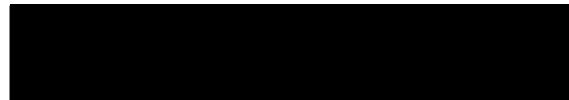


Family and Community Development Committee
Parliament House , Spring Street
East Melbourne Vic 3002

Betty Coleman



Friday 20 July 2012

Betty Coleman



Name in the home - Yvonne Collins

Name of the Home - Salvation Army Home for girls East Camberwell

Please find attached 2 Submissions to your department of my account of being in Salvation Army care in Victoria .

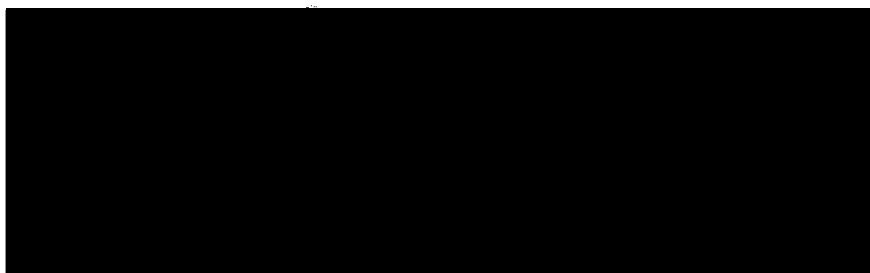
This also was under your care as well .

One is a copy of my questionnaire for the Salvation Army and the other is A recollection of mine whilst in the care of the Salvation Army .

Should there be any more information you may need please contact me at the above address .

Yours sincerely

Betty Coleman



RECOLLECTION BY BETTY TRICKET WHILE IN CARE OF THE SALVATION ARMY HOME FOR GIRLS, EAST CAMBERWELL DURING THE PERIOD 1939 – 1949.

My name hasn't always been Betty Coleman. When I was aged four and a half my mother and I were driven in a large black car to a place that I later learned was called The Salvation Army Home for Girls, East Camberwell. I was placed in the Salvation Army care around the period 1939 – 1940.

I was born in 1935. When I was first driven to the Salvation Army Home it was dark and all I can recall when the driver approached the large gates was the wind blowing the branches of the overhanging trees and their shadows were playing on the high fence. This image was very frightening to me.

On arriving at the front door of the Salvation Army Home my Mother and I were taken into a large hall. The hall was all white and black marble and the place was very cold. My mother had brought all my clothes in a small cardboard suitcase. The suitcase was taken from my mother by the Home staff and the next occasion when I saw my belongings was in 1949, when I left the home. None of the suitcase items fitted me again so everything was taken away and replacement clothing was given to me when I left the home.

The first night I was in the Salvation Army home I was taken to a dormitory. I could not see properly as it was dark and the only light was in the hallway. I could make out a lot of other beds but it was late, as all the other girls were asleep. That night I was too afraid to move so consequently I wet the bed twice. The next morning I was scolded by one of the Home's resident officers and told that if I wet the bed again I would have my nose rubbed in it.

From that time on for many years after I left the home I continued to experience a terrible nightmare. The nightmare involved me being in a bare room with white bright walls. Very soon the walls turned into large balls that began rolling towards me. I would wake up screaming and again be scolded by the resident officers, told not to be stupid and stop looking for attention. The nightmares did not stop while I was at the home and for many years afterwards. Also when I woke up on the first morning at the Home I was told I was no longer to be called Betty Trickett (my maiden name) but Yvonne Collins. I was not sure why my name was changed and I never could overcome the terrible feeling when told of my name change.

I always seemed to be scolded by the resident staff. A regular punishment that I received was being struck / slapped with a narrow leather strap and also a thicker, more painful strap. I would be struck on the hand or bottom and across the back of my legs. Another form of punishment was to place me on a seat in an isolated place and forced to remain on the seat for either half or a full day. I was only allowed off this seat to take meals or a toilet break. During mealtimes I was forced to sit at a table on my own. Over the years I was forced to regularly take meals at that table on my own.

I can recall on one occasion I leaped over a trench that had been dug to place slop rubbish in. The breakfast bell rung when I landed on the other side, my foot slipped

down the edge and I injured my right foot - the pain was terrible. I could only drag myself to the dining room door and I banged on the door however the rule was if you were not inside the dining room when the door was shut you went without and had to wait until the door opened again. I was then put to bed for three weeks without any medical examination or assessment by a trained medical practitioner. My ankle broke out in a cluster of very painful for months after. To this present date I still have occasional pain in the ankle when walking.

When I was aged eight I was placed in charge of a younger girl. This involved significant responsibilities on my part, responsible for ensuring she was dressed appropriately at all times. I was required to mend her clothes and darn her socks. Additionally I also ensured she bathed regularly.

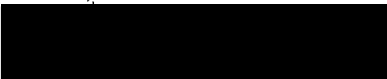
I was born left handed. When I commenced school in 1941 at the Salvation Army Home I was regularly struck across my left knuckles whenever I attempted to use my left hand. The teachers regularly tied my left hand to the back of my chair.

The teachers and staff continually told me that I was stupid and an idiot. I was placed into a corner with a dunce's cone on my head. I have now grown to believe that I am slightly Dyslexic, as ever since my time at the home I have regularly made the mistake of confusing the letters D and G.

A regular task I was forced to do was to assist four other girls in the home to rake a very large area of lawn. Raking the lawn in winter and autumn was worst as we would suffer chronic chilblains on our heels and fingers. The temperature was near freezing and we were never provided gloves or warmer clothing. Nor were our chilblains covered and consequently we could not wear shoes due to the pain.

I am unable to recall the names of the staff or other girls in the home but I do remember some of the faces.

During the period I was at the home I can recall the regular physical abuse through the corporal punishment that I regularly received. Many of the staff and teachers struck me with either open hands or using an implement such as a strap. I continually lived in fear that I would be struck or punished. At the home the staff would strike us for the most minor of indiscretion. I recall the emotional pain I felt when forced to sit in an isolated place and forced to remain isolated and ostracised during meals and in when trying to seek human contact and companionship. These events affected me emotionally for many years after leaving the home and I can still recall the terrible feeling of being isolated and continually berated.

Signed: 

Dated: 17 Aug 2006

SALVATION ARMY QUESTIONNAIRE

- Please complete this form legibly using BLOCK CAPITALS
- Please tick boxes as appropriate

1. Your details:

Last name: COLEMAN

Maiden name: TRICKETT

First name(s): BETTY

Any other first or last name(s) used: YVONNE COLLINS

Any other name(s) by which you were known in any institution:

Date of birth:

Day	Month	Year
12	JANUARY	1935

Sex: Male Female /

Address: [REDACTED]

Daytime telephone no: [REDACTED]

Mobile number: NONE

Email address: [REDACTED]

2. Evidence of Identity

Do you have any of the following? If so, please attach copies:

- *Passport*
- *Driver's Licence*
- If known, please state your home address when you were first placed in an institution:

Tasmania

3. Institution(s) in which you were resident

- *Please give the names and addresses of all institutions in which you were resident and the dates of residence as precisely as possible.*
- *Please also state, if you can, any number you were given in the institution.*

Name of Institution:	Address:	Dates of residence:		Number given in the institution
		From:	To:	
SALVATION ARMY	UNKNOWN	1939-40	1948 OR	UNKNOWN
HOME FOR GIRLS			49	
EAST CAMBERWELL				

4. Description of abuse suffered by you:

- *Please provide a written account of any sexual, physical or emotional abuse or any neglect which you suffered while resident in any institution named in this form.*
- *Please provide the following details, if you can*

Place(s) where abuse occurred	Approximate date(s) when abuse occurred	Name(s) of person(s) who committed abuse
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AT THE HOME	WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED AT THE HOME	THIS IS UNKNOWN TO ME NOW
AT THE HOME	DATES MEAN NOTHING TO ME	UNKNOWN TO ME
AT THE HOME	ALWAYS BEING PUNISHED, HAD TO SIT ON A BOX IN AN ISOLATED PLACE ALL DAY OR MADE TO SIT THERE HALF A DAY AND ONLY ALLOWED OUT FOR MEALS AND THEN HAD TO SIT AT A TABLE ON MY OWN. OVER THOSE YEARS I BECAME VERY AQUANTED WITH THAT TABLE AS I WAS IN TROUBLE A LOT.	UNKNOWN TO ME
AT THE HOME	GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANOTHER GIRL WHEN I WAS 8 YEARS OLD THAT ENTAILED A LOT	UNKNOWN TO ME
AT THE HOME	I JUMPED A DITCH IN THE YARD WHEN THE BREAKFAST BELL WENT.	

	DID SOMETHING TO MY RIGHT ANKLE AND WAS UNABLE TO WALK TO THE DINING ROOM I CRAWLED TO THE DINING ROOM DOOR AND	
	KNOCKED ON THE DOOR AND THE DOOR WASN'T OPEND UNTIL BREAKFAST FINISHED. I WAS THEN PUT INTO BED FOR 3 WEEKS .	
	THERE IS A LOT MORE I WISH TO TELL SO IT MAY BE BETTER TO COVER THIS IN THE COVERING LETTER.	

5. Description of injuries resulting from abuse:

- Please provide a written account of the injuries resulting from the abuse with reference to the following:
 - (a) Physical or psychiatric injury.
 - (b) Psychological, social and educational difficulties.
 - (c) Loss of employment or other opportunity,
- If you have attended any medical or other practitioner or any hospital for treatment of these injuries, please provide the following information where possible:

Name of Practitioner/hospital	Address	Dates attended
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NONE	NONE	NONE

I WAS BORN LEFT HANDED BUT THAT SOON CHANGED AS I HAD MY LEFT HAND TIED BEHIND MY BACK WHILST I WAS AT SCHOOL, ALSO I WAS FOREVER BEING TOLD I WAS AN IDIOT AND A DUNCE AND MANY TIMES PLACED ON A STOOL IN THE CLASSROOM IN A CORNER WITH A DUNCES CONE ON MY HEAD.

9. Tell us about yourself.

Were you a Ward of the State UNKNOWN

If so, over which years? 1939-40_____ to __1948-49_____

- Are you married? Yes
- Do you have children? Yes
- Dates of birth
 - Child 1. _____ 1958
 - Child 2. _____ 1961
 - Child 3. _____ 1962
 - Child 4.
 - Child 5.
 - Child 6.

AS I DIDN'T MAKE MANY FRIENDS THERE AND NOW IT IS
60 YEARS AGO.....

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Witness 2.....

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• What level of education did you achieve?
6TH GRADE

.....
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• When did you come to Australia?
N/A

.....

• Are you presently employed? No

• What is your occupation?
RETIRED

.....

• Name of Employer?
N/A

.....

• Average Gross Annual Earnings?
PART PENSION

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Signed:.....