Who or what is Origins SPSA Inc?

About Origins Inc SPSA
Supporting People Separated by Adoption

An overview

Origins SPSA Inc was formed in 1995 by a small group of mothers who had lost children to adoption, not only in Australia but also from other parts of the world. This group of women had been previously involved with other groups including Jigsaw, Mothers for Contact, before they formed Origins this was with the intention of exposing the mental health and legal issues primarily of adoption, and later family separation of children, by forced separation practices and policies.

As an incorporated association we have followed the code of practice for that status, and have been audited, etc on an annual basis

Origins being a forerunner and the only independent organisation of its kind in the early 1990s also attracted, supported and formed partnerships with outreach programs and networks for people separated from their families through various forms of confinement in State and religious institutions including ex-foster care leavers, also Stolen Generations. We are also an organisation based on researching the mental health and legal issues of adoption, separation and removal

We have 3 state Coordinators and committees in each state; we also have groups in Canada, USA, with affiliated networks in the UL, Scotland, NZ, and Korea, and have sponsored 2 adoption conferences in New York, and three websites built and maintained by committee members.

We have a membership base of over 750 clients mostly mothers who have lost children to adoption and a significant number of adoptees and Forgotten Australians, also a number of Stolen Generations who have also been affected by all three issues, and an extensive library of historical resources on adoption,

etc

Unlike other self help groups, we at Origins are an independent organisation that has not received funding from Federal, State or Church organisations for adoption focused issues, so we rely for the most part upon our membership subscriptions and invaluable member volunteer committee for our survival.

We have over the past few years been granted a small amount of Federal Government funding for Stolen Generations projects and for assistance to host Sorry Day events etc

We have also received financial help from two of the local community sporting clubs being The Mounties and Cabravale Rugby league clubs who graciously paid the rental on our drop-in centre and office for a period until the competition for funding became too difficult to compete against larger organisations that could lobby more successfully for limited funds

Over the past 16 years Origins has also been instrumental in contributing to legislative change and also with input into a number of Parliamentary Reviews, State and Federal Inquiries and other initiatives by State and Federal governments.

As there was limited support for clients affected, before the emergence and awareness of the Forgotten Australians issue, and out of necessity we broadened our support network, it was also becoming apparent that those people affected, were in many case also were affected by adoption our original charter.

Origins has worked in partnership with other groups, indigenous and non-indigenous, and is currently represented on peak national groups by Mrs Pamella Vernon Souris on the Forgotten Australians Alliance and by Origins Coordinator Lily Arthur on the Stolen Generations Alliance where she is the non-indigenous delegate for New South Wales. We are to our knowledge, the only support organisation that is actively representing on a national level with past child removal or institutional issues.

We have also held three national mental health conferences on the mental health damage of family separation which included, people separated by adoption, state ward ship, indigenous groups, British child migrants and persons conceived by A.I. plus other groups etc. Origins although initially founded to deal with adoption issues quickly realized that adoption also encompassed a number of contributing factors, and was one of the first independent organisations to not only support these groups but also to take an active part in issues associated with The Forgotten Australians, and was called to give evidence to the 1998 Forde Inquiry Into the Abuse of Children in Qld Institutions, the Senate Mental Health Inquiry and the second Forgotten Australians Inquiry

We have also participated and provided information in a number productions including the Film Australia documentary “Gone to a good home”, “Operation Baby lift” and more recently “The Fence” a play about “Forgotten Australians”

Origins Services

We had a council office at Bonnyrigg Community Centre Bonnyrigg NSW that we occupied for 5 years and lost it due to the lack of funding and moved to a private residence where we continue to operate.

Currently we have played and still play an active part in Apology Day and Sorry Day Celebrations and have helped to organize a number of local events for the Indigenous community, and also provide social events and meetings for people separated by forced adoption

We provide welfare services such as

- Counseling and advocacy.
- Welfare relief such as water and food vouchers, clothing, furniture, etc .
- Information and referral to other welfare organisations.
- Searching advice and help and also mediation with reunions.
- Websites, on line chat forums and quarterly Newsletters.
- Workshops and art projects
- Public speaking etc
- Social events.

Origins Timeline

As presented on
www.originsnsw.com/timeline.html

- 1995 April. Origins NSW founded by Dian Wellfare to address past adoption practices and trauma relating to adoption.

- 1995 Origins expands to include Queensland.

- 1995 Joined the NSW Standing Committee on Adoption and Permanent Care.

- 1995 Led the International Women’s Day March in Sydney.

- 1995 Origins attends review of the Adoption Information Act Reform Forum.
- 1995 November. Submission to Beijing International Women's Conference.
- 1996 Marched at International Women's Day Sydney.
- 1996 Tasmanian Dead Baby Scandal, Origins inundated by media.
- 1996 Origins expands to include Victoria.
- 1996 Submissions to Law Reform Commission on Review into NSW Adoption of Children Act.
- 1996 "W" v State of New South Wales.
- 1997 Origins presented to the XIX Congress of the International Association for Suicide Prevention Adelaide.
- 1997 Origins presents to the 6th Australian Conference on Adoption held in Brisbane CBD.
- 1997 Origins Victoria instigates inaugural conference at Parliament House.
- 1997 "W" v State of New South Wales fails in Supreme Court.
- 1997 October. Dian Wellfare calls for Parliamentary Inquiry into Past Illegal Adoption Practices on Lateline ABC titled "Birthbond".
- 1998 March. Origins NSW gains Inquiry into Adoption Practices. Inquiry begins in August 1998.
- 1998 Origins goes global with the launch of it's first 2 websites.
- 1998 October. Evidence given at Forde Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions.
- 1999 Queensland Ombudsman calls for review of vetoes due to pressure from Origins as a result of uncovering fraudulent vetos.
- 1999 Origins gains Inquiry into Adoption Practices in Tasmania.
- 1999 Catholic church apologizes for past adoption abuses on day 2 of Parliamentary Inquiry.

- 1999 Origins USA is formed.
- 1999 Origins speaks on International Human Rights Day.
- 2000 Origins creates first open to the public on-line chat room on adoption in Australia.
- 2000 NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Adoption Practices finds adoption practices unlawful and unethical.
- 2000 New NSW Adoption Act 2000 incorporates all of Origins recommendations into section 5 of the legislation.
- 2001 Origins makes submissions to the Queensland Adoption Review.
- 2001 Origins has input into Child Migrant Inquiry.
- 2002 Origins Canada is established
- 2002 Origins instigates 1st National Conference on Mental Health Aspects of Persons Affected by Family Separation at Liverpool Hospital, Sydney.
- 2002 Origins representative invited to sit on SWSAH Area Mental Health Advisory Committee.
- 2003 Origins NSW opens it's own office at Bonnyrigg.
- 2003 Staged workshops in Sydney and Queensland into the historical perspective and effects of adoption.
- 2003 Origins submits submission to "Forgotten Australians" Inquiry.
- 2003 Qld Origins opens it's office at the Mental Health Association Building Wacol.
- 2004 Origins mothers in Victoria win court battle for FOI.
- 2004 Origins speaks at Women's Court of Human Rights University of NSW.
- 2004 Origins instigates 2nd National Conference on Mental Health Aspects of Persons Affected by Family Separation. Parks Centre for Mental Health Wacol Qld.
- 2004 International Women's Day March.
- 2004 Film Australia provides grant of $400,000 to film makers for

Origins instigated documentary “Gone to a Good Home”. Filming begins soon after.

- 2004 Origins Queensland invited to participate as members on Adoption Act Review Committee.
- 2004 Arthur v Queensland.
- 2005 Origins celebrates 10 years of Adoption Reform and Advocacy.
- 2005 Origins Qld and NSW appeared and gave evidence before the Senate Inquiry Into Mental Health.
- 2005 Origins Victoria, Queensland and NSW submits and appears to Inter-country Inquiry.
- 2005 Filming of documentary “Gone to a Good Home” finishes.
- 2005 Origins links up to work with Aboriginal Stolen Generation through South West Sydney Stolen Generation Support Group.
- 2006 International Women’s Day March.
- 2006 Mothers Adoption Stories Art Exhibition held in Brisbane.
- 2006 Origins invited to speak at Sorry Day dedication to Stolen Generations Monument at Mount Annan.
- 2006 Appeared at Forgotten Australians Conference.
- 2006 Origins presents submissions to Senate inquiries into "Stolen Wages" and "Transparent Advertising and Notification of Pregnancy Counselling Services Bill 2005".
- 2006 Origins becomes a member of the Forgotten Australians Alliance
- 2006. Origins Australia is represented by two of our speakers at the U.S. “Shedding the Light on Adoption” conference in New York organised by Origins USA in collaboration with Adoption Crossroads.
- 2006. Origins Victoria Held the 3rd National Conference on “The Mental Health Aspects of Persons Affected by Family Separation”. Melbourne Town Hall Victoria 10th-11th October
- 2006. Documentary “Gone to a Good Home” be aired November 2nd on SBS National Television. It was later aired 3 more times on SBS in the following 2 years

- 2007 Origins presents submission to the Senate Mental Health for Provision of Services
- 2007 Origins organizes Sorry day event at Mount Annan
- 2007 Lily Arthur NSW Coordinator is nominated non-indigenous delegate for Stolen Generations Alliance 2008 Origins attends Apology Day on Canberra
- 2008, Dian Wellfare Founder of Origins Dian Wellfare Passes away 16th April
- 2008 Mothers day service at the Wayside chapel
- 2008 Origins organizes Sorry day event at Mount Annan
- 2008 Nominates Dian Wellfare for My Favorite Australian Unsung Hero for the opening of the National Portrait Gallery Canberra, Dian's Portrait now traveling Australia
- 8/11/2008 Submission to the Senate Committee on Community Affairs Inquiry into Recommendations from Forgotten Australians Inquiry 2004 calling for a Senate inquiry into adoption
- 2008/09 Origins Qld lobbies Queensland Government to change Sec 39 Qld Adoption Act, new Act passes though Parliament in 2009 amending Sec 39
- 2009 Origins organizes Apology Day celebrations for Stolen Generations at Penrith NSW
- 2009 Origins gives evidence in Sydney at Senate Inquiry Senate Committee on Community Affairs Inquiry into Recommendations from Forgotten Australians Inquiry 2004
- Origins received funding for Stolen Generations Journey of Life Project
- 2009 Contributes submission to Senate Inquiry into Access to Justice calling for a Senate inquiry into adoption
- 2009 Origins is represented by its members of the Alliance for Forgotten Australians at the Federal Government Apology to the Forgotten Australians
- 2009 The Stolen Generation Project "A Life's Journey" is launched
- 2009 Origins consults for the Urban Theatre Company on the play "The

Fence" to be shown for the Sydney Festival

- 2009 The Federal Government initiates the Institute of Family Studies to report on "Past Forced Adoption" with Origins Inc to provide the Institute with our many years of research to the report

- 2009 Discussions in Canberra with Federal politicians and Senators for a Senate Inquiry

- 2010 Launch of the play "The fence"

- Feb 2010 Narrative workshop at Cumberland Women Health Centre to coincide with 2nd Anniversary of Apology Day

- April 2010 Response to the Australian Institute of Family Studies "Impact of Past Adoption Report" http://www.originsnsw.com/aifs_response.html

- May 26 2010 partnerships with Liverpool Council and 5 LGAs and SGA for Sorry Day commerations at Mt Annan and representing the SGA at Fleet Park Circular Quay Sydney Sat 29th May

- 2010 Senate Submission into Compensation Inquiry

- May 2010 Origins receives ongoing funding from FAchsia for Journey of Life Project

- September 2010, Origins announces Origins International

- September 25-26, 2010 Origins sponsors "Shedding the Light on Adoption Conference in NY

- 2010, 15th November after 13 years of calling and lobbying and submissions into 10 Senate Inquiries Origins successfully gains a Senate Inquiry into Forced Adoption instrumented by the Greens Party