To **The Senate Community Affairs Committee**

With regard to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices.

My name is Jenny Marshall; I was born on the 4th of September 1963 at Emil House West Hobart, a Salvation Army's women's hostel.

Ever since I can remember I have know of my adoption. Fortunately for me my adoptive parents believed that this should not be a secret for either me or my brother who is also adopted, (but from a different family). We were also told that they chose to adopt us because they wanted children and after several unsuccessful attempts were unable to have children of their own.

Although I have had a good life and have children of my own, the fact that I was adopted has never left me; it is almost a daily part of my life. From the time I was a small child I have had a desire to meet my birth mother, at that time I did not consider that there could be circumstances that would not permit this. When I was angry as a child I would say to my adoptive mother "I am going back to the mother that borned me", she told me of these things as I got older because she knew it was the anger speaking and that it wasn't personal towards her. She was supportive of me finding my birth mother and would have liked to have met her herself.

My mother also told me that I was a very unsettled baby, who could not be left, she strongly believed that my mother must have gone through a lot of emotional turmoil and that possibly I had suffered in the womb due to her stress and then my birth and then the separation from my mother either after birth or in the days to come when the adoption order went through on the 18th Sept 1963.

After talking to someone at the Dept of Community and Health Services in 1999 and gaining some information regarding my birth mother I was told it was common practice for the birth mother to look after their baby up until the adoption and that I was most probably breastfed until then. On the day the adoptive parents came to collect the baby the mother would watch from a window in the building as their babies left.

I believe these circumstances have affected me in my life. I have been an anxious person during my life and continue to be troubled by what happens around me personally. My Story will never have closure for me if I cannot meet my birth mother or have a picture or something more than I have now. Who do I look like? What were the influences in my mother's life? What was she passionate about? What sort of person is she? What sort of family did/does she come from? Then there is my biological father what about him and his family?

I feel that the initial information I gain 1999 was not enough. Why wasn't she asked if my biological father new of the pregnancy. Why couldn't they have asked some of question I have mentioned above? These things could have been fulfilled for me even though she decided she didn't want any contact at this point. I understand that it was also quite confronting for her to receiving a letter

from the Dept. This in itself could have been enough to make her react badly. Because she responded by phone I believe she could have been asked some of these things. I understand just how difficult this could be, but I exist and I have a right to know my heritage, I don't wish to impose on her nor as an adult I don't expect a relationship with someone whom I have never known and who doesn't know me, but I need answers **WHO IS GOING TO GIVE THEM TO ME?**

As I was growing up I was surrounded by the vast family of my adoptive parents. This was a little unusual because my mother was already in her mid 40's and my father in his mid 50's as they were born in 1918 and 1908, they were quite old to have been adopting. I have been informed in recent years that strings were pulled due to their age is this true?? At different times I was reminded by relatives that I should be a more grateful child because I was adopted, and behave accordingly, I was very fortunate to be adopted! EXCUSE ME, DID I HAVE A CHOICE!! No!

My adoptive father died as a result of an accident when I as about 13 yrs old and my adoptive mother died in December of 1996. My children were born in 1989, 1991 and 1995, my mum was the only grandparent my children had and my last born was only 12 months old at the time of her death. My husband's parents were both deceased before we had children, and his own birth father died when he was a baby as a result of an accident and his mother remarried. We have lost 7 parents between us.

After my adoptive mum died that was basically the end to the many relatives that existed, I guess they didn't need another person who is not really related to them.

I don't know where this leaves me but this is my life's quest I suppose, and it may never end. I need help to fulfil my life's unanswered questions otherwise I will never know where I came from and I feel empty.

Yours faithfully

Jenny Marshall.