



Link-Up (Qld)

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION ®



Still Bringing Them Home

Chairperson - Sam Watson



Sam Watson

The new year has started with a real bang. In the first week of January our community met in the heart of the city at the Post Office, to observe the historical execution of one of our great resistance leaders Dundalee in 1885. This legendary warrior was called upon by the senior elders and community

leaders from many of the south east Queensland tribes and charged with leading a war of resistance against the invading forces of the white invaders. Dundalee and his troops fought a lengthy and honourable war but he was finally captured by the Native Mounted Police at York's Hollow in front of the place where the Royal Brisbane Hospital now stands.

Dundalee was a senior man of his tribe and was acting on behalf of many Indigenous nations when he declared war on the encroaching white "settlers." He had the lawful authority of his own people and had been given directions by the Elders of a number of other Indigenous nations. He should have been treated as a prisoner of war and treated with proper respect. Instead, he was captured, held illegally in a white man's jail and taken before a colonial court. Dundalee was charged with criminal offences under white man's law. His tribal sovereignty and his Aboriginal rights were not given any respect. He was subsequently found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging.

The gallows were constructed on a spot that was in front of the Queen Street Post Office and on the 5th January, 1885 – the sentence was carried out and he was hung. The actual execution was badly handled and the great warrior had to be killed by the attending hangman. This appalling act took place in front of

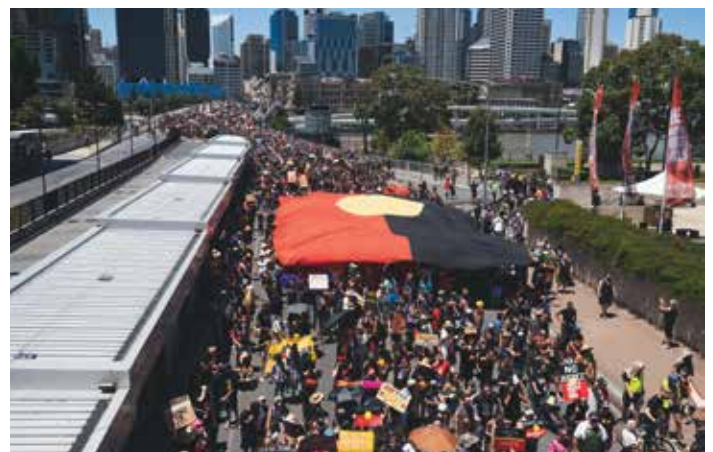
hundreds of protesting Aboriginal people who had gathered on the slopes of Spring Hill and smashed their shields and Nulla Nullas together to show their rage.



Dundalli Remembrance Day at Post Office Square

In January of every new year we come together and give honour and respect to the generations of great warrior leaders and patriots who gave their lives in defence of their land and culture. It is ironic that when we meet at the small park in front of the Post Office in Queen Street, we are standing in the shadows of the RSL's eternal flame in Anne street that honours the fallen soldiers who died in foreign wars. There are no monuments or flames to honour our warriors who were murdered on our own land.

The Invasion Day rallies and marches on January 26th were huge. Thousands of people across the land came out to protest and march in support of Aboriginal rights. Here in Brisbane we must have had over 7,500 people rally at the Roma Street forum, who then marched through the city to Musgrave Park. It was a great day. No incidents and no drama. Our community came together in strong solidarity and made a massive and enduring statement. From day one of the white invasion in 1788 we have never given up our sovereign rights as Aboriginal people to our land, to our culture and to our rights as human beings. Long live our struggle for justice.



Invasion Day march passing the Cultural Centre at Southbank



Cover: Rob Frescon
1985 - 2019
Remembering Rob Frescon - page 8

DISCLAIMER: Whilst every effort has been made to respect cultural traditions, Indigenous readers are advised that this publication may contain images of people who are deceased.

CEO - Patricia Thompson



Patricia Thompson

Welcome to this edition of our magazine – Our Link-Up family has suffered a very tragic start to 2019 with the sad loss of our work colleague Robert Frescon – a young life taken tragically. We remember him always and miss his energy, vibrancy and laughter. We extend our comfort and support to

Rob's family and with their permission share photo's and messages from many people around the country who had the pleasure of meeting or working with him and the positive impact he had on them.

We have had a reality check in terms of the importance of our own self-care, reflecting on how we look after ourselves and each other, and the need to look after ourselves so we can stay strong to support our families, our clients and our community.

Kelleigh Ryan is a Psychologist, and we thank Kelleigh for the professional support she provides us here at Link-Up (Qld). We invited Kelleigh to speak at our Apology Event which was held at the State Library of Queensland on 13 February 2019. Kelleigh talked about grief and loss, telling a story of privileging Indigenous knowledges around grief and loss and touching on the influence of colonisation, genocide and fragmented cultural connection to ceremony, practice and identity as influencing recovery from deep pain.

Kelleigh's talk raised awareness of the physical and neurological response to grief and loss and importantly ways of healing and resilience or recovering by sharing practices that held us safe from the beginning of our dreaming. We have printed Kelleigh's speech in this edition and we hope that sharing this helps in some way.

Apology 2019 was very successful, we decided to hold it at the Edge Auditorium at the State Library of Queensland. As well as Kelleigh, we also had other very inspiring speakers including Dr Chris Sarra, Director General of the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DATSIP). Chris gave a very inspiring talk about us as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people surviving and thriving.

Other inspiring speakers were Nadia Currie, Operations Manager at QATSICPP and the important work they do as the state child protection peak organisation, Councillor Peter Matic and Louise Denoon, Executive Director of the State Library of Queensland.

It was really pleasing to see many of our Elders present, they thoroughly enjoyed the morning. We screened short video clips produced by our Multi Media team of our Stolen Generations clients reflecting on the Apology 11 years ago, when the then Prime Minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd gave the Apology.

We also screened another video produced in house - Searching for Sasha – *Access Denied*. This is Jennifer and Steven Hart's story of searching for their daughter Sasha. This film highlights our client's journey and important work we do and the barriers we face in accessing records.

Steven sang a song he wrote about Sasha called "Wakka Wakka Ways". We also had a performance from our Torres Strait Islander sister Ruth Ghee, brothers Tony Ghee and Charles Passi.

This year, Link-Up (Qld) has been operating for 35 years. We will be celebrating this milestone with a Gala Dinner on Friday, 24th May 2019 at the Brisbane City Hall. It will be an opportunity to share our journey with our Stolen Generations clients over those 35 years, highlighting significant achievements and milestones through stories, images, song and performances.

Keep an eye out on our website and the next edition of our magazine with information about how to obtain tickets and how you can share and celebrate this very special event.

This year Link-Up (Qld) is celebrating our 35 year anniversary.

**To mark the occasion we are hosting
Link-Up (Qld)'s 35th Anniversary Dinner on
May 24th 2019**

Save The Date

**To register your interest and receive updates
on this event please contact Link-Up (Qld) on
07 3638 0411**

11th National Apology Day

The Edge, State Library of Queensland

Link-Up (Qld) held National Apology day at The Edge Auditorium, State Library of Qld. Many Elders were amongst the 180 guests who enjoyed the varied program. Link-Up (Qld) showcased two films, *Remembering the Apology*, featuring Stolen Generation clients and Jennifer and Steven Hart's story *Searching for Sasha: Access Denied*, A film about the challenges and barriers faced by the Research Unit over 8 years searching for Sasha.



Welcome to Country by Debbie Sandy



Link-Up (Qld) Chairperson Sam Watson



Tony Ghee, Charles Passi and Ruth Ghee



Dr Chris Sarra, Director General of DATSIP



Peter Matic, Councillor for Paddington Ward



Jeff Locke, Murri School



Murri School Dancers



Murri School Dancers



Nadia Curry, Operations Manager of QATSICPP



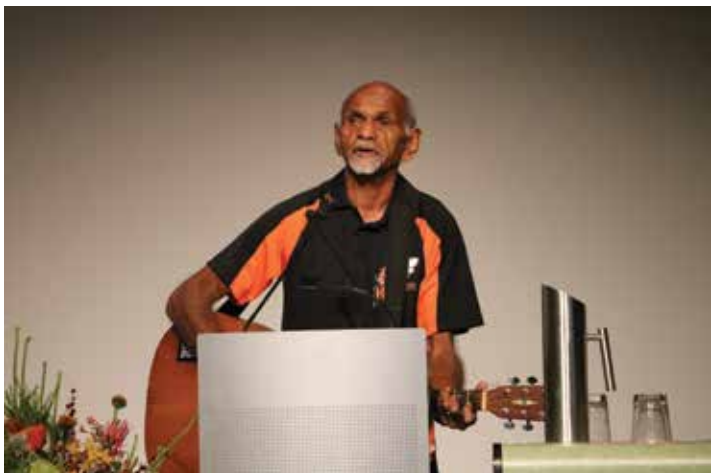
Kelleigh Ryan, Director of The Seedling Group



Uncle Willie Prince and Uncle Sam Watson



Ruth Loli, Research Manager of Link-Up (Qld)



Uncle Steven Hart

Kelleigh Ryan, Director of The Seedling Group



Kelleigh Ryan speaking at Link-Up (Qld)'s Apology Day

Kelleigh Ryan delivered this speech at Link-Up (Qld)'s Apology Day in Brisbane.

I would like to tell you a story of privileging Indigenous knowledges around Grief and Loss and touch on the influence of colonisation, genocide and fragmented cultural connection to ceremony, practice and identity as influencing recovery from deep pain.

I would like to raise awareness of the physical and neurological response to grief and loss and most importantly ways of healing and resilience or recovering and invite you back to the practices that held you safe from the beginning of our dreaming.

Quotes

"The way to recover from deep pain is to go through it."

"To understand where you want to be, you need to know where you have come from."

First Nations People and Grief and Loss

First Nations Peoples around the world and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have understood both birth and death as a part of a natural cycle of life and being.

Stages of change in these cycles were accepted through ceremonies and rituals that provided a place and time for acknowledging the joy or pain experienced by these events.

Sacred places, songs, dances and practices marked the importance of different stages in all cycles of life. Importantly in relation to death, experiences of loss and grief; many protocols recognised the importance of families caring for other families as they were given time to express their pain and grieve and begin the journey to healing.

Burial rituals provided safety for the outlet of great pain, allowing collective cultural practices to hold families and community safe to release their grief, gather, rest and begin to recover.

Many of these practices still exist and are practiced in some form in our communities in remote, regional and urban setting today.

Grieving processes provided the safe release of great pain from our spiritual, physical and emotional being.

People come together to pay respect and grieve, culturally safe social processes of acknowledging

and moving through this pain as a community was healing.

Importantly it allowed individuals to incorporate the loss into their new identity and roles in the family and the community.

Colonisation

The arrival of the first tall ships or colonisation changed our ability to practice our healing rituals and influenced our wellbeing forever.

The fragmentation of cultural identity, roles, practices, ceremonies, languages and connections to place disrupted the healing rituals of Indigenous cultures.

The frontier wars, genocide, the removal of children, enslavement of families, the removal from country, destruction of land and waterways and the devastation to cultural language groups disrupted storylines for many clans and Aboriginal nations.

With the removal of access to our healing practices came the increased exposure of many deaths and losses to our families.

These losses continue today with the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in prisons, suicides, chronic illness, premature deaths and the ongoing removal of children.

Grief Interrupted

These events see families experiencing grief and loss at rates we are unable to recover well from. When people are unable to recover from grief before experiencing another loss the symptoms of grief, like anger, rage, deep sorrow, violence, depression and anxiety become more difficult to manage.

These emotions often place the individual and community at greater risk through having less resources to manage grief and care for themselves and others.

Pain

Deep pain scares people.

For some people understanding that grief is not just all in your heart or head, and therefore something you should get over takes some explaining. The simplest way to understand the burden of loss is like this. When we experience, trauma, grief and loss, racism, isolation and discrimination our body responds through physical nervous systems.

These systems send a message to your brain, through the same network of nerve endings and neurological connections that we experience physical pain through.

Therefore, our brains understand and respond to these messages just like physical pain.

No one would ask someone who has experienced great physical pain to just get over it.

To Heal

As you have heard, cultural practices have always provided healing, resilience and recovery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The road to recovery is through these same practices of connection to identity, family and culture. Allowing time and connection to relationships with people and places to heal our losses through practicing rituals and activities that bring us joy and connection.

Activating the physical and neurological networks that record experiences of pleasure and happiness will increase our bodies levels of good hormones, rest our nervous systems and build our connections to self, others and cultural identity. All of which are powerfully healing.

We may not have control over how we lose the ones we love, but we do have control over how we remember them and heal ourselves.

So if you are a salt water person find your way to our oceans, if you are freshwater find your way to our waterways. If your bloodline has seen your ancestors like in our mountains, deserts and plains find your way to country.

If you are still on the journey of finding your way home please remember that while you may not have found your mob yet, your ancestors know you. You are never alone, you are always connected and wherever you walk on this land, you are connected to your country.

Thank you for listening and I hope this has been helpful.



Remembering Rob Frescon 1984 - 2019



Rob commenced working with Link-Up (Qld) in June 2015. Upon commencement he said, “I am excited to join the Link-Up (Qld) team and to be working closely with our mob, reconnecting them with their families and country”. Rob’s role was working directly with Stolen Generations clients to support them on their journey looking for family.

An extract of a client’s reflection of Rob from a reunion in 2017 – “My wife and I have just returned from a reunion accompanied by Rob and a co-worker, these amazing young men helped me through difficult times and there were many when I felt I was struggling but they understood all my emotions and were always there with the support I needed and this saw us through those moments. They were constantly professional but always laughing when we laughed and cried when we cried, just by being there they made our adventure all the better and we will always remember this experience with gratitude.”

At Link-Up (Qld), we will remember Rob as tenacious, a larrikin, resilient, proud, generous,

happy, caring, cheeky, he had a sense of humour that made people feel at ease, respectful, and supportive. Rob brought a great joy and energy as a person, his vibrancy and laughter will be missed.



We will miss his silliness – like when you are not at your desk, him putting his photo on your computer as a screen saver, we will miss his generosity and thoughtfulness always.

With family permission we have taken the following from Rob’s eulogy:

Our lasting memories of Rob are of good times, acting silly and simple, of a guy who loved of his family and friends, lived his life the way he wanted and who always made us laugh.

We will mourn the man who is gone, who we lost so tragically but we will remember him as a loving, generous, fun spirited person who left an impression on every person he met whether their meeting lasted five minutes, five years or a lifetime.



We are so sad to hear of Robby's passing, he was such a great guy. Our thoughts are with his family and staff at Link-Up (Qld)

Ken and Glenda Chaille



My deepest condolences to the family, team and community.

Kathy Mokaraka – Yorgum Aboriginal Corp, WA



Although Robert's time amongst us here at Injilinj Aged Care was all too brief – we would like to respect and acknowledge Robert's jocular and jovial personality which, in part, characterised his dedication towards his work with Link-Up (Qld).

Pattie Lees - Injilinj Aged Care Mt Isa



You all hold a special place in our hearts & to know one of the team has gone is heartbreaking. We wish you strength to carry on & all the love you need to keep doing this wonderful work, we will always be grateful we had the opportunity to have known Rob.

Len and Claire White



Our thoughts and prayers are going out to Rob's families and all that had the pleasure of meeting this wonderful man.

Raelene Rosas NT Stolen Gen



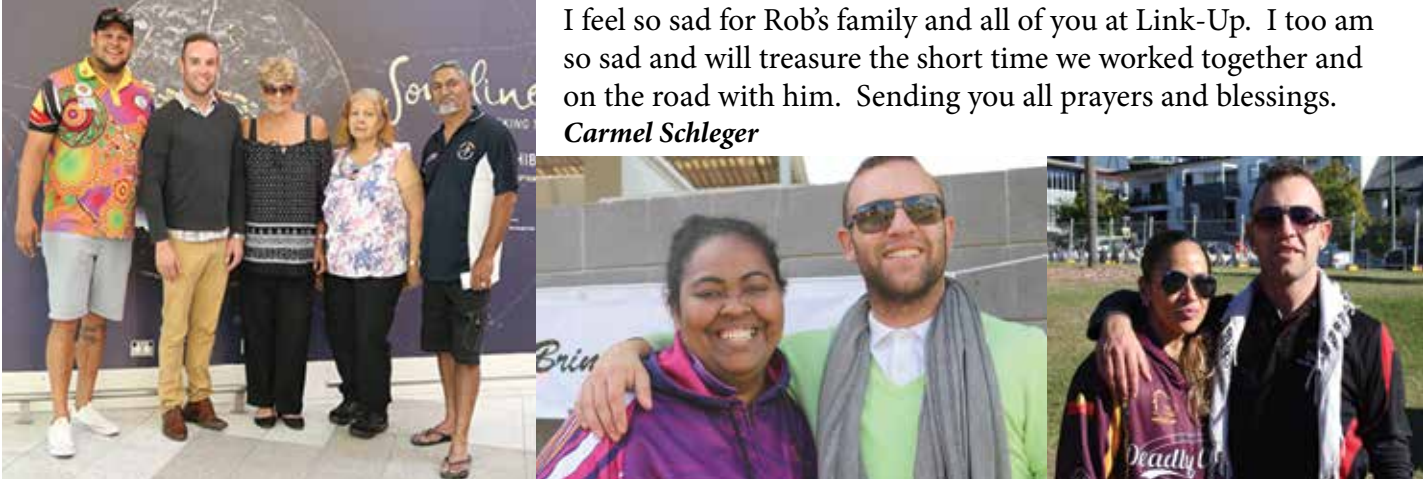
We will never forget the image of his gentle and bright face and the laughter he shared with everyone who met him. It was an honor to have known such a great person and we will truly miss him. We will not say goodbye, but we will see him again in the Dreaming.

Lilly Davidson – Liworaji Aboriginal Corporation

Congress Link Up extends our sincere sorrow and thoughts. It was a privilege to have known Rob and although our friendship with him was brief, this brother has left a big impact with memories of so much laughter, kindness and commitment to helping our mob. Bless and may he RIP.
Tracey Brand – Congress Central Australia



I feel so sad for Rob's family and all of you at Link-Up. I too am so sad and will treasure the short time we worked together and on the road with him. Sending you all prayers and blessings.
Carmel Schleger



Our hearts go out to you and all the family of this beautiful young man who will certainly be remembered for his thoughtfulness, kindness and the love that he had for his job and the stolen generation members.
From Kimberley Stolen Generation Staff, Board and Members

Kerry Bodle Reunion - Cherbourg



Link-Up (Qld) workers Christine Reeves and Jessie Cobbo with Kerry Bodle and Kylee Fitzpatrick

My Grandmother, Merle (Moola) Conbar, was born at Thargomindah in 1898, with her parents recorded as unknown on departmental records. From the age of two my Grandmother was living with William Geddes under a special permit allowing him to employ Moola as a ward. With this permission for him to act as a Guardian, he had power to move Moola with his own family to any part of the colony. No records could be found to show why Moola was removed from her family and why she was allowed to be William Geddes ward. Moola was sent to Cherbourg in 1929 when she was pregnant with my mother, Margaret (Maggie) Millikin nee Conbar/Fisher. Moola married James Fisher in 1932 at Murgon and passed away in 1934 at Cherbourg, with the gravesite unknown in the old cemetery. It is not clear if Moola and James Fisher had any children together.

My mother, Maggie, was born at Cherbourg in 1929. She was taken from Cherbourg when she was four years of age and sent to the Salvation Army Home in Yeronga, which she left when she was sixteen years of age. My mother had a child when she was about twenty and then married my father and had another four children. When I was five, whilst living at Smithfield NSW, my mother left us. I was sent to a Salvation Army Home in Canowindra NSW. My mother came to visit me at the Home when I was 8. Once I left the home when I was 16, I used to catch up with my mother more regularly.

At the age of sixteen I fell pregnant. I have been married twice and have three more children. I started studying at Griffith University when my twin boys were two. I have been working at the University for twenty years and now have a PhD.



Kerry Bodle at the Old Cemetery in Cherbourg





My mother sent an intake request to Link-Up (Qld) to find her family in 1997. I sent a similar request in 2004 while working at GUMURRII student support unit at Griffith University. The journey has been long due to life circumstances taking precedence at certain times. With the death of my mother I wanted to take on this journey for her.

When I first received my research from Link-Up (Qld) I felt like a missing piece of the puzzle was finally found. The reunion was mainly back to a place of significance. I did feel quite anxious heading off to Cherbourg. I did not know if anyone would remember my Grandmother Moola Conbar or James Fisher. I was also really excited as I could not wait to see the country where my mother was born. My daughter Kylee Fitzpatrick was accompanying me on this journey.

The first couple of days were spent visiting the landmark places – like the old and new cemetery, the hospital where my mother was born, a tour of the Ration Shed and other Cherbourg sites. We did not meet any family from the Fisher clan until the last day.



Lindsey Bligh, Jessie Cobbo, Kylee Fitzpatrick and Kerry Bodle

We had decided to leave flowers (with a message on the card) at the Ration Shed instead of the old Cemetery because we wanted to see if we could possibly trigger someone's memory about Moola Conbar or James Fisher. We met two Elders at the Ration Shed that morning. Up until this point I was feeling disappointed. When I finally met Aunty Lilian Gray I felt like I had another piece of the puzzle. I have yet to contact Aunty Lilian Gray and hope that we can catch up to see if she can help me complete the story of my Grandmother's time at Cherbourg.

I had mixed feelings after the reunion. First, knowing what my Grandmother and Mother had to endure made me feel very emotional and sad, and as time went on I became more fulfilled. I definitely want to go back to Cherbourg after I make connections with Aunty Lilian Gray and see it from a new perspective.

I want to thank Christine Reeves and Jessie Cobbo from Link-Up (Qld) for taking time to make the reunion possible and thanks to Link-Up (Qld) for the great work that they do. I want to thank Lindsay Bligh for taking us around the cemetery.



Kerry Bodle, Aunty Ada Simpson and Kylee Kitzpatrick



Kerry leaving a note and flowers at the Ration Shed Museum

Eddena Geia Reunion - Tweed Heads



Eddena Geia and her daughter Tamara Willis at Fingal Cemetery

My name is Eddena Margaret Mae Geia (nee Willis). My mother is Edna Mae Willis. My father was not in my life, for reasons of my mother's choosing. I was taken off my mother as a young baby – not quite sure how old I was at that time. The Mercy Nuns at Woolawin Holy Spirit Convent where my mum worked told her that the Department of Family Services could help her, so off she went to see them in Brisbane. They removed me from her and placed me in Nudgee Orphanage. I remained there and was fostered out when I was about two and a half years old. I lived with my foster family at Gatton in the Lockyer Valley.

When I was 16 years old, I met my mother again – the connection wasn't there, the hurt and pain of losing me once overcame her fears of our reunion. I tried again when I was 18 years old and she was ready to let me be a part of her life again.

After getting to know my mum, I started to ask

questions about my father and her family. She would shut down very quickly and get very upset with me. I did meet my Auntie, mum's sister and a couple of her children. I also met my mum's cousins who lived in the next street. This was only a handful of people. When I was 23 years old, I moved to Toowoomba with my son and had another 3 children. I left Toowoomba and moved to Cairns, then Townsville and now I'm back in Cairns. About 3 and a half years ago, I connected with Link-Up (Qld) in Townsville to see if they could help me trace my family. Staff from Cairns office came to my home in Townsville and told me that they would be handling my case. Later that year, the college where I worked closed down and I was lucky to gain employment in the same field in Cairns, which made it easier to work with Link-Up (Qld) Caseworker, Shane Wallace.

Over the last year Shane and I met on numerous occasions. Shane always had lots of paperwork to give me about my mother's family. There seemed to



Eddena Geia, Tamara Willis and Shane Wallace



Eddena Geia and Tamara Willis laying flowers



Bronze Plaque with the names of Eddena Geia's great Grandparents be a glimmer of hope that I might one day know who my family were and where my country was. I always thought I was a Murri but records show that I am descendant of Wanggeriburra people also known as Danggan Balun (Five Rivers) people, which is part of the Bundjalung Nation. So, I suppose I should say I am a Koori.

On the 11th December 2018, Shane Wallace and Kathleen Bobongie from Link-Up (Qld) and I flew from Cairns to Coolangatta to commence my reunion. My daughter Tamara Willis, my support person, drove from Toowoomba to meet us. The following day, Shane drove us to Fingal Cemetery where my great grandparents Alice and John Edwards were laid to rest. It was so surreal knowing that I had great grandparents and that this was their resting place. We found the rock mounted with a bronze plaque with about 10-12 names on it and then I saw their names, **Edwards – Alice and John**. At that time, I felt happy to find their resting place but sad that I hadn't met them. A lot of mixed emotions were impacting me both mentally and physically.

After collecting myself, Shane drove nearby and showed me a totem carved out of a tree stump. It

was of an echidna, a dreaming story from that area. This was manmade, located at Fingal Heads but south of the beach is where you can see the real story. Hexagonal basalt columns which were formed from slowly cooling lava from Mount Warning Volcano, it was quite magnificent to see how Mother Nature created it in the Dreamtime. While exploring the Heads we came across a signpost saying Dreamtime Beach – it was very beautiful but very dangerous due to rips forming all the time.



Eddena Geia at Dreamtime Beach

Later we drove to Minjungbal Cultural Centre in Tweed Heads to view the museum of history and visit the bora ring. There was also a boardwalk which wraps around the cliffs. We all went for a lovely reunion lunch at the Tweed Sports Club and talked about what we had seen that morning and about how Tamara and I were feeling. I had a lot of mixed emotions but was feeling positive about the reunion. After lunch we visited the Tweed Heads Historical Museum but sadly there wasn't much information there about local Aboriginal people.

My great grandmother, Alice Edwards (nee Coolwell) had about 9 children. They all would have married and had children who, in turn, would have had their own families so there is a lot of family to meet. Towards the end of my reunion Shane gave my daughter and I copies of some of the additional information he had found. This will help me to find out and connect with other family members that are out there. This is important for me, my children and grandchildren, as for so long we knew we were of Aboriginal descent but didn't know much about our family connections, traditional country or culture.

I would like to say thank you to Shane for making this happen and to Kathleen for her support during the reunion – beautiful people. Lastly thank you for having an organisation like Link-Up (Qld) to help people like me and others in the same boat.

Kerry Mullins Collaborative Reunion - Link-Up Victoria and Link-Up (Qld)



Kerry Mullins Reunion, Healesville, Victoria

My name is Kerry Mullins I am a Wiradjuri descendent. I wanted to find my two children who were removed from me while I was living in Queensland, before moving back to Victoria where most of my family reside. I didn't know where to start, but I was told to contact Link-Up Victoria.

After contacting Link-Up Victoria they were able to help me search for my two children and reunite me with them in January this year with the assistance of Link-Up (Qld). Having all four of my children together with me for the first time brought up so many different emotions. I was able to reconnect with not only my two children that were removed but all four of them together as a family for the very first time in Victoria. The connection that my older two children had with their younger two siblings was so good it looked like they had never been apart.

At the family reunion, which included our eldest

living family members in Victoria, it was great to see everyone catching up together and sharing family stories. I will be for ever grateful to Link-Up Victoria and Link-Up (Qld) for the part that they had with connecting me with my four children for the first time. This is only the beginning of our long journey ahead.

Susan Neilson – Kerry's daughter

The story of my life isn't a very happy one to share. Always knowing I had a family out there and never having the answers as to why I don't have them by my side was always a hard thought. I knew I had a younger adopted brother out there somewhere and two other siblings. I only knew my birth mother's name and an aunty so searching for them made it extremely difficult.

Three years ago, I almost gave up after many failed attempts, and having no answers made me feel very disheartened. I had an overwhelming feeling to give it one last go and I am so glad I did. I found my aunty who then told me I had another younger brother and sister. Jodie connected with me on Facebook and we would talk every day for hours. We were both pregnant at the time so sharing that experience was really something. She was going through some things at the time and I knew she needed my help, so I flew down to Melbourne to meet and help her. We instantly connected like we had never been apart. She now even borrows clothes without returning them like sisters do LOL!



Emma, Adam JNR, Jamie Mullins, Susan Neilson and Aaron



Susan Neilson, Aaron, Uncle Joe, Kerry, Jamie and Jodie



Aaron, Jamie, Tammy, Susan Neilson and Jodie

My search for my adopted brother Aaron continued and my faith in searching for him only grew after meeting Jodie. I was never going to give up on him. When I finally found him, I messaged him on Facebook, my heart literally beating out of my chest, constantly refreshing my phone hoping I wouldn't be rejected. When he finally accepted my message and spoke to me the tears were insane. I finally felt like I was complete, and I had found my missing pieces to my life. Aaron was going to be on the Gold Coast for a night and came to meet me and my family. When I finally got to hug him and meet him was such a moment I will truly never forget. Our connection was so strong instantly.

Link-Up got in touch with me to be part of a reunion to meet our birth mother. I was very hesitant and reserved about this idea as I felt like I had already accepted the past and closed the door. I knew I needed to be there for Aaron with his journey as well. To be able to meet my other brother Jamie and perhaps to try and gain some healing for my past wounds.

The first day of the reunion was extremely emotional.

Having myself, Aaron and Jodie all be together at once was such a rewarding feeling. Meeting our birth mother did feel awkward as there was so many unanswered questions, so many mixed feelings, not knowing how to feel or act. Thank heavens for Josh from Link-Up (Qld), our support. He made me feel extremely safe. I needed that as I was unsure how the week was going to turn out. We met our brother Jamie and he connected with me straight away which made me feel like a big sister should. I felt like I was loved and finally accepted.

That week was the best week of my life. Sure, there were tears of sadness but there was also tears of happiness. I will be forever and truly grateful for that experience in helping me find my family. The bond especially between myself, Aaron and Jodie is so strong it feels like we have never been apart. We may not have memories of growing up together, but we now have a chance to create memories moving forward. Learning about our heritage and where I come from really touched me. It has made me have a greater appreciation, understanding and a feeling of pride. I made new friends and gained so much more.



Uncle Perry conducts a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony

National Redress Scheme

The National Redress Scheme is in response to the Royal Commission into Institutional responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

National Redress Scheme Line -1800 737 377

There have been many people that have been applying to the National Redress Scheme in the last few months. Over 2000 applications have been made. Offers are now coming out with over 40 already completed.

The Western Australian Government and the South Australian Government have completed the joining in process. This will mean any non-government institutes in these States will now be able to join the Scheme.

More institutes are now coming on board since the 1st of July 2018. The following have been included:

- Geelong Grammar School Ltd
- The Presbyterian Church of Queensland
- Anglican Diocese of Bendigo
- Anglican Diocese of the Northern Territory
- Anglicare North Coast
- Camberwell Grammar School
- St John's Anglican College and The Springfield Anglican College (FSAC Ltd)
- The William Branwhite Clarke College Council.
- The Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of the Southern Cross
- The Legacy Club of Brisbane Limited
- Jewish Care (Victoria) Inc

34 out of 35 of the Catholic Dioceses and Archdioceses have also joined the Scheme. This includes:

- De La Salle Brothers
- Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea

Some ideas for help when filling in the form:

1. Take your time- make sure you have the details that you need for the application process. This might include copies of documents or notes of the lived experience that you may have written down previously. You can only make one application.
2. You can withdraw your application and reapply if you need to change your application however once you receive your offer, then you cannot withdraw or change your application
3. If you have multiple institutes that you are applying for, then you will need to add copies of pages 12-26 for each of those institutes.
4. If you have multiple people who abused, you in each of these institutes then you will need to have a copy of pages 16-17 for each person.

5. If you are unsure of what to do call the National Redress Scheme and ask for support or a service that is officially a trained service in providing the support, you may need.

6. The Statutory Declaration needs to have: your name, your address and your occupation and signed and witnessed. The instructions for this are included in your application.

7. Details of your lived experience will need to be in the form. This may include the name of the person/s who were involved or a description of the person/s who were involved in performing the abuse and what occurred. This can be traumatising.

If you are experiencing emotions you're not coping with, call a support service that you're working with or the following can be contacted 24 hours a day and seven days a week:

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636

1800RESPECT: 1800 737 732

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467

If you have already filled in the application and are wondering what the progress of your application is, the National Redress Scheme can be called between the hours of 8am to 5pm. National Redress Scheme Line - 1800 737 377

If you are under the age of 18 years old but turn 18 years old before the Scheme is completed by 30 June 2028 and you are eligible to apply; you can apply for the National Redress Scheme. However, a decision will not be made until you have turned 18 years old.

Seeking legal advice is recommended when deciding on what action you may need to take. Knowmore legal service is an independent service that gives people with lived experiences an opportunity to seek information and advice on the legal aspects of the justice and redress options. They can be contacted on 1800 605 762, 9am -5pm, Monday to Friday.

When the application asks for documents, they mean any supporting documents that you may want to include in your application. This may include:

- Police reports/School reports/Hospitals/Other Departments
- Psychological reports/ Letters of support

- Photographs
- Statements whether from yourself or a witness
- Reports and letters from the Chief Protector/ Commissioner of Native Affairs

If you are sending in any documents including photographs, please make sure you send copies only as it is not a guarantee you will get back any original documents. Highlight what it is you are showing. A yellow highlighter works well when providing a large document and easier for the researcher to read what it is you are wanting them to see. If it is a photograph you may want to point out where you are in the photo or what the photo is about. What date can you provide for the document. Do not forget to put this in the section marked 61 Attachments to support your application.

Filling in the application form can be a difficult process. There are many services that have been trained to support you through this process. Finding the support service that you feel comfortable working with can be found on the National Redress Scheme website: <https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/> or call the National Redress Scheme Line - 1800 737 377

Staff Professional Development



Link-Up (Qld) staff Natalie Harrison, Jessie Cobbo and Christine Reeves

Link-Up (Qld) Caseworker Jessie Cobbo and Social and Emotional Wellbeing Counsellors Christine Reeves and Natalie Harrison, recently attended a two-day Professional Development workshop run by the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Workforce Support Unit of Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council. Participants came from various locations in Queensland and this was a great networking opportunity enabling us to better support Link-Up (Qld) clients. The workshop included training on Case Management and a cultural exchange to Stradbroke Island.



**Link-Up (Qld) 35 Years Dinner
May 24th - Save the Date
Call 07 3638 0411 for more info**

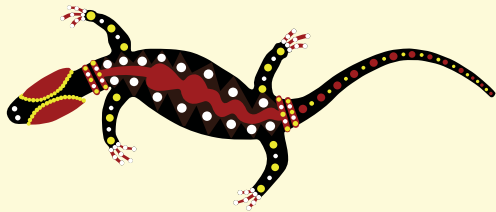


Link-Up (Qld) staff Sylvia Wright and Shane Wallace

Congratulations to Caseworkers Sylvia Wright and Shane Wallace who attended their Certificate IV in Mental Health Graduation on the 8th February 2019 at the RSL Club.

They started their studies with Gallang Place in March 2017 and successfully completed their block training held in Cairns.

Both Sylvia and Shane have aspirations to undertake the Diploma of Counselling with Gallang Place in the near future.



About Link-Up (Qld) -Our Mission-

Link-Up (Qld) Aboriginal Corporation supports the healing journeys of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people who have been separated from their families and cultures through forced removal, fostering, adoption and/or institutionalisation. We deliver professional, culturally sensitive and confidential research, reunion and cultural wellbeing services.

Link-Up (Qld) Aboriginal Corporation Caseworkers and Counsellors are experienced individuals who can assist in reuniting Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander families.

We also provide a referral service to the appropriate organisation or Government Department.

Link-Up (Qld)

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION ®

Still Bringing Them Home



Quick Facts

- Link-Up (Qld) is a FREE service
- We offer support before, during and after your family reunion
- We respect your privacy and treat all information confidentially
- Link-Up (Qld) runs a range of healing activities; camps, support groups, art, craft and music workshops
- We offer cultural renewal activities and support return to country

Link-Up (Qld) ABORIGINAL CORPORATION OFFICES

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**Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/linkupqueensland
or visit our website at www.link-upqld.org.au**

Toll Free: 1800 200 855 from landlines

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