

## THE STORY OF KENNETH LAW HUTTON

Wednesday 7.40a.m. on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 1952 the nurse on the maternity ward at Simpson memorial hospital Edinburgh, Scotland cried out to my father "it's a boy". I was given the name Kenneth Law Hutton and I was second son to my mother Kate Margot Rubas Hutton born 7<sup>th</sup> December 1930 and my father Robert Baird Hutton born 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1924. My mother was of German decent and my father was Scottish, both my parents served in the Second World War where they met while my father was stationed in Germany with the British army.

After the war they both returned to Scotland and got married on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 1948 shortly after my brother Albert Robert was born in 1949 and they all set up home on a council estate in Edinburgh. A couple of years down the line I was to come onto the scene, followed shortly after by my sister Anita Christine born 24<sup>th</sup> October 1953.

Over the next four years we all lived as one big happy family well that's what it seemed to be from the outside looking in. Little did people know that the family was slowly disintegrating. Unfortunately for us my father was a heavy drinker, and to my knowledge unable to hold down any job for any length of time. During 1955 and 1957 my mother walked out on the family three times, and on each occasion it was said that she had gone with other men. Then finally on Wednesday the 20<sup>th</sup> February 1957 she left for the last time and was not seen or heard of for many years, it was very late that night when my father returned home to find the three of us all huddled together and alone, I was five years old. My father tried his best to take care of us with the help of our grandmother who came over from Germany to look after us but it was all too much for both of them. Finally there became no option but to put us into care and our once happy home was to be a thing of the past.

On Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 1957 my brother Albert was sent to live with my grandmother, my father's mother, whilst my sister Anita and I were put into the care of Dr Barnardos Homes and admitted to Haldane House, Bogside by Alloa near Edinburgh and was there to stay for the next four years during which my father visited only the once. In July 1958 my mother applied through a solicitor to regain custody of her children but it was short lived and by August 1958 our parents had disappeared off the face of the earth, and that was the last contact we were ever to have from them. Fortunately for us our German grandmother still showed an interest and was to visit us many times traveling from Germany to Scotland always with a smile and gifts for both of us, but after a while the years caught up with her and at the age of 72 she was finding it hard, so gradually her visits became less frequent.

During those four years Anita and I were boarded out many times and told it would be the last and introduced to our new parents to be. Each time I took my little sister by the hand hoping that these were the ones, But it wasn't to be and after the third time we thought we were going to be institutionalized forever, little did we know that Barnardos were trying to relocate us with our father's sister Christina but on receiving a letter from her telling Barnardos she already taken the older one Albert after the Scottish grandmother died and wasn't interested in either of us two

Then in February 1961 shortly before my ninth birthday we were told once again we going to be boarded out and hand in hand off we went again but this time it was to be different neither knowing that this was to be a turning point in our young lives as we were introduced to our prospective foster parents Mr. and Mrs. I'Anson.

After a short holiday with the I'Anson's we returned to the home once again but this time asked if we would we like to go and live with them. Naturally our answer of course was yes. Finally after four years of coming and going we moved into our new home on Saturday the 15<sup>th</sup> April 1961. Mr and Mrs I'Anson lived in Falkirk Stirlingshire and had one daughter called Doreen aged 18yrs who became our big sister. During our stay at Falkirk our grandmother came over from Germany and stayed with us for one month. By now she was the only family we had from our old life, The I'Ansons had become our parents and we called them mum and dad. We were all one big happy family and still have fond memories of those early years in Stirlingshire.

At the age of 12 years my brother Albert was kidnapped on the 29<sup>th</sup> August 1963 from outside my aunts

house in Edinburgh and all hell was let loose, the police were called and Anita and I were put under police protection for a time it was assumed my mother had come to get children but there was no actual proof and thought that she had taken Albert back to Germany with her, we now that she must have because he's well and living in London.

All was going well until our new parents decided that they wanted to emigrate to Australia and as they were not our legal guardians we could not go with them. They went ahead with their application but at the same time approached Barnardos and asked if we could go with them. They were successful in their application and Barnardos said they would try to send us with the next group of children being relocated to Australia. This meant we would have to go back into care for a short period of time. Finally the day came when we all packed our bags and moved to Malton in Yorkshire on the 27 of July 1964 and waited for our parent's departure date.

The departure date was confirmed as the 3<sup>rd</sup> March 1965 so while they flew off to Australia, we were sent to live in London to the Dr Barnardo's village home in Barkingside. It was a sad time and at the back of my mind wondered if we would see our new mum and dad again.

On arrival at the village home we were put in a cottage (Forget Me Not) all the cottages had their own names. The village itself had to be seen to be believed as the name said it all with shops, church, school and it's own town clock which looked across the village green surrounded small cottages. All this in the heart Essex London surrounded by an eight foot wall to keep the world out and we were to stay there until 21st March 1965 when all the other children arrived before being sent to Australia.

There were nine of us altogether and we were all put into Ivy Cottage and was to spend the next week having a great time together seeing the sights of London, a west end show, and the press all taking an interest in our exploits. We all felt like celebrities, then came all the new clothes complete with new shiny suitcase to put them in which was all new to me as most of my life I'd had second hand clothes.

Finally the day of our departure arrived and I remember leaving the village like it was yesterday as we were all buzzing with excitement for our destination was Heathrow airport. After two days flying we eventually arrived in Sydney Australia on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April 1965. Unfortunately as soon as we arrived the group was split up almost straight away and didn't even get to say our goodbyes. My sister and I were taken on arrival to meet up with our parents; it was a happy moment for us. As for the rest of the group we never knew where they went and so were unable to keep in touch.

We were all young with a brand new life ahead of us, I wish now we'd all kept in touch as we all have so much in common like us all having spent most of our lives in care and look forward to the day that hopefully we can all meet up again.

We were to settle in a place called Bradfield Park Hostel Sydney it was where all the immigrants went so they could find their feet in their new land i.e. be it a job and a home both were hard to find in those days as money for most was in short supply. The full reality hit home as it was not just blue sky's and sandy beaches you had to work hard to survive and many didn't. Anita and I went to Chatswood High School and I was to stay there until I finished High School during which period I worked two jobs to bring in money into the home. In the mornings I delivered milk starting at 3am and after school I sold newspapers at the local railway station. I worked a twelve hour day in a milk bar on a Saturday. Sundays for me was not a day of rest as I would mow people's lawns or help dad with his landscaping business.

In November 1968 I left high school and became an apprentice chef at the Royal Automobile Club in Sydney although for the next year I carried on doing some of my part time jobs but eventually had to give them up as I starting work at 8.30am to 9pm six days a week and it was hard going.

After a while I found motorbikes and girls more fun then working all day and started racing bikes as a hobby. I left home at eighteen and lived with some mates in the inner city of Sydney that's when party life started. More girls, more grog and even faster motorbikes. I changed my place of work and got a job on the north shore of Sydney, shortly after I had a bad crash racing bikes and had to give up cooking for a while so went and worked at the bike shop that sponsored my racing. I later decided it was time to travel so moved to Melbourne for a while, I sold pictures door to door at night and lived above a pub where during the day played pool for money to pay my rent, but it didn't last and I

returned to Sydney four months later.

I decided to finish my apprenticeship and worked in an inner city restaurant finishing my time so I could get my certificate.

In 1972 I got itchy feet again and decided to buy a camper van and travel around Australia. My first stop was Tasmania where I worked for four months picking apples and from there I drove to Perth in Western Australia and worked in the Sheraton Hotel as a chef finally to leave in January 1975. Continuing my journey, I ended up in Cairns North Queensland where I lived and worked for nearly two years then headed back to Sydney where I spent the next two years trying to save enough money to go to England and Germany to find my brother and grandmother. I left Australia in August 1977 the very same month that Elvis died. I eventually found my brother and my Grandmother and spent a month with each of them and that was the last time I ever saw them, although I do know that my brother Albert still lives in London

Arriving back in Sydney I got married on the 21<sup>st</sup> January 1979 and moved back to Cairns and went back to my old job as head chef until 1982. From there we went to manage a ski resort in the snowy mountains, when the contract was up we returned to Cairns, I always wanted to be a pro fisherman and for the next year I worked with a friend fishing for Barramundi. As I was tired of cooking with its long hours and seven days a week, It was then I thought I'd change directions in my career I'd always liked horticulture so found myself a job in a nursery to learn the trade.

After a few years I decided I new enough to start up my own nursery business and as money was in short supply I took on a job managing a seafood company and working on the nursery weekends. During my time at the seafood company I was approached by an Italian business man who asked me if I would like to manage his 100 acre farm and nursery. Of course I said yes it was the break I'd been waiting for.

It was now 1988 and I had just brought the land to build my dream home and nursery on .And it was then our third child was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 1988 we called her Lauren Sarah my son Karl Robert was born on the 15<sup>th</sup> March 1984 and Melissa Anita born 10<sup>th</sup> November 1979. Time flew past and Lauren was already three years old and I thought it was time to go in search of my birth mother.

I arrived in America in November 1991 and my mother was at the airport waiting for me. It was a shock for both of us as she hadn't seen me for 34 years. We stayed in America for six weeks and my mother came to Australia 2 years later and again in 1995, sadly she died in March 2000 in America.

Finally I had enough money to build my home and started up my own nursery business but it was hard at first so went back working casual for another nursery. I also went back cooking for a company that only catered for special events and most of the jobs were at nights and weekends and ended up working for that company for eight years. By now my nursery was up and running full time I had a great family and was looking forward to a great future.

In 2004 after 25years of marriage the bubble burst, and I was to go through a messy divorce, I nearly lost everything, but fought hard and managed to keep my house, business and my three children. On the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2005 my daughter gave birth to young Jackson my first grandson shortly after I was to meet a very nice Chinese girl called Bailing and went to China three times and lived with her and her family, on the third visit I brought her back to Australia and we got married on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2006  
We still live in Cairns and are both very happy together

So much has happened over the last forty two years since coming to Australia and it's hard to tell it all in a short story. I'm glad I was sent to Australia and given a second chance and feel I have been successful in my life even if I'd had more then a few ups and downs. All my children are healthy and happy with their lives and my foster parents live in Tasmania and my sister Anita now lives on the Gold Coast.

If I had my time over again I wouldn't change much. Firstly it was sad that my mother and father spilt up and the three of us children couldn't stay together as when we did meet Albert we were strangers.

Although the first few years were hell it all changed when we met the I'Ansons. I also thank Dr Barnardo's for sending me to Australia and would love to one day meet up with the rest of the group that came to Australia with me. Unfortunately they weren't as lucky as us, as we had a new mother and father so at least we had a chance as some of their stories are very sad. We only spent a few weeks together but I know we all have a lot in common.

A special thank you to Tony Diamond for trying so hard, to get us all together and give us the courage to tell some of our stories to others.

#### FINALLY

I know that Tony has spent many hours tracing the group's relatives and personally would like to thank him on behalf of all of us. As for Tony, he found my auntie Christina my father's sister, who I didn't know existed until recently. He is now trying to trace my father who is still alive but where? And hope he has more luck than I did.

Kenneth Law Hutton 18/09/2007