

ADOPTION CIRCLES

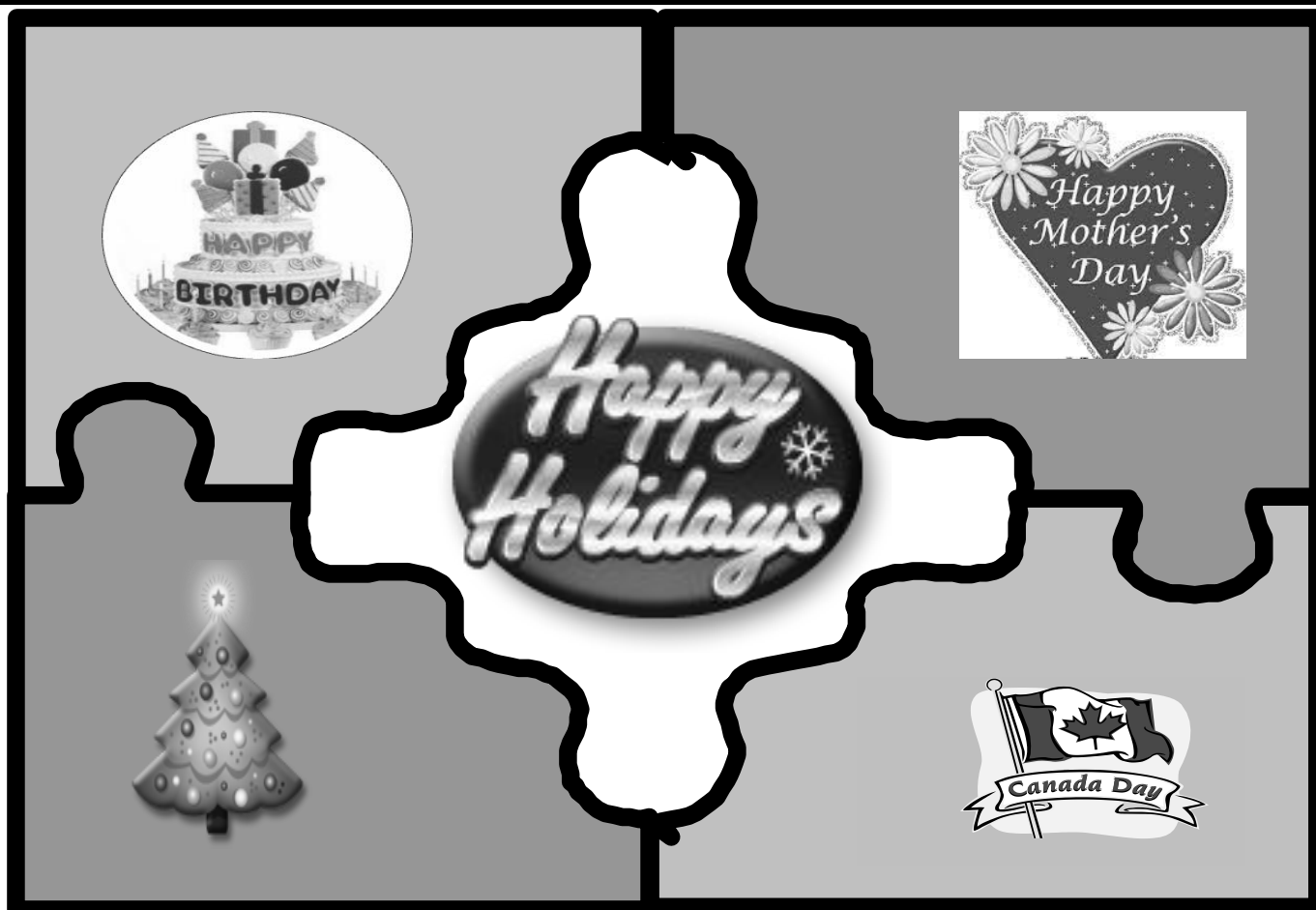
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Holidays

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ADOPTION CIRCLES



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FMNFS FACTS:

Forget Me Not Family Society is a provincially registered, non-profit society and a federally registered charity (#88908 4869 RR0001.) Tax receipts are issued for donations over \$25.00. Our Society was formed for education, consultation, peer counseling and to offer support to all those touched by adoption: adoptees, birth parents, adoptive parents, and concerned professionals. Our primary source of income is through membership fees. These funds go directly towards printing, postage, telephone expenses and supplies.

WHAT WE OFFER:

Experience shows that at various times in life, the issues and concerns of adoption need to be addressed. We provide our members with opportunities to gain further understanding of adoption issues through:

- Conducting monthly support groups in New Westminster, Cloverdale and Kamloops, B.C.
- Individual peer support
- Resource library
- Referrals to professionals and other service groups
- Speakers Bureau to educate groups on post-adoption issues
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Annual weekend workshops

OUR MANDATE:

- To encourage and develop a recognition of the benefits of family preservation and openness in adoption practice.
- To establish and operate a Post-Adoption Resource Centre providing education, consultation, counseling and support to those touched by adoption: adoptees, birthparents, adoptive parents, and concerned professionals.
- To provide community education programs, panel presentations and workshops on post-adoption issues for any members of the community who wish to learn more about adoption and reunion issues.

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER:

ADOPTION CIRCLES is published quarterly and is available by subscription to our Society. Membership is open to anyone who is interested in adoption and post-adoption issues. Comments and contributions are always welcome. Please mail submissions to our office or forward to the Editor at: bjrymer@telus.net The Forget Me Not Family Society reserves the right to edit all material submitted on the basis of space, relevance, and suitability.

Please note that the material published in the Newsletter, including the article by the Editor, does not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the Forget Me Not Family Society.

President's Message

By Marnie Tetz

Hi Everyone!

Welcome to another issue of Adoption Circles! I have to admit that at first I couldn't see how this topic was going to work.

I couldn't get any creative juices flowing to even write my message. I was dragging my feet! Then it was Valentine's Day. My birthday!



I pondered if this could be considered a holiday. I decided that even though it's not a statutory holiday, it is an event that some people do celebrate so I think that it does just squeak into the holiday category.

Growing up, my adoptive mum always made holidays something special. Christmas was a special time with the house being decorated inside and out, stockings hung with care and shortbread that is now a legend. Christmas was special and my parents made sure that we really did have visions of 'sugar plums' dancing in our heads. Our birthdays were another very special event that made me feel as if this day, Valentine's Day had been created for me alone. I was very surprised and disappointed to discover others actually had birthdays on this same day. It kind of deflated my bubble!

Were these two events each year difficult for me or a struggle? Was I sad? No, after a lot of thought I know that I LOVED them both. Many times at the support group meetings birthdays have been brought up and many of the adoptees have said how much they didn't like their birthdays at all. This made me wonder what was wrong with me. Why did I like my birthday so much? Why was I different? The only answer I have for that is that we are all just different and there is no right or wrong to how we feel about certain events in our lives... holidays or birthdays.

What I will say is that once I found my first mum, it changed how I felt about these events a lot. I will never know for certain if my mum thought of me on my birthdays, but I am pretty sure she did. Many of you know that my mum denied being my mother for many years, however it was okay for me to call her mum and for her to introduce me as her daughter... her *adopted* daughter. I remember calling her once on my birthday and wondering if she would say anything about what day it was. I hadn't said anything in recent calls about my birthday coming up, so yes, I was testing her to some degree. Anyhow... she said it! She said Happy Birthday, without any prompt from me about what day it was. I will **never** forget that she said it. What a gift and memory I have of her saying that. She did

think about me, and now I had the proof! I wonder how it made her feel.

Christmas changed as well because I was able to send her a card and a gift. It was such fun and so exciting to be able to make that purchase and send it to her. I was like a little kid all over again. I well remember one year when she asked for a pair of sleeper earrings. I didn't know if I could still get them or at what cost, but I didn't care. She had asked me for something she really wanted and I was able to do that! I am grinning ear to ear remembering how much fun that was!

The other holiday event was Mother's Day. Going into the Hallmark Store (it had to be a Hallmark card!) and trying to decide which of all those beautiful cards was going to be the perfect one to send to my mum. I had some help from my inner child on this one. She was sooooo excited!



I had never been sad on any of the big holidays growing up, I had enjoyed them all. What happened once I found my mum was that I was able to share them with her, include her and enjoy them even more now knowing who she was and where she was.

Again Bernadette and Amy have done a fabulous job on another issue of the AC. Please find your cozy spot with your favorite drop and enjoy!

~ Marnie

From your Editor ~ Rymer Writes

By Bernadette Rymer

Along with Marnie, Gail and our Associate Editor, Amy, I welcome you to this issue of Adoption Circles in which we explore the theme of Holidays.

Holidays are a really tough experience for many in the adoption loss community. This statement is well attested to by our members and others who attend our support group meetings as they share their pain and anguish at approaching and surviving some holidays.

In the first stage of preparing for and researching this theme and calling for submissions from members and other readers, I was surprised by the very few responses we received. Usually when we call for submissions we receive enough to fill an expanded issue. So I have to ask, "Is this limited response to our requests due to the fact / reality that holidays are just too painful to talk about"? Or is it that we are so exhausted from our efforts to survive yet another painful holiday that we just did not have the energy or the focus to record and share our thoughts and feelings?

In preparing for each AC my typical approach is to search for research based articles and studies from universities and institutions. In my web researching I used many variations of the question "Why are holidays so painful for birth/natural mothers and adoptees?" I was also surprised by the dearth of reliable information available on the

web. It seems that this specific topic has yet to be explored by the research community. There were of course many blogs by mums and adoptees who have lived the experience, share their stories and offer advice. These are helpful in that they offer different points of view for us to consider as we move forward in our journey of understanding and healing. I read these blogs with caution, open to new ideas yet careful to not get swept up in the emotion or opinion being expressed.



Next I simplified the search question to 'origin of holidays' and 'why holidays are so important to us'. BINGO - sort of! From the wealth of information on this topic I then extrapolated my theory (if I may loosely call my opinion a *theory*) about why holidays are so difficult for me. Perhaps my theory may shed a bit of light on this subject for you. We hope so. Please refer to my article "What's the Matter with Holidays?" on page 11 of this issue.

Often, when we understand our pain better, it helps us survive it and move forward. We hope that the articles shared by our contributors will help you to understand how you respond to, anticipate, prepare for and live through those holidays that may be particularly troublesome for you.

We sincerely thank our contributors who were inspired to share their experiences of holidays.

I Found My Mother

By Joe Soll

Twenty-five years ago, I sued the state of New York based on my being sold. I won my case, got my Original Birth Certificate and the NYC health department acknowledged that the info on my OBC was fiction. I hired the best searchers I knew of, the ones who could do magic tricks, to no avail. I did sign up with several DNA companies, not for searching, as it never occurred to me that I could ever find anyone or be found, but to get info on my heritage. The most concrete information I could get from any of them was that my mother was part Asian*. I never gave up in my heart but there was nothing I could do, search wise.

A few months back, I signed up with Ancestry.com to try and find more heritage info. I was truly shocked when it came up with a match for a few cousins and one cousin had an aunt (his favorite aunt) named Ruth Braverman, the right age and living in New York when I was born. (She lived a few miles across the river from me my entire life until she died in 1987.) (My OBC says Ruth Haverman and that's the kind of lying that Bessie Bernard, who sold me, did when she sold babies.) Cousin and I spoke and it was clear that Ruth had to be my mother. I have no doubt that my mother has been watching over me and that her doing that helped me survive the trauma of losing her.

I am very, very sad about her not being here and will go to her graveside to visit her as soon as I can.

I am on cloud nine and feel connected to the earth in a way I never imagined possible.



Ruth Braverman, Joe Soll's mother

* Asian DNA markers are found in First Nations/North American Indian populations. (an)

Holidays To ~ Holidays With ~ Holidays From

By Bonnie Evans

Holidays to other places were wonderful and adventurous. The school board set my holidays. Some summers were spent acquiring knowledge in a classroom as I took courses. Others were spent travelling. Now with mixed emotions I reflect on the places I have been and the people I met because, since reunion, my reflective joy has been diminished. All this travel was only possible because of the relinquishment of my baby.

My daughter likes to travel. At first when we shared about our lives she would ask me about my travels. I felt very uncomfortable telling her. My responses became shorter and shorter and lacked enthusiasm. I did not want her to ask me anymore about it. I diverted the conversation to another topic or to her travels. I felt as if she too were silently saying, "You could only do all this because..." Did my stories bother her? The telling bothered me. I felt guilty. We found out we had been in some of the same places. Not London or Rome, but Cowes, Isle of Wight, England to see the sailing and for her to participate in those events. Also, both of us have huge, framed posters of bull fights in Spain. Hers is hanging in her living room and mine has migrated to our basement.



Holidays with my daughter have been few. She lives in Alberta, I am in Ontario, and so is her adoptive family, two hours by car from me. I am free to holiday any time. She is self-employed, so no work, no pay. On her holidays she has travelled, returned

home to her adoptive parents or just stayed home out west. On only one of her visits home was I ever included. Her adoptive parents were aware of her seeing me. Our reunion has never been one of "there is enough love to go around". I am sure you can extrapolate the difficulties this has caused my daughter. I learned very early on that if she came to see me the repercussions and emotional turmoil put on her would be too much. I did get a Dear Jane letter saying there would be no more visits because of this exact situation. I learned to accept and just show that I was glad she had a good visit back home. Sure, I deeply wish that she would silently slip away and see me. I have not suggested this to her, but you know, I would to another adoptee. We are allowed to see each other.

For the statutory and faith holidays distance prevents us from spending a few days together or even just a meal. Due to her strong sense of A-family obligations, tinged with guilt, even when she has been near me we have not had to deal with seeing two families in one day or seeing one another on a day close to the actual holiday. I have always indicated that she is welcome in our home and left it up to her, minimizing the pressure on her. The combined geographic distance and A-family obligations could be considered a blessing. You know, the in-law situation of seeing both families to keep everyone happy?

To have a holiday with her without family interference, my husband and I have been west twice in the seven years of reunion. During both visits her A-family intruded via the telephone. She told me that her mother could hear the stress in her voice because we were there. Even her parents did not visit for that long. And I thought why not? We were in a hotel, had other friends to see, we are very independent travellers and had a car. We did not plan on seeing her every day. This second, and last, visit was in a September. The following May I received the "Dear Jane", no more visits email. Door closed! Still closed!

Christmases to Ontario have been few. She flies in and heads home, two hours in the other direction from my home which is only twenty minutes the other way from the airport. So near yet so far. Yes, it hurts. I am relieved when she is not near and I cope much better. I soon learned to let go of my fairy tale plans for celebrations. After our last visit west I knew she would be going home for Christmas. I arranged for my husband and me to be far away to visit a special young family. I enjoyed that Christmas.



Near all Christmases we have talked and emailed. Christmas 2012 I was singing, "Joy to the World." She stayed in Alberta. I received my first Christmas card, emailed, and we had our first Skype. All was lovely. Good communication during the year. Christmas 2013 I was only humming "Silent Night". Not a word then; nor in the weeks that followed.

Unbeknownst to me, until afterwards, she had been home to Ontario for the 2013 Thanksgiving. I can only speculate as to what might have transpired then.

Lastly, there are holidays from people and situations. My daughter now seems to be taking a holiday from adoption, which means me. So now on my own I am trying to do some cognitive therapy to think of other things to lift myself up to enjoy all the other pleasures in my life. Upon reflection, this enforced holiday may be good for me too. I will send her a postcard occasionally though just to keep in touch. As I divert my mind and read books I will pretend that I am on a holiday sitting under some palm tree in the shade, in the warmth, or on really snowy days in a luxurious winter ski lodge by a fireplace.

Holidays often present their challenges. Oh, I have had holiday challenges before, both actual travel to physical places and to emotional places. Recovery from holidays becomes easier with practice.

Happy Holidays and may your baggage be light.

Bonnie Evans

"The holiest of holidays are those kept by ourselves in silence and apart;
The secret anniversaries of the heart."

-- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

"I have had a holiday, and I'd like to take it up professionally."

-- Kylie Minogue

To many people holidays are not voyages of discovery, but a ritual of reassurance.

-- Philip Andrew Adams



Holidays: Ouch!

By Noreen Scarth

The question is asked, “What issues come up for you around holidays?” With Christmas now packed up for another year, I look back and think about how to answer this question. My mind drifts back six weeks to decorating the tree at my parents’ house, with most of the family gathered around. Out came the precious boxes, opened to reveal stories of Christmas past. “Oh look, here’s the ornament that your sister made in kindergarten.” Ouch. I wish I had someone save something I had made when I was in kindergarten. I was in grade four when I was adopted, so this family didn’t even know me at that age. “And here’s the decoration that dad made when he was a little boy, that grandma saved!” Another ouch! I never met my birth father’s mother, and I don’t have anything as precious as a family heirloom. And although my children share in the laughter, my daughter asked me, “Wasn’t it hard

growing up not in your real family?” At age eight, her compassionate honesty massages my soul. “Yes it was.” I tell her. And I hold back my tears as I hug her tight. One day I know she will understand why I’m such a pack rat. She will get it, rather than make insensitive remarks about how I keep *everything*.

Also at Christmas there is the traditional baking, made from recipes handed down through the generations. Cookie recipes, not from my grandparents and Vinarterta, an Icelandic cultural and family tradition, yet I’m Scottish and Japanese.

I love my adopted family. I have felt the pain, though, of interracial adoption at a time like Christmas.

“This is my wish for you: peace of mind, prosperity through the year, happiness that multiplies, health for you and yours, fun around every corner, energy to chase your dreams, joy to fill your holidays!

-- D.M. Dellinger



Holidays: Someone Is Always Missing

By Colleen Rudd

How many times have you heard a natural mother say "I thought of her every single day!"? It is true. Since being separated from my daughter, my first born child, there has not been a SINGLE day that I have not thought about her.

Prior to our reunion the recurring thoughts were as desperate as: "IS SHE STILL ALIVE?", "Where is she?", "WHO HAS HER?", "How are they treating her?", "Is she okay without me?", "What is she doing?", "Who has she become?", "Does she ever think about me?", "Will she ever look for me?", "When am I going to find her?" Holidays! All family holidays are difficult! SOMEONE is ALWAYS missing!

Her birthdays, each and every year, and Christmas are the most difficult to navigate, even after being reunited for 17 years!

Now, following some intense work throughout our re-union, I having the ability to send her a card, a gift, an e-mail or a text on those days! This honor has taken some of the sting out of my melancholy.

Over the many long years - of her and I being apart - my husband and I have created our own ways to celebrate on her birthday. These rituals have helped us to acknowledge her and include her as an integral part of our family. My favorite is making her a cake on her birthday. We celebrate her life, even though she is not physically present. Happy and SAD.

I am forever grateful for the personal growth and the tools that I have acquired over the years. Through

reading, attending workshops and conferences, and meeting "enlightened witnesses" along the way I have come to a more peaceful place.

Do I hold out hope for us being together for one or possibly some of those holidays in the future? YOU BET!! I will NEVER give up!

The time that we do have together is sacred. We cherish these times that we can be together as a family - no matter what day it is - holiday or not! The blessing is that we are together! We are now able to express our love and affection directly to her and her children.

I know my daughter sets aside a special, and guarded time to open - and savour the greetings and gifts that have come from her natural family on her birthday and at Christmas.

I am committed to continue to educate myself on how to remain in the PRESENT, (HERE and NOW) and equip myself with whatever is required to cope with the feelings that come up, the re-surfacing of separation and loss.

The JOY is in having the ability to express to my daughter just how much she means to me on HOLIDAYS and EVERY DAY!!

Namaste.

Colleen

HOLIDAY REFLECTIONS

By Gail Davies

February 21, 2014

Holidays, Christmas and birthdays, sad times, glad times, and many more;
remembering you and wondering where you were, but we found each other.

Our expectations were high, sometimes they were not,
now we're together, and we wondered what was in store.

Las Vegas, you say I bought you a pink t-shirt, pink you say you don't like, you got hurt.

In Harrods in London, I bought my other daughter a pink scarf, a cream one for you but I forgot to bring it
when you were living back East, I thought you did not care, so that was where it stopped.

Did you mean that when you said you were hurt about the pink scarf from Paris that you never got?

Always I thought of you but now it seems it was never enough.

Years later you told me of the anger and hurts, disappointed you say,
and how you thought I was selfish about Christmas when you were not able to be here.

So I paid for your son, my grandson, to visit and he came but again misunderstandings
about sharing our time with your other family, it all worked out, but you never forgot.

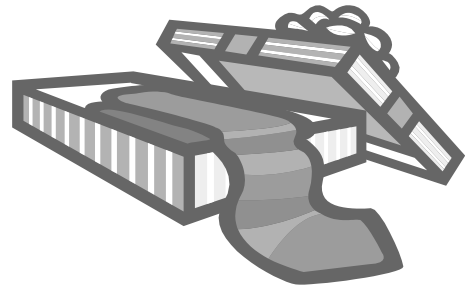
How I wish that I could have done things differently but I never knew

Our silent longings that never grew

Love you forever but it's not enough.

I don't know what to do to make up the loss,

Did you think I forgot you? I never stopped.



And all I can hope for is what you want, I want what you want for you.

Your destiny, your happiness, it's all in your hands

So be happy, take care of yourself, I understand.

~~~~~

## In the News

Angela Ellis found her birth mother's family a few years ago. She recently posted a letter to Facebook hoping that the power of social media will help her locate half-siblings Terry Shane Cronk and Shelly Lin Rose Cronk, children of her biological father. An article appeared in the Province newspaper, Sunday March 16, 2014, page A12 "There's still a connection with my biological family" and she credits her Forget Me Not support group with helping her find her mother's family.

View the full article online. It's on the Forget Me Not Family Society Facebook page or [www.theprovince.com](http://www.theprovince.com)

"Richmond woman turns to social media to find her half-siblings" By Glenda Luymes, The Province

# What Do Holidays Mean To Me?

By Doris, Mother: Canadian Council of Natural Mothers

**A**s I have been unable to establish contact with my son who was placed for adoption, holidays arouse particularly poignant emotions within me. Realizing that I am unable to share the same joys and comforts that I find in my relationships with my current family holidays generally stir a sense of deep loss and melancholy within me.

My response to the question "What does a holiday mean to me?" would reflect the perspective of retired parents whose children are no longer living with us and reside in another community.

A holiday visiting our children is a break from the normal routine, responsibilities and scenery. Normally, we communicate via phone and e-mail, but on holidays we can physically and emotionally participate with our family members from first thing in the morning until bedtime. Scheduling time and duration, weather permitting, of the visit to the mutual convenience of all parties is important.

During our family gatherings we reflect on things past, participate in things present and contemplate things planned. Meal preparation is a shared task with all adult family members contributing their culinary skills. Special occasions like birthdays generally include a restaurant outing. We readily volunteer to assist in daily household chores.

There is always a risk of being intrusive. It is sometimes difficult to interact with children and not feel you are imposing your values or sense of discipline upon them. One must be wary of not flaunting opinions that conflict with their views regarding finances, moral sensibilities or educational

beliefs. Unless asked for an opinion it is better not to engage in the conversation. Personal matters should remain personal.

We allow time for separation so the family does not feel an obligation that they have to entertain us. We will take our grandchild to the park on an outing to give the parents some time alone, free of the responsibilities of child rearing. My spouse and I will go for a walk, maybe have coffee and pick up groceries (always a meal to prepare). We always let the family know where we are and when we will return and maintain cell phone contact should anything change.



Our expectation is that the family would want to spend all the time with us but we recognize that it is their holiday time as well. Grandchildren have their own circle of friends and it is not surprising that they spend most of their leisure time in the company of their peers. Grandpa and Grandma become secondary elements in their playtime agenda. Similarly, our own children have a social network and itinerary that may well (understandably) exclude us from participation in certain activities. Their routine is changed to receive company and preparation time to make accommodations for us is an additional stress.

Failed expectations are often at the root of anger. One must learn to cope and compromise and be aware of possible conflicts that might arise to ensure that the visitation runs smoothly and all parties may genuinely enjoy their time together.

Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and wisdom to know the difference. ~ Doris



## What's the Matter with Holidays?

By Bernadette Rymer

In my editorial 'Rymer Writes' I stated that for many of us who have lost loved ones to adoption, holidays are a really tough experience. Why is this? Of course we miss our loved one, but there has to be more to it than that.

My web search question:

- What's the matter with holidays?  
..... led me to a site that explored:
- Why do holidays matter?

Let's look first at the two broad meanings of the word *matter*.

- *Matter* is a physical substance.
- *Matter* also refers to a subject or situation under consideration or the reason for distress or problem.

Either or both meanings may come into play in considering our questions.

To help shed light on both questions and how they relate to us it is useful to understand the origin of holidays and why they are so important to us. My explanation summarizes information from the web which takes us back in time to when we identified who we are by what we did for a living.

The concept of holidays originated far back in history (around 300 A.D.) in connection with religious observances, or holy days which is the origin of the word *holiday*. The intention of a holiday was to allow individuals to tend to religious duties associated with important dates.

Throughout history until the industrial revolution, our identities were determined by what we did for a

living and we knew much about a person's life when we learned what they did. Think back hundreds of years about a butler, a butcher, or a blacksmith and you will know a lot about how and where he lives. The butler, etc. by his work association had a strong sense of who he was and his place in society.

This is not the case in modern cultures thanks to the changes brought about by the industrial revolution. Today for example, if we think of a sociologist, we know what he/she does for a living, and we may safely assume that he is intelligent and well educated. But we know very little else about that person's life. Our work evolution over time has disconnected us from how we historically thought about ourselves.

In modern times, sociologists and other health care professionals believe that our sense of self is derived partly in – wait for it – our holidays which serve as an opportunity to recreate ourselves. When I first read this it seemed to me to be rather a stretch in thinking, but as I delved further into the origins and evolution of holidays it started to make sense to me.

Holidays, both calendar holidays and vacation holidays, are a space in our very busy lives when we rest, relax, create and re-create who we are. We get to choose what, how and with whom we celebrate our holidays.

If you can work with this premise that holidays shape what we think and how we feel about ourselves you can now link forward to our questions: 'What's the Matter with Holidays'? and 'Why do holidays matter'?

As I share a little about which holidays are meaningful to me, which holidays I celebrate with joy and which are difficult for me, think about what holidays are most important to you and how you prepare for and celebrate them.

While growing up in Australia, Australia Day was a really big deal and was celebrated by all 'decent' Aussies in great style with family, friends and fun in the sun. Since living in Canada, Canada Day has taken on the same level of importance for me and I attend community 'birthday' celebrations whenever I can. I now identify myself as an Australian Canadian. This is part of who I am. I am other things as well, of which two are the most important:

As a very happy wife my wedding anniversary is always a joyous celebration.

As a mother who has lost her only child to adoption, Mother's Day, her birthday, my birthday and the birthdays of my 57 nieces and nephews, and Christmas are excruciatingly painful for me as my child should have been there and been part of my family and the celebrations. But she was always missing.

I think about the newly created and very controversial holiday - Birthmother's Day. While I believe that this holiday was created by people with good intentions, to me this 'celebration' is salt in my wounds as it serves as an additional reminder that I never had the chance to mother my child. What's to celebrate?

I wondered about why birthdays are so painful for many adoptees. The birthdate and a child's entrance into his/her family are legally documented with an original birth certificate (OBC). Adoptees entrance into our world and his/her family is legally documented by a falsified birth certificate (FBC) which legally wipes out the baby's history, name, mother and father. In the act of creating the FBC,

parents and child are legally wiped out of each other's lives. Again I ask: What's to celebrate?

Do holidays matter to me? Absolutely!

For me the **matter** with holidays is like a multi-dimensional phenomenon:

- The *physical matter* is my daughter who is always missing.
- The *matter* with me, the *reason for my distress* is that I am sad because I miss her and always wish for her presence.



So, does this '*matter with me*' shape how I see and how I feel about myself when celebrating holidays? Absolutely!

Fortunately for me, and I hope for you as well, other people and other significant relationships (my husband, his children and grandchildren) and others have come into my life since I lost my child 44 years ago. Because of them I do have a lot to be thankful for and to celebrate.

#### Questions for your reflection:

- To what degree do holidays *matter* to you? Why?
- Which holidays *matter* more, or less? Why?
- How do the holidays that *matter shape* how you think and feel about yourself?
- How satisfied are you with how you currently celebrate the holidays that do *matter*?

If I could change one thing about how I celebrate holidays, I would change my **matter**, both substance and feelings. While I always act happy and bubbly when celebrating with those I love, I would actually feel that way.

What would you change?

# Ghosts of Holidays Past

By Joe Soll 조 살, LCSW,  
Psychotherapist & Author

One of the things that plagues adoptees and moms is holidays, mother's days and birthdays.

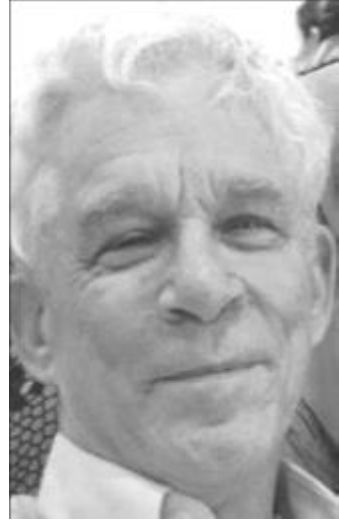
The ghosts of those special days of the past, days that were spent without the person lost to adoption, haunt us. They may cause us anguish. They may prevent us from enjoying these special days in the present. We may not even attend family functions. We may get ill around the holidays or get moody and snap at those we love. Sadly this is not unusual for us.

To enjoy things today, I often have to cry about not having those things in the past.

I believe that when we do enough grieving for what we lost, we can start to really enjoy what we have, including holidays, mother's day and birthdays.

We will even be able to enjoy ourselves!

Can you imagine?



*Joe Soll is the author of "Adoption Healing... a path to recovery" (1 for moms, 1 for adoptees, 2 for both), Co-author of "Evil Exchange" and "Fatal Flight"*

The joy of brightening other lives, bearing each others' burdens, easing other's loads and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts becomes for us the magic of Christmas.

-- W. C. Jones

"A good holiday is one spent among people whose notions of time are vaguer than yours."

-- John B. Priestly

# Gone...

By Jane Hunt

I opened my eyes to see you there.  
You were already gone it wasn't fair.  
I would never feel your caress or touch your hair  
My childish mind screams you didn't care.  
My heart was broken I felt alone.  
Finally some stranger took me home.  
They didn't tell me they wouldn't talk.  
They just kept training me to walk the walk.  
They fed me, they clothed me but showed me no love.  
For that I turned to the Lord up above.  
I desperately questioned Him so many times,  
Why did I not deserve a mother divine?  
Was her heart filled with fear and despair?  
What were her reasons for leaving me there?  
Years have passed, time has slipped by,  
But still I ask, "Who am I?"

Jane invites you to visit her website at <http://adoptionhealers.com>.  
It has her whole story, some art and more poems.

# Letter to FMNFS Members

*February 21, 2014*



Hi Everyone,

I'd take a minute to share with you why it is so important for you to renew your memberships with the Forget Me Not Family Society.

Our last issue of Adoption Circles included a brief history of our Society. (page 21)

Our Society is rich in history, with many amazing people serving on the Board over the years. The women and men who have served have done so with a passion for those who have had their lives impacted by adoption. We are all volunteers and do so because in our hearts we know what it is like to have taken the healing journey that we are all on. Without the help and support of those who attend our support groups, our workshops and contribute to our newsletters I wonder where some of us would be! Personally I know the power of working together and sharing our experiences and how even one individual with a small suggestion and a hug can move mountains.

Your membership dollars help us produce the Adoption Circles Newsletter, pay our rental fee at the library in Cloverdale, pay our phone bills, maintain our website, print our brochures and help us to continue to offer the Fall Workshop that has become a staple to who we are and what we do.

Thank you to those who continue to support us. Your membership matters!

Marnie Tetz, President.

## Feedback

Fran Kuefler Josey of the Alberta Adoption Registry is a Forget Me Not member and has attended one of our workshops. The Alberta Registry buys extra copies of our Adoption Circles Newsletter. She writes:

"All is good with me and everything at the Registry. I'm looking forward to some quiet time to read the latest newsletter. You bring it all together in a way that is inspiring, thought provoking, pushes buttons and makes me think in new ways. I appreciate that in so many ways to help me learn from each person's experiences and views.

I'm very excited that you folks are in conversation with Ann Fesler and bringing her to Vancouver for the fall 2015 conference."

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## **Editor Retirement**

### **Calling All Aspiring Editors**

Sadly, this is my last *regular* issue as Editor of our Adoption Circles Newsletter. I am retiring and my husband and I will be travelling here, there and wherever. When home I will continue my involvement with the FMNFS and as an assistant editor in the production of our AC. However, while away trekking this will not be possible. Our Associate Editor, Amy Newman is willing to continue doing layout and editing. Her expertise and keen eye to the fine details of each issue help to make our AC what it is. Thank you so much Amy.

We are inviting you to volunteer as a Guest Editor for one issue. This involves researching the topic on the web, pulling together relevant information for members and readers, inviting members and professionals to contribute and receiving their contributions, pasting each contribution onto one document and sending it to Amy so she can work her editorial magic.

If you are interested in being a Guest Editor, contact Marnie, Amy or me for more information. Email addresses are on the inside cover of this AC. Thank you. ~ Bernadette

## **Forget Me Not Family Society**

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Wednesday April 23, 2014**

**7:00 p.m. (Registration 6:30)**

Owner's Lounge, 7288 Acorn Ave, Burnaby BC V5E 4H6

## FMNFS FALL WORKSHOP

*Mark your calendar for:*

**November 1 & 2, 2014**

**Presenter: Rich Uhrlaub, M.Ed.**

**Location: Executive Airport Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre,  
7311 Westminster Hwy, Richmond, BC**

Rich serves on the boards of the American Adoption Congress and Adoptees in Search – Colorado's Triad Connection. He is a frequent speaker at conferences and a contributing author to *Finding Our Place: 100 Memorable Adoptees, Foster Persons and Orphanage Alumni* by Nikki McCaslin, and *Adoption and Mothering*, edited by Frances Latchford.

*Next Year*

**FALL 2015** – Featuring Ann Fessler, author of *The Girls Who Went Away*. This workshop will be billed as a major event so stay tuned for updates.

## Obituary

**T**hose who attended our Fall Workshop in 2010 will remember Anne Petrie and Mary Anne Alton. Mary Anne's documentary followed the story of Linda Dawe and Ray Cave as they reunited and then searched for their daughter they had lost to adoption. I was saddened to hear of Ray's passing. ~ Marnie

Our adoption community extends its sympathy to the family. "The 40 Year Secret" demonstrates how mothers were coerced into giving up their babies in the 1960s. Ray and Linda's willingness to make their poignant story public gives hope to others that successful reunions are possible. ~ Amy

### **Raymond Wesley Cave**

The obituary of Ray Cave (a resident of Sutton, Ontario) reports that he died peacefully at Southlake Regional Health Centre, Newmarket on Monday, January 13, 2014 at the age of 65 years. He was the beloved husband of Linda Dawe...

The complete obituary may be viewed at [www.forrestandtaylor.com](http://www.forrestandtaylor.com)

## LEAN ON ME

Telephone/E-mail Support List



### **Reunited Adoptees:**

Cecelia Reekie (cecelia\_r@telus.net) (604) 857-2125  
 Betty Anderson (bettboop@telus.net) (604) 531-4074  
 Dan Carson (ariete\_132@hotmail.com) (604) 557-0230

Marnie Tetz (marnietetz@shaw.ca) (604) 535-4434

Kimberley-Ann Jandl – Abbotsford, BC (604) 852-9663  
 (kajandl@yahoo.ca)

Judy Lanyon- Courtenay, BC (250) 338-2429  
 (juriah@shaw.ca)

Leanne Neighbour – Kamloops, BC (250) 374-0990  
 (neighbourhoodz@shaw.ca)

Lynn Carrier- Edmonton, AB (780) 455-8528  
 (carrierlynn@hotmail.com)

### **Reunited with Siblings:**

Michael Hodgson (tiggerboots@shaw.ca) (778) 395-0206

### **Reunited Birth Parents:**

Nancy Kato (katosan@telus.net) (604) 777-2920  
 Susan Wiesendahl (susanwiesendahl@yahoo.ca) (604) 275-3243

Alice McKinnon – Chilliwack, BC (604) 858-9970  
 (chkekray@shaw.ca)

John Post - Castlegar, BC (250) 365-5991  
 Diane Herbert – Abbotsford, BC (604) 870-1821

(dalendi@shaw.ca)

Bernadette Rymer - Ashcroft, BC (250) 453-2360  
 (bjrymer@telus.net)

Kathy Chambers (chattycats@telus.net) (604) 541-6267

### **Searching Step-Adoptee:**

Edith Archibald (eearchibald@shaw.ca) (604) 583-7792

### **Interested Professionals:**

Judy Archer, MSW, RSW, (250) 758-1275  
 Counselor and Consultant in Adoption  
 (judyarcher@shaw.ca)

Lee Crawford, M.Ed. R.C.C. (604) 875-9957  
 (leecrawford@shaw.ca)

John Thomas - Quesnel, BC (250) 992-5688  
 Christine M. Gatzke, M.Ed.,CPAC/ARC

Psychotherapist (306) 352-4069  
 (christine.lachaine@clc-apathtohealing.ca)

J. Amy Newman, Newman Research Services

Genealogist/People Finder, Burnaby, BC  
 (info@nrsfind.com) 1-877-521-3463 (604) 521-3463

### **Genetic Attraction:**

Anne Tasko, M.A. R.C.C. (250) 721-5995  
 (anntasko@shaw.ca)

This is a peer support service.

Please contact our office if you wish to be included in the  
 LEAN ON ME Support List.

## Forget Me Not Family Society Support Groups



The FMNFS holds three support groups a month, for adoptees, birth/natural/first parents, adoptive parents and those in a supportive role:

**Cloverdale, B.C.** meets the first Thursday of each month.

year-round from 6:30 - 8:30 pm.

Cloverdale Public Library 2nd floor

5642-176 A Street, Cloverdale, B.C.

Contact Marnie Tetz (marnietetz@shaw.ca) or 604-535-4434.

**New Westminster, B.C.** meets the second Tuesday of each month

year-round from 7 - 9 pm. New Westminster Public Library 2nd

floor, 716 - 6th Ave, New Westminster, B.C.

Contact Nancy Kato (katosan@telus.net) or 604-777-2920.

**Kamloops, B.C. Interior Support Group** meets once a month  
 (days and times vary). For information please contact Bernadette  
 Rymer at (bjrymer@telus.net) or 1-250-453-2360.

## Other Support Groups

**Vancouver, BC: The Adoptees Association** holds a discussion  
 group for adopted adults the third Tuesday of each month starting  
 at 7 pm at the Rhizome Cafe, 317 East Broadway (near Main  
 Street). Please contact Catherine at (katiesue@shaw.ca) or visit  
 www.adopteesassociation.ca for more information.

Please note that the "Other Support Groups"  
 do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of FMNFS.  
 They are listed above for your information only.

## Adoption Circles is Your Newsletter ~ Your Voice!

Our next topic is “**Loyalty**.” How has loyalty had an effect on your adoption triad and relationships? How has it impacted your ability to reunite? Let us know your opinions on our topics, tell your story and news. Editorial support is available. Send to <bjrymer@telus.net> or by mail c/o the Society.

| Issue        | Topic            | Submission Deadline | Distribution |
|--------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Spring AC 69 | Loyalty          | April 16            | May 15       |
| Summer AC 70 | (open to ideas!) |                     |              |

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Have you renewed your MEMBERSHIP?

Membership to the **Forget Me Not Family Society** includes:

- ✓ Subscription to **Adoption Circles**, a quarterly publication
- ✓ Reduction in workshop fees
- ✓ Information on books and support groups



Name: _____

Address _____

City/Province/State _____

Postal/Zip Code _____

Phone Number _____

Email _____

Birth Parent _____ Adoptee _____ Adoptive Parent _____ Sibling _____ Reunited _____

Prospective Adoptive Parent _____ Adoption Professional _____ Other _____

Change of Address _____

Individual Membership \$30.00/year
 Couples Membership \$50.00/year
 International Membership \$50.00/year
 Corporate Membership \$65.00/year

Please send cheque payable to the
 Forget Me Not Family Society
 #102-1860 Southmere Cres. E.,
 Surrey, BC V4A 6Y7

Residents of the U.S. please send
 U.S. funds