

From: [Inquiry into responses to historical forced adoptions in Victoria](#)
To: [forcedadoptionsinquiry](#)
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into responses to historical forced adoptions in Victoria
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Inquiry Name: Inquiry into responses to historical forced adoptions in Victoria

MR PETER AUSTIN

[REDACTED]

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Hello. i am an individual that wanted to just comment on the forced adoption issue. I am 65 and i was adopted as a baby .my adoptive family always told me that i was adopted and i feel that was the proper thing to do. As i got older i was curious to know some information about my mother, etc but at that time , it was only non-identifying information! That has changed which i fully agree with.

So i went through the proper channels and protocol and did find information which was great plus how to word a letter etc and i did talk with a social worker as well.All good i thought.!

I wrote my letter and waited for a reply.! Eventually i got a phone call from a social worker that they had a distraught woman on the phone! This being my natural mother! Firstly she was afraid her then husband would have opened the letter and found out, as she had never told him about the birth, although this had happened years before she was married. Reading between the lines, i feel it was an abusive relationship.! I had addressed the letter to her and followed the proper protocol for those days.

Then the social worker told me that the hospital had told my mother i died at birth!! You can only imagine how she felt . Plus she never had any more children.

I presume in those days the hospital felt mothers would get over the loss of a child quicker if they were told it had passed away and you heard horror stories of the sheets on the bed lifted up as a mother gave birth so the baby was whisked away without her seeing her child. Shocking stories from the past. I have come to terms with what my natural mother went through and i did eventually contact her and receive a phone call from her. We cannot change what has happened in the past and maybe, in mothers mind,i did die at birth as she had no means to look after me as she was a immigrant with no family here. She does not want to meet me which i understand. I only hope she has found some level of happiness now. She has carried a guilt that she could not resolve and i had her cry and say sorry for 5 minutes on the phone.Of course i said i never want to hear her say sorry as she has nothing to be sorry for.And we did chat for about an hour. I have had no contact since but that is her wish. I respect that.

You may ask what has this got to do with forced adoptions? In the dark old days,a lot of things could have been done better.Decisions made then do have consequences in the future and can effect people for the rest of their lives.

Although i have strayed a bit from the original meaning of the submission ,we have to

learn from the past.

You have the power to make things better for the people involved in these emotive issues. And i feel that by sharing what has happened in the past, we all can learn and make better procedures and implement policies that respect and consider all the people involved.

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PETER AUSTIN

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File1:

File2:

File3: