Volume 56 | October - December 2024

Link-Up (Qld)

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

STILL BRINGING THEM HOME



Celebrating 40 years of Link-Up (Qld)

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Acknowledgement of Country

Link-Up (Qld) would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners past and present on whose land we walk, work and live.
We would also like to pay respect to our elders and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Disclaimer:
Whilst every effort has been made to respect cultural traditions, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this publication may contain images of and references to people who are deceased.

Cover image:
Link-Up (Qld) 40th Anniversary Gala hosts, Latia Schefe and Tahj Minniecon.
(PHOTO: FARLEY WARD SHUTTERSTORM PHOTOGRAPHY)

Inside cover image:
Morans Falls, Lamington National Park, 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

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Welcome

As we wrap up 2024, I'm delighted to introduce this final edition of the year, which reflects on the remarkable achievements of our organisation and highlights the inspiring stories of healing and reunification shared at our recent 40th Anniversary Gala. The evening brought together Stolen Generations survivors, descendants, and supporters to celebrate four decades of Link-Up (Qld)'s work. It was an incredibly powerful night, with heartfelt video stories from clients and a tribute to the late Sam Watson, reminding us all of the importance of connection to family, culture, and country.

This year has been one of extraordinary effort and dedication from our staff. Their compassion, expertise, and unwavering commitment to supporting Stolen Generations survivors and descendants have made a lasting difference in countless lives. I extend my deepest gratitude to our team for their hard work throughout 2024.

As we reflect on the past, we also look forward with optimism to continuing this important work in the years ahead. Our mission to bring families together and foster healing remains at the heart of all we do.

As we approach the festive season, I would like to wish you all a safe and joyful holiday period and a happy and fulfilling new year. Thank you for your continued support and for being part of Link-Up (Qld)'s journey.



Kenny

Ken Murphy
Chairperson
Link-Up (Qld)

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CEO's Message

This year, Link-Up (Qld) has marked a momentous milestone – our 40th year of reuniting Stolen Generations survivors and descendants with family, country and culture. It has been a year of celebration, reflection, and connection, centred around our 40th Anniversary Gala Dinner at Brisbane City Hall. This special event brought together clients, staff, and supporters to honour four decades of achievements and the enduring importance of our work. Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this milestone celebration so meaningful.

Equally significant was our recent Healing Camp, a powerful gathering that provided opportunities for clients to reconnect with culture and support each other in a nurturing environment. You can read more about this on page 20 of this edition.

This year has also been about recognising the dedication of our incredible team. I want to especially thank some of our longest-serving staff: Ruth Loli (15 years), Mirko Soto (12 years), and Lauren Scheiwe (11 years) for their outstanding contributions over many years - your commitment and expertise are deeply valued and have been instrumental to our success.

On a personal note, 2024 marks my 10th year as CEO. Over the past decade, I've had the privilege of witnessing this organisation go from strength to strength, and I am proud of the incredible impact we have made together. I look forward to continuing to lead this passionate and skilled team into 2025 and beyond, as we work to support healing and create lasting change.

As we approach the festive season, I wish you all a joyous Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year. Let us continue working together in 2025 to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.



Pat

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

Link-Up (Qld)
ABORIGINAL CORPORATION
STILL BRINGING THEM HOME

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.

SCAN ME

Celebrating 40 years

Link-Up (Qld) has been offering family history tracing and reunification services for 40 years, and in 2024, 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.





Determined to Belong

Angelique and Samuel's journey home

Samuel Songoa (second from left) and Angelique Wittwer (third from left) visiting family in Lajamanu.

The journey to rediscover identity and belonging is rarely straightforward, as Angelique Wittwer and her son Samuel Songoa have experienced. For Angelique, a survivor of the Stolen Generations, this journey has been one of reunification, healing, and perseverance. Taken from her family in the Northern Territory as a young child, Angelique was sent to a Catholic mission on Melville Island. She believes she was around five years old at the time, though the exact age remains unclear to her - a poignant reflection of the disorienting and fragmented nature of her early childhood.

"I had no idea why I was on the island, and I was too young to really think. I couldn't process it," Angelique shared. "It was just a whole lot of kids all together in a big corrugated iron tin roof shed."

Angelique stayed at the mission for several years before being adopted by a white family in South Australia, likely when she was around ten. In her adoptive household, her Aboriginal identity was actively suppressed. "My adopted mum never told me anything. She didn't want me to mix with Aboriginals," Angelique explained. "She kept me apart constantly." This enforced separation left her disconnected from her heritage, her culture, and her country, with no understanding of her roots or identity.

As an adult, Angelique spent many years living in Papua New Guinea, raising her children in her husband's culture. Despite adapting to life there, a deep discontent grew within her. "I was hanging in space up here, I didn't feel as though I'd got ground under my feet," she recalled. "I said, no, I can't, I have a place, and I have to go back to my place." This unease stemmed from a sense of neglecting her true identity, as though she was denying her connection to her Aboriginal heritage and her ancestral country.

Returning to Australia, however, was fraught with challenges. Having become a Papua New Guinea citizen, Angelique faced obstacles in reclaiming her Australian citizenship and securing it for her children. "They said, we need the original delivery papers, hospital papers for your children to prove that they are actually your kids," she explained. "It was a long process." This difficulty underscored the complexities of identity and belonging that Angelique had grappled with throughout her life.

After resettling in Northern Queensland in 1999, Angelique made the life-changing decision to contact Link-Up (Qld) to trace her family roots. After years of piecing together records, Link-Up (Qld) confirmed a connection to Lajamanu, a remote Warlpiri community in the Northern Territory. For Angelique, this marked the beginning of a healing journey - a step towards reconnecting with her family, her culture, and her country.

In June 2023, Angelique and Samuel embarked on their first journey to Lajamanu, supported by Link-Up (Qld). They were accompanied by Link-Up (Qld) support staff Tahj Minniecon and Sharona Joinbee, whose presence provided both logistical and emotional support. The trip involved flights from Townsville to Darwin and then to Lajamanu in a small plane. The moment they arrived, they were greeted warmly by family members who had eagerly awaited their return. "When I arrived, I just felt I'm home, yeah," Angelique reflected.



Samuel Songoa and Angelique Wittwer visiting family in Lajamanu.

For Samuel, this reunion was transformative. It provided clarity about his heritage and answered questions he had carried since childhood. "Seeing people we were actually blood-related to, that was something we never got to experience before," he said. Meeting family members and learning about their history offered him a profound sense of belonging.

During their time in Lajamanu, Angelique and Samuel visited family homes, paid respects at the graves of their ancestors, and immersed themselves in Warlpiri culture. They walked on the land of their ancestors, their country, feeling the strength of family ties that had once been severed. The community's warmth and hospitality left an indelible mark. "It's my bloodline. Link-Up has helped me start to find my place in life, back in the community," Angelique shared.



Angelique Wittwer visiting family in Lajamanu.

The trip was not just about reconnection but also about healing. For Angelique, it brought a sense of peace that had eluded her for decades. For Samuel, it laid a foundation for his children to understand their roots and their culture. "Identity is really important," he explained.

> **"Now we know where we're from, and we can write our own stories."**



Angelique Wittwer visiting family in Lajamanu.

The visit to Lajamanu was a defining moment for both mother and son, made possible by Link-Up (Qld)'s commitment to reconnecting families. For Angelique and Samuel, it marked the beginning of a lifelong journey to embrace their heritage, rebuild relationships, and nurture the bonds that had been lost for so long. Their story is a testament to the enduring power of family, culture, and the healing journey.

Travelling the long road to healing



Angelique Wittwer on her return journey to Lajamanu.

For Angelique Wittwer and her son Samuel Songoa, the road to Lajamanu is more than a long stretch of bitumen and dirt - it's a path to family, culture, and healing. Following their Link-Up (Qld) reunion in 2023, Angelique and Samuel returned to the remote Warlpiri community in September 2024 on a trip they organised themselves, demonstrating their unwavering determination to continue their healing journey.

However, their second trip to Lajamanu was not without setbacks. Earlier in April 2024, Angelique and Samuel had gone to great lengths to plan a visit, including a family convoy, but the trip was cancelled at the last minute due to severe flooding. Despite the disappointment, they stayed focused on their goal of reuniting with family again. In September 2024, Angelique and Samuel were ready to retry and set out on their 5,000km round trip from Townsville. Samuel shared moments of humour about the trip, recalling how "Mum got me to stop at nearly every single ant hill to get a photo of it."

Upon arriving in Lajamanu after three long days of driving - often spending up to 10 hours a day on the road - they were warmly received by family and the broader community. Angelique reflected on the significance of reconnecting, saying, "They made us feel welcome right away. We were able to go to their houses and sit with them and just be part of them again."

Their time in Lajamanu was filled with cherished moments. Samuel, who loves to fish, enjoyed casting a line with cousins, creating meaningful connections through shared activities. They also took time to explore the nearby creeks and swimming spots, embracing the natural beauty of the region. Jerry Jangala Patrick OAM, a senior Warlpiri Elder and Pastor of the Lajamanu Baptist Church, welcomed them warmly and shared stories, further deepening their sense of belonging.

A highlight of their visit was the final dinner before Angelique and Samuel departed for home. Angelique prepared her "Island Stew," a dish inspired by her years in Papua New Guinea, for her relatives. "They loved it," she said. The dinner was one last chance to spend quality time with loved ones, sharing stories and strengthening connections as they prepared to say their goodbyes.

"I hope to do it on a yearly basis," Angelique shared. "Hopefully, next time, I can bring my two daughters along too."

Angelique and Samuel's latest journey to Lajamanu was yet another chance to piece together their truth and share it with confidence, ensuring their family's story is passed on to future generations. Together, they continue to demonstrate that healing and reunification are lifelong processes, and our ties to family, country and culture are worth every effort.

Samuel Songoa (left) spending time with cousins on Warlpiri country.





A night to remember

40 years and still *bringing them home*

Link-Up (Qld) marked its 40th Anniversary with a Gala Dinner on Thursday, 28 November 2024, at the iconic Brisbane City Hall. The event brought together 360 guests, including Stolen Generations survivors and their families, community leaders, supporters, and staff, to celebrate four decades of healing, resilience, and reconnection.

The evening was a resounding success, combining heartfelt storytelling, inspiring speeches, and captivating performances to honour the organisation's legacy of supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. CEO Patricia Thompson AM reflected on the organisation's achievements and expressed gratitude to the courageous clients who have shared their stories and to the dedicated staff who continue to reconnect families and restore identities.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of healing stories by clients Bruce Midson, Angelique Wittwer, Samuel Songoa, Roy Gray, and John Stanley, and a tribute to the late Sam Watson. Their stories offered a powerful glimpse into the profound impact of Link-Up (Qld)'s work in reuniting families and helping individuals rediscover their identities.

The event opened with a moving performance of 'Took the Children Away' by Edgar Conlon, setting a reflective and emotional tone for the night. Guests were also treated to dynamic performances by the Suga Cane Mamas and Gling & the Huntsmen, celebrating the strength, vibrancy, and beauty of culture and community.

The evening's MCs, Tahj Minniecon and Latia Schefe, brought heartfelt energy and optimism to the event. As younger members of Link-Up (Qld)'s team, they reflected on the significance of the organisation's work over the past 40 years and shared their commitment to continuing this legacy.

"Tonight has been a celebration of healing, culture, and community - values that have guided our organisation for 40 years," Tahj said. "Every story and every shared moment reaffirm the profound impact of reuniting families and rediscovering identity."

Latia echoed this sentiment, emphasising the shared journey of healing: "We know that healing is not a destination but an ongoing journey, one that requires all of us - survivors, families, communities, and supporters - to walk this path together. It is through this unity and shared commitment that we can create lasting change and bring hope to the generations that follow."

Link-Up (Qld) extends its heartfelt thanks to everyone who attended and contributed to making the 40th Anniversary Gala a memorable and meaningful celebration. Our organisation is proud to continue its work and build on its legacy in the years ahead.

Check out some photos of this special event over the page!

Link-Up (Qld) 40th Anniversary Gala Dinner

Photos by Farley Ward, Shutterstorm Photography.
















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Designing for impact and connection

Meet the talented designer behind Link-Up (Qld)'s 40th anniversary commemorative logo.

To commemorate its 40th anniversary, Link-Up (Qld) collaborated with acclaimed designer and director of Cause/Affect, Keisha Leon, to create a striking and meaningful anniversary logo. A proud Waanyi and Kalkadoon woman, Keisha brought her lived experiences, cultural insight, and creative expertise to craft a design that reflects the legacy and future of Link-Up (Qld).

Keisha leads Cause/Affect, a social impact creative agency she founded to approach communications through a diverse and values-driven lens. "We deliver meaningful and relevant communication solutions through a diverse lens, with the chance of driving real change," Keisha explains. Her strong sense of social responsibility and commitment to amplifying diverse voices guide every project she undertakes.

Her work is deeply informed by her First Nations heritage, which provides a rich perspective for empathetic and inclusive design. "Cause/Affect is backed by a deeply informed and lived cultural vantage point," she shares. "My First Nations perspective provides invaluable insights that shape empathetic, inclusive, and impactful outcomes."

For Link-Up (Qld)'s commemorative logo, Keisha approached the design with a focus on storytelling and symbolism. "We wanted to reflect Link-Up's story of the 40 years," she says. The design features three lines representing the past, present, and future, illustrating the organisation's journey and the progress made over its 40-year history. The line is intentionally left open-ended, symbolizing the ongoing work of reconnecting people with their home, family, and identity.

This thoughtful design captures the essence of Link-Up (Qld)'s mission while serving as a reminder of the work still to be done.



Above: Keisha Leon, Cause/Affect Director

Below: Link-Up (Qld)'s 40th anniversary commemorative logo, designed by Keisha and the team at Cause/Affect.



For Keisha, the most rewarding part of her work is the people she collaborates with. "Every day, I get to come in and work with like-minded people in the space of social impact," she shares. "There is so much passion and drive in the work they do, and they're always open to new ways of working and outcomes - and just good yarns."

Keisha's creative practice is grounded in connection, empathy, and her unwavering dedication to using design as a tool for meaningful change. Her work at Cause/Affect continues to reshape social impact communications, amplifying voices and perspectives that often go unheard.

Link-Up (Qld) is proud to feature Keisha Leon's work in its 40th-anniversary celebrations. Her commemorative logo serves as a visual representation of the organisation's journey over the past four decades and its ongoing commitment to healing, reunification, and identity.

Community Spotlight:

Edgar Conlon

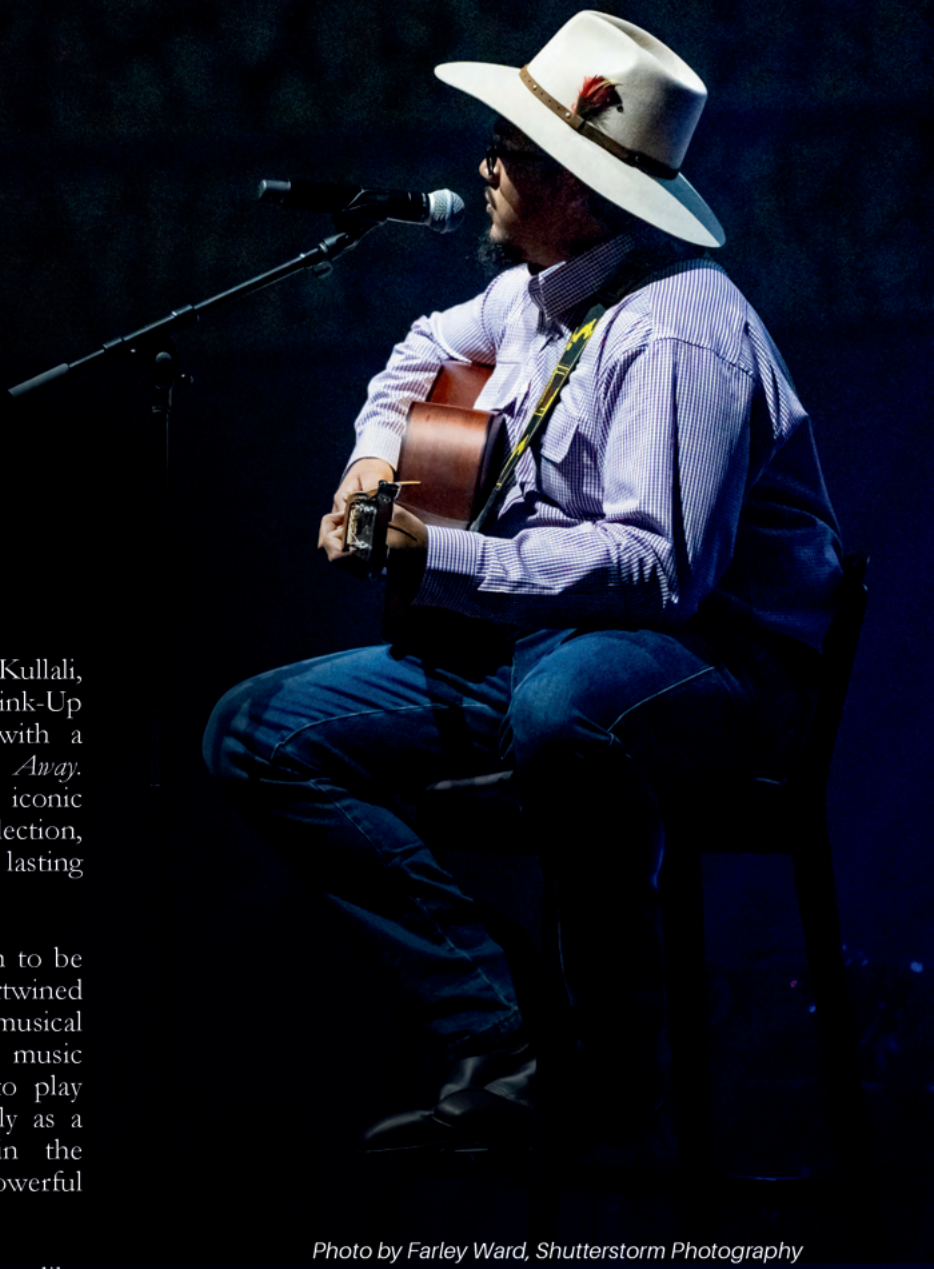


Photo by Farley Ward, Shutterstorm Photography

Edgar Conlon, a descendant of Yiman, Kullali, and Wakka Wakka peoples, opened Link-Up (Qld)'s 40th Anniversary Gala Dinner with a moving performance of *Took the Children Away*. His heartfelt rendition of Archie Roach's iconic song set the tone for an evening of reflection, resilience, and celebration, leaving a lasting impression on everyone in attendance.

A proud husband and father of five (soon to be six), Edgar's love for music is deeply intertwined with his love for family. Growing up in a musical household, he developed a passion for music during high school and taught himself to play guitar and sing. His journey began humbly as a "toilet singer," practicing for hours in the bathroom, and has since grown into a powerful voice for his community.

Edgar's influences include country greats like George Jones, George Strait, and Alan Jackson, as well as Mop and the Dropouts and hymns sung at church with his nan. These influences shaped his unstructured blend of country, blues, and folk - a style that resonates with audiences for its authenticity and emotion.

In addition to his music, Edgar works as a Cultural Senior Youth Worker, helping jarjums (children) reconnect with their mob, build healthy relationships, and find their identities. His dedication to giving back to the community aligns with his personal mission to be the role model he once wished for in his own life.

Reflecting on his performance at the Gala, Edgar says, "I'll forever be grateful for this opportunity, and it will be cherished deep in my heart." Through his music and his work with the community, Edgar continues to inspire others, sharing stories of resilience, connection, and hope for the future.

Edgar's hard work and talent have been recognised with a place in the 2025 Tamworth Country Music Festival lineup, a milestone in his musical journey. This opportunity will allow Edgar to share his unique voice on a national stage, and readers are encouraged to support him by donating via the QR code below.

SCAN ME

Help Edgar get to Tamworth!



Healing Together

From 26 to 29 November this year, Link-Up (Qld) organised a Healing Camp for past and current clients at the Brisbane International Hotel, Virginia. Participants came from as far as Darwin, Yarrabah, Cairns, Townsville, Woorabinda and Cherbourg amongst other locations. Over the four days of the camp, Link-Up (Qld) staff arranged activities such as weaving, yarning circles, reiki and karaoke.

The camp was organised to coincide with Link-Up (Qld's) 40th Anniversary Gala dinner held at Brisbane City Hall on 28 November so that the participants could attend. In preparation for the Gala, the men were treated to a trip to the barber and the women were styled up by a hairdresser who visited the Healing Camp. Participants also created woven mats and their artwork was showcased as table centrepieces at the Gala.

Participants reflected that one of the best parts of the camp was coming together from a place of shared experience to yarn and share stories as a form of healing.



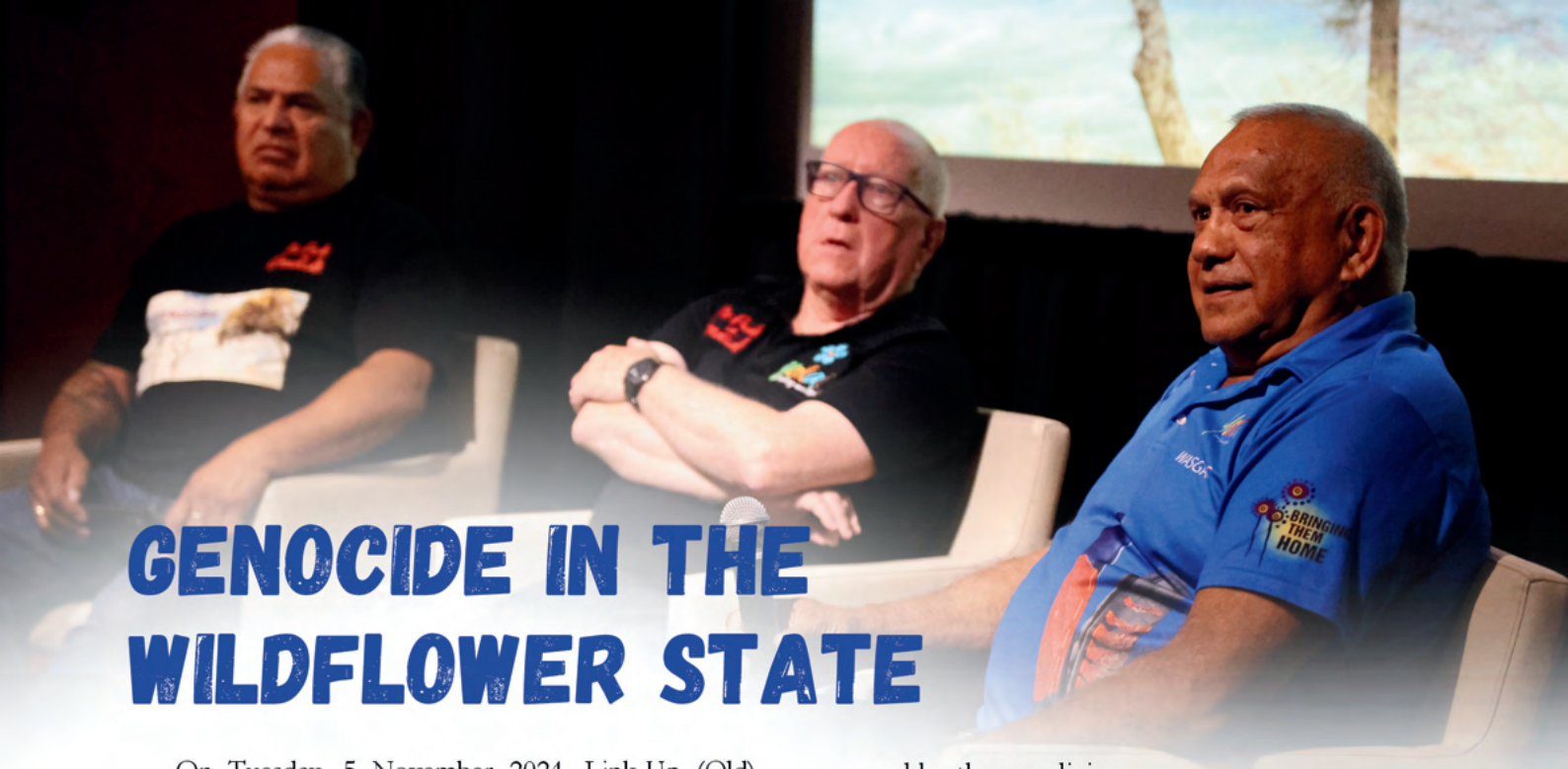







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GENOCIDE IN THE WILDFLOWER STATE

On Tuesday, 5 November 2024, Link-Up (Qld) hosted a screening of the documentary *Genocide in the Wildflower State* at the State Library of Queensland. The film, focused on the devastating impacts of Western Australia's racist state policies, highlights truths that resonate deeply with our own community here in Queensland.

The documentary, co-produced by Bringing Them Home WA and Western Australia Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation, presented powerful survivor stories and explored the intergenerational trauma caused by these policies.

Following the screening, a Q&A session with executive producers Jim Morrison, Tony Hansen and Alan Carter allowed attendees to reflect on the film's themes and discuss the ongoing need for healing and redress.

Thank you to everyone who joined us.

To learn more about the documentary, visit **www.genocidewildflowerstate.org.au**











Merry Christmas

The Link-Up (Qld) Board of Directors and staff wish you a safe and joyful festive season and a fulfilling 2025.

Link-Up (Qld) offices will close on Friday 13 December 2024 and re-open on Monday 6 January 2025.


DID YOU KNOW?
Link-Up (Qld) is a free service.
We offer support before, during and after your family history research and reunification.
We respect your privacy and treat all information confidentially.
We run a range of healing activities, camps, support groups, art, craft and music workshops.
Scan here to learn more!

National Link-Up Leadership Group Forum

In October, the National Link-Up Leadership Group gathered in Mparntwe [Alice Springs], on Arrernte country and hosted by Central Australian Aboriginal Congress. The bi-annual meeting brings together CEOs, program leaders and other leadership staff from Link-Up services around the country to collaborate and further our shared interests for Stolen Generations clients. Ruth Loli, Research Manager and Latia Schefe, Caseworker represented Link-Up (Qld).

We were blessed with a welcome to country and smoking ceremony at Akeyulerre Healing Centre and given the opportunity try bush medicine rubs made by the Angangkere (traditional healers). We took a tour of the AIATSIS engagement and digitisation facility newly opened in Alice Springs, as well as a tour of the Strehlow Centre, and learned more about each of the repositories' collections and valuable preservation work of cultural material for community.

The 3-day meeting brought productive discussions around data management and evaluation, governance and funding, service delivery models and staff well-being. Guest participants and speakers also attended from the Healing Foundation, National Indigenous Australians Agency, Beyond (Kathleen Stacey & Associates), National Archives of Australia and Knowmore Legal Service.

Thank you for welcoming us, Alice Springs!



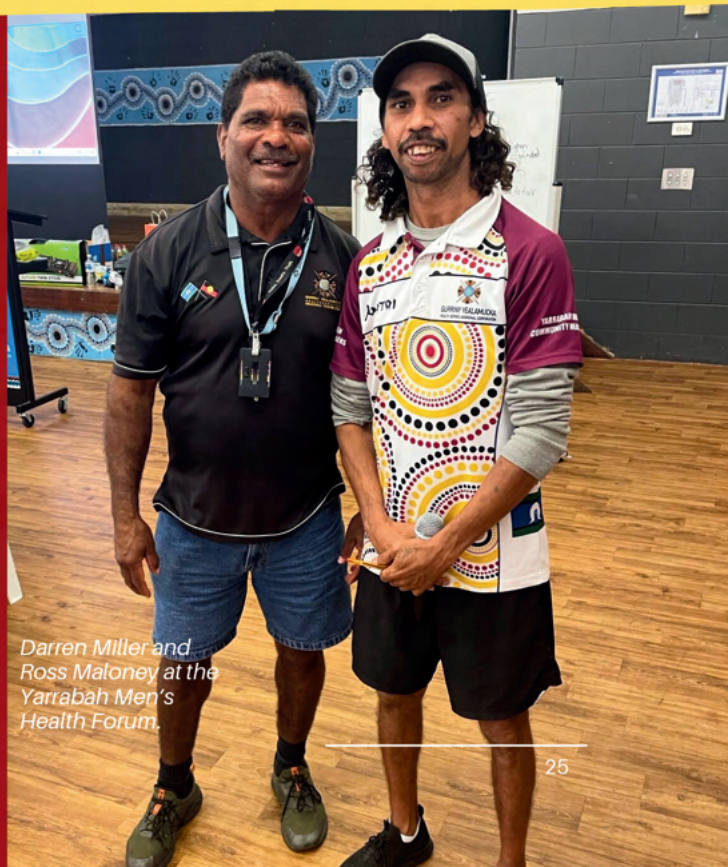
Attendees at the National Link-Up Leadership Group forum.

Yarrabah Men's Health Forum

On Tuesday, 19 November 2024, Link-Up (Qld) staff Jack Webster and Joshua Thompson attended the Yarrabah Men's Health Forum at Yarrabah Community Hall, led by Darren Miller and Ross Maloney from Gurriny Yealamucka Health Services.

The motivational event was attended by over 100 community members along with guest speakers from outside organisations and community leaders.

Link-Up (Qld) look forward to more events hosted in Yarrabah and surrounding communities as it plays an important role in bringing our people together and taking steps forward together.



Darren Miller and Ross Maloney at the Yarrabah Men's Health Forum.



Photo by Farley Ward, Shutterstorm Photography

Community Spotlight:

The Suga Cane Mamas

The Suga Cane Mamas are a trio of Blak women who inspire and empower through their music, blending song and poetry to tell stories of strength, identity, and resilience. Formed in 2022, the group represents their rich cultural heritages - Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, South Sea Islander, and Pacific Islander - and their shared identity as mothers.

The idea for the Suga Cane Mamas was born in 2021 during a workshop for a stage play at the Queensland Conservatorium. In the script, Berniece Peeauakeau and Georgia Corowa came across the phrase "Sugar Cane Girls," which sparked inspiration. The two began exchanging ideas for songs they could sing together, and by May 2022, they had officially started rehearsing as a group, joined by Eilla Appo. The name evolved into Suga Cane Mamas to reflect both their shared history and their roles as mothers, with nine children between the trio.

The Suga Cane Mamas celebrate their roots through original songs performed in Kabi Kabi, Bislama, and English. Their music explores themes of empowerment, motherhood, and the true history of Australia, including the often-overlooked stories of Blackbirding. Their work is deeply personal, seeking to honour their ancestors and share stories that shape their cultural identities.

They describe what they represent as "strength, story, and beauty." For them, their performances are not just about music but also about truth-telling and preserving the richness of their heritage for future generations.

Music is a powerful tool for healing, and for the Suga Cane Mamas, it is a way to connect with their own journeys and their communities. They believe music reaches deeply into the heart and spirit, addressing both personal and generational trauma. By sharing their stories through song, they create spaces for unity and healing within Indigenous communities and beyond.

Their style has been compared to the soul-stirring harmonies of groups like The Tiddas, with a unique energy shaped by their ancestry and lived experiences. Through their performances, they aim to leave audiences with a sense of connection, pride, and empowerment.

Their performance at Link-Up (Qld)'s 40th Anniversary Gala dinner on 28 November 2024 at Brisbane City Hall was a highlight of the celebration. Their powerful harmonies and heartfelt storytelling resonated with all in attendance, adding a deeply moving and inspirational dimension to the event.

As they continue to perform, the Suga Cane Mamas remain committed to telling their stories their way. Balancing their roles as mothers and musicians, they find joy and purpose in singing together and supporting each other through life's challenges.

Whether performing on large stages or within their communities, the Suga Cane Mamas bring a blend of strength, beauty, and truth to every note they sing. Their music is not just a celebration of culture but a call to honour the past and build a stronger future for the generations to come.

A Forgotten History

Moorooka Aboriginal Camp Reunion and Book Launch

On 30 November 2024, Chrissy Hansen-Doherty hosted a historic Moorooka Aboriginal Camp reunion and launched her book, *A Forgotten History*, bringing families and communities together to honour an often-overlooked chapter of Australian history.

"In the morning, I organised a special and historic Moorooka Aboriginal camp reunion lunch for the four Elders who were children at the camp and all their families," Chrissy said. "The tears flowed as some met for the first time, and some hadn't seen each other for a long, long time, with memories of their childhoods at the camp."

In the afternoon, Chrissy launched *A Forgotten History*, which features her mother's memories of childhood at the camp and rare family photos. "The truth-telling stories of our Elders is the embodiment of leaving a treasured legacy and healing for our communities," she explained.

Chrissy reflected on her motivation: "As an Elder, my mother's childhood memories are to ensure her truth-telling stories become a family legacy, leaving an eternal sense of belonging for future generations, and for the general public, to share her stories of a forgotten history and her precious rare photos of the First Nation families who lived at Moorooka camp from 1940-1960s."

The event drew 200 attendees, including 30 family members from the camp and many Moorooka locals. Chrissy described the emotional impact: "Everyone was emotional, in tears, tears of healing for all. The reunion families meeting each other for the first time, and all the kind, supportive mainstream Australians, a lot of locals of Moorooka and surrounding areas, who never knew the Moorooka Aboriginal camp existed."

Chrissy summed up the day as a "sensational cultural success," saying, "My book brought healing to all by sharing knowledge and history."



Front L to R: Elders Aunty Sue Hansen (Richards Ross Family), Aunty Karen Koppenol (Roberts/Watson Family), Uncle George Bostock (Bostock Family), Aunty Frances Williams (Andrews/Richards Family). Back: Author and launch organiser Chrissy Hansen-Doherty
Photo by Lewis James Bin Doraho (Lewis James Media)



KINCHELA BOYS HOME SURVIVORS MARK 100 YEARS

Contributed by Harp Kalsi-Smith, Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation.

On October 19th, we marked 100 years since the Kinchela Boys Home (KBH) opened - a place that symbolises one of the darkest chapters in Australian history. From 1924 to 1970, KBH operated as a 'training home' for Aboriginal boys forcibly removed from their families as part of the assimilation policies of the time. For the first year, Aboriginal girls were also placed at the site. Its mission was to sever ties to culture, language, and identity, leaving enduring scars for those known as the KBH Survivors.

More than 500 KBH Survivors, descendants, and families came together with the broader community to commemorate this solemn anniversary. The event was a testament to the resilience and strength of Survivors who have spent decades reclaiming their stolen culture and reconnecting with their families.

Sydney-based singer-songwriter Mi-kaisha Masella performed #24 in honour of Uncle Robert (Bobby) Young, a KBH Survivor. Uncle Bobby, affectionately nicknamed "Bullfrog," proudly identifies with the sand goanna as his totem - a connection that speaks to his ongoing journey of cultural reclamation.

The Survivors, their descendants, and the community share a unified vision: to transform the former KBH site into a national centre for truth-telling, healing, and reconciliation. This vision is not merely symbolic but a step toward breaking the cycle of intergenerational trauma that continues to affect so many.

The Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation (KBHAC), formed by Survivors themselves, has been central to these efforts. KBHAC advocates for the creation of a Healing Centre at the historic site - providing a space for acknowledgment, education, and recovery. However, the urgent need for a decisive 10-year commitment to invest in the site's restoration cannot be overstated. Many Survivors are now elderly, and the opportunity to honour their strength and resilience is slipping away.

Earlier this year, Leah Armstrong, Chair of the First Nations Funders Network of Philanthropy Australia, highlighted a significant barrier to change. Less than 1% of philanthropic funding benefits Indigenous peoples, with an even smaller percentage going directly to Indigenous Peoples. This stark disparity underlines the need for all philanthropists, large and small, to step up and contribute to multi-generational healing and positive change for the KBH Survivors and their descendants.

Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation is also actively seeking to connect with more KBH descendants and family members. If you are connected to the KBH story, or know someone who might be, please reach out to us.
Visit our website to learn more:
www.kinchelaboyshome.org.au.

This centenary commemoration is a powerful reminder of the strength of those who endured the unimaginable and the collective determination to ensure their stories - and the lessons they teach - are never forgotten.



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.

Scan this QR code for more information

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.

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Upcoming Events

See below for a list of upcoming events.
For more information, visit our website or call our team on 1800 200 855.

13 DEC 2024 - 5 JAN 2025	**LINK-UP (QLD) OFFICES CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY CLOSURE**
13 FEB 2025	**ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL APOLOGY** Queensland Performing Arts Centre *More information will be available on our website soon.*
27 FEB 2025	**CLIENT MORNING TEA SUPPORT GROUP (BRISBANE)** Link-Up (Qld) Brisbane Office *Call 1800 200 855 for more information.*
27 MAR 2025	**CLIENT MORNING TEA SUPPORT GROUP (BRISBANE)** Link-Up (Qld) Brisbane Office *Call 1800 200 855 for more information.*



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/donation



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

STOP VIOLENCE	BEYOND BLUE	13 YARN	MENSLINE	SUICIDE CALLBACK SERVICE
1800 737 732	1300 224 636	13 92 76	1300 789 978	1300 659 467
respect.gov.au	beyondblue.org.au	13yarn.org.au	mensline.org.au	suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Inside back cover image: Daintree National Park, Queensland (MATTHEW MERLIN NEWKIRK/GETTY IMAGES)

Back cover image: Crows Nest Falls, Queensland (GETTY IMAGES)



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NIAA

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