

National Link-Up News

National Link Up News Edition 27

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Northern Territory

CAC Link-Up team update

CONGRESS LINK-UP SERVICE

The Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Link Up is now fully established. The service is integrated with the Congress Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) service to enable a greater suite of support to affected members and families under a comprehensive primary health care model. The Congress Link Up Service has a footprint of the Central Australian region including the Barkly.

While presentations to the service has been less than anticipated, the team is working with a small case load and been proactive in promoting the service to the community, other health providers and social support agencies. A monthly gathering of members has also been formed.

Case Workers are working on a potential reunion with a client in Tennant Creek. Most of the research work was completed by the previous Link Up Service. Congress is developing a trusting relationship with the client and family to enable continuity of service for the completion of the reunion.

PHOTOS

1. Participants of the Seasons for Healing training in Alice Springs
2. Congress Link Up Service National Sorry Day Event Poster
3. William Tilmouth
4. Ms Pat Ansell-Dodds
5. Margaret Furber



SEASONS FOR HEALING

Representatives from the National Association of Grief and Loss recently delivered workshops designed to help Aboriginal communities and individuals to navigate the difficult path through loss and grief.

The Seasons for Healing sessions, was delivered in Alice Springs at the invitation of the Congress and attended by Aboriginal service providers from as far as Katherine.

The 4-day program is specifically designed to be flexible and adaptable, so as to be made culturally appropriate, and reflect the linguistic needs of specific communities.

Team Leader, Gwen Troutman-Weir said of the program "Loss and grief is something we all experience, but to have a program such as this, specifically designed for Aboriginal people and adaptable to cultural and linguistic needs, is very valuable."

AIATSIS TRAINING

Through video conferencing the team attended research training with AIATSIS. The next phase of the AIATSIS training will be a delivered face to face in Alice Springs. Congress welcomes staff from our services to join the training in Alice Springs.

erritory

National Sorry Day Event

CONGRESS LINK UP SERVICE NATIONAL SORRY DAY EVENT.



Over 100 people attended the Congress Sorry Day event that also marked the 20th anniversary of the *Bringing Them Home* Report.

Congress chairman and first generation member, William Tilmouth, addressed the event recalling the apology to Aboriginal people made by then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. The apology was “a first step”. Aboriginal people are still waiting for the second step, said Mr Tilmouth which is to have a say in the control of their own affairs.

Mr Tilmouth referred to the recent Frist Nations Constitutional Convention at Uluru where much the same message was being heard, calling for “the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution”.



Mr Tilmouth also decried the advent of a new Stolen Generation with steeply rising rates of removal of Aboriginal children from their families. The current hearings by the Northern Territory Royal Commission, focusing on the child protection system, may reveal a clearer picture of this situation, but the stories told at the

Congress link Up Service National Sorry Day Event were stark reminders of the ruthless system of the past.



Ms Pat Ansell-Dodds’ shared ten people from her family were removed across the decades. Her father was put in a home at the back of Stuart Arms before being put to work on a cattle station.

Her mother was caught near Ryan’s Well tied to a tree by a policeman when her father was out mustering. Her grandmother was grabbed and they were both brought into town to the Telegraph Station. Their family tried to get them back without success.

Her mother’s sisters were put in a Catholic Church mission; two ended up on Melville Island and were not allowed to stay in touch with their family. Her uncles were also taken.

An aunty was taken to The Bungalow, then taken to St Mary’s before ending up in New South Wales: she never really came home, she didn’t know she was or that she’d been taken there by government, she thought her family didn’t want her. Then when she was a young woman she had her daughter taken from her.



Margaret Furber was taken from grandparents at the Gap Cottages, she was eight years old. Her grandmother came home from work and found she was gone.

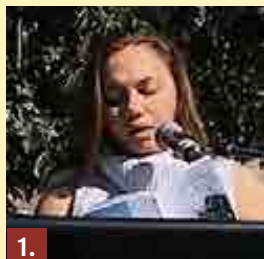
Her brother (Harold) and sister were taken to Croker Island. While on Croker Island, her brother and sister were separated. The sister ended up adopted in Queensland.

Much later, the siblings found out that another sister had been taken straight from the hospital, and adopted by a white family down south. She wasn’t told anything about her background until her adoptive mother was dying.

Northern Territory

National Sorry Day Event

Some belated comfort for the Furber siblings came with a “fantastic” family reunion and smoking ceremony a few years back, assisted by Link-Up.



The gathering also heard from the granddaughter of Frank Byrne, Delphina who read a passage from her grandfather’s autobiographical “living in hope”. She read

“He was living happily with his mother and stepfather on Christmas Creek Station in the Kimberley when

he was taken at the age of six. What happened is harrowing. No explanation, no preparation: this little boy was held back physically as he saw his parents loaded up onto a truck and driven away’.

Mr Byrne goes on to tell us that he was then turned out into a paddock “just like a poddy calf” and left to fend for himself. “I think I went mad,”. The only help he received came from other removed children like him and, thankfully, a few Aboriginal families camped there who did their best to take care of them.



MC for the day and General Manager of Congress Health Services, Tracey Brand spoke of the importance greater awareness by the wider community of the unresolved trauma of forced separations. These personal stories drove the message home.



The school choir of the local Sadadeen Primary School provided entertainment at the event.

The event was concluded with a cleansing smoking ceremony from the local Arrernte Healing group, Akeyulerre

The Congress link Up team thanks all members and the community for their support in Congress’ inaugural National Sorry Day Event.



FUNDING EXTENSION

Congress welcomes the announcement of a three-year funding extension for the Link Up Service and looks forward to negotiating the contract with the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet over the next few months.

The Congress Link Up Service is located in the Congress Leichhardt Building, at 14 Leichhardt Terrace, Alice Springs and can be contacted on 8959 4750 and email congresslinkup@caac.org.au

territory

Bringing them Home Event, Canberra



Two stolen generation members from Central Australia, Aunty Pat Ansell-Dodd and Aunty Eileen Mosely attended the Canberra Bring them home event. Members found it a momentous event and an opportunity to meet other members and continue their healing in sharing their story with many other members. They also enjoyed the opportunity to meet Archie Roach.

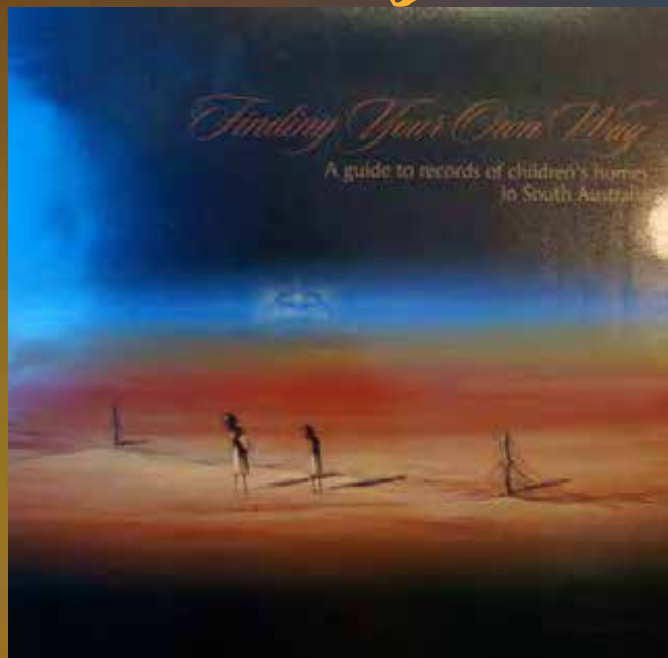


PHOTOS

1. granddaughter of Frank Byrne, Delphina
2. L-R: Frank Byrnes with daughter Valencia and grand-daughter Delphina.
3. Sadadeen Primary School Choir
4. Smoking ceremony from the local Arrernte Healing group, Akeyulerre
- 5-6. Congress Link up and Northern Territory Stolen Generation members and staff at the BTH#20 Canberra, launch

South Australia

Finding the way home



LINK-UP SA AND THE FINDING YOUR OWN WAY GUIDE TO RECORDS OF CHILDREN'S HOMES IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Dr Karen George – Historian Researcher, Link-Up SA

It's heartbreaking to see these records like this. But then again, it puts the jigsaw puzzle together, the missing link, so that there's some comfort there now. (Link-Up client, March 2002)

Finding out where records are held, applying for access to them, receiving files and then releasing information to clients are all central parts of the Link-Up journey for caseworkers, counsellors and clients. This has been one of the primary roles of all Link-Up services since they were established during 1980s and 1990s. In this 20th anniversary year of the handing down of the Bringing Them Home report it is important to highlight that the need to preserve records and provide fair access to them for members of the Stolen Generations was one of the 54 recommendations of the Bringing Them Home report.

In relation to government records about Aboriginal people, Link-Up SA has always worked closely with State Records of SA and their Senior Aboriginal Access Officer, Andrew Wilson. Andrew has worked at State Records for close on 30 years. One of Andrew's

primary jobs has been to provide advice about records for members of the Stolen Generations. In the past, while it was generally clear where government records were held, it was much more difficult to help people who had been placed in church or other non-government run institutions. Minimal information was available about non-government records including if they were ever kept, whether they had survived, where they are held and how to apply for access to them. To solve this problem, Andrew envisioned a guide to all children's homes that operated in SA in which Aboriginal children might have been placed, a guide which would also provide information about home records and where to find them. After numerous discussions during the early 2000s, this vision began to become a reality.

Under the auspices of Nunkuwarrin Yunti, a Link-Up SA project was devised to create a comprehensive guide to children's home records. Funding was sought and received from the former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission [ATSIC]. Dr Karen George, a consultant historian who had worked in the field of Aboriginal history and had recently been involved with the National Library of Australia's Bringing Them Home Oral History project, was contracted as the researcher and writer for the project. Andrew Wilson acted as a principal consultant.

The research for the project involved identifying the names and locations of every children's home that operated in South Australia, as far back as records allowed, and then finding out what organisations ran them. Once the former care provider was identified the historian contacted the current day organisation in the hope that an archivist or long term staff member would know the whereabouts of the Home's records.

For example, if a home or institution was run by the Catholic or Anglican Church, the archives of those agencies was contacted. The historian asked if it would be possible to come in and view any surviving records in order to list and describe the kinds of files/documents that had been kept and the sort of information they contained. Karen particularly noted if records mentioned the names of children and/or identified them or their families as Aboriginal. In the early 2000s when this research was being conducted, organisations cooperated and assisted with the project because they recognised its value both to themselves and to people who had spent time in institutional care as children. The project team always explained that we were not interested in looking at the names of individuals, but rather in identifying the types of records and the kind of information they might be able to provide to a

Australia through records

former resident of the home. As the research did not involve disclosure of private information, organisations were open and helpful. In some cases it was the first time they had properly examined and listed the records they held.

For smaller homes, run by private organisations or groups of private philanthropic agencies, not affiliated with a major church or other organisation, it was very difficult to find out if records were still kept somewhere. Sometimes records had been deposited into one of the State Libraries. Sometimes they were held in smaller archives or in private hands.

At times the trail ran completely cold and the whereabouts of records still remains a mystery. In a few instances honorary custodians who ended up with the responsibility for records (a former resident or staff member of the institution) acted as gatekeepers allowing little or no access to records.

For some institutions a wide range of records have survived including Admission registers, Matron's and/or Superintendent's reports, minute books of boards of management, staff diaries and other staff records, child endowment records, children's files and/or index cards, financial ledgers, visitors' books, correspondence, annual reports and photographs. For others only a small handful of documents still exist, often with no personal information about children at all. The idea behind Finding your own way was to make this situation transparent. If records had not survived or could not be found then this was clearly stated. The changing addresses of all former institutions were listed and attempts were made to identify whether original buildings were still standing or had been demolished. A contemporary photograph was included of every home where possible. Permission from owners of buildings now in private hands was sought for current day photos to be taken and published where no historic photos existed.

As the project continued it grew beyond the allocated funding. At the same time the Children in State Care Inquiry, also known as the Mullighan Inquiry, (2004-2008) was operating in SA. Recognising the value of this resource to the Inquiry, Karen approached the Project Manager to see if the Inquiry would fund its completion. As a result of this approach she was employed as a Research Historian for the Inquiry and was able to access even more records and complete the guide. The guide became an essential resource for Commission staff and for the Commissioner himself.

Finding your own way was published by Nunkuwarrin Yunti of SA in 2005 with a beautiful cover designed by Jacob Stengle. It soon

became the 'go to' South Australian guide for Link-Up caseworkers and also for other organisations and former care providing agencies and record holders.

In 2011 Finding your own way took on a new electronic life with the beginning of the Find & Connect web resource project. After the Apology to Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants in 2009 the Federal government allocated funding for a range of Find & Connect services including a national web resource to assist with the search for records and other information held by past provider organisations, government and non-government agencies.

Nunkuwarrin Yunti signed an agreement with Find & Connect for Finding your own way to become the basis for the South Australian part of the website. As researcher and author of the guide Karen was contracted as one of the State-based historians for the website. With a colleague, Gary George, she worked on the South Australian and Northern Territory sections of the website. The list of homes and information about records was greatly increased. Although a small National Archives guide, Tracking Family existed for the NT, it only provided limited information. Detailed research was conducted on Territory welfare records to gather information for the site. The research side of the Find & Connect web project continued until 2014. The website www.findandconnect.gov.au is now a unique comprehensive guide to children's homes and their records across Australia and is an essential resource for Stolen Generations family history research.

Finding out where records are held, however, is only part of the journey. There are still huge barriers in place restricting and hindering access to records. These barriers prevent members of the Stolen Generations from finding family information through records. Freedom of Information legislation and Privacy principles tend to operate with risk aversion uppermost in the minds of record holders and controllers. This means that information about third parties including parents, grandparents, aunties, uncles, brothers and sisters is redacted or blanked out from records. The next step in the path towards improved and fair access to records for members of the Stolen Generations and for anyone who spent time in institutional or foster care as a child, is to work with record holders, both government and non-government, to help them to understand the importance of better access and reduced redaction of family connection information. Only when the recommendations of the Bringing Them Home report which called for Common Access Guidelines in relation to records are honoured and acted upon will Link-Up clients and others seeking to understand their family stories be allowed to find their way home.

South Australia

Sorry Day



Recently Nunkuwarrin Yunti of SA Inc, Link Up SA Program, held an exciting two day event to acknowledge the 20th anniversary of the Bringing Them Home Report and Sorry Day. This event brought together Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander clients, family and community members to participate in a community healing experience. The activities at the event were aimed at increasing social and emotional wellbeing and offered an opportunity to interact with others who may have been impacted by this significant anniversary. A great turnout of around 70 people attended over the two days, with one of the days dedicated to Traditional Ngangkari healing sessions from the Anangu Ngangkari Tjutaku Aboriginal Corporation (ANTAC). The second day also offered Ngangkari healing sessions alongside Art Therapy and Mindfulness workshops, and for a little pampering a very talented henna artist. We also painted a 'Show of Hands' canvas where participants

placed their painted hand print on the canvas as a show of support for The Bringing Them Home anniversary. Another popular activity was the 'how far have you travelled?' where a large Aboriginal map of Australia was marked with lengths of wool to show personal journeys around the country; where they are today and more importantly the distance they have travelled. A family history booth was also a popular attraction for participants who were interested in gaining information around Aboriginal family history research and how to go about it. Members of the Nunkuwarrin Yunti Link Up Volunteers program were a key part of the day, being involved in the planning and delivery of the day with one of our volunteers giving the official acknowledgement of country to start the days proceedings. A lovely lunch was shared by all who attended.



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FAMILY HISTORY WORKSHOPS AT LINK-UP SA

In 2016, not long after the appointment of a new Historian Researcher, Link-Up SA ran its first Family History workshop. The concept behind the workshop was to provide an avenue for clients on the waiting list to commence some of their own research if they were interested to do so while they awaited allocation to a caseworker. The first workshop attracted just one participant who was very fortunate to be able to have a 2 hour personalised workshop!

A year and a half on, however, Link-Up Family History workshops now regularly attract around 10-12 participants. Some people have attended multiple workshops and have travelled from country areas to do so. Inquiries have also come from other services asking whether workshops can be held for staff and local community members. Catering for people outside of the city and in regional areas is in discussion.

Family History workshops are designed to be valuable for anyone interested in researching their own family with a focus on locating records relating to Aboriginal family history. No prior research skills are necessary. The workshops are run by the Link-Up Historian who first introduces participants to the practice of research and offers tips about how and where to start and what things to be aware of. For example documents written in the past often use highly offensive and derogatory language which is not acceptable today so people need to be aware that they may come across this

type of material. Sometimes a lot of research brings no results so the process can be time consuming and frustrating. At other times, information can be found in the most unlikely of places.

During the workshop participants are introduced to a large number of on-line sites which can be used to search for vital records (such as births, deaths and marriages), sites for cemetery and burial place searching, as well as websites which can assist with locating records related to children's homes. The record holdings of State, Territory and National Libraries and Archives are discussed as well as the records held by Church Archives, the South Australian Museum and by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies [AIATSIS] in Canberra. Throughout the workshop students have the opportunity to use a laptop or tablet to have a go at their own research and to ask questions.

Workshops are currently being run bi-monthly alternating between a morning and an afternoon session. They run for 4 hours with a tea break in the middle.

One hoped for outcome for the workshops is to draw together participants to create a family history research group who can meet regularly and support each other in their research.

If you are interested in learning more about the workshops, or attending the one scheduled for Tuesday 8th August 2017 please give Link-Up SA a call.

PHOTOS

1. Research Historian Karen George with client
2. A show of hands canvas
3. How far have you travelled?
4. Art therapy at Sorry Day

South Australia

Reflections on Reunion



1.

The first reunion for a caseworker is certainly a significant experience. For me this involved accompanying our client to his traditional country at Point Pearce. The journey toward a reunion is long and requires us to address numerous barriers in both access to records as well as the impact that family tracing and reunion can have on each client's social and emotional wellbeing. For the case worker, this entails unearthing documents from various institutions which provide some insight into what each client has been through as a result of removal from their family, country and culture. Learning such personal information about the hardships that our client had endured provides for a great appreciation of our client's resilience.

During the reunion to Point Pearce, we contacted a local elder who provided a tour of Point Pearce and provided us some education about where Aboriginal people of the Narungga country had spent their time and the activities that took place. Narungga are the Aboriginal people whose traditional lands are located on Yorke Peninsula, South Australia. The local elder, in sharing his wealth of knowledge, enhanced the reunion experience for our client through informing and contextualising the reconnection to family and country.

The Aboriginal people of Point Pearce were given control of the land in 1972, when 5,777 hectares was transferred to the ownership of the Point Pearce Community Council under the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act. Special permission is required to visit particular areas of Point Pearce that are controlled by Narungga community. To be given access to explore these parts of Point Pearce was such an honour and enabled valuable insight into the history of that country. The client was also introduced to his uncle and then visited the cemetery to pay respect to relatives who have passed away. Reconnecting clients to living relatives as well as ones that have passed contributes to establishing a connection with their family and country. Visiting historic cultural landmarks and spending time at significant sites also provides much enjoyment as well as educating the client about their country.

On a personal level, to hear and observe the client expressing on many occasions how he was really glad to attend the reunion was very rewarding. On a professional level this reunion emphasised what a reunion means to a client and the importance of culture and country in healing the trauma of removal, as well as building a bridge back to disconnected family and community.



2.

IS OUR APPROACH TO HEALING STILL RELEVANT TODAY?

Coming up to the 20th anniversary of the BTH Report much reflection has occurred for Link Up SA yet the question above stands out most prominently.

Since coming into the Link-Up SA program five years ago there has been much change, in particular the clients themselves and how they respond to different approaches to healing and the meaning they make from their journey. Depending on the generation and experience this may require a difference in the way the healing takes place, although central elements remain the same; cultural healing, connection to family and country, identity and spiritual peace all contribute to healing, but this can be achieved through a number of therapeutic models and approaches.

The Reunion to Self-program that was run a couple of years ago was evidence of the success of cultural healing through the central ingredients mentioned above, along with the focus on a cultural elder giving information to people on country about that country. This allowed clients to take away their own meanings from their journeys whilst a cultural elder gave permission for them to walk and talk in that country and that allowed healing to take place. For those that participated in the program the feedback was outstanding, and the program had met its objectives with much greater success than anticipated.

So going back to the question of “Is our approach to healing still relevant today? ”, the answer is yes. The mixture of therapeutic

approaches and core tenants of cultural healing may vary depending on the needs of the client, their experiences and their generation, however the essence of reconnection and cultural identity remain the most significant elements in their potential for providing healing to our Stolen Generations and their families.

Brad Hart
Link-Up Counsellor

VOLUNTEER CALL OUT

Nunkuwarrin Yunti of SA Inc would like to hear from community members who are interested in joining our volunteer program. We would like to engage with Stolen Generation members and their families, as well as people from the community affected by forced removal in the development of a volunteer network.

The volunteer network will come together to undertake training and identify activities in which they would like to participate and share knowledge. Volunteer opportunities may include participation at events such as Sorry Day and NAIDOC, and making visits to schools and tertiary institutions in partnership with workers at Nunkuwarrin Yunti of SA Inc.

Please contact Tanya Michelle – Team Manager, Link Up SA on 8406 1600 for more information.

PHOTOS

1. Refelctions of Point Pearce
2. Henna art at Sorry Day

Queensland

Josephine Jack Reunion



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2.



3.

My name is Josephine Jack and I live in Mount Isa. My mother Edna Gauaguna Nurulama was born at Seagal Creek on the NT and Qld border. She belonged to the Garawa tribe from Robinson River, NT area. Mum had 8 children, four boys and four girls. I am the second youngest and my brother Francis Jack is the 4th oldest. She gave birth to triplets on the 28th January 1971 at Darwin Hospital. The triplets were born prematurely. Mum only went home with baby Francis.

Mum passed away over 20 years ago. Over the years we were told that Mum had 3 sons and that the other two baby boys were taken off her. We heard about sightings of men that looked like Francis and we lived in hope that one day we would find our brothers.

In 2015, I talked to Desley Ah Wing who worked at the Link-Up (Qld) office in Mount Isa and asked her if she could help to find my missing brothers. I was shocked when the research came back and said that Mum had actually given birth to one boy and two girls. Francis was the first born and Kathleen was born second then Denise. It was so painful and heart breaking to find out that baby Kathleen only lived

for 4 days and baby Denise only lived for 5 days. They were buried in separate graves at the Darwin General Cemetery so far away from my mother who is buried in Robinson River.

Link-Up (Qld) workers Sloane Stallan and Kathleen Bobongie organised a reunion in Darwin on 11th April 2017, so that my brother Francis Jack and I could visit our sisters' resting places and pay our respects. Francis brought his partner Roslyn Shadforth to support him during this difficult time. They had travelled all the way from Robinson River near Borroloola in the Northern Territory. A distance of over 1100 kilometres one way and a journey that took 2 days by bus.

The reunion brought out many emotions. We realized that the search and the wait was over. Our original thoughts were that the remaining triplets would find us when they were adults. It was a heavy burden for us and we now knew that this was never going to happen. Reality hit us then. Francis was deeply affected and it was very sad for him as he always yearned for his siblings. He sat at each of his sister's graves and finally felt the connection to his sisters that he had missed since birth. We would like to find out if it is possible to move our sisters back home to be near our mother

Link-Up



4.



5.

and our country so that we are united in spirit. This would make us feel proud as our mother would be together with her babies again. It would mean the world to Francis to be closer to his sisters.

This was always going to be hard reunion because of the circumstances. Despite this we looked forward to it and the time we would spend together. My plane from Mount Isa had to make an emergency landing in Cloncurry and Kathleen was stressing out waiting for me in Townsville. We missed our connection to Darwin and so we didn't make it up there until late at night. Roslyn and Francis lost one of their bags of clothes along the way and they missed their connection in Katherine and had to get on another bus. The weather was really wild and stormy. Despite all these setbacks, the reunion was a success.

We would like to thank Link-Up (Qld) for all the work they have done for us. Thank you to Desley Ah Wing, Sloane Stallan and Kathleen Bobongie and everyone in Link-Up (Qld) especially the Research Team, Travel Team, Multi-Media Team and the CEO Pat Conlon for their generous support.

PHOTOS

1. Connection with Kathleen
2. Connecting with Denise
3. Roslyn, Francis, their children and Josephine at Denise's grave
4. Josephine, Francis and Roslyn at the grave of Kathleen
5. Putting flowers on Kathleen's grave

Queensland

Christine Doyle Reunion



1.



2.



3.



4.

My name is Christine Doyle nee James. I was born in Cloncurry, lived in Djarra and grew up in Boulia. I am 51 years of age. My mother is Peggy James nee Lyon and she was from two tribes, Eastern Aranda in the Northern Territory and Wangkamdla on the border of Qld. My mother was born on 12th October 1919 at One Mile on the banks of the Burke River in Boulia and she had 12 children. In those days, Aboriginal people had to live on the bank of the river which was on the outskirts of the township.

Around the time of the 60's or 70's Mum took me and some of my siblings back to her country Boulia to meet our 2 sisters Nancy and Muriel and brother David Lyon for the first time. It was here that she told us the story that she had another daughter who was born in between Nancy and Muriel and that her name was Audrey Lyon. Mum spoke often about Audrey to us children. Mum said that Audrey was taken away from her and that she didn't know if she was still living. She talked to some child welfare mob who came to Boulia and told them her story and they said they would try and help her. Mum received a phone call one day and was told that Audrey had passed away.

However, Mum didn't want to believe that and kept hoping that one day Audrey would come back home to Boulia to meet her family. In the last years of Mum's life, she still believed that Audrey was around and that we would see her. Sadly Mum passed away on the 25th February 2000 without finding her lost daughter and died of a broken heart. She was 80 years old.

I spoke to Link-Up (Qld) caseworker Bethel Clay at the Mount Isa Office in August 2015. I told her that I wanted to find out more about our sister Audrey. I forgot all about it until one day Desley Ah Wing, the new counsellor in the Mount Isa Office rang me last year. Desley gave me some of the information that the researchers had found about my sister. In the meantime, I had met one of Audrey's children Shan in Boulia, she was on another reunion organised by Link-Up SA. Not long after that I got a phone call from Audrey's son, Anthony who lived in Sydney. It seemed like we were being guided to connect.

Audrey Maria Evans nee Lyon was born on 11 January 1945 at the Aboriginal Camp Reserve at Boulia. At a young age, Audrey Lyon was taken while Mum was at work and she was placed in the care of her mother's employer, Mr and Mrs A.R. Clarence of Two Rivers Station. They later relocated to Sydney and took Audrey with them. Audrey had three children: Anthony, Jillian and Shan. She passed away on 11 February 1990 and was buried at the Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park in Sydney. Desley started planning a reunion for me and my support person, my sister Coreen to go to Sydney to visit Audrey's resting place and to meet two of her children Anthony and Jillian. In the months leading up to the reunion there was regular phone contact with Anthony and Jillian.



5.

Coreen and I were both excited when we left Mount Isa on the 5th December with Desley, we hadn't been to Sydney before. Link-Up (Qld) Caseworker Chris Cole based in the Brisbane Office also accompanied us on our journey. On the first day, we had a family meeting with Anthony and Jillian at the Sands Motel and I shared our family tree and family information as well as photos of our mother and siblings. We told them that they have over 200 relatives. Anthony and Jillian provided photos of Audrey's christening day, her wedding day and as mother and wife of her own family. They told us that the Clarence family gave Audrey a good life and that she was loved and cared for. They said that their mother knew she had family in Boulia but she never made it back there.

The following day we went to Centennial Park for breakfast and Anthony and Jillian took us to look at the house where Audrey grew up, saw the church where she got married (and had her funeral service) and the college she attended. When we visited Audrey's grave it started sprinkling and Coreen and I became emotional because the rain is culturally significant to us. We believed that this was a good sign. When I read the story that Desley helped us to

prepare for this day, I broke down and cried. I was present at the burial of all of my deceased brothers and sisters except for Audrey – this was the one that we all missed out on. It was wonderful to be with Anthony and Jillian and my sister Coreen and to support each other during this emotional time. A sense of peace washed over me after visiting Audrey's resting place.

Though it was a sad time, Desley and Chris organised some highlights for us and showed us a bit of busy Sydney. We had a family dinner, went on a private tour of the Sydney Opera House that Anthony arranged and saw the Sydney Harbour Bridge. We also visited the National Australian Museum and saw some Aboriginal artefacts from Boulia and Djarra there. This was a significant cultural learning experience for Jillian and Anthony and his daughter Jacinta. Jacinta and Coreen have similar facial features and expressions so there is a strong family resemblance. Plans have started for Anthony and Jillian to visit Boulia in September 2017 to meet the rest of the family.

It was so good that Bethel Clay helped to get us started on our journey and then Desley and Chris took us on our reunion. Many thanks to Link-Up (Qld) and also to Anthony and Jillian. Coreen and I appreciate all the hard work put in to this wonderful trip.

PHOTOS

1. Jillian, Christine, Coreen, Jacinta and Anthony at Audrey's grave
2. At the house where Audrey grew up
3. Audrey's Church
4. Christine Doyle and her sister Coreen
5. Coreen, Audrey's son Anthony, daughter Jillian and Christine
6. Audrey

6.



Western Australia - Yorgum

Sorry Day



SORRY DAY PERTH

On Friday 25th May, 2017 Yorgum Link Up team organized a Sorry Day Event for their clients who are Members of the Stolen Generation. Derbarl Yerrigan Aboriginal Medical Service were invited to bring some of their clients' who also were Stolen Generation, along with their Social and Emotional Wellbeing Counsellors.

Whilst celebrating Sorry Day, everyone was reminded it was 50 years since Australians voted yes in the Referendum making Aboriginal people citizenship in their own country! The Event was held in the large shed which is attached to the Link Up Office at 3 Bramall Street, East Perth and was decorated with streamers, balloons, pictures of the Sorry Day Flower, the purple native hibiscus, laminated pictures of Mission children. A number of trestles were lined up and set in the middle of the room and bark center pieces decorated with a variety of bush items were placed in the center of the tables. Each center piece had a flickering candle which softened and set the mood for the event. The setting was quite amazing and many of the Elders were overwhelmed when they first entered the shed.

In total 35 people attended of which seventeen were clients. Given there was another large Event celebrating Sorry Day of which Archie Roach was a guest, some clients who had confirmed were unable to attend.

Clients were welcomed to the Event and given promotional bags and a Sorry Day Flower pin to wear. Karen Farrell and Cheryl Augustsson welcomed clients and guests to the event and an outline of what was going to happen was given. Given our Staff hail from different areas of Western Australia, each introduced themselves providing information about their family and country links. Aunty May McGuire, a Nyoongar Woman from the Brookton area in the South Western area of Western Australia Welcomed us To Country. Each of the Link Up Staff were invited to share with the Elders and invited guests, information about and their family and country connections.

After this, clients were invited to share their stories to the group who were present. Five Elders and one Staff member talked about their experiences as a Stolen Generation, living in a Mission. Some of the Elders shared their stories, which were filled with sorrow, despair, hurt, anger and pain. As these stories were told, it was obvious many who were present felt the same pain, and tears were being wiped from many a face. Interwoven in these stories were threads of friendship amongst the children who had been forcibly removed and placed with others. Even today, clients reminisce about their "Mission sisters and brothers" who grew up together away from their "own Families". The strong messages which came out of this gathering and sharing of stories, was that of resilience, love for their people, and their determination.

Entertainment was provided by Reynald Indich who was a deadly entertainer. He played some country and rock and roll, which had the Elders and Staff singing and tapping their feet to his music.

The Elders and Staff tucked into a lovely lunch of Kangaroo Stew, Damper, Johnny Cakes, Chicken Curry and Noodles. Later Loretta and Dianne cut the Sorry Day chocolate cake. This was served with a bread and butter pudding, a wattle seed cake with lemon myrtle icing. And custard and cream!

PHOTOS

1. Sorry Day cake
2. Sorry Day Perth
3. Luncheon at the Railway Motel
Kalgoorlie
- 4-5. Kurrawang Mission Reunion



3.

SORRY DAY KALGOORLIE

Yorgum Aboriginal Corporation Kalgoorlie celebrated National Sorry day this year as it was a milestone for link up and 20 years since the first Bringing them home report was tabled in parliament, with our annual Elders 60+ Luncheon at the Railway Motel Kalgoorlie attended by 22 clients and 10 Students from Kalgoorlie Boulder Community High School, clients of our service were offered a three course sit down meal, healing activities and entertainment, we had compiled a slide show of photos of the surrounding Missions in the Goldfields, Mount Margaret, Cundalee, Norseman and Kurrawang, they enjoyed seeing the old photos of loved ones and families who shared the same experiences with thanks to Storylines, State Library of Western Australia .

We also had a celebration of the 50 years since the 1967 referendum which is a significant stepping stone for our Aboriginal people in Australia, the clients had an opportunity to share their stories and experiences with the other elders and high school children. We also had one of the High School children do the welcome to country and he spoke language fluently which was very inspiring to his other fellow students and impressed the elders in the room.

I think it's important for our elders to celebrate this day with our future generations and sharing their journey in life and how hard it was for them but how they amaze us and continue on positively.



4.



5.

KURRAWANG MISSION REUNION

In May 2017, Yorgum held a Mission Reunion for the past Mission kids of Kurrawang. This reunion brought together 16 clients from Perth, Esperance, Leonora, Kalgoorlie and Warburton. This was the first Reunion for this Mission so everyone came with mixed emotions, some didn't want to come as the trauma still lived within them. Once reunited in Kalgoorlie everyone was so happy to see each other.

We spent two days out in Kurrawang hearing of the stories from their upbringing, a Perth family spoke about how they were transported from the Wheatbelt to Goldfields with no family connections and how they spoke Wongi instead of Noongar.

During their time at Kurrawang we did a lot of yarning circles to find out what they have been doing for the past 30 to 40 years and how they found life after the Mission. They also spoke about how the brothers weren't allowed to talk to the sisters and sisters were not allowed to talk to the brothers and the invisible line that kept them apart.

We also had the group doing paintings and looking at old photos from the Mission days, also lighting candles at the Mission Church to remember Mission Brothers and Sisters who have passed away.

Lisa Cooper

Western Australia - Yorgum

Barron Reunion

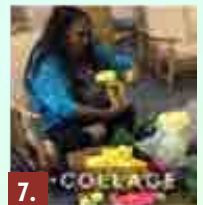
BACK TO COUNTRY

A 'Back to Country' and 'Graveside Reunion' in the South West of Western Australia.

Perth Linkup team Dennis Colbung (caseworker) & Catherine Garlett (counsellor) assisted the Northern Territory Linkup team Raelene Rosas (caseworker) & Daniel Fejo (counsellor) with the Barron family back to country reunion.

THEY HAVE NEVER SEEN THEIR GRANDMOTHER AND FATHER'S COUNTRY.

It was a healing journey to Lake Grace, Tincurrin, Wagin, Narrogin, Woodanilling and Katanning and back to Perth to Karrakatta graveside. We had a number of graveside reunion in different places as relatives are buried in these places.



TINCURRIN OUR 'FATHERS COUNTRY.'

Their father Bernard Barron was born in Tincurrin in 1922 and was placed in Moora River Native Settlement (MRNS) at the age of 8 in 1930. Their father successfully walked from MRNS back to Tincurrin or in that region to his parents but was discovered again and taken back to MRNS.

PHOTOS

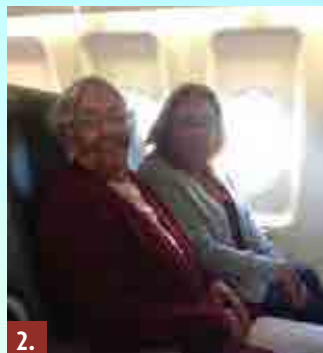
1-8. Tincurrin Reunion

Australia

Edna Dann Reunion

Edna Dann is an elderly client who first approached Perth link-up two years ago for Family Tracing and possible Back to Country Reunion. The Reunion took place over a beautiful and healing time throughout the Midwest & Murchison surrounding areas. Shamone Eades (Lead Case worker) and Catherine Garlett (Counsellor) took Edna and her four daughters (Glenda Wheelock, Colleen Wheelock, Gillian Chesson & Theresa Rose) who are all first generation stolen generation to Geraldton which would act as the base point for the reunion.

The following 4 days took the ladies on a wonderful journey as we visited the towns of Mullewa, Yalgoo & Morawa. Three of the sisters were able to go back to the place they were each born and Edna was able to share those stories with her daughters. We also took the family to the Tardun Mission, where each daughter spent some time of their lives with their brothers also. It holds different memories for each and the time there brought up mixed emotions.



The Back to Country Reunion started with us taking Edna back to Meka station where she was born and also later in life worked & met her daughters father Lenny Wheelock. Edna enjoyed her time there, although now there have been changes making it harder for her to relate to the place she was so fond of and sadly the homestead she remembers working in has been burned down. Being back on country was a unique and healing experience for Edna and her daughters.

The family also visited Utakarra Cemetery for a Graveside Reunion where they were able to spend some time near the graves of their siblings and mother/grandmother Chika Dann. It was a lovely time facilitated by the counsellor and everyone shared their healing experiences. Overall both staff felt very privileged to have been a part of the journey. With the family so appreciative of what Link-Up was able to do for them, they have started to plan to take their family back again.



PHOTOS

1-8. Edna Dann Reunion

New South Wales

Sorry Day Events 2017



1.

ILLAWARRA ABORIGINAL MEDICAL SERVICE

On Wednesday May 24th Di Belgre & Rachel Rewiri attended the Sorry Day event in Dapto which was held by the Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service.

It was a great turn out with all different ages ranging from pre-schoolers up to Local Elders in attendance.

Link-Up was amongst many organisations that held a store and we were approached by community members in regards to family history and to discuss the services that Link-Up provides.

We had the pleasure of past and present clients greeting us and expressing their appreciation with the support that Link-Up has provided them in reconnecting with family. Other organisations expressed their interest in our programs and how it would benefit their clients.

There were performances from school children and local community members including song and dance and artwork displays. The day was a great success enjoyed by all.



2.



3.

EASTERN SUBURBS MEMORIAL PARK

Link-Up (NSW) staff Tracey Fitzgibbon and Kim Foley attended the Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park's (ESMP) symbolic memorial dedicated to the Aboriginal community, remembering Aboriginal children who were taken away from their parents, and those parents who were laid to rest at ESMP before their children returned home. Professor the Honourable Dame Marie Bashir officially opened the memorial.

Wales



4.

LINK-UP (NSW) HOSTED SORRY DAY EVENTS – ZACH'S CEREMONY

Link-Up (NSW) hosted a private, complimentary screening of Zach's Ceremony to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Bringing Them Home report and Sorry Day for staff, the community and officials. The screening was shown at both Penrith and Blacktown cinemas.

Zach's Ceremony is an extraordinary, feature-length documentary captured over ten years that shows one boy's journey to manhood in a complex, emotionally driven story. Its themes are universal: that of family and connection, but also explores the fascinating and unique question of what it means to be a modern man belonging to the oldest living culture on earth.

LINK-UP (NSW) CEO

Link-Up (NSW) CEO, Terry Chenery, attended a number of Sorry Day events and commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the BTH Report events. Some of the main events included attending FACS head office to deliver the response to the apology reading by the Secretary of FACS, Michael Coutts-Trotter and the Bringing Them Home 20 year Commemoration breakfast in Canberra.



6.



7.



8.

PHOTOS

1-2. Sorry Day

3. Memorial Park

4. Zach's ceremony

5. Commemoration breakfast in Canberra

6-8. Sorry Day



5.

New South Wales

Family-Link

Reunions

FAMILY-LINK

Family-Link is continually working towards providing the best service possible. The program is funded to locate kinship, family contact and cultural information for 250 children in Out of Home Care. With 3 researchers and a caseworker, this number is sometimes hard to achieve but we continue to do our utmost to ensure that children and young people are connected with community, kin and culture.

There is exciting prospects coming up, with the introduction of a fee for service division and a new partnership with an Out of Home Care provider, we aim to deliver a service for the writing and review of cultural care plans to ensure the best possible outcomes for our clients.

COMMUNITY BUILDERS

The program has had a busy few months with various community engagements and partnership meetings. Community Builders has worked extensively with supporting the community in accessing various support services. Our goal over the year was to increase the number of our assisted referrals and support our clients when accessing services that they might not otherwise have accessed.

This level of engagement has seen a number of clients gain accommodation, packages delivered by the National disabilities insurance Scheme and employment services. The has just been refunded for a period of 3 years whilst the Targeted Earlier Intervention Reforms occur and we are hopeful that with the reform, it will bring more opportunities for the program to extend into other services.



1.



2.

DAWN HARDY REUNION

In April 2017, Link-Up NSW workers Paul Bates and Mary-Anne Frail took Dawn and her daughter, Fiona, to Darwin to meet with Dawn's sister & her family. A few other family members from NSW travelled to Darwin by themselves to join in the reunion which ended up having 1st cousins, 2nd cousins and 3rd cousins.

On the first day, Dawn waited for her sister in the tea room of the accommodation. As soon as Gai walked in, there were hugs all around. During the 4 days in Darwin the family spent as much time as possible together sharing stories and seeing the beautiful sights of Darwin. Days were filled with laughter, tears and memories as they filled each other in with all that had gone on in their lives since they were separated. The reunion flowed easily and the family were a delight to be with.

Wales

Healing Weekend



HEALING WEEKENDS

In early February we held a 4 day Women's only Healing weekend at The Retreat, Port Stephens in Anna Bay. Over the weekend the women were pampered with beauty treatments ranging from manicures, pedicures, waxing, eye lash tinting and more. Many of the women said they had never experienced any of these treatments before and were delighted with the results. A team of massage therapists were also on hand to provide the women with some much needed relaxation and stress relief.

"All staff were awesome all weekend. Everyone laughed, listened and connected. I loved talking to sisters; the bond we build as strong women is something you can't get with your own family. Link-Up is Family! Thank you for letting me come."

"I was given the opportunity to spend time with all my Aunties for the first time in my life, I will never forget. Thank you Link-Up, the work you do is invaluable and the opportunity you give for families to heal is amazing".



PHOTOS

1. Dawn Hardy Reunion
2. Dawn Hardy Reunion
3. Womens retreat
4. Sorry Day

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