

Editorial

Welcome to the Spring issue.

Our front page carries a brief farewell salute to one of our most loyal supporters. Inside there's reports of our press coverage, although in this day and age, we probably ought to be reporting on 'likes' and 'hits'. Of which we have many by the way. Maybe more of this in the next Bulletin.

Here's to a warmer 2018.



**Adults Affected
by Adoption**

Angus Mitchell: War Hero, former Chair, Sup- porter and Searcher

Angus Mitchell died on February 26 and whilst there are many memories, too many to print here, we can say

that he was one of our most loyal friends. Bulletin readers and the present staff will know him most be-



cause of his search work in the National Records Office. Angus's search reports were exemplars in how to compile a family tree. He was meticulous in providing connections between second cousins, chasing up people who lived at addresses in streets that no longer existed and his informed guesses as to distant family connections were invariably accurate. Angus was also well-known for his wide knowledge of Scottish burial plots and cemeteries. This too helped us in our searches for birth family members. He will be sorely missed.

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Information about his derring-do war exploits can be found at: <https://www.forces.net/news/veteran-who-liberated-dutch-town-bicycle-dies-aged-93>

Birthlink in the News

On 19 February The Edinburgh Evening News carried this story headlined: Without Edinburgh-based charity Birthlink, Mervyn Miller's experience of searching for his birth mother might have been very different.



'Mervyn, 73, was born three months premature in 1944 to a young unmarried inmate of Saughton Prison, locked up for shoplifting. Mervyn was born with Spina Bifida and he believes that the pressure of having to provide for a disabled, mixed-race child before the NHS was why his mother abandoned him at a few months old at the children's centre in Gorgie that cared for him. He spent the rest of his childhood in care.'

The article goes on to tell Mervyn's tale including the fact that we have found a member of Mervyn's family, and you can read more at: <https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/health/edinburgh-pensioner-mourns-loss-of-funding-for-birthlink-charity-1-4691495>



Matches on the Adoption Contact Register: the ups and downs

On regular occasions we never actually see those that we help link with each other and, again, regularly, it is the case, despite the adoption being in Scotland, that neither party lives here anymore.

Douglas was born and adopted in 1961, his brother Mark was born five years later and remained with the family. Douglas and Mark were in Australia and England when Douglas registered with us on the urging of his wife. It took us a while to find Mark however we did, and they are now speaking on the 'phone with each other, and Douglas is planning a visit.

A second link was equally international in that a birth father who had been on the Register for twenty years was linked when his daughter registered from her home in the USA. We are now actively looking for her mother.

Less international, was the case of the adopted daughter who registered and was linked with her birth father's cousin who had registered many years previously. Sadly, her father was dead, however we did manage to trace her mother, this time to the care home in which she lives now.

Running for Birthlink

Just room for two shout-outs to Allie MacDonald who's in the London Marathon, and doing the Lake District is Aaron Devaraux. Thanks guys.



Food for thought corner: reprinted from [Birth Mother] First Mother Forum

‘Birth mother, first mother, biological mother, or relinquisher? Framing the language when we talk about adoption

It's an issue at *First Mother Forum* for even the name irritates some--adoptive parents and adoptees. Adoptive parents object because if we are the "first" parents, what does that make them? You can figure out the answer. It starts with "s." To many of them, we are birth parents, first, last, but most importantly, always. Anything else--save *biological*--seems to get up their dander but then, biological is still troublesome because it implies DNA, hereditary, ancestry, health history, etc. Biological goes on and on. Biology is real and forever. DNA coding cannot be re-written.

You can see the irritation on Facebook with the angry comments that

[Birth Mother] First Mother Forum

Where first/birth/natural/real mothers share news & opinions. And vent.

pop up on all sorts of pages--for adoptees, for adoptive parents, for all members of the triad--from writers who are angry that *birth* is replaced by *first*. Birth connotes a one-moment (hours, actually) in-time occurrence that has us in and out of the baby's life, who by law, becomes someone else's child. No matter what. I don't mean to smear all adoptive parents, because there are many who are accepting and generous in their attitude towards the child's true, biological mother and father and don't get rattled by the term, *first mother*.

But it is not only members of the adopting class who object. Some adoptees find any use of the word "mother" connected to the woman whose DNA they carry offensive. *First* or *birth*, it doesn't matter. Don't even think about *natural...*' If you want to read more go to: <http://www.firstmotherforum.com/2018/01/birth-mother-first-mother-biological.html>

And here's another interesting article culled from the Web, it's from a site named

Just your average grateful/angry adoptee here in London, UK.

‘How important is a neutral location?’

Meeting on neutral territory is a well-known component of adoption reunion advice, but is it essential or could you meet at home? Both have pros and cons, so a café environment, for example, gives you props and subjects to talk about if conversation stalls. But a public location is just that, and you may feel inhibited by the space, the noise or the people around you. It's tempting to choose a home environment so you'll be more relaxed, but if you go to your biological parent's home there may be knickknacks and photographs that could trigger you. And conversely, if they come to your house, you may be revealing more about yourself earlier than you wanted to.' The article goes on with some wonderful sub-headings, including 'Expect to be overwhelmed', 'Expect to be underwhelmed', 'Leave your inner people-pleaser at home'.



To read more go to: <https://howtobeadopted.com/home/2018/adoption-reunion-top-tips>

Now Out

Our latest publication promises to be popular.

Orders are already coming in.

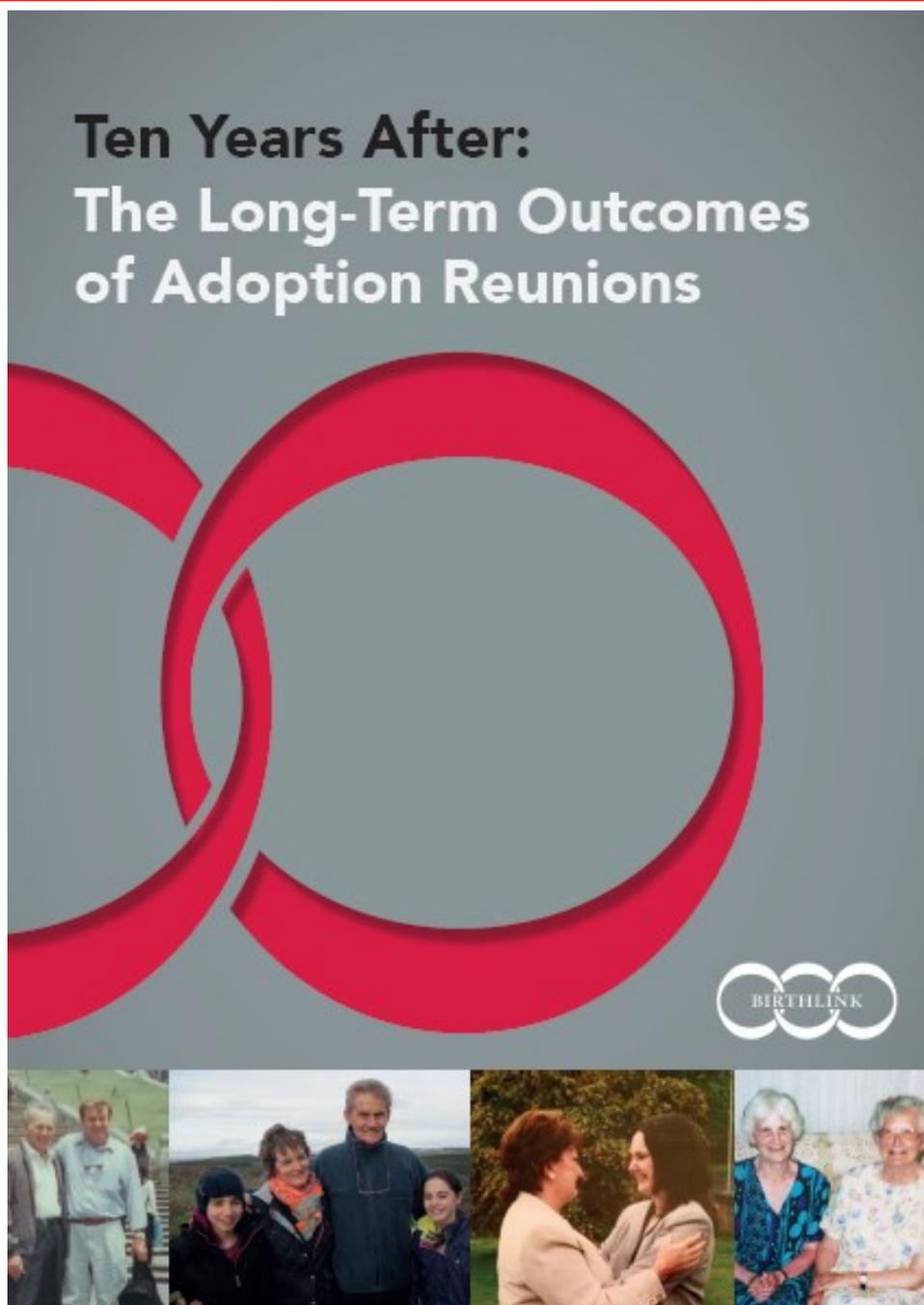
As indicated in the last Bulletin, *Ten Years After* carries findings from an ambitious piece of research into hundreds of reunions that took place as far back as 1996.

Edited by Dr. Gary Clapton of the University of Edinburgh, the 28-page booklet publishes news from the people at the heart of reunions that are at least ten years old.

The idea was to explore how people who had been separated by adoption got on with each other once the initial high emotions of first meetings subsided.

Ten Years After is packed with information, stories and interesting research findings. And it is free.

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