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## Cover image: Acknowledgement of Country Guest Speaker Aunty Flo Link-Up (Qld) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country on which we Watson OAM at work and live. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water, and Link-Up (Qld)'s 17th community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and Anniversary of the National thank them for their wisdom and guidance as we walk in their footsteps. We Apology event (PHOTO: extend and pay our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander **FARLEY WARD** peoples and to our non-Indigenous friends. SHUTTERSTORM PHOTOGRAPHY) Disclaimer: Whilst every effort has been made to respect cultural traditions, Aboriginal Inside cover image: and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this publication may Undara National Park, contain images of and references to people who are deceased. Queensland (GETTY IMAGES).

#### Link-Up (Qld) Magazine

We invite submissions from community, clients, partners and associates. Do you have a story about your reunion and healing journey?

Email our friendly team at communications@link-upqld.org.au with your story ideas, special updates and events.

View our past volumes online at www.link-upqld.org.au



#### Contact Us

Freecall: 1800 200 855 Email: contact@link-upqld.org.au

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#### Welcome

Welcome to volume 57 of the Link-Up (Qld) magazine - the first for 2025!

Already this year, I've seen the dedication of our team reflected in the stories and achievements shared in this magazine. On behalf of the Board, I thank our staff for their continued commitment to supporting Stolen Generations survivors, descendants and their families.

It's also a pleasure to welcome two new staff members featured in this edition - Makaela Maloney-Connolly (Caseworker, Cairns) and Jade Shelley (Redress Counsellor, Brisbane). We are excited to have them join the team and contribute to the important work of the organisation.

As National Reconciliation Week (27 May - 3 June) approaches, I encourage everyone to take part in events across Queensland. This year's theme, "Bridging Now to Next," highlights the connection between past, present and future. It reminds us that reconciliation is an ongoing journey, one that calls on all Australians to step forward together and keep pushing for progress, guided by the lessons of the past.

Thank you to our clients, Elders, and community members for your trust and support. Your strength and belief in our mission continue to guide our work.



Kenny Ken Murphy Chairperson Link-Up (Qld)

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### CEO's Message

This first edition for 2025 opens a new chapter in our continued journey of supporting Stolen Generations survivors and descendants across Queensland.

Our team has been busy welcoming new clients, researching family histories, and preparing reunions that help restore identity and belonging. These journeys are deeply significant, and I want to thank our staff for the care, cultural sensitivity, and commitment they bring to this work each day.

In February, we commemorated the 17th anniversary of the National Apology with a special event at QPAC in South Brisbane. It was our largest gathering to date, filled with stories, culture, and connection. Thank you to everyone who joined us in person or online. The strength and unity in the room was a reminder of how far we've come, and how much we can achieve together. You'll find photos from the day on page 9.

We're now preparing for our annual Sorry Day breakfast event on Friday 23 May, to be held at the site of the former Aboriginal Girls Home in West End. This event is a chance to pause, reflect, and honour the resilience of those affected by forced removal. More information is available on page 25 and on our website.

Link-Up (Qld) remains a place of healing and support. We are grateful to our clients, families, Elders, community organisations and funders who walk alongside us. Thank you for your trust and encouragement as we continue this vital work together in 2025.



Patricia Thompson AM
Chief Executive Officer
Link-Up (Qld)



#### About us

Link-Up (Qld) has been actively advocating for Stolen Generations survivors since its establishment in 1984.

Our service works to enhance the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were forcibly removed from their families as children or were affected by forcible removal policies.

Our work is integral to helping right the wrongs of the past by assisting our Stolen Generations to reconnect with their identities, spirit and culture through family history research and active reunification with family, community, and country.

We work with elders, mums, dads, grandparents, aunties, uncles, sisters and brothers to reverse the cycle of transgenerational trauma and restore community health, resilience and wellbeing.

Scan the QR code below to learn more about our work.



#### Our history

Link-Up (Qld) has been offering family history tracing and reunification services for over 40 years, and our ongoing commitment to *bringing them home* remains stronger than ever.

In 1984, we began our work to address the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who felt they were victims of a society that dominated them, leaving them with no control and attempting to erase their identity.

Increased attention was brought to these issues following the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, which found that many of the deaths investigated were of people who had been separated from their families and communities due to the actions of past government policies and practices.

The 1997 Bringing Them Home report confirmed the devastating effects that the removal of children has had on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, communities, and cultures.

Backed by the findings of these reports, Link-Up (Qld) has continued – and will continue – to reunite families and communities so that healing can take place.



Evelyn Dodds' reunion story

When Evelyn Dodds first reached out to Link-Up (Qld), she sought answers her family had been denied for generations. Her father, Patrick Dodds, had been just one year old when he was removed from his mother in 1927 and placed into the Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home. From there, he was sent to Kinchela Aboriginal Boys Training Home, where he spent the remainder of his childhood.

"He grew up not knowing very much about his mother or any of his Aboriginal family or connections," Evelyn shared. "It was actually my daughter who suggested I approach Link-Up (Qld). I wanted to find out where my grandmother was buried and learn more about our family history."

Like so many others impacted by past government policies of forced removal, Evelyn and her family had grown up with missing pieces - gaps in identity, memory, and belonging. What she didn't know was that the journey she was about to take would offer not only answers but healing.

Link-Up (Qld) helped Evelyn by providing a detailed family history report that shed light on her family's past.

"I will be forever grateful for the extensive family tree and family history research. I learned so much about my grandmother, her brothers and sisters, our great-grandparents, and our connection to the Walgett area in New South Wales."

What struck Evelyn most was discovering how her father had been misled. "The people who ran the institutions he was placed into told him he was not wanted by his parents. But I found out through Link-Up (Qld)'s research that his mother never stopped trying. She wrote again and again to the Aboriginal Protection Board, asking for her son to be returned to her, or at least to know if he was okay."



The reunion journey began in Sydney, where Link-Up (Qld) had found the resting place of Evelyn's grandmother in Rookwood General Cemetery.

"I was surprised to learn I was nine years old when she passed away. I would have loved to have met her. Visiting her grave was deeply emotional. I felt like I was the only person to have visited her in a very long time. I was sad for the times we never had together, and for a woman who never got to raise her son."

But the journey didn't stop there. Evelyn travelled with her daughter Christine and Link-Up (Qld) Caseworker Latia Schefe to Walgett, NSW -country that her family had once called home.

After flying to Dubbo and driving to Coonamble for an overnight stay, the trio made their way to Walgett, where they met Aunty Dot Gibbs and Noreen Ward-Kennedy - descendants of Evelyn's great-uncle, Arthur Dodd.

"It was so heartwarming to be welcomed by Aunty Dot and Noreen. They showed us all around the town, including the cemetery where many of our ancestors are buried. We shared stories over lunch, and I showed Aunty Dot the family tree Link-Up (Qld) had helped me put together. They even invited me back to visit any time."





It was a trip full of powerful emotions - grief, gratitude, and a quiet sense of fulfilment.

"My whole trip was a truly amazing journey of discovery and healing. I just wish my father could have experienced this with me, but I think he was there in spirit."

Through Link-Up (Qld), Evelyn not only uncovered her grandmother's story but also found her place within a broader family and cultural legacy. The journey helped her stitch together a part of her identity that had always felt just out of reach.

"Most of my life I had a longing to know more about my grandmother's Aboriginal background, where she came from, and why my father was taken from her. Thanks to Link-Up (Qld), a lot of my questions have been answered. My sense of belonging and connection has only been strengthened."

Evelyn expressed her deep appreciation for the team who walked with her on this journey.

"I would like to thank Link-Up (Qld) CEO Pat Thompson, Research Officer Kali, Caseworker Latia, and all the staff at Link-Up (Qld) for the truly amazing and vital work you do. I will never forget what you've given me."

Above: Christine Kanofski, Evelyn Dodds with Aunty Dot Gibbs spending time together in Walgett, NSW.

Left: Noreen Ward-Kennedy, Evelyn Dodds and Christine Kanofski in Walgett, NSW.

Photos by Farley Ward, Shutterstorm Photography.

## 17th Anniversary of the National Apology

More than 400 people gathered at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre (QPAC) on Thursday, 13 February, to mark the 17th Anniversary of the National Apology, with over 1,000 additional viewers joining via live stream. This year's event was the largest gathering in Queensland to commemorate the occasion, demonstrating the ongoing importance of truth-telling and healing for Stolen Generations survivors and descendants.

Hosted by Wiradjuri and Filipino man Ivan Ingram, the program featured powerful reflections from Stolen Generations survivor Aunty Flo Watson OAM and Aunty Florence Onus, alongside esteemed Butchulla academic Dr. Rose Barrowcliffe. Edgar Conlon and the Murri School Dance Troupe delivered moving performances, honouring culture and resilience.

Link-Up (Qld) CEO Patricia Thompson AM expressed her gratitude for the overwhelming support and engagement from the community:

"The National Apology was a significant moment in acknowledging the injustices of the past, but it is the continued commitment to truth, healing, and justice that truly makes a difference. Seeing so many people - both in person and online - come together shows that this journey is one we walk together. We thank everyone who joined us to honour the past, support those still affected, and reaffirm our shared commitment to a brighter future."

For those who were unable to attend, a video recording of the event is available at www.link-upqld.org.au/apology2025.

This free community event was proudly presented by Link-Up (Qld) and QPAC, and supported by The Healing Foundation, the Australian Government's National Indigenous Australians Agency and the Queensland Government.





























































Link-Up (Qld) joins the Australian country music community and all who loved him in paying tribute to Chad Morgan, who passed away peacefully on New Year's Day, aged 91. His passing marks the end of an era for country music but his legacy will live on in song, story, and the hearts of his many fans.

Born on 11 February 1933 in Wondai, Queensland, Chad grew up in rural Australia during a time when the bush was still full of yarn-spinners, mischief-makers and homegrown entertainers. He was discovered after performing "The Sheik of Scrubby Creek" on the radio talent show Australia's Amateur Hour - a tune that became his signature and gave him the nickname that would follow him for life. With his unmistakable voice, toothy grin, and cheeky charm, Chad stood out from the very beginning.

Over the course of more than seven decades, Chad Morgan carved out a space in the music world entirely his own. His songs blended traditional country melodies with a sense of irreverence and fun, offering a uniquely Australian take on life, love, and larrikinism. Tunes like "The Shotgun Wedding", "Double Decker Blowflies", and "T'm My Own Grandpa" are etched into the memories of many - a joyful mix of humour and heartbreak told with tongue firmly in cheek.

But Chad was more than just a country music comedian. Beneath the laughs was a deeply talented storyteller who knew how to capture the spirit of country life. His music spoke to the simple pleasures of community, the trials of the heart, and the quirks of human nature. He had the rare ability to bring people together through the power of laughter and song.

Chad's down-to-earth nature and generosity of spirit earned him the admiration of audiences and fellow performers alike. He remained true to himself and his fans throughout his life. Whether he was performing on a grand stage or in a small-town hall, he gave his all - every song, every joke, every moment shared with his audience was delivered with warmth and authenticity.

His contribution to Australian music was recognised with numerous honours, including the CMAA Lifetime Achievement Award, the Grant McLennan Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Mo Award for Australian Country Male Act of the Year in 2015. He also inspired countless artists who followed in his footsteps, including John Williamson, Col Elliott, and even Barry Humphries - all of whom credited Chad as a true original who paved the way for storytelling through music.

In his later years, Chad continued to perform and record, releasing his final album *Quarantined* in 2021. He remained active and touring right up until the final chapter of his life. His story was immortalised in the 2012 documentary *I'm Not Dead Yet*, and in the 2022 biography *Seventy Years in the Making*, which captured the wit, wisdom, and resilience of a man who had seen it all and never stopped smiling.

Photo credit: News Corp Australia

For many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly in rural and regional Queensland, Chad's music was a familiar presence in the home and on the road. His songs brought joy to countless families, many of whom continue to share his records with new generations. He was a part of the musical landscape that shaped so many lives and memories, especially in remote communities where the radio and guitar offered connection and comfort.

Chad Morgan was a national treasure, a cultural icon, and a proud Queenslander. His humorous spirit never faded, and his music will never be forgotten.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family, friends, and lifelong fans.

While Chad may no longer walk among us, his legacy lives on in the stories we tell, the music we share, and the laughter he leaves behind.





Growing up in Yarrabah, Makaela Maloney-Connolly always understood the power of connection - to family, to country, and to culture. Today, as the newest caseworker in Link-Up (Qld)'s Cairns office, that understanding continues to guide her work supporting Stolen Generations survivors and their families.

Before joining Link-Up (Qld), Makaela worked as a mentor with the Parent Pathways program, helping parents in her community explore study options and employment pathways. It was work that required compassion, trust, and patience - qualities she now brings to her casework role.

"I have a personal connection to the Stolen Generations, and I understand how rewarding and life-changing it can be to help clients find their connections to country and families."

As a caseworker, Makaela is the client's primary point of contact, guiding them through every stage of the process with cultural care, consistency, and respect. Although her work is supported by a team of researchers and social and emotional wellbeing counsellors, it is Makaela who builds and maintains the direct relationship with each client. She keeps in regular contact from intake to reunion and beyond, working hard to ensure a positive, culturally safe, and empowering experience for everyone she

supports. Whether organising travel, gathering records, or simply checking in, Makaela is a constant presence on what can be a complex and emotional journey.

Makaela's work also involves supporting applicants of the Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme, which provides financial and wellbeing payments to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were removed from their families as children in the Northern Territory, ACT, or Jervis Bay Territory.

For Makaela, the most meaningful part of her work is the opportunity to walk alongside clients as they uncover their past and reclaim their sense of belonging.

"I'm most looking forward to helping families reunite and find their connections to country. I love that this role gives survivors and their families a chance to finally have answers to those questions that have been with them for so long."

In the Cairns office, where many clients are from remote and regional communities, Makaela's presence brings both lived insight and fresh energy to the team. Her journey is only just beginning, but her commitment to supporting others on theirs is already leaving a quiet and powerful impact.



## Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme

Seeks to recognise the harm and trauma caused to Stolen Generations survivors who were removed from family or community in the NT, ACT or the Jervis Bay Territory.

Find out more at territories redress.gov.au or call 1800 566 111





**Australian Government** 

National Indigenous Australians Agency



At Link-Up (Qld)'s recent Apology Anniversary event, Dr. Rose Barrowcliffe shared a deeply personal and powerful speech that underscored the importance of archival access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As a Butchulla woman and researcher, Dr. Barrowcliffe's work is shaped by her own family's experience of the Stolen Generations. Her mother, removed from her family as a child and placed in a Catholic orphanage before being adopted by a white family, was one of nine siblings - all separated and raised away from their parents. Though she believes her mother's story may not be among the most traumatic, the lifelong consequences of that removal remain significant.

Dr. Barrowcliffe's passion for archives stems from this personal history. She examines the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in archival collections, advocating for improved access so individuals can reclaim their histories. She recalled her own experience of first stepping into an archive in 2018 and discovering records that held profound significance for her people. Many of these records had never been read or fully understood by non-Indigenous archivists, yet they contained vital information about the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



One particularly striking example she shared was from her time working with Queensland State Archives. While reviewing a letter book from the Commissioner of Lands in the mid-1800s, she came across a brief mention of the murder of an Aboriginal man who had consumed arsenic-laced flour. There was no acknowledgement of wrongdoing - just a passing mention in bureaucratic language. This discovery was a stark reminder of how colonial violence was recorded in a manner that rendered invisible within Indigenous lives official histories.

Dr. Barrowcliffe emphasised the importance of a relational way of viewing archival records. As a Butchulla woman, she could recognise names, places, and contexts that non-Indigenous archivists could not. This perspective is crucial in understanding the depth of historical records and ensuring they serve the communities they document. Despite the vital work of First Nations archivists and history teams, she highlighted that many barriers still exist in accessing these records, making it difficult for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to reconnect with their families and histories.

While the challenges remain, Dr. Barrowcliffe also spoke about moments of hope and connection. She described the unique experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people walking into a room and instantly finding links to kin. A simple question - "Who's your mob?" - can uncover shared ancestry and histories. This was something her mother had to rebuild after being separated

from her family, a journey made possible through the support of Link-Up (Qld) and dedicated archival teams.

Dr. Barrowcliffe's reflections made one thing clear - archives hold the missing pieces of family histories, cultural identities, and untold truths. They are more than piles of documents; they carry the weight of lived experiences and the resilience of generations. Her speech was a reminder that for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the search for truth is ongoing, and access to these histories is not a privilege but a right.



## Walking Beside Survivors

Jade Shelley joins Link-Up (Qld) as a Redress Counsellor.

At Link-Up (Qld), our commitment to supporting those affected by institutional child sexual abuse continues to grow, and we are pleased to introduce our new Redress Counsellor, Jade Shelley. With a strong background in social work and a passion for social justice, Jade brings valuable experience to the team, ensuring that applicants of the National Redress Scheme receive compassionate and informed support.

Jade has worked across various social work fields, including family support, advocacy, court-based services, and community mental health. Now, as a Redress Counsellor at Link-Up (Qld), Jade is eager to support survivors through the National Redress Scheme and develop his advocacy skills. His approach is centred on providing clear, thorough information while respecting each survivor's personal journey.

"Achieving positive outcomes for the people I support and forming strong connections within the team is incredibly rewarding."

The National Redress Scheme was established in response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, providing financial redress, access to counselling, and a direct personal response from the institution responsible. Link-Up (Qld)'s Redress Support Team provides free, specialist assistance to anyone eligible for redress under the Scheme. If you need help deciding if the Scheme is the right option for you, chat with our Redress Support Team.

Our experienced counsellors provide confidential support before, during and after the application process. We can also connect you with legal and financial support.

As the newest addition to our team, Jade looks forward to further developing his advocacy and counselling skills through walking beside both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, ensuring they feel supported and empowered throughout the redress process.

Chat with us to learn more by calling 1800 200 855 from 8am-4pm weekdays. Alternatively, you can contact the National Redress Scheme directly at <a href="https://www.nationalredress.gov.au">www.nationalredress.gov.au</a>.



# Do you know about the National Redress Scheme?

The National Redress Scheme is for people who suffered child sexual abuse in institutions such as a school, church, mission, orphanage, foster care, children's home, detention centre, hospital or a sports club.

As part of redress you can get a payment, counselling and support, and an acknowledgement of what happened to you from the institution.

Support services are free and can help before, during and after you apply.

To find out more, visit **nationalredress.gov.au** or call **1800 737 377** to be connected to your local support services.



#### Note:

The National Redress Scheme is different from Stolen Generations Redress Schemes. You may be eligible for both Schemes.

## National Redress Scheme

This artwork is by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artist Rosella Namok. It represents change, growth and reflection.



#### Brisbane Client Support Group Morning Tea

Our monthly Client Support Groups provide a great opportunity for Stolen Generations survivors and descendants to connect, share experiences, and chat with our support team. If you're interested in joining us, get in touch with our team.

Here's a few happy snaps from some of our recent morning tea events...

































FREE COMMUNITY EVENT

# GOTTY UNIT

#### 8am-10am Friday 23 May 2025

Cranbrook Place, Orleigh Park Hill End Terrace, West End

Join us for breakfast at the site of the former Aboriginal Girls Home in West End, as we honour the resilience of Stolen Generations survivors and descendants, and show our support for their ongoing healing.

This year's event will feature inspiring guest speakers and moving cultural performances.



Limited seating.





or phone Link-Up (Qld) on 1800 200 855

Supported by:









# Upcoming Events

See below for a list of upcoming events.

For more information, visit our website or call our team on 1800 200 855.

24 APR 2025	CLIENT MORNING TEA SUPPORT GROUP (BRISBANE)
	Link-Up (Qld) Brisbane Office
	Call 1800 200 855 for more information.
23 MAY 2025	SORRY DAY BREAKFAST EVENT
	Orleigh Park, West End
	Register to attend: link-upqld.org.au/sorryday2028
27 MAY 2025 -	NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK
3 JUN 2025	Event info: reconciliation.org.au/calendar
29 MAY 2025	CLIENT MORNING TEA SUPPORT GROUP

(BRISBANE)

Link-Up (Qld) Brisbane Office

Call 1800 200 855 for more information.

CLIENT MORNING TEA SUPPORT GROUP
(BRISBANE)

Link-Up (Qld) Brisbane Office

Call 1800 200 855 for more information.



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Scan here for more news and events on our website!





## Support our work

Interested in helping Link-Up (Qld) continue its work?

All donations, large and small, make a difference in supporting our organisation to continue the work we do to help members of the Stolen Generations still searching for their family.

We truly appreciate your generosity.

For more information, visit

link-upqld.org.au/donations



If you or someone you know needs urgent support at any time, please contact the following services.

STOP VIOLENCE BEYOND BLUE

OND BLUE 13 YARN

**MENSLINE** 

1800 737 732

1300 224 636

13 92 76

1300 789 978

SUICIDE CALLBACK SERVICE 1300 659 467

respect.gov.au

beyondblue.org.au

13yarn.org.au

mensline.org.au

suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Inside back cover image: Sunshine Coast, Queensland (GETTY IMAGES)

Back cover image: Outback Queensland (GETTY IMAGES)



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