special family function" in all the years HER Majesty held him?

He again disappeared. With no little difficulty he was again tracked down this time at Mittagong [Sunshine Lodge]

Later with no assessment he was sent to Rosnel at Bundanoon. It appears he was showing clear signs of mental health problems prior to transfer. Sunshine lodge told me they were NEVER informed that dad or any of those transferred with him had ever had mental health problems. On dad's Morisset file it states that it was doubted he would ever be able to survive outside the hospital environment.

In Sept 2000 he was admitted to Bowral hospital " After a fall in an appalling state with a chest infection and hypothermic" WE visited.

A week later I again visited He had been dehydrated [while conscious] worse than I have ever seen anyone admitted to hospital. As a registered nurse with outback experience one does know what they are seeing.

Picking up his chart I was horrified to see a large bolus IV overdose of Morphine ordered and signed as given. Especially as the previous evening I had been assured he didn't need it and definitely would NOT be given it. When challenged Dr at first denied morphine had been given then blatantly altered the chart in front of us said "there" and walked out

When challenged about the dehydration he said dad was "old homeless with a history of mental illness" A phrase he repeated many times in the ensuing days sometimes adding "with no family" We stayed at dad's bedside till his death a week later. I can assure you it didn't get any better.

We are informed that what happened to dad was "acceptable medical practice" The eyewitness evidence is inadmissible on the grounds we may have "vested interests"

Dad was NEVER appointed a guardian? WE can't find out when he was actually "dumped" by the mental health system. It appears that in the latter years only the "protective commissioner" knew of his mental health history. Ironic the New name for the master for lunacy is I am told the "Protective Commissioner" SOME PROTECTOR. Morisset was a Palace compared to Rosnel

The more we learn the worse it gets. I have yet to encounter anyone who really wants to know let alone cares what people like dad and their families go through. WE criticise some other cultures as inhumane: what we allow by turning our backs is I consider far worse. Because we have the money and expertise to make it different. Hope you agree and have the will to make a difference.

It seems to me that at present covering up is far more important than improving the system. That is to bureaucrats at least

Dad's case was set down for inquest 3 times then postponed; now the idea is cancelled altogether. Every time anyone listened to us it appears they either "left" or were transferred ???

There is documentary evidence. I HAVE COPIES - NO ONE WANTS TO KNOW..

A lot of MENTALLY ILL PEOPLE are intelligent/professional people why can't their abilities be harnessed to "cut costs" - ie they contribute their skills etc to help maintain the facility they and others so desperately need. no one really wants to stay in a "degrading" hand out total care environment if they can help it WOULD YOU

This also applies to elderly - I'm 60 & know enough oldies to say this with absolute certainty

I know I was given
"How it's been covered
up & I can't
prove it"

(of Family)

My suggestions:

It be a requirement that ALL mental health clients in any sort of institutional care be appointed a guardian. Morisset was Buckingham palace compared to Rosnel.

That the relatives of all the people who were admitted under "Her Majesty's Pleasure" be formally notified that it is now permissible to take custody of their relative if they so wish. Keeping in mind that some may well not even know anything.

That ALL institutions housing frail aged / mentally ill be required to have a responsible person present on the premises 24 hrs a day except maybe for brief periods, and especially at night even if they are sleeping.

That mentally ill persons not be sent out of area where family can't visit and those who have been sent brought back.

That these people preferably be cared for by "Not for profit or community organisations" *in their own community AREA*

A law prohibiting the dehydration of any person while conscious in any care facility in Australia on the grounds that it is inhumane would be less hypocritical. Lets face it, it is illegal to do it to a dog WHY then is it ok for the "Old homeless and mentally ill"?

Recognition that some mentally ill people "for reasons of their own safety or that of others" may need very long term or even permanent close medical supervision. That the Old mental health facilities would be a palace compared to what they now have. Jail, Street, hellholes, etc. Reopen them but give the clients the dignity of being able to contribute towards the everyday workload. One young fellow with schizophrenia put it this way "I might be mad but I'm not stupid or lazy or incapable of working."

Few would need to be actually locked up continually. Some may well be able to hold outside jobs if they had regular supervision and meals. Get a bit innovative and realistic these people are not often physically incapable nor do they all want to "live off the tax payer." - *Boredom can accentuate some mental Health* Δ

Consideration of a family accommodation Rehabilitation centre for those with drug related problems [similar to the alcohol withdrawal centres the Salvation Army runs in WA] could actually short circuit return to drugs on discharge.

Hopefully you will find my submission worthy of acceptance

Yours faithfully

It would seem obvious that anyone who needs money Management and Institutional care ALSO needs a guardian either family or someone independant. NOT THE facility they're in.

PLEASE