

Link-Up (Qld)

THOMPSON FAMILY REUNION

IPSWICH | TWEED HEADS | TOOWONG

DR (AUNTY) RUTH HEGARTY
Stolen Generations Stories

PAT TURNER AM
Closing the Gap

APOLOGY 2022
All The Event Highlights

ROCHELLE PITT
Reflecting on the 2008 Apology

PLUS: Stolen Generations State Scheme Updates | Intergenerational Resilience
Client Tribute | New Cairns Staff | Upcoming Events

Link-Up (Qld) MAGAZINE

We invite submissions from Community, Clients, Partners, and Associates. Do you have a story covering your reunion and healing journey?

You can reach our friendly Communications Team at communications@link-upqld.org.au with your story ideas, special updates and events, or just to say 'Hi!'

We always appreciate your feedback.

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



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

CALL ON US

3-5 Reid Street
Woolloongabba QLD 4102
07 3638 0411

1/214 Mulgrave Road
Cairns QLD 4870
07 4041 7403

FREECALL 1800 200 855



NEXT VOLUME
JUNE 2022



Welcome to volume 51 of the Link-Up (Qld) Magazine. We are proud to share our updates with you in this new-look quarterly magazine as we continue our work connecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with family, community and country.

In this first volume for 2022, our cover story features the Thompson family reunion story (page 4), which involved four gravesite reunions in Ipswich, Tweed Heads and Toowong (Brisbane). I'm pleased to see that in this quarter our team was able to coordinate this successful reunion.

Our Apology 2022 event (page 8) was very well-attended at the QPAC Concert Hall Foyer on 14 February 2022. I'd like to thank QPAC for being wonderful hosts and all our guests for complying with the COVID requirements on the day.

You'll meet Dr (Aunty) Ruth Hegarty (page 10), a member of the Stolen Generations who delivered a keynote address and launched her new book at Apology 2022. Now in her 90s, Aunty Ruth is an author, an activist and an educator, who also volunteers her time to cultural camps started by the Hegarty family.

We've also featured our second keynote speaker Pat Turner AM (page 12) and soul singer Rochelle Pitt (page 16) who performed at the event. And our Research Manager Ruth Loli has shared her memories of the late Errol James (page 18) an active member of our clientelle.

Find those important updates on the National Redress Scheme (page 20), the NSW Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme and Funeral Assistance Fund (Page 22), and the Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme (page 23).

Finally, I'd like to congratulate our CEO, Patricia Thompson for her appointment as a Member (AM) of the Order of Australia (General Division) on 26 January 2022. Very well recognised Pat! We look forward to a feature in the next edition of Pat's work for which she has received this recognition.

Ken Murphy

Chairperson | Link-Up (Qld) Aboriginal Corporation

VOLUME 51

CONTENTS

8

APOLOGY 2022

Event photos and highlights of our annual morning tea to commemorate the anniversary of the National Apology to the Stolen Generations.

10

DR (AUNTY) RUTH HEGARTY

We meet this author, activist and educator in our special feature from Apology 2022.

12

PATRICIA TURNER AM

The CEO of NACCHO talks us through the new National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

16

ROCHELLE PITT

This powerful voice with a big heart shares her memories of the 2008 Apology and her advice for budding musicians.

18

REMEMBERING UNCLE ERROL

Our Research Manager Ruth Loli pays tribute to our larger-than-life client, Errol William James.

4.

THOMPSON FAMILY REUNION

IPSWICH | TWEED HEADS | TOOWONG

Sonny Thompson brings us along on his 20-year search for long-lost family members culminating in his Link-Up (Qld) reunion as he is shown the sites of his great-aunties' and great-uncles' final resting places.

THE BLACKBOARD

2 Message from the CEO

2 New Cairns Staff

3 Staff Spotlight

20 The National Redress Scheme

21 Intergenerational Resilience

22 The NSW Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme & Funeral Assistance Fund

23 Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme

24 Upcoming Events



MESSAGE FROM

Link-Up (Qld) CEO Patricia Thompson AM

What a busy start to 2022. You can see from the refresh of our magazine that we have hit the ground running as we usually do at the beginning of the year. I commend the Link-Up (Qld) team for their resilience, professionalism, and the integrity they display always in carrying out our important work.

COVID has presented challenges for all of us over the past two years and has significantly impacted our people and community. Sadly, some staff have departed through this period, and we wish them all well for the future.

Through the adversity and these tough times though, people really do shine and I have to commend Rebecca and Eugenie for stepping up and working extremely hard in organising our very successful Apology event held at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre on 14 February 2022.

Rebecca and Eugenie went above and beyond to ensure

that every detail was taken care of to make this event the success it was. This dynamic duo has also supported our new staff in Cairns who commenced during the office relocation to Mulgrave Road. Thank you both for your hard work and dedication.

Our new staff in Cairns - Sharona, Darryl and Heidi featured below - are an energetic and tight knit team, who have also hit the ground running. All local to the Cairns region and connected to Yarrabah, their knowledge and associations are an asset to Link-Up (Qld). We look forward to featuring the Cairns Office opening in our next edition.

Welcome to the team, Amanda Donigi, our Communications Manager. Amanda commenced with us in February 2022 and in this short time, she has jumped straight into events, reunions and multimedia. Her fresh ideas and energy is very much appreciated and welcomed.

Thank you to the whole team at Link-Up (Qld) who really do pull together – they know what TEAMWORK is.

Your feedback is welcome on our refreshed magazine. Email communications@link-upqld.org.au

NEW CAIRNS STAFF



Sharona-Lee Joinbee
SEWB COUNSELLOR

“ This is an opportunity to help my people connect back with family and country and give our mob an identity. ”



Darryl Tranby
REDRESS COUNSELLOR

“ Helping people has always been my passion and getting positive outcomes is icing on the cake! ”



Heidi O'Donoghue
CASEWORKER

“ The feeling of longing is there for many of our people. I am blessed to be able to be a part of bringing them home. ”

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

New roles Same faces



Nahkari Carr-Smith (L) and Kerry Sandow (R)

On visiting or contacting Link-Up (Qld)'s Brisbane office, you will have been greeted in the past by Kerry Sandow.

For four years, Kerry was the friendly, smiling face at reception and the ever pleasant and helpful voice over the phone.

Kerry has recently taken the opportunity to move into service delivery in a caseworker role and is enjoying the challenge.

“What I enjoy the most is working closely with our mob. It is such a rewarding feeling being part of an organisation that genuinely cares for their clients. It is really something special,” she said.

Following her first reunion, Kerry reflected: “This experience is something that I will cherish. I was able to witness a strong bond and connection between a brother and sisters that were on a journey. There are mixed emotions during the reunion, and I think there is some comfort knowing that you are not alone – that you have a caseworker and counsellor with you.”

Kerry is relishing the opportunity to work directly with clients, supporting them on their journey as they patiently wait for their research to be completed to reconnect with family, community and country.

Filling the position on reception is Nahkari Carr-Smith. Nahkari is excited to be back at LUQ. She has been a reliable relief staff member for Kerry at reception in the past two years. So, clients and visitors to our office already know Nahkari well.

Nahkari is thrilled about the opportunity to work full-time in the administration position at reception. “I enjoy being in such a supportive role that allows me to work with a lot of people. I also think there are always ways to learn new things in this sector. I enjoy meeting new clients and connecting them to the right person at Link-Up (Qld). This job is fast paced, non-stop and always interesting for me. It's pedal to the metal, always,” she said.

Congratulations Kerry and Nahkari for stepping up to the challenge!



Thompson Family Reunion

IPSWICH | TWEED HEADS | TOOWONG

By Sonny Thompson

I first contacted Link-Up (Qld) in August 2000. I was searching for information about my grandparents. My grandmother Annie Rolf, born at Aramac, Central Queensland in 1903 or 1905 was removed from "Annievale" Aramac to Deebling Creek, Ipswich in around 1914 or 1915. My grandfather Harry Thompson Jr. was born at Deebling Creek Mission in 1902 or 1903. They married and had seven children, including my mother Doris Thompson.

I also wanted to find information about my great-great-grandparents Janie Billie and Tommy Thompson, and Maggie and King Billy Turner. My great-grandfather Harry Thompson Sr., tribal name Goolpahjo, was born at Normanby Station in Harrisville between 1857 and 1860. My great-grandmother Amy Turner, tribal name Bundarcha, daughter of Maggie and King Billy Turner (Yuggera), was born in the Helidon or Gatton area in 1866.

The Thompson families lived at Deebling Creek and Purga Missions for over 50 years. Our connection to country is well documented. Our ancestors were born here and we have always lived on country.

I have always had an interest in my family history. We come from large families and it is important for our children, grandchildren and future generations to know who their family is. In the 1990s, through the Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action (FAIRA), I collected anthropological research and reports about my family. The information contained in those reports really got me interested in finding out more about my family, even though the family tree attached to that report rolled out for many, many metres. I then approached Link-Up (Qld).

King Billy Turner – Yuggera

We are descendants of King Billy Turner, a Yuggera warrior, through his daughter Amy Turner who married Harry Thompson Sr. I have searched for where King Billy might be buried, however have not been able to locate his grave or that of his wife Maggie. Interestingly though, on a visit to Ropely Cemetery about five or six kilometres inland from Gatton, I met a couple who were visiting the grave of a young girl who was killed in a car accident. I started talking to them, telling them that I was a descendant of King Billy Turner and that I was searching for his grave.

“ It is an unreal feeling to know that they have been so close, and we never knew it. ”

They suggested I talk to Herbie Olm who lived at Ropely. They told me where he lived and I went to his house and introduced myself to him as a descendant of King Billy. He was so excited to meet me, the mention of King Billy lit up his eyes. Herbie was in his 90s when I met him. He still had all his wits about him and had so much knowledge about Aboriginal people from that area. He told me his father used to go to King Billy's camp and they would offer him bush foods. His father had great respect for King Billy and I could feel that as Herbie told me the stories about his father.

Herbie gave me a copy of a book with his family tree in it and the story of the original inhabitants of Ropely. In the book, there is a photo of King Billy Turner, his wife Maggie and my great-grandmother Amy Turner as well as Johnny Tarampa, believed to be King Billy's brother, and his wife at the camp his father used to visit.

According to an article in the Queensland Times newspaper in the early 1900s, King Billy is buried at Brassall in Ipswich. We still do not know exactly where King Billy Turner or his wife are buried, and we will probably never know.

The Olm's are good people, and I was saddened to hear of Herb's passing. Herb Olm's family contacted my sister Faye where she worked at the Aboriginal Legal Service in Ipswich when he died. They had artefacts which had been given to them and they felt it important to hand those artefacts over.

Harry Thompson Sr. – Goolpahjo

Great-grandfather Harry Thompson Sr. was born at Normanby Station, Harrisville and was brought up with his tribe. He later lived at Deebling Creek and Purga Missions. His wife Amy died in 1918 and is buried at Purga Cemetery, where a significant headstone is placed.

They always lived and moved around the local area and as the years went by they ended up at Boonah. My family didn't know where Great-grandfather Harry Sr., or Grandfather Harry and his wife Annie were buried. We didn't know them as they passed away before I was born.

Aunty Phyllis, mum's sister, told us later in life that her father and mother and grandfather were in the Boonah Cemetery. We took Aunty Phyl out to the cemetery and tried to find them. On one occasion she went to the local council to see if she could find the plot numbers, only to be told that the lady who used to look after this was no longer at council.

I was living at Boonah in 2014 and started searching – visiting the cemetery to see what I could find out. I would wander up to the top of



the hill to a seat and look back down over the cemetery, not realising that they were resting right there in front of that seat. Such a peaceful place it is, surrounded by trees with their branches and leaves blowing in the breeze and kangaroos lying about, enjoying the shady spots in the early morning and late evening. It is a beautiful spot to be resting.

It's ironic that where Auntie Phyl would sit on that seat on the hill at the cemetery is where her parents and grandfather had been laid to rest. My sister Faye has now put plaques on their graves, so our families and future generations will always know where they are.

Searching for our Great Uncles and Aunties

I have always had an interest in searching for where our great-uncles and aunties are buried, the descendants of King Billy Turner. We are Yuggera people. Our great-uncles Alan and Charlie always told us we are Yuggera and our country spans from the mouth of the Brisbane River to the foot of the Toowoomba ranges.

All our old people have now passed away, our mother's uncles and aunties, and we didn't know where they were buried. I contacted Link-Up over 20 years ago to search for the missing links in my family. In that time, I have moved around with my family due to work commitments and Link-Up has never given up on me. They tracked me down through the electoral rolls to complete my family research and identify exactly where our old people are buried.

In February, I travelled with Link-Up's SEWB counsellor Lee-Ann Joseph-Roch, caseworker Kerry Sandow and communications manager Amanda Donigi from Ipswich to Tweed Heads and back to Brisbane for four gravesite reunions. My sisters Faye and Sheryl supported me on this reunion. All the graves are unmarked, so I felt a lot of different emotions going on this journey to find the locations of their final resting places.

We were shown where Great-auntie Lottie and Great-uncle Charlie King are buried at the old Ipswich Cemetery. I had searched before by going to Ipswich City Council, but only been given the section. I couldn't find exactly where they were.

Coincidentally, their graves are not far from Jackie, one of Faye's twin daughters who passed away as an infant more than 50 years ago. It is an unreal feeling to know that they have been so close, and we never knew it.

We then proceeded to Warrill Park Lawn Cemetery to visit Great-uncle Alan and Great-auntie Alice. I remember them being such gentle people. We always thought they were at Toowong Cemetery in Brisbane, so this came as a shock to me and my sisters. It's our Great-auntie Enid who is buried at Toowong Cemetery.

My reunion then took us to the old Tweed Heads Cemetery to locate Uncle Doug. He and Auntie Cissy and Uncle Alan and Auntie Alice moved to Currumbin from Boonah, where they lived for a long time and where their families still live. When our grandmother passed away, mum and her siblings were raised by Uncle Alan and Auntie Alice at Currumbin. When they were old enough to look after themselves they came back to Ipswich.

We had mixed emotions visiting Uncle Doug. We were glad to know where he is, but we were also so sad thinking about him.

On the final day of my reunion we visited Toowong Cemetery where Great-auntie Enid is buried. She was just a baby when she died. We couldn't find the grave though and Lee-Ann from Link-Up is going to chase that up for us. We understand they buried Aboriginal people with convicts in a particular area of the cemetery in those days, which makes us sad.

I want to express our thanks to Link-Up for the amazing work that they do, the information that they uncover through their research, and the detailed research letter that they give us along with a family tree. Research Manager Ruth Loli is highly professional and our huge thanks to Lauren Scheiwe for her dedicated research and to Lee-Ann, Kerry and Amanda, for treating us in such a respectful and caring way. We will never forget you all and the support you have shown us.



L-R: Auntie Faye, Lee-Ann, Auntie Sheryl, Uncle Sonny, Kerry.



APOLOGY 2022



Link-Up (Qld) hosted our annual morning tea at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre on Monday 14 February 2022 to commemorate the 14th anniversary of the National Apology to the Stolen Generations.

The program included cultural performances, personal accounts from Indigenous Elders and recognition of the anniversary from Members of Parliament.

Guests were treated to performances by Ken Jacobs on didgeridoo and Rochelle Pitt, R&B and soul singer.

Dr (Aunty) Ruth Hegarty, who grew up in the dormitories at Cherbourg, and Aboriginal activist Patricia Turner AM, CEO National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and Lead Convener of the Coalition of Peaks delivered heartfelt keynote speeches on the occasion.

Hon. Craig Crawford MP, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Ms Sarah Anderson for Terri Butler MP, Federal Member for Griffith also addressed the morning tea in recognition of the Apology.

Link-Up (Qld)'s research unit works closely with the Community and Personal Histories team at the Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. This alliance is key in reuniting the Stolen Generations with their families.

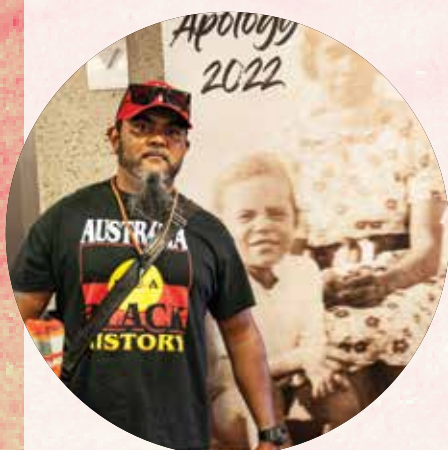
Through our annual event, Link-Up (Qld) acknowledges the resilience and strength of the Stolen Generations and their families, recognises the multiple ways that intergenerational trauma can manifest, and draws

attention to pathways to justice for First Nations Australians.

At the end of the event Aunty Ruth launched a reconstruction of her mother's life, titled *Buthalangi: The Maranoa Woman* - her fourth book.

Following the inspiring program, guests enjoyed contemporary bushfoods catered by Murri Menu on a beautifully presented grazing table.

To see more, watch the event video here: www.link-upqld.org.au/livestream-apology-2022



Dr (Aunty) Ruth Hegarty

Delivering a keynote address at Apology 2022, Dr (Aunty) Ruth Hegarty captivated the audience with her story as a survivor of the Stolen Generations. Her story is heartbreaking, not least because it is what thousands of other Indigenous children experienced between 1910 and 1970, and still encounter in various forms today.

Born in the back room of the Royston Private Hospital in Mitchell to Ruby "Buthalangi" Duncan, a Maranoa woman, and Frank Saunders, a white man, Aunty Ruth was called Munya, first grandchild. Her father, Frank, was away on a droving trip at the time, but had already proposed to Ruby and they would marry on his return.

It was 1929 and Australia was in the grip of a depression. Aunty Ruth's grandfather, George Duncan, set about to find work and a safe place for his family to all stay together until these hard times passed, and was told by the local Protector of Aborigines that he could go to Barambah, now Cherbourg.

George included Ruby and Ruth in the application to leave Mitchell and sold his belongings for £31; for the times he was well off. Though Frank had still not returned from droving, or met his baby daughter Ruth, Ruby decided to accompany her parents and younger siblings to help them settle in. She planned to return to her life in Mitchell in a few days.

These plans were dashed on their arrival in Barambah after a three-day train journey. Aunty Ruth describes what happened to her family next as "being ripped apart like an old rag."

Her grandparents were taken to the camp, her uncles to the Boys' Dormitory and her mother and her six-month-old self to the Women's Quarters.

Ruby had no power to leave the settlement or even send a letter to Frank to explain where she was. In fact, Frank had tried to find them but was told they had died.

Life in the Women's Quarters was strictly regulated. Ruby learned that when baby Ruth stopped breast feeding, the matron would take her away and she would go to school to learn to be a domestic servant in the Girls' Dormitory.

Young Ruth had been so excited by the prospect of going to "school" like the other children, she did not realise until it was too late, that it meant she would be separated from her mother.

Without a baby to care for, Ruby's only option was to begin to work as a domestic servant. The first family she worked for allowed Ruth to visit for two weeks every year, but as Aunty Ruth said, "Their closeness had disappeared. The damage was done."

Aunty Ruth has published three books, each about different

members of her family; writing the first when she was in her 70s. At Apology 2022, she launched her fourth book, titled *Buthalangi: the Maranoa Woman*.

This book is a reconstruction of her mother, Ruby's, life and captures Aunty Ruth's ancestry during a dark time in Australia's history. She is descended from a truly remarkable, resilient people.

Aunty Ruth said she wrote her fourth story partly because of Kevin Rudd's Apology in 2008.

"I refused the invitation to go to Canberra to be a part of this significant event... [Ruby's] death in 2006 meant the 'Apology' was too late for her... We may have shared more, but my own anger and loss aided me in blaming her for a long time, a blame that I now know was misdirected and unwarranted."

Guests at Apology 2022 were treated to a copy of Aunty Ruth's book with their event giftbags.

Watch Aunty Ruth's full keynote address at our event video here:
www.link-upqld.org.au/livestream-apology-2022

“Aunty Ruth describes what happened to her family next as “being ripped apart like an old rag.” Her grandparents were taken to the camp, her uncles to the Boys’ Dormitory and her mother and her six-month-old self to the Women’s Quarters.”



PATRICIA TURNER AM

Keynote Speaker Highlights, Apology 2022

Raised in Alice Springs, Patricia Turner AM, CEO of The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), is at the forefront of community efforts to Close the Gap in health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Pat has over 40 years experience in senior leadership positions in government, business and academia including being the only Aboriginal person, only woman and longest serving CEO of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Commission (ATSIC). Pat was the inaugural CEO of NITV and is the Coalition of Peaks Convenor and Co-Chair of the Joint Council on Closing the Gap.

I am foremost an Aboriginal woman, the daughter of an Arrernte man and a Gurdanji woman. I am part of a kinship structure where I am a sister, a cousin an aunty and a grandma with all the cultural and caring obligations.

We have been protecting and caring for our families and our children for more than 60,000 years. I think we know everything about it by now. So I say this when we reflect on the past that brings us together today, as well as the future we are seeking.

We always remember the strength that is in our people, our culture and our own ways. Since colonisation, numerous government laws, policies and practices resulted in the forced removal of generations of our children. From the 1910s to the 1970s, thousands of our children were forcibly removed by governments, churches and welfare bodies to be raised in institutions fostered out or adopted by non-Indigenous families nationally and internationally. These children are known as the Stolen Generations.

The exact number of children who were removed may never be known, but there are very few families who have been left unaffected. In some families, children from three and or more generations were taken. The removal of children broke our cultural, spiritual and family ties, and we have been left with a lasting and intergenerational impact on the lives and well-being of our peoples and communities, affecting anywhere from one in ten to one in three children.

There is not a single Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community who has not been forever altered. It is important that we understand how widespread the impact is for our First Nations peoples when we both look back and seek to heal our past and when we look forward and reclaim our future.

The National Apology was an important step forward in our healing journey for our peoples and for families and our relationship as First Peoples with the settler state. But this was just s one step. The Commonwealth government announcement to provide compensation to

the survivors of the Stolen Generations who were removed from the federal jurisdictions of the Northern Territory, the Australian Capital Territory and Jervis Bay last year was another welcome step. A step that came off the back of decades of campaigning and storytelling from survivors and descendants, including a class action lawsuit since the landmark Bringing Them Home report in 1997.

Although it was a step too late for my mother and for many others in healing from the past, there are more steps to take. All jurisdictions need to take the step of redress and compensation. This includes the Queensland government, who have so far failed to take any meaningful step to compensate for the harm to our children and families caused by their policies of removal.

In reclaiming our future, we need to urgently address the current rates of removal of our children from our families and communities. The Steering Committee of the Review of Government Service Provision recently released new figures showing that 22,297 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were separated from their families in out-of-home care and other supportive care as of the 30th of June 2021.

These figures are the legacy of the Stolen Generations and continue to shed light on one of the most shameful impacts of colonisation. In overcoming the legacy and in reclaiming our future, we need to remember the strength and the power of our own cultures, kinship





Pat Turner AM delivers keynote address at Apology 2022

structures and families to chart a new future for our children.

In 2019, a group of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled peak organisations came together as a part of the movement across the country to share in decisions with governments about the policies and programs that impact on our people's lives.

The Coalition of Peaks negotiated and agreed with all governments a new National Agreement on Closing the Gap. The National Agreement is a commitment from governments and our own organisations to a new future and a new way of working between our people, organisations and governments.

The National Agreement has put addressing the rates of our children in out-of-home care and supporting our children squarely on the national agenda. Led by the hard work of SNAICC, the National Voice for our Children, the Coalition of Peaks negotiated hard for an expanded focus on our children under Closing the Gap. The National Agreement includes several socio-economic targets that relate to our children's wellbeing, covering healthy birth weight, development and early childhood education. We also pushed governments to agree a target to reduce the

rates of our children in out-of-home care. These targets set the nation a clear focus by which governments will be held to account as they report publicly on progress every year.

Importantly, the National Agreement also sets a practical path forward for our nation on how to achieve these targets through four priority reforms.

Priority Reform One is about shared decision making between our peoples, and our organisations and governments to ensure the full involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at the state, national, regional and local levels on policies and programs that impact on us.

Priority Reform One takes us beyond the notion that governments know best. It positions our knowledge as central to any policy and program response to the issues that we face and says we must be heard. This is crucial if we are to support our children to grow strong and address the rates of out-of-home care where the root causes are embedded in our experiences as colonised people, and where it is us that have the solutions to the issues we face.

Priority Reform Two is the commitment to strengthen

“ The National Apology was an important step forward in our healing journey for our peoples and for families and our relationship as First Peoples with the settler state. ”

and place our community-controlled services at the heart of delivering programs and services to our people. Community control is an act of self-determination for our people. No other way of delivering and governing services or providing us with a say in government policy guarantees Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander empowerment and protects our identity and culture for the long term.

There is strong evidence that that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled services are much better for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. They achieve better results and help make sure we get the support we need. Our community control, early education, family support and health services are vital to support our families and our children, maintain and strengthen our culture, and ensure our peoples feel safe to access the support they need.

In developing the responses to the Closing the Gap targets we would expect to see a priority

emphasis on the role of community-controlled organisations. We would also expect this to be backed by significant and long-term funding.

Priority Reform Three is the commitment by governments to ensure that mainstream government agencies and institutions that deliver services and programs to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people undertake systemic and structural transformation to contribute to Closing the Gap. Although the priority must be on building our community-controlled services sector to deliver the services our people need.

Not all the services at this stage are able to be provided by a community-controlled organisation. In addressing the rates of out-of-home care this is particularly relevant to our interactions with the child protection system.

Systemic racism proliferates all the facets of the child protection system from the “care workers” who remove our children, to the police and teachers who make the calls to child protection to notify of alleged abuse and neglect.

It is no wonder that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families do not see that those working in and around the safety and wellbeing of our children as a place to go for the support that they in fact may need.

Priority Reform Three demands that the child protection system and family and children's health and wellbeing services, and those that work within them, recognise the damage that the current approach has had on our culture, our identities and our corresponding wellbeing and experiences of harm. Importantly, Priority Reform Three also commits governments and those working in the child protection system to take steps to heal the past and to take an active decolonising approach.

Priority Reform Four is a commitment to ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to and the capability to use locally relevant data and information to monitor the implementation of the first three Priority Reforms for Closing the Gap targets and to drive our own development. Better access to data means that we can make better decisions for our futures and hold governments to account.



Pat Turner AM receives gift from Link-Up (Qld) presented by caseworker Kerry Sandow

Priority Reform Four means that the data on our children and families is not used for coercive control. Where data is not being used by others to judge and assess us by Western ideals and to continue to perpetuate racialised stereotypes that justify the removal of our children.

Priority reform Four is about jointly deciding, in partnerships between our community-controlled representatives, governments and other organisations, what data is important to capture that tells the story of children's experiences based on what is important to us. And then using that data together to make more informed decisions about the policies and programs that are designed to support us.

The Priority Reforms reflect what Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have been saying for decades is needed and provide a comprehensive, practical framework to support our children to grow up strong and confident in our own cultures and identities.

Today, as we look back and continue to seek reparations to heal the past, we must look forward and claim our futures for our children and for the survival of our peoples as First Nations peoples with strong cultural identities. We have a way forward. Let's seize it together.

Watch the full event video online:
www.link-upqld.org.au/livestream-apology-2022/



ROCHELLE

PITT:

USING THAT TONE



Rochelle Pitt entertained guests at the Apology 2022 anniversary event at QPAC on Monday 14 February. She is of Nunukul, Nughi and Meriam Le descent and started singing and performing at a young age in the churches and choirs of Far North Queensland.

In recent years Rochelle found mainstream success as she went from nurse-and-mother, to star on Australia's The X factor. Today she continues to perform across Australia at music festivals and community events.

What did the 2008 Apology mean to you?

The official apology delivered by then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd on 13 February 2008 was a long time coming. It showed acknowledgement for the past government policy's wrongdoing in the forced removal of Indigenous children from their families. It was a good step forward in healing for what had happened to my old people and the intergenerational trauma it caused. I was watching on the TV living in Toowoomba at the time and a feeling of relief came over me. It felt to me like white Australia was moving forward in acknowledgement of this.

How do you feel about commemorating the Apology with Link-Up (Old)?

I feel honoured to be asked by Link-Up to sing at the Apology event. For me, it's connecting back into community and connecting with my elders, brothers and sisters, family who I haven't seen in a long time.

Can you tell us about the songs you performed at the event and why you chose them?

The songs I chose to sing are both language songs from the Eastern Islands in the Torres Straits where my Pitt family and the Birri Gubba-Wiri tribe of my father Len Watson come from.

There is a freedom now in this day and age to bring back our endangered original languages. An event like the Apology commemoration allows me to do that and for people to hear and connect with our lost languages.

What's the best advice you can give to budding musicians?

Singing is part of my DNA, like breathing, speaking and dancing. If you need to express yourself in other forms, keep the balance in your life as it's not just about work and family. To stay happy and fulfilled in life you need to embrace your true self in the creative arts. Take some time aside just for you to develop your creative spirit and if you can connect with your culture, then work on our lost languages. It's part of our job as "Song People" to do this while we are here on this earth.

What personal characteristic has most benefited you in your work as a nurse?

I've always had empathy, care, compassion, and joy in my soul... you need to have love for people to do nursing. I believe this is what has kept me in the profession for 25+ years. A strong constitution also helps, as you will see end of life, grief, and loss. Knowing this prepares you for anything that comes along in your journey.

What projects are you currently working on?

In my nursing and health career I'm working on a mentoring course with the Nurse Educators at Metro South Health to support First Nations nurses in their first year of a graduate nursing program. I'm also working on the first ever Director of Nursing identified position within Metro South Health. An identified renal nursing position has already been established within the renal unit of Princess Alexandra Hospital. This is the beginning of many more black nursing positions that are overdue for our people.

In my music career I'm working on a project with Jessie Lloyd (Mission Songs Project) to write a musical story about my Pitt family who have been First Nations jazz singers and musicians since the 1900s. It will highlight the significant part they have played in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Music Industry in Australia. I'll also be working on new original music in my traditional language to release in the near future.



REMEMBERING UNCLE ERROL

By Ruth Loli

Errol William James was born on 20 December 1939 and passed away on 13 February 2022. He was from Townsville and grew up around Happy Valley. A strong and proud Aboriginal man, he was a fighter and a survivor.

Uncle Errol came to Link-Up (Qld) in 2003 in his quest to find his first-born son who was forcibly taken from him in 1963 by government authorities and for whom Uncle searched for decades. It was a complicated case, and when I met Uncle in 2010 I promised I would do my best for him and we went on a journey together.

Since 2010, Uncle was a warm and regular presence at Link-Up (Qld), often attending our events or popping into the office for a cuppa. We last saw him in December 2021. Uncle had an effervescent energy; he would arrive to the office with his bold hearty voice, wearing his cowboy hat with the Murri colours and feather, and his long white hair in a ponytail and you couldn't mistake him. We will always remember him this way.

Uncle Errol would walk down to the tearoom and share his big hellos and hugs and yarns around

the office. I remember when I first made a cuppa tea for Uncle. He taught me to make his tea white with six sugars, and I exclaimed "Six sugars Uncle?!" and he put a finger to his lips and said, "That's our secret, love". And from there on in, he only had to ask for a cuppa with a wink and I knew how to make it. And I would open the Arnott's assorted cream biscuits that I knew he liked too.

Uncle Errol was fond of his Murri shirts; he wore one almost every day. One time he came to the office, he opened the car boot to show us his collection, a travelling Murri shirt wardrobe!

He would always ask if we had a new Link-Up shirt and he would wear it with pride and when he couldn't make it to Brisbane, he'd ring up and say "Have you got any new shirts, love? Can you send me one?"

Uncle Errol loved to drive long distances, even into his old age. He was an enthusiast about his cars. Sometimes he bought or was given vehicles and he liked to make touch ups to the old models and would keenly talk about the improvements and when he would test them on the road to

“ In 2015, we found Uncle Errol's son and they reunited at Clermont. 52 years of separation and Uncle waited for him with open arms and they embraced at Emerald airport. ”

Brisbane. He talked about his old job in his younger days as a driver for Opal House.

Not to mention his horses. Horses were at the core of Uncle's heart. Uncle Errol would tell stories of his days working on the stations and of his mares up at his niece's property.

In 2012, we assisted Uncle Errol to make an application to the County Court of Victoria for his son's adoption information that had previously been denied to him under former Victorian legislation, and we travelled to Melbourne for the court hearing. The judge found in his favour and Uncle always spoke about this as one of the greatest moments of his life and a great burden off his shoulders, when the judge acknowledged the injustices he suffered and said to him, "Mr James, it's unforgivable what they done to you over the years."

But what topped the day off, Uncle said, was going to Melbourne Museum after the court hearing and seeing Phar Lap, the legendary racehorse, preserved and encased there and standing tall in all his glory.

"I got to fulfil my dreams, seeing Phar Lap" he said. We

took a photo of Uncle with Phar Lap and Uncle Errol told us he still has that photo on his desk to remind him of his greatest day.

In 2015, we found Uncle Errol's son and they reunited at Clermont. 52 years of separation and Uncle waited for him with open arms and they embraced at Emerald airport. The trauma of his son's removal always stayed with him but Uncle persevered, he fought against the system and he never gave up hope.

We know the pain lingered after the reunion, but every time we saw Uncle Errol, he would unfailingly express his deep gratitude and appreciation for Link-Up (Qld) in helping to find his son. It was a chapter of healing.

Uncle Errol James did not have an easy life but he was a resilient man and had a big heart and affection for many.

He always spoke of his love and dedication for his late wife Marsha, for his parents who reared him, and for each of his children and grandchildren.

His presence will be missed by many. May he rest in peace.

Clockwise from opposite page: Ruth Loli with Uncle Errol James at LUQ 2014, Errol James and Phar Lap 2012, Ruth Loli reunites Uncle Errol with his son Tim 2015, family gathering at Uncle's memorial service 2022.



National Redress Scheme

The National Redress Scheme (the Scheme) was established by the Australian Government in response to one of the key recommendations of the of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Applications can be made any time before 30 June 2027.

nationalredress.gov.au | 1800 737 377

So What's this Scheme About?

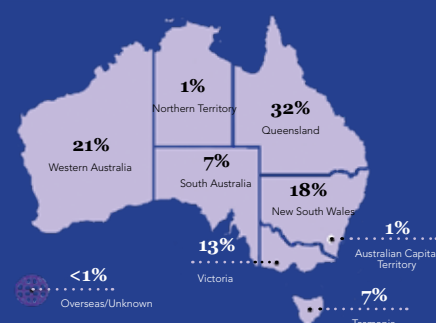
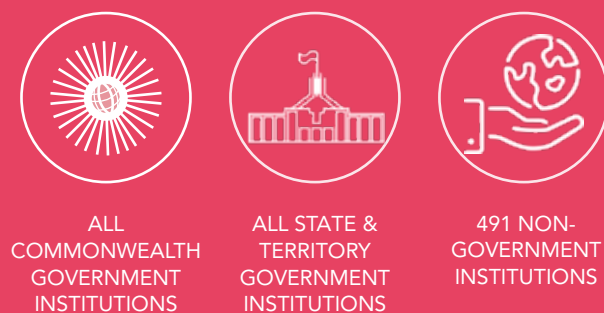
The Scheme acknowledges that many children were sexually abused in Australian institutions and seeks to hold institutions to account for this abuse. It helps people who have experienced abuse gain access to counselling and psychological care, a direct personal response in apology, and a redress payment.

Eligibility Checklist

- ✓ experienced institutional child sexual abuse before 1 July 2018
- ✓ aged over 18 or will turn 18 before 30 June 2028
- ✓ Australian citizen or permanent resident

Institutions joining the Scheme

Over 66,000 sites across Australia have joined the Scheme since July 2018.



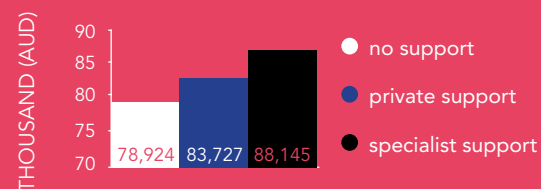
QUEENSLAND ACCOUNTS FOR ONE THIRD OF THE COUNTRY'S REDRESS APPLICATIONS FROM 2020-2021

Link-Up (Qld) ☎ 07 3638 0411

Redress Scheme Support Services

In Queensland, Link-Up (Qld) is one of two free Indigenous support services that guide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders through the Redress application process.

Did you know that payment outcomes are 11% higher for applications submitted with specialist support?



Our Redress Counsellors are available from Monday to Friday between 8am and 4pm.

Link-Up (Qld) Redress Outcomes 2021

In total, \$3,337,617.54 was paid out in redress to survivors.

38 applications were finalised, including 32 redress payments ranging from \$41,000 to \$150,000.

17 people accepted the offer of counselling and psychological care services and the offer of a direct personal response from an institution as part of their redress outcome.

If you are in crisis, struggling and/or need to talk to someone, contact these 24/7 services

13 YARN	13 92 76
BEYOND BLUE	1300 224 636
1800 RESPECT	1800 737 732
MENSLINE AUSTRALIA	1300 789 978
SUICIDE CALLBACK SERVICE	1300 659 467

Intergenerational Resilience

Kelleigh Ryan is Director & Consulting Psychologist at The Seedling Group. She has been supervising staff at Link-Up (Qld) for 11 years and outlines the benefits of culturally responsive and trauma-informed supervision.



During my years supervising at Link-Up (Qld), I have seen many things change in the practice, workloads, challenges and learnings for myself as a practitioner, as well as the supervisees, managers, and clients I work with.

The one thing that has always touched my heart has been the spirit of intergenerational resilience both in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the dedicated workers who support them.

I have had the satisfaction of providing a type of social and emotional wellbeing supervision that is founded on cultural strength and healing alongside psychological clinical science and practice.

Eleven years ago, the most logical way of doing my work was to take advantage of the unique way a Murri psychologist combines two knowledge systems to assist the client.

This is how I supervised the team at Link-Up (Qld) in their work supporting the brave men and women of our Stolen Generations.

Eleven years on, this practice is referred to as Culturally Responsive and Trauma-Informed Supervision. The drive to recognise and encourage healing and intergenerational resilience remains a key focus.

“When we care for our own wellbeing and cultural and clinical integrity through practices of honest self-reflection, everyone benefits.”

While we acknowledge that institutional, systemic, racial, and environmental abuse and trauma harms the survivor, this trauma can transfer on to the families, friends, caregivers and support workers. We call this vicarious trauma.

When we care for our own wellbeing and cultural and clinical integrity through practices of honest self-reflection, everyone benefits.

It has been my great pleasure to provide a form of this knowledge sharing in my supervision with Link-Up (Qld).

I am grateful to everyone I have had the pleasure to work with, especially the CEOs who have entrusted their staff to my practice. I hope my clients will always remember that Intergenerational Resilience is in our blood, carried in our DNA through songlines, stories and dance.

TIME IS TICKING

The NSW Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme and Funeral Assistance Fund is Closing Soon.

The NSW Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme and Funeral Assistance Fund commenced on 1 July 2017. The Scheme is open to living Stolen Generations survivors only. If you may be eligible for a payment, an application form must be submitted by **30 June 2022**.



The NSW Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme provides ex gratia payments of \$75,000 to living Stolen Generations survivors who were removed from their families and committed to the care of the NSW Aborigines Protection or Welfare Boards. This payment is made in recognition of the harm that these removals caused.

The Funeral Assistance Fund provides one-off payments of \$7,000 to Stolen Generations survivors to assist with the cost of funerals. Recipients of the Scheme can also request a personal apology from a representative of the NSW Government.

Eligibility for the Scheme is open to Stolen Generations survivors who were removed by, committed to, or otherwise came into the care of the New South Wales Aborigines Protection or Welfare Boards under the Aborigines Protection Act 1909, up until the Act was repealed on 2 June 1969.

The Funeral Assistance Fund provides one-off payments to individuals who meet the eligibility requirements above and who were living on 2 December 2016 (the date that the NSW Government announced the establishment of the Funeral Assistance Fund).

To find out more or to download an application form, visit the NSW Government Aboriginal Affairs website or call the number on the details below.

<https://www.aboriginalaffairs.nsw.gov.au/healing-and-reparations/stolen-generations/reparations-scheme/>



1800 019 998



Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme

Reading about this might bring up difficult memories and feelings. Please see our 24/7 support numbers on the back of our magazine if you need help managing the emotional impacts of this information.

territoriesredress.gov.au | help@territoriesredress.gov.au | **1800 566 111**

Office hours: 9am - 5pm (AET), Monday to Friday

NEW REDRESS SCHEME OPENS

Stolen Generations survivors who were removed as children from their families and communities in the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory before self-government and the Jervis Bay Territory, can now apply for redress from the Australian Government.

The Territories Stolen Generations Redress Scheme is now open for applications. You can apply in your own time **until 28 February 2026**.

DECEASED CASES

If a Stolen Generations member has passed away after 5 August 2021 and they would have met the eligibility criteria—their family will be able to apply on their behalf.

WHAT'S THE PAYMENT

The Scheme offers a redress payment of up to \$75,000 and a healing assistance payment of \$7,000. The Scheme also offers the opportunity for Stolen Generations survivors to confidentially tell their story about the impact of their removal to a senior government official, should they wish, have it acknowledged and receive a face-to-face or written apology.

WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE

- Free support services are available to help you throughout the application process. You can access these services even if you are just thinking about applying.

- We encourage you to contact these services to help you make a fully informed decision that best suits your personal situation.

LINK UP (QLD)

- Link Up (Qld) can support you in submitting your application.

- EMAIL contact@link-upqld.org.au or FREECALL **1800 200 855**

knowmore

- Independent legal advice and financial counselling in relation to your application is also available through knowmore.

- Call knowmore Legal Service for culturally safe, trauma-informed assistance on **1800 566 966**.

- Male and female Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Advisors are available.

CHARITY & DONATION

Interested in supporting Link-Up (Qld)?

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

ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.”
- AESOP

Subscribe to our Link-Up (Qld) Magazine for a free copy delivered to your mailbox every three months.

That's four volumes every year!!

Join at link-upqld.org.au/contact

Moving house? No worries! Update your address here too



UPCOMING

APR-JUN

RSVP:
contact@link-upqld.org.au

15-18
APR

EASTER HOLIDAYS
LUQ offices will be closed

28
APR

CLIENT MORNING TEA
10am Reid St WOOLLOONGABBA

2
MAY

LABOUR DAY
LUQ offices will be closed

27
MAY

NATIONAL SORRY DAY BREAKFAST
8am Orleigh Park WEST END

30
JUN

CLIENT MORNING TEA
10am Reid St WOOLLOONGABBA

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

STOP
VIOLENCE

1800 737 732
respect.gov.au

BEYOND BLUE

1300 224 636
beyondblue.org.au

13 YARN

13 92 76
13yarn.org.au

MENSLINE

1300 789 978
mensline.org.au

SUICIDE CALLBACK
SERVICE

1300 659 467
suicidecallbackservice.org.au



About Link-Up (Qld)

Our Mission

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

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

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

Link-Up (Qld) is funded by

National Indigenous Australians Agency
Department of Social Services
Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs

Quick Facts

- + Link-Up (Qld) is a **FREE** service
- + Your privacy is respected and all information is treated confidentially
- + Receive support before, during and after your family reunion
- + Select from a range of healing activities; camps, support groups, art, craft and music workshops
- + Participate in cultural renewal activities and support return to country

Toll Free from landlines:
1800 200 855

National Redress Scheme:
1800 737 377

