

Volume 27 July - August 2017

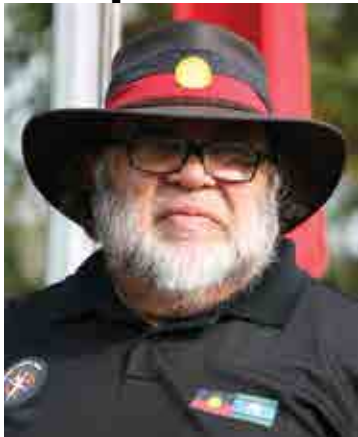
Link-Up (Qld)

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION®



Still Bringing Them Home

Chairperson - Sam Watson



Sam Watson

Greetings from the Board room. Hope that we are all coping with the winter chills. I hear that quite a few of our mob have had really bad experiences with the winter flu season, so our thoughts and prayers go out to you all.

Please consider having a flu shot next year it may help you get through the

winter months.

Have you been following the referendum campaign at all?! I was invited to go out to the big sit down at Uluru and be part of the mob that came up with a final blueprint for the next step that would then go to Federal Parliament. I had a really busy time then so I had to pass on the trip. I did follow the media reports with interest and I noted that the political leadership of the country then journeyed up to the Garma festival in the territory as well. I see that the Prime Minister and Opposition leader and many of their senior colleagues were up there in the great outback, talking up the case for the changes to the referendum. As a child I was dragged around a number of meetings and rallies to support the 1967 referendum. Back then the Aboriginal political movement was in its infancy and our emerging leaders had no funds or resources to travel to and from Canberra. But they carried the day.

The case for the changes to the constitution in 2017, has not really been made.

In 1967 the Aboriginal people and our supporters rallied against a constitution that had been drafted in the 1800s. It excluded Aboriginal people and made sure that we had no role or recognition within the new nation. This campaign to now change the preamble to acknowledge our people is a noble sentiment; but



Front Cover:
Jaqueline Brown and her sister
Shirlene Boyd at Kangaroo Point
in Brisbane.

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

but will any such change really improve our daily lives?! Will the 16 million Australian voters support any such changes?

Since Federation there have been 44 referenda and only 8 have succeeded.

The most successful recommended changes were the 1967 changes and they were endorsed by 91.5% of the electorate. I do not have any real confidence that any recommendations for constitutional changes will succeed in this current political climate. In order to be carried, the vote will require a majority of voters in a majority of states.

There is a throbbing, pulsing racism that is bubbling beneath the surface of the nation and I do not see a vast number of white Australians endorsing any changes that will benefit Aboriginal people. This whole campaign has cost more than 300 million dollars.

Our people need jobs, housing, health care, better access to training and education. We need more lawyers, more doctors and more businesses. I don't even know how many of our mob have even read the constitution and running up to the Northern Territory en masse is not going to solve anything.



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CEO - Patricia Conlon



Patricia Conlon

Convention Centre.

Welcome to this very colourful edition of our latest magazine which highlights our client reunion stories and NAIDOC events including the National NAIDOC Ball and the National Award Winners at a wonderful event in a rainforest setting inside the Cairns

Link-Up (Qld) staff have been very busy as usual. We have moved to new premises in Cairns at 2/128 Spence Street – just a block away from the previous office. Regional Manager Kathleen Bobongie has been very busy, with not only moving and setting up the new office, but also recruiting new staff. Sylvia Wright has joined our Team. Sylvia is a local with a wealth of experience and has spent many years working with Aboriginal Hostels. Sylvia has hit the ground running and is enjoying her new job. She is already planning reunions and building on her extensive network to promote Link-Up (Qld). Tegan Green is also a new starter in the Cairns Office. Tegan comes from a teaching background and is also enjoying the change in career path working with our Stolen Generations. Tegan has also hit the ground running, supporting Caseworkers and our clients with their social and emotional wellbeing.

Kathleen is glad to have a full complement of staff – Joshua, Sylvia and Tegan in Cairns and Vicki in Townsville. The Cairns Regional Office effectively covers the state from Mackay up to the Cape, out to Mount Isa including Mornington Island and down to Birdsville and inland through Winton and everywhere in between and back across to Mackay – a vast area to cover.

Our staff have worked hard and have achieved completing 27 reunions in the last financial year – this has exceeded our KPI's. We are limited to the number of reunions we are able to do because of the locations we go to and the cost of getting to remote locations. So we are pleased that we have been able to support our clients on their healing journey by reuniting them with family, back to country or to loved ones gravesites. Over the past year we have included many of our clients reunion stories and are pleased with the positive feedback we receive from clients and other

avid readers who receive our magazine.

Our Research Team is led by Manager Ruth Loli, who manages a very efficient unit. They are the search engine of Link-Up (Qld), their valuable skills and knowledge contributes to the final reunion outcome for our clients through their research outcome reports, linking the family history. Our researchers have access to a wide range of restricted and open access records to prepare their reports. They visit the Communities and Personal Histories Unit weekly for direct access to records created by former Queensland departments during the Protection era relating to our clients and families, allowing for more efficient and faster outcomes.

We farewelled one of our researchers Rhyl Tonge in June – Rhyl has moved on and is now working with Communities and Personal Histories, we wish her well in the future and she is just across the bridge from us now.

Link-Up (Qld) is funded by Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet to deliver our important work ; Department of Social Services provides funding for Royal Commission counselling and support; Queensland Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services provides funding for families/Targeted family support. The Healing Foundation supports Healing Camps and therapeutic activities for our clients.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the excellent work of our staff - Thank you Team Link-Up (Qld) for your commitment and dedication to providing a quality service to our Stolen Generations.



Link-Up (Qld) staff from the Cairns office at the NAIDOC Day in Fogarty Park are Tegan Green, Sylvia Wright, Joshua Thompson and Kathleen Bobongie

NAIDOC Day - Fogarty Park, Cairns



Cairns region held the biggest NAIDOC event to date at Fogarty Park on 30th June. There were many participants in the march which was very vocal.

Record numbers of stalls including Link-Up (Qld) were present and a high number of attendees enjoyed the traditional dancing and speeches on a warm sunny day.





NAIDOC Day - Musgrave Park, Brisbane



There was thunder and rain at Musgrave Park as NAIDOC stalls began setting up and people were arriving. But the weather didn't deter the crowds from flowing into the park and enjoying themselves.

The Link-Up (Qld) promotional items especially the branded tee shirts and thongs quickly went as our mob made their way down the muddy pathways between the stalls. It was great to make new friends, see old friends and family who passed by our stall.

The park had a big program that included well known musical group "Mop and the Drop Outs" performing. Amongst the crowd was Coloured Stone's lead singer Bunna Lawrie and guitarist Selwyn Burns. (below)





NAIDOC Day - Townsville



NAIDOC Celebrations were held across Townsville with the Official Launch and Flag Raising Ceremony on Sunday 2 July at Jezzine Barracks. Other celebrations during the week were at Shalom Elders Village, CQ University, the Corporate Breakfast, Wellbeing Centre at TGH, Townsville Correctional Centre, St Theresa's College, Shalom Christian College and the Iris Clay Hostel. Upcoming events include the NAIDOC Dinner and the Elders Luncheon.

The NAIDOC march was attended by approximately 200 people which also included Indigenous and mainstream organisations. The march started at 10.00am down Thuringowa Drive to Pioneer Parklands, Riverway where the Family Fun Day/Deadly Day Out was held. There were guest speakers, cultural performances, around 47 information stalls, entertainment, food stalls, arts and craft stall and free rides and amusements.





NAIDOC Lunch at Iris Clay Hostel in Townsville

NAIDOC Day - Taigum, Brisbane

The Northside NAIDOC family fun day was held at Koobara Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Kindergarten in Taigum. The event started with a Welcome from the Elders, followed by traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander song and dance. The dance troupe also treated the crowd to fusion performance, showcasing a mix of contemporary hip-hop and Aboriginal dance styles, before welcoming the crowd to join them for their final performance, "Gari Gynda Narmi." A live band took to the stage afterwards to keep the positive energy going.



There was a lot of great things going on, including art activities, jumping castles and bouncy boxing, petting zoos, raffles, and information stalls from vital community organisations. Link-Up (Qld) was very happy to have been part of the day.

NAIDOC Day - Murri School, Brisbane



Rob Frescon – Team Leader of the Brisbane Office and Jessie Cobbo – Caseworker attended as stall holders representing Link-Up (Qld). The day was great, had a lot of community members walking through the stalls. There was a lot of entertainment happening on the day.

Rob and Jessie enjoyed their time at the event, they would like to say thank you to all of the Murri School staff who helped and a special thanks for the Murri School dancers for providing great entertainment.



National NAIDOC Awards - Cairns



2017 National NAIDOC Award Winners

- Minjerribah Moorgumpin Elders-in-Council Aboriginal Corporation (QLD) – Caring for Country Award Winner
- Elverina Johnson (QLD) – Artist of the Year
- Sharee Yamashita (QLD) – Apprentice of the Year
- Dr James Charles (SA) – Scholar of the Year
- Patrick Mills (QLD/SA) – Person of the Year
- Joanne Cassady (QLD) – Poster Design Winner
- Faye Carr (QLD) – Female Elder of the Year
- Ollie George (WA) – Male Elder of the Year
- Dianne Ryder (WA) – Lifetime Achievement Award Winner
- Amanda Reid (NSW) – Sportsperson of the Year
- Latia Schefe (QLD) – Youth of the Year

The National NAIDOC Ball was held in Cairns in a beautiful rainforest setting inside the Cairns Convention Centre. Congratulations to the 9 outstanding and inspirational individuals who were recognised for their achievements and contributions to not only the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities but also more broadly and internationally. And of course a huge congratulations to the Minjerribah Moorgumpin Elders-In-Council Aboriginal Corporation (QLD) for their Caring for Country Award – what an amazing journey and story they have to share.

The National NAIDOC Ball really is the Gala event of the year. Congratulations to the National NAIDOC Committee, PM&C staff within the Secretariat who work tirelessly to make this event such a success each year and to the local Cairns NAIDOC Committee and community for being such wonderful hosts for the whole week of NAIDOC events and celebrations.



Collette Wotton Reunion - Innisfail



Collette Wotton completed an Intake with Link-Up (Qld) in Townsville in 2015, after approaching the Caseworker, Vicki Darr during a visit to Palm Island.

She did the Intake on behalf of her mother, Agnes Wotton who was searching for information on her mother Valmay Barlow (nee Sore). Collette requested a family reunion with her Aunt Katherine MacHerndl. Collette's family had first met Aunt Katherine back in 1975 when she came to Palm Island on a boat with her first husband, they lost touch and hadn't seen her again.

Aunt Katherine and her family live in Innisfail and the reunion was organised for the 13th to 15th June. Agnes would have liked to travel on the reunion but she had been unwell, so her son, Gerald Wotton travelled in her place.



Collette, Aunt Katherine and Gerald



Gavin, Dawn, Aunt Katherine, Collette and Gerald

The Link-Up (Qld) staff Vicki Darr and Regional Manager Kathleen Bobongie arranged for Collette and Gerald to visit with Aunt Katherine at her home in Innisfail. Aunt's son Gavin and niece, Dawn were also at the reunion.

"My mum's father and Aunt Katherine's mother were brother and sister. Aunt Katherine talked about our grandparent's country, Black Mountain and King Plains Station outside of Cooktown. Aunt Katherine also took us to areas around Flying Fish Point in Innisfail where some of the Sore family lived and told us many stories of growing up in the area.

This reunion was very overwhelming for me and being connected to family who still live in Innisfail where our mum grew up. Aunt Katherine was able to provide me with a lot of written documentation and photos about our great-grandparents and also a photo of my mum when she was younger. My mum was happy to see the old photos and that we were able to meet up with family in Innisfail.



I would like to thank Link-Up (Qld) for finding and connecting us up with our family and giving us the opportunity to travel and meet with them forty-two years after their visit to Palm Island.

The photos, written documents and stories provided by Aunt Katherine in relation to our grand and great-grandparents will be passed on to other family members on the Island.



Jacqueline Brown Reunion - Our Journey to Beaudesert



Link-Up (Qld) Client Jacqueline Brown and her sister Shirlene Boyd at Kangaroo Point in Brisbane

Our father Roderick Brown was born at Beaudesert in 1922, to parents Bertie Brown and Lena Ross. Grandfather Bertie and his family were local people from around Beaudesert and Kyogle area. Unfortunately, Roderick's mother passed away suddenly at Kyogle in 1926. Roderick and his 3 siblings were forced onto Purga Mission where they remained until 16 years of age. After leaving Purga he joined the Australian Army and this started his journey north to Cairns where Roderick stayed not returning to Beaudesert for over fifty years. Roderick met our mother Gertrude Jackson, they married and lived at Yarrabah Mission until 1958, when the family relocated to Bessie Point where they raised their 12 children.

As we got older we began asking who are we and started questioning our identity, our parents didn't talk about where they came from, so it was up to us to start searching for our traditional country. Eventually both our parent's passed and we had very little knowledge of our cultural country. Jacqueline applied for family history through Queensland Government and also approached Link-Up (Qld) in Mt Isa. This is where we found out our family history and had our reunion organized.



Jacqueline Brown at Beaudesert Cemetery



Reuniting with our niece Larrisa White



Paying our respects at Beaudesert Cemetery



Kylarri White, Jacqueline Brown, Link-Up (Qld) Caseworker
Jessie Cobbo, Shirlene Boyd and Larrisa White

On the morning of our trip to Brisbane, we both had mixed feelings of happiness and also sadness, I think it was my reflection on the time it had taken to be making such an important trip that was long overdue. Just thinking about family we didn't know and how it would affect us at their resting place. It is without doubt that Link-Up (Qld)'s support made our journey a very pleasant and enjoyable time in Brisbane, we were so blessed to have two beautiful ladies Jessie and Chenoa take good care of us.

My sister Jacqueline Brown was the person who contacted Link-Up (Qld) initially and she asked me (Shirlene Boyd) to travel and support her on this journey to the Beaudesert Cemetery for a graveside reunion as well as driving to Deebling Creek as this place had huge significance for us. Our Great Grandparents William and Topsy Brown were first inmates of Deebling Creek Mission.

We both agreed that all our expectations of filling the void we lived with all our life of not knowing our heritage, were met and we are forever grateful that we had this very emotional experience that allowed us to share with our siblings and family in Cairns. Our next trip to Beaudesert will be a family trip that we'll organize to include all family members.

Many thanks from us to Link-Up (Qld) for making this Reunion possible.



Meeting with local Elder Roberta Graham at Deebling Creek Mission



Deebling Creek Mission

Desmond Wright Reunion - Inverell



Desmond Wright before is Reunion trip to Inverell

I have been trying to track down my father, Gordon Charles Wright for many years now. I have not had contact with him since I was working at Apia Hostel, this was before they changed the name to Elle Bennett hostel, here I worked as a night watchman and cleaner/maintenance worker. My Father came to stay for a short period and that was the first time I had ever met him. He then decided to travel before finally settling in NSW, I never saw him again.

Over the years my siblings and I were always thinking of him, where he might be and how he was going. Then I finally decided I had to see him again, this is why I contacted Link-Up (Qld) as I had heard that they may be able to track him down. Link-Up (Qld) Researchers did a search for my father and found that he had passed away. The research came back and stated that my Fathers place of burial was at the New General Cemetery Inverell. I was very saddened to find this out, but was grateful to know that Link-Up (Qld) was going to support me with travelling to his gravesite for a reunion.

It was a beautiful morning when Link-Up (Qld) staff, Sloane Stallan and Glen Evans arrived to pick me up for my reunion. It was a long drive from Nambour to Inverell NSW but also a wonderful experience as we were able to stop along the way to take in the sights and also get our photo taken. A highlight was stopping at the Queensland and NSW border, at this time it was winter and very windy and cold. Throughout the journey the Link-Up (Qld) staff were very supportive



Having a rest stop at Warrick

of myself and were checking in to make sure I was comfortable and feeling ok. We arrived in Inverell that afternoon and booked into our motel.

Early the next morning we arrived at the cemetery, as we were looking for the grave site a kangaroo came from out of nowhere and bounced beside the car almost like directing us toward my father's grave. As I laid out the ornaments and flowers that I had brought to place on my father's grave I became a bit emotional. I thought of how I had only met him the one time many many years ago and here I was now saying my final goodbye. It was a very moving moment for me.



Desmond at the gravesite of his father Gordon



I would like to thank Link-Up (Qld) Caseworkers, Counsellors, Researchers, and the CEO for the great support I have received from my first inquiry, to becoming a client, and finally to the reunion event of visiting my father's grave.

Link-Up (Qld) Cairns Update

THE BIG MOVE

Link-Up (Qld) Cairns Regional Office have moved from 18 Scott, Parramatta Park to 2/128 Spence, Cairns. The Opening is Wednesday 30th August 2017 to celebrate our new office.

Clients are slowly getting used to visiting the new place.



LINK-UP (Qld) FIELD VISIT DEBUT

New LUQ SEWB Counsellor Tegan Green and Case Worker Sylvia Wright visited Yarrabah in July for their first Client visit. They appreciated the assistance from Kayleen Jackson, Bringing Them Home Co-Ordinator based at Gurriny Yeala Mucka Health Service.

The Link-Up (Qld) team then set off around the Yarrabah Community delivering Link-Up (Qld) magazines and taking the opportunity to introduce themselves to the Women Shelter, Aged Care, the Treatment and Healing Centre and Yarrabah Community Council.

Link-Up (Qld) continues to build on the networks developed, and rapport with local organisations and people in the Yarrabah community.



New Link-Up (Qld) Staff Sylvia Wright and Tegan Green with Bringing Them Home Coordinator Kayleen Jackson

CLIENT SUPPORT GROUP

The Client Support Group was held in July in the new premises. We have our next Client Support Group meeting on the Opening Day on the 30th August 2017



Tarni Williams and Link-Up (Qld) Counsellor Tegan Green



Beverly Murgha and Link-Up (Qld) Caseworker Sylvia Wright

REUNIONS

Staff are busy planning reunions which will take place in many isolated parts of Queensland. It will be exciting taking clients to locations such as Mount Margaret Station, Euroka Springs Station and Palm Island.



Link-Up (Qld) Regional Manager Kathleen Bobongie with Emily Collins

NAIDOC at Bentley Park College



Caseworker Josh Thompson and Counsellor Tegan Green went along to the Bentley Park College NAIDOC event and were joined by other Indigenous corporations invited to attend this wonderful celebration.

The event was filled with songs, dancing, storytelling, speeches and many varieties of different foods available. Staff yarned with parents/families who were interested to find out more about Link-Up (Qld) services.



Cairns Client Support Group 2017 Morning Teas

Held on the last Wednesday of every month at the Link-Up (Qld) Cairns office from 10.00am
Contact us on (07) 4041 7403 for more details

Next meeting will be on:
27th September
25th October
29th November

Visit to Cherbourg



Link-Up (Qld) attended Cherbourg Ration Shed on the 19th July 2017 to provide information about our services followed by an intake session, giving Cherbourg residents an opportunity to become a client.

Rob Frescon – Team Leader of the Brisbane Office and Jessie Cobbo – Caseworker facilitated the information and intake day.

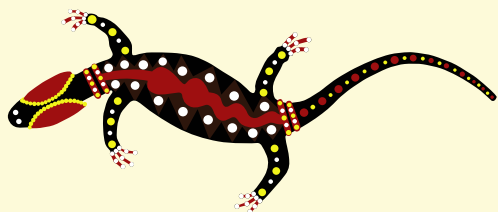
Whilst in Cherbourg Rob and Jessie attended local organisations to network and distribute Link-Up (Qld) magazines and brochures promoting services available and also followed up with current clients to discuss their reunion journey.



Brisbane Client Support Group 2017 Morning Teas

Held on the last Thursday of every month at the Link-Up (Qld) Brisbane office from 10.00am.
Contact us on (07) 3638 0411 for more details

Next meeting will be on:
28th September
26th October
30th November



Link-Up (Qld)

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION ®

Still Bringing Them Home

About Link-Up (Qld) -Our Mission-



Quick Facts

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

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

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

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

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Link-Up (Qld) is funded by
Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet,
Department of Social Services,
Attorney-General's Department | Ministry for the Arts,
Department of Communities, Child Safety and
Disability Services.

