

Extraordinary life's secrets at book talk

By Robert Henson

SINGER Sharyn Killens kept a lot of things secret while working in the entertainment industry: childhood abuse, being abandoned in Kings Cross, institutional beatings and isolation, drugs and drinking.

But Ms Killens will reveal her extraordinary life story in book talks at Penhurst and Hurstville libraries this Thursday as she launches *The Inconvenient Child*, a compelling book she has written with friend and author Lindsay Lewis.

Ms Killens describes the literary events as "absolutely wonderful," complementing her moving memoirs with her vocal talents.

"We start at the beginning ... and pick out the highlights of my life," she said. "Usually everybody's crying by the end of it, so we finish up with hand clapping and bit of a singsong."

Born to a Sydney socialite and a visiting African-American serviceman, Ms Killen went into foster care and survived life in a Kings Cross "party house" before being abandoned in a convent-orphanage at five.



Book of a lifetime: Sharyn Killens will be launching her extraordinary memoir *An Inconvenient Child* at Penhurst and Hurstville libraries.

She said that as a troubled runaway teenager she was arrested without committing a crime and sent to juvenile detention centres - Parramatta Girls Home and Hay Girls Institution.

From being an exotic dancer in Kings Cross, she strived to achieve her singing dream as Sharyn Crystal.

Despite her hardship, the book has a "fabulously wonderful happy ending" involving a trip to the US to discover her roots.

"It's a beautifully written

book but it's also a history of Australia that isn't talked about, and that everyone should read," she said.

Ms Killens lived in St George for 20 years until she moved to the NSW Central Coast in 2004.

Ms Killens and Ms Lewis will give insights into the book this Thursday, October 29, at Penhurst Library (10.30am) and Hurstville Library (2pm).

Bookings: 9330 6422 or 9330 6111.