

On Wednesday, August 29, 2012, my daughter, Kristianna was contacted, via a facebook friend request, by Lilly Oddsdottir of Iceland. She called me to tell me that a lady from Iceland put a friend request to her. Of course we knew no one from Iceland and I joked and said, maybe Grandmother (Esther) may be trying to get in touch with us....little did I know how true this was! By that afternoon, my life changed because of the tenacious work of this wonderful Icelandic lady named Lilly Oddsdottir. Before the day was over, I saw pictures of my beloved Mother I had never seen, even pictures of her family I had been told had died. Pictures of her brothers and nephew that look like my own brothers! Actually seeing the faces of my Grandparents and seeing my Mothers face in her Mothers.....unbelievable. I can not tell you the range of emotions we, my family, have experienced in a few short days since Lilly Oddsdottir found Ragna Esther Ishom Gavin Vickers' family.

Lilly has opened up an entire world for us. Given us the family we longed for and solved a family mystery and revealed secrets that we had no clue existed.

I only wish my Mother were alive to know her wonderful beloved family searched for her all these years. My Mother passed away on October 14, 2002 of lung cancer. Her family remained with her for three days, never leaving her side until she slipped away to heaven. We all loved my Mother who was the most caring, loving and generous person I have ever known. I am so honored to have had her as my Mother and now feel so honored to have her family now in my life. All because Lilly never gave up. What a blessing we have been given.

Reading the article about her abuse was very difficult. But at the same time it did solve many questions I have had over the years. What impresses me most is the fact that although my Mother was in such a horrible situation, alone, hurt and homeless in a Country she did not know. She survived! More than that...she did not let that define her. I am so proud of her!

My Mother never told us of the abuse...she only told us of the marriage and the two children when I was 32 years old. I found out by accident when applying for a birth certificate that she had two previous live births. When I asked her she told me of the two children she had lost. That was when I realized why every single Christmas of my entire life she had always been sad.....saying she missed her family. Of that I am sure as she spoke of them at times with tears... but she also missed her two children. The two she lost because of the system and most likely the threats of Larry Gavin. Because I know my Mother well....she would die for her children. But she would also do whatever was needed to protect them. After reading this story, I feel certain Larry Gavin must have threatened to harm the children if she did not disappear. That would be the only reason she would have left them...to protect them. I also feel she must have been told by the Gavin's that her family did not love her or want her anymore....or she may have been so ashamed feeling like she had failed her family and just found it easier to just disappear.

My Mother married my Dad, Arthur Vickers Jr. in 1953. He was a sailor when they met and I understand her Father and Brother were sailors too. He loved her dearly. They had three more children, myself born in 1954, my brother Jimmy born in 1956 (died 1974) and my brother Jack born in 1963. She has 4 grand children: Kristianna (named after her Mother) born 1979, Heather born 1980, Jonathan born 1984 and Kimberly born 1984. She was married to my dad for 32 years when he passed away in 1985. She never remarried.

After my Dad passed she began to sit with terminal patients. People dying of cancer, until she got cancer then we brought her to my house and took care of her until the end. She fought a hard battle living about 9 months longer than they said she would.

She loved life, she loved to laugh and have fun and she always loved the ocean. Of course now I understand she is a sailor's daughter. ;-)) She raised me to think I could do anything I wanted. Always encouraging always loving. I miss her so.

When I found out her family never stopped searching even after her Father passed away it tells me how wonderful her people are. I am so honored to have their blood in mine. I am so grateful for their efforts and only wished my Mother had known. They would have been very proud of her. She was kind, loving, caring, giving and selfless. She always put others ahead of herself. She was a very Godly woman and taught her family to love and forgive. I miss her dearly. As you see I can not tell you enough how wonderful she was.

I know the beginning of this story was horrible....but I know the last 50 years of her life were good ones. She had her happily ever after....I only wish she were here to meet Lilly who has brought her family to me in the US. I will forever be grateful to her for this wonderful gift.

I know I sound rambling but I can not explain how excited and happy I am to know my Mother's people are alive....my people are alive! How wonderful! Such a blessing.

I listed my email address for home above. You have my cell phone..... I look forward to speaking with you.

Lou Ann Vickers LeMaster

PS: I have been told there is a book written by Melissa Gavin, who never met or knew my Mother. I sent an email to Melissa Gavin to tell her she does not have my permission to use my Mother's name in any publication. I have not read this book and understand as her legal heir Melissa or the Publisher should have my permission before she can use my Mother's name. I have advised Melissa Gavin not to use my Mother's name to avoid further actions being taken. I hope she respects this. She has not responded to me at all.