



# SEARCHLIGHT

Volume 2/Number 2/June 1978.

(416)483-1358, 28 York Valley Cres.  
Willowdale, Ontario M2P 1A7 Canada.

...Bruce G. Foster, President

In our last newsletter, I am sure some of our members noticed a triangle with Parent Finders Incorporated inscribed. We have officially incorporated in the Province of Ontario as a charitable organization. The following have agreed to serve on our Board of Directors in organizing the affairs of Parent Finders: Joseph Brinkos, Mary Jane Brinkos, Alistair Campbell, Bruce Foster, Mel Herzog, Sidney Katz, Virginia Mason, Wendie Redmond, Patricia Richardson. The Board of Directors have elected the following Board Members to serve as officers of the corporation:

- |                |                     |
|----------------|---------------------|
| President      | - Bruce Foster      |
| Vice President | - Mary Jane Brinkos |
| Secretary      | - Joseph Brinkos    |
| Treasurer      | - Mel Herzog        |

The Board of Directors have established three working committees, made up of members of the Board and assisted by others from our general membership, who will carry on the necessary detail work in operating and expanding our organization. These committees are:

1. New Chapters
2. Legislation Changes
3. Publicity .

The Chapters Committee has been most active in working toward establishing new groups in various areas throughout the Province. Groundwork has been initiated in Collingwood, Brampton Mississauga and St. Catharines. The Chapters Committee has done extensive work in establishing our organization in the Windsor area and reopening the Kitchener group.

The Legislation Committee has been making presentations to various government authorities over the past few months with respect to changes in specific legislation as it affects the social rights of adult adoptees. A presentation and a request for assistance has been made to Mr. Arthur Maloney, the Ombudsman of Ontario. Mr. Maloney is now examining the

present process with respect to the government legislation as it affects adult adoptees. Presentations have also been made to the Government of Ontario and copies of our presentation have been given to every cabinet minister in this province. Also, meetings and discussions have been held with numerous officials in the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

The Publicity Committee has been meeting on a regular basis every month to formulate ideas pertaining to awareness of our organization. This committee has designed an information brochure outlining the organization of Parent Finders Incorporated and its objectives. This brochure is in the process of being printed and will be readily available to our members and the public at large. The brochure will be circulated very widely and be available in public libraries and at public information kiosks. The Publicity Committee has also initiated a Petition to the Government of Ontario requesting changes in Ontario legislation to establish and recognize the rights of adult adoptees. This has been done in conjunction with the Legislative Committee in its efforts to influence legislators.

It is most essential to have a very broad base of support for our cause and the Petition that is being circulated is most worthy of your support. We urge you to try and get as many names as possible to add to our list for presentation to the Government of Ontario.

\* \* \*

~~~~~  
~ MEETING - June 6, 1978, 8 P.M. ~  
~ St. Andrews United Church ~  
~ 117 Bloor Street East ~  
~ GUEST SPEAKER: DR. H. DAVID KIRK ~  
~ Detailed information in newsletter ~  
~~~~~

...Mary Jane Brinkos, Vice President

\*\*\*We are honoured to have as guest speaker at our next meeting DR. H. DAVID KIRK who is a member of the Faculty of Sociology at Waterloo Univeristy. Dr. Kirk is the author of "SHARED FATE", a widely read book on adoption published in 1964. His topic will be "ENLARGING THE CIRCLE OF SHARED FATE".

Dr. Kirk has recently returned from a conference on adoption in Philadelphia where he spoke to numerous groups involved in the adoption field. His experience with the rights of adult adoptees is unparalleled and his continued support in this area is highly valued. The meeting will be at St. Andrews United Church, 117 Bloor St. East, Toronto at 8 P.M. on June 6, 1978.

PRIVATE ADOPTIONS. On April 15, 1978 the Toronto Star printed an article written by Doris Hopper on some of the concerns around private adoption. I would like to elaborate and share these concerns with you:

- ...that babies are being placed into homes without sufficient investigation of suitability, ie. motivations for adopting, age of adopting parents, emotional stability of adopting parents.
- ...that unwed mothers relinquish babies without adequate counselling, ie. what alternatives are available to mothers wishing to keep their child, what is in the best interest of the child.
- ...that questionable placements occur, ie. where money is involved motivations may lose perspective, the well-being of the child may be secondary to that of the adoptive parents.
- ...that babies privately placed are forever cut off from knowing their origins, ie. the information collected tends to be inadequate to share with the adoptee while he/she is growing up, very sketchy medical knowledge is obtained.

Based on those figures which were quoted in the Star, at a minimum of \$800 per adoption and over 1400 placements, one lawyer has earned well over one million dollars from adoption alone. This is appalling when it is indeed human lives we are talking about.

The government has recommended in its Green Paper that "All placements for adoption with the exception of step-parents and close relatives (i.e. those by grandparents and uncles and aunts) should be effected through

a licensed adoption agency". I heartily support this position and would be very interested in hearing from our members on this issue.

We have two new contacts in the Province of Saskatchewan. They are: Mrs. Elaine Hartt, 209-929 Northumberland Ave., Saskatoon, Sask. (306-384-0029) and Mrs. Heather Adam, Box 334, Simpson, Sask. (306-836-4532).

In Collingwood we have established a search group headed by Mrs. Sandra Pilon Mill St., Singhampton (705-445-6528) which meets at the Collingwood High School at 8 PM on the third Monday of every month. Sandra has a super group of people attending her meetings and we wish you all much success with your searches.

Unfortunately we have run into difficulties with our Brampton-Mississauga group as Betty Ann has taken on a full time job and is unable to carry on with PFI. Consequently there will not be meetings until we can find someone who is willing to help others in search. If you are interested or know anyone who is, please contact the Ontario office.

PETITION. Many of you are aware that we are involved in a lengthy battle with the Province of Ontario over the question of open records for adult adoptees. Unless we have the support of our members and their help whenever needed, our chance of success is greatly diminished. At this time we are asking for your assistance in signing the enclosed petition on page 7 and obtaining as many other signatures as possible. Some of you have already received a copy of the petition and returned to us the names you were able to obtain, however, we must have more response than we now have which is slightly over 1000 signatures - virtually no support for our cause. WE NEED YOUR HELP NOW! MAKE COPIES OF THE PETITION, GIVE THEM TO YOUR FRIENDS, RETURN AS MANY PAGES AS POSSIBLE TO US BY THE END OF JULY. OUR CAUSE IS CREDIBLE, PROVE IT! GOOD LUCK!

Our Objectives are threefold:

1. To seek changes in legislation which presently denies adult adoptees access to records pertaining to their adoption.
2. To promote a feeling of openness and understanding in the minds of the public concerning the concept of adoption and

Cont'd.

its effects on all members of the adoption triangle.

3. To maintain an active provincial and national cross-reference registry system of Adoptees and Birth Relatives.

\* \* \*

#### RURAL SEARCH

The rural search like any other must begin with certain basic information. Your place of birth and your birth name. This information may be obtained from a number of sources, an Adoption Order, an original Baptismal Certificate or a Court Order changing your original name. Another important source of information is the local Child Welfare office through which you were adopted. You should obtain all non-identifying information directly from this office, preferably in person. Social Workers will usually give more details (even if they are insinuations) face to face than they will by phone or letter. If it is not possible to arrange an interview, then certainly you should use the latter methods.

One other factor that should be kept in mind - your mother did not necessarily live in the town in which you were born. Now you are ready to begin your search...

On a map draw a circle with a fifty mile radius around your place of birth and for each town (village or hamlet) start searching for families with your birth name. The following sources of information should be contacted by letter or phone:

1. Public libraries - most public libraries have old copies of city directories. Ask the librarian to check for listings under your birth name five years before and after your actual date of birth. Always enclose two dollars to cover the cost of photo-copies, postage and service charges, if any. You will always be pleasantly surprised when you receive exact change with the answer to your request! Not all small towns have city directories but this is an excellent pretext. Who knows, perhaps the librarian knew your mother!
2. High Schools (or County Boards of Education) - ask if they had students with your birth name at that school around the time of your birth. They may also be able to put you in touch with teachers who taught at that time. These people are usually an invaluable source of information.

3. General Stores - people who run these stores usually know everyone in the area. If they are not able to help you directly they will almost certainly put you in contact with 'oldtimers' who are natural historians.

4. Churches - again you are looking for a connection with the name. Ministers, or other oldtimers who may have known your natural mother.

5. Nursing Homes - depending on your own age, your mother may even be a resident, however, if not, there is a good chance that someone who is knew your mother's family.

6. Town Clerk - these people have records on local families from many sources but the most obvious one would be property records.

With all these sources you are always trying to make a connection with someone who has the same name as your natural mother. The more people you ask in each community, the greater your chances of making this connection. Always give the name, approximate age and physical description if at all possible. Don't give up easily. Ask everyone you come in contact with if they know or knew someone fitting the description of your natural mother.

As a city dweller I found the friendly, sincere and helpful attitude of everyone I contacted, very refreshing. After many frustrating weeks of writing and phoning, my own search came to an abrupt halt with one phone call that went something like this:

Town Clerk: "I'm forty-nine as well and I went to school with a girl of that description. We still send Christmas cards to each other. Her married name is....."

Me: "Oh...OH! uh, thank you very much!!!"

Good luck... Sandra Atyeo.

\* \* \* \* \*

Check your Library.

Adoption and Family Life - M. Kornitzer

The Search for Anna Fisher - F. Fisher

Children of Special Value - D. Anderson

Adoption Today - Rael Jean Issac

The Adoption Triangle - A. D. Sorosky

Everything secret degenerates; nothing is safe that does not show it can bear discussion and publicity - Lord Acton.

































































































































































































