

From: [Judy Stiff](#)
To: [forcedadoptioninquiry](#)
Subject: Re: Inquiry into responses to historical forced adoptions in Victoria - updates on Inquiry and making a submission
Date: Wednesday, 17 June 2020 1:50:04 PM

The year was 1965, I was 15, found myself pregnant so scared to tell anyone.

When I told my parents they were in shock, devastated, My mum was hysterical ,Dad tried to commit suicide.

I was taken to a doctor verified about 12 weeks pregnant Mum suggested abortion I told them I couldn't do that, so then discussion with the father of the child ,and his parents took place .

We were then going to get married, as I was under age needed the courts permission, so we had to see a judge in chambers . He wouldn't give his permission as the baby would be born after I turned 16 ,He said also I wasn't a ward of the state so I was cared for.

We then had talks with his parents his mum said said he shouldn't marry me.

The next day he came over to my house , told me he didn't love me I was so upset that was the last time I spoke to him .

Mum took me to Royal Women's Hospital for a check up we saw a social worker and was told adoption is best, so my family and everyone that was involved ,without much consultation with me ,it was decided that is what I should do. I cried everyday, my heart was so broken no one really encouraged me to do anything else .

When it came time that my child was to be born ,I was taken to the hospital in labor was in a big room on my own .

Every few hours a nurse would come ,until I was ready to give birth , I was then taken into what looked like a theatre had the mask for the contractions which made me vomit .

Finally after 24 hours in labour my baby was born ,I asked the nurse what did I have she told me a girl.

I asked could I see my baby ,she said we don't recommend that

,I told them I want to see my baby .

So for a split second she was placed in my arms then taken away,I had lots of stitches then taken to a verandah outside the ward ,which was where, the, married women were put .

I had to stay in hospital longer as I also had an infection .

One night my family came to visit me , we went to the nursery window a stranger said what a beautiful baby ,that was my little girl, I collapsed crying so was taken back to my bed sedated and later told we do not want you to see your baby again.

One point I was told to fill out a birth certificate application as it must be done regardless of impending adoption ,so I got the nurse to fill it out, I gave my baby the name [REDACTED] .was told she will get a new name when adopted anyway, but I thought she must have a name .

I was asked the father's name ,I told her ,she said we don't normally do that ,usually put unknown ,I protested told her what to put I don't know if she did , I was told usually in these cases they put unknown ,I was distraught as it made me out to be a bad girl seems everyone was protected except for me .

Also I was told this document would be destroyed , however I found out years later it went into the archives of Births Deaths and marriages .

When it came time that they wanted me to sign the document to revoke all rights to my child ,I couldn't so I told the nurse to fill it out , and they kept at me ,until,I signed it ,but I didn't want to.

I was told I had one month to change my mind ,everyday I went through trauma about wanting to sign it so I could get my baby back ,but as there was no support , also I was told my baby was already placed with the family ,so thought of the trauma to my child of being taken from the home I thought she was in ,however this I found out was wrong she wasn't put with them for number of weeks ,so was still in the hospital nursery.

I tried to get on with my life so I got a job .

One day there was a knock at our door, there were two police

officers, a lady and man standing there I was asked my name , I gave it to them ,then they said you have had a baby ,I said yes how do you know?

They told me we check the hospital records ,we want you to have the father charged with canal knowledge of a minor ,mum came out to see what was going on said we can't do that .

I told them i can't so I did nothing ,it was so intimating and as his brother was now married to my sister so very complicated. My story is like so many at the time we didn't have very much support and the stigma was so great not just for the mother , kids were labelled as well ,everyone it seemed wanting to put the problem as they called it ,under the rug ,out of sight out of mind.

For me years of torment, not knowing where my baby was not allowed to tell anyone grieving my loss it was like someone ripped out my heart .

In 1984 I was able to locate my beautiful girl ,who was now 18 years old she is a beautiful woman and is very much part of my life .

Writing this brings back so many painful memories I think we need to have a voice, so many young woman we're not helped or given any other options, we're not given correct information so we could make informed decisions, .and treated like criminals .

These years were stolen from us ,and nothing can change that, but maybe we can bring healing to a lost generation and their families especially Mums like me

Judy Stiff
16th June 20

Sent from my iPad

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