



Link-Up (Qld)

ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Volume 45 | July - September 2020



Still Bringing Them Home

Chairperson - Ken Murphy



Ken Murphy

COVID-19 continues to dominate the headlines as we all try to get used to this 'new normal'. The simple actions that we all can take to help keep ourselves, our loved ones and our community safe remain:

- Washing our hands well and often
- Using hand sanitiser
- Staying home if you are unwell
- Keep physical distance from others
- Get tested for COVID-19 if you are unwell

Recently the Queensland government has recommended the use of face masks in Queensland in situations where it is hard to keep at least 1.5 metres away from another person, for example on public transport. Here at Link-Up (Qld), we have obtained masks for our staff to use in such situations. Face masks are not the nicest thing to wear,

but it is important that we all try to keep as safe as we can and follow the government directives.

Wearing masks is just one way that the staff at LUQ have shown their resilience and willingness to adapt as the guidelines and regulations around COVID-19 keep changing. It is really important that all our staff and clients keep up to date with the latest guidelines for where they are by looking at reputable sites such as www.health.gov.au or www.atsils.org.au. Staff are being extra careful as many of our clients are especially vulnerable to this horrible virus that has affected all our lives.

Some reunions are still going ahead with extra precautions in place if needed, and planning is well underway for healing camps in the later part of the year.

NAIDOC Week is going to look different this year as well, it is doubtful that we will be able to all

come together to celebrate but LUQ staff are actively seeking out and exploring creative ways to celebrate the 2020 NAIDOC theme of 'Always Was, Always Will Be' in a COVID-safe way.

This global pandemic and the resulting restrictions have forced many of us to take stock of what is important in our lives. Earlier in the pandemic, it may have seemed to be all about toilet paper and pasta, but after that initial hysteria has calmed down the focus has turned to what really matters.

Our connections are what keep us together – connections to our family, community, country and culture. This is at the very core of what Link-Up does, and why our work is so important to our people and our future. So we continue on, we adapt to this 'new normal'.

We are *Still Bringing Them Home*.



Angela and Kerry from the Brisbane Office modelling face masks. The use of face masks is now recommended in Queensland if you cannot ensure social distancing.



This issue's Cover Story

In memory of Jessie Janice Cobbo
(21.11.1958 - 08.08.2020)

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.



Patricia Thompson

Welcome to this edition of our magazine. The cover features our dear work colleague, mate, sister and aunty Jessie Cobbo, who sadly passed away on 8th August 2020 after her battle with cancer. Jessie commenced working at Link-Up in 2015 – it was, apart from teaching kindy kids at Cherbourg as a young woman and later as a teacher aide at West End State School, her most fulfilling job.

Jessie supported many clients on their healing journeys, providing answers to missing pieces of their life through the delivery of research, their family history and linking them to country. Jessie was a valuable asset to our team, she had wide networks and knew many families, so at times was able to use that knowledge to support the work of the research team and unite people together.

We miss her yarns and laughter and her feistiness – while she was a small woman with a gentleness about her, she stood strong on her values and beliefs.

Jessie will not be forgotten and I am sure her presence will always be felt at Link-Up.

2020 Launch of the Queensland Parliamentary Service Reconciliation Action Plan

On 8th September 2020, Link-Up (Qld) was represented at the official launch of the Queensland Parliamentary Service Reconciliation Action Plan on the Speaker's Green at Parliament House. The Speaker of the House, Curtis Pitt spoke about the important work that had been done in partnership with Reconciliation Australia. He commended the actions contained within the RAP as a contribution towards the process of reconciliation.

Guests and politicians from both sides were in attendance as well as the co-chair of Reconciliation Australia, Peter Jackson.

Historic Moments in Queensland Parliament

Cynthia Lui MP, Member for Cook, first made history in 2017 by being the first Torres Strait Islander to be elected to an Australian Parliament and in September 2020 led Queensland to another historic moment – the passing in the Queensland Parliament of the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa Act 2020, which translates to "For our Children's Children." This Act formally recognises Torres Strait Islander children traditionally adopted by relatives or other community members.

"For generations, Torres Strait Islanders have supported their children and each other in loving, supportive extended families. Until now, these family relationships have never been fully recognised in law," Ms Lui explained.

"This Act means children and adults who've grown up with traditional adoptive parents will finally have their legal identity match their cultural identity."

The change should make it easier to get birth certificates, reduce complications when birth parents challenge custody arrangements and ensure access to inheritance if adoptive parents die without a will.

The Member for Cook acknowledged and paid respect to past elders, making special mention of her late Uncle Steve Mam, who passed away in 2016. "His courageous heart led the Kupai Omasker working party to fight for legal recognition of over 30 years", she said.

I had the privilege of sitting on the ATSIC Regional Council with Uncle Steve over an 8 year period from 1996 to 2004, I remember well his commitment to fighting for Kupai Omasker.

Uncle Steve was a strong and very passionate supporter of autonomy for Indigenous people, self-determination and economic development, and always said it was important to "listen, understand, ask questions and take action".

He would be so proud of this significant and historic achievement, that his niece Cynthia Lui, listened, understood, asked questions and took action.

Au Eso Au (Big Thank you) to Cynthia Lui MP, Member for Cook

Remembering Jessie Cobbo - 21.11.1958 - 08.08.2020

Many of our clients would remember the infectious grin and kind and generous heart of Jessie Cobbo, who sadly passed away on 8 August, 2020 aged 61.

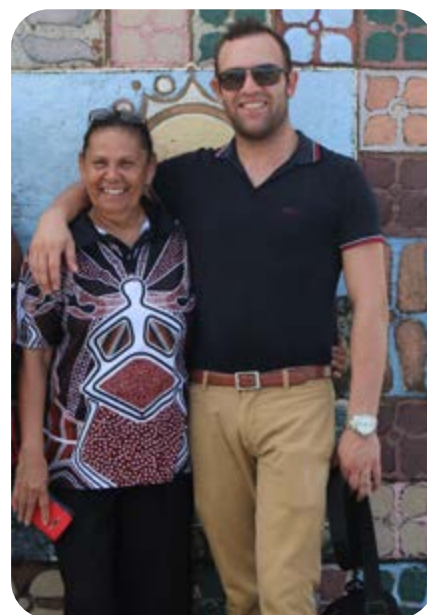
Jessie was born in Barambah Mission Hospital in Cherbourg and was a proud descendant of the Wakka Wakka and Kullilee people. She grew up in Cherbourg until she moved to Brisbane as a young teenager where she worked and studied, but she returned home often to Cherbourg. Jessie always went back and forth from Brisbane in her little yellow Gemini to visit her brothers, sisters, family and community.

Jessie worked in the education area for many years. She trained as a kindy teacher in the 1970's and worked at the Cherbourg Kindergarten. She worked as a teacher aide at West End State School for 15 years and also at the Christ King Catholic School. Those kids from the Cherbourg kindy days are all in their mid 40's now and all the kids she supported at the West End State School still called her "Miss Jessie" right up to her passing.

Jessie joined the Link-Up (Qld) family in 2015 as a Case Worker which was a job she cherished. In this position she travelled to many different places, connecting our

people to their family and country. She believed this role was her calling, and she became a much valued and loved colleague and dear friend.

After Jessie was sadly diagnosed with lung cancer in 2017, she continued to work until the middle of 2019 when the cancer returned and was diagnosed as terminal. Jessie resigned in February 2020, however she still remained part of the Link-Up family all through her illness. She will always be fondly remembered by her work colleagues and the many clients whose lives she touched and had the privilege of travelling with on their journeys.



Jessie with Rob Frescon (dec'd)



On Thursday Island



Jessie loved travelling all over Queensland with Link-Up



Client Christmas Party 2019



Chris and Josh Thompson with Aunty Jessie



Staff retreat - visit to Byron Bay

Linda Medlin Reunion - Townsville



Linda Medlin with her brother Joe and Link-Up Caseworker Alison Bell at their grandfather's gravesite

I was born in Brisbane Qld in the mid-60s to Lance and Frances Medlin. I had an older brother Joe and sister Debbie who I just adored.

1967 was a year of mixed emotions. Debbie passed away after a freak accident, leaving Mum traumatised by the experience. Mum found out soon after Debbie's passing that she was pregnant, and on Christmas Day our brother William was born. In 1970 Andrew (Grub) was born followed by a sister Kylie in 1971.

When I was in Grade 2, Mum and Dad decided to move to Winton to give us a better life as a family. In Winton, Mum and Dad continued to grow the family and in 1975 the youngest member of the family was born - another brother named Murray.

The family was now complete with 4 brothers and 3 sisters. In high school Mum told us of another sister Donna who had been adopted as an infant and who was searching for her birth mother. We met Donna at Sea World in the late 70s or early 80s and we clicked. Throughout the years the relationship developed and was nurtured. Donna had many questions around family history. We didn't have much information other than for the present generations.

This got Mum thinking, as family meant everything to Mum. So, when she started her search in the 90's for her Mother's family Isobel Lane, I was honoured to be there with her and learn from her and others we met upon that journey.

During the 1990's in Mt Isa we attended the Mulkuddi Festival and

it was there that Mum was called to be a part of a Yarning Circle with Elders from Boulia and surrounding areas. Mum was told by this group, in particular Aunty Peggy James that her mother was of Kalkadoon descent and her totem was Emu. Mum was so excited, she asked if she could get me and bring me into the Circle. She ran back to me and brought me into the Yarning Circle where I was accepted by the Elders who also shared with me the stories of my Grandmother Isobel Lane.

Mum had contacted Link-Up and they were able to provide some documentation around Grandma Isobel and a half-brother named Freddie. Mum could add to this information - whilst we were in Boulia, Mum was saying she could never figure out why her and her sibling had gone with Grandma Isobel to a funeral in Boulia as they didn't know this person. From the timing of the funeral it seems that may have been the funeral of her Uncle Freddie.

Mum continued her search and was often disappointed and depressed with the lack of information she could source. In 1998, our Mum passed away and she never got to find the answers she was looking for. It was a painful topic for the family to follow up on and no one else had the energy to commit.

I wanted to continue the search that my Mum had commenced back in the 90's. So, I reached out to Link-Up several times but did not follow up due to other significant deaths in the family. In 2017, I started the process again and this time continued to maintain contact with Link-Up.

I needed to pay my respects to my Mum and honour the journey she started.

Upon receiving the information from Link-Up, I shared it with family members, siblings and cousins. My feelings upon reading the information initially was that of excitement, however, I wasn't really ready for the emotional journey it would take me on. I am the knowledge keeper and 'go to person' to lead things of my immediate family. I thought it was just another thing to process.... and I did just that.... Process.

My brother Joe stood beside me and we supported each other in this journey to honour our Mother and close a chapter. Together we closed a chapter of the family book, and we can start the healing in our Generation so that the next Generation doesn't need to do it.

It was a graveside reunion. I went to boarding school in Townsville, I lived in Townsville so did Joe. But none of us ever knew that Granpa Joe was buried there. I think we may even have been the only family members that have ever been to his grave.

Heavy. I definitely felt heavy after the sun set on the gravesite and we honoured Mum. There was a lot to process again.

I would like other family members to follow up through Link-Up the dotted lines of possible parents and siblings of our Grand Mother – Isobel Lane and Great Grand Mother Minnie McCulloch.

The family would really like to thank the Link Up staff who have supported us through this journey. I would like to give a big shout out to Anne Garrett and Alison Bell for their unwavering support in the final lead up, on the day of the graveside reunion and since returning.



Linda's grandfather competed in the rodeo circuits and he was known as a great horseman



Link-Up (Qld) Caseworker Alison Bell, Linda Medlin with her brother Joe and Link-Up (Qld) SEWB Counsellor Anne Garrett preparing for the graveside reunion.

Yarrabah - Paradise by the Sea



The view of Yarrabah from the Lookout

Some of the Brisbane staff recently made the trip up north to support and collaborate with our staff members from the Cairns office, now that COVID-19 regulations had lifted a little and we were able to travel within the state again. While we were there, we visited Yarrabah, otherwise known as “paradise by the sea”.

We visited the Gindaja Treatment and Healing Centre at Yarrabah to catch up with some clients and Pat Thompson, CEO, did a presentation to the residents about what Link-Up (Qld) does and how we can help reunite families. Our Redress Manager, Anne Struckett, also spoke about the process of redress and how the Redress team support their clients through what can be a difficult process.

Yarrabah was one of the Aboriginal communities which had a hard lockdown during May, with curfews and roadblocks set up on the only road into the community. Gindaja showed their resilience by transforming their training room into the COVID isolation unit for

anyone who had to come back into the community. Luckily, the virus didn't hit the community and by keeping isolated, supporting each other and maintaining social distance and good hygiene, they have kept everyone safe.

Thank you Gindaja for your hospitality, you are all doing a great job.

Yarrabah, we look forward to seeing you again soon.



Although we didn't see any crocodiles on our visit, the warning signs were everywhere. Crocodiles have been known to attack dogs and horses around Yarrabah



The training room at Gindaja which became a COVID-19 Isolation Unit during lockdown



Gindaja staff and clients were happy to have a yarn with Link-Up (Qld) staff and pose for photos in their beautiful grounds.



While we were driving back to Cairns, avoiding the beautiful wild horses and bike riders on the road, we bumped into one of Yarrabah's oldest and most well known residents Popeye Alf Neal. At 96 years old, or he thinks maybe a bit older, Popeye is still working hard for his proud and strong community.

Sam Watson Mural - West End



Link-Up (Qld) staff Anne Garrett, Rebecca Oberle, Patricia Thompson and Christine Kanofski pictured with artist Warraba Weatherall (centre) with his daughter in front of the mural of Sam Watson at Bunyapa Park, West End

Monday morning and Bunyapa Park in West End is scattered with people enjoying the sunshine on the last official day of winter. Small groups of people are on the grass, and most seats are taken. The community vegetable gardens are overflowing with ripening tomatoes, spinach, zucchini and herbs and a nearby busker adds to the relaxed, carefree and colourful atmosphere of this small green space in West End.

It is here that we meet Warraba Weatherall, a talented Kamilaroi man and street artist who has painted a bold and striking mural of Uncle Sam Watson, holding a microphone as he often was and looking powerfully out over the park.

Warraba was commissioned by Blaklash Creative, a local arts collective, with support from Brisbane City Council to paint the

mural of Uncle Sam Watson. This took Warraba about two days, and since then he has received positive feedback from all sections of the community - even while we were there people wanted to congratulate him on such a powerful artwork. Most importantly for Warraba, this artwork also has the support and endorsement from Uncle Sam's family.

It is a fitting and beautiful tribute to our late Chairman, a man who was such a strong and loud advocate for the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

He was and remained a true Leader right up until the end, not just here in Brisbane, but on a state and national level.



Link-Up Baby - Daisy Jill Parry

"August 16 is a day I will never forget as I was able to hold my daughter, Daisy Jill Parry, for the very first time. For those of you who don't know, I live on Macleay Island and the journey to the Redland Hospital included two ambulances and an ambulance boat and I completely underestimated how long this trip would take. We arrived at the hospital with less than 10 minutes to spare and Daisy began to make her appearance whilst my partner was still parking the car.

Daisy arrived at 7:08am, weighing 7.5 pounds (3.45 kg), a little less than the 9 pound baby I was told I was having.

She was born with a full head of dark hair and long legs that she has loved to kick about since her birth.

Daisy is 9 weeks old now and we are settling in well. Her favourite things are eating and being cuddled and rocked. She is very interested in the outside world and likes to listen to the birds outside our house and looking at bright lights. Her dislikes are sleeping alone, spending time on her tummy and not being held.

Thank you to everyone who has asked about the new 'Link-up baby' and I look forward to bring Daisy in to meet her Link-up family."

Written by Rebecca Locker, Link-Up (Qld) researcher currently on maternity leave. All staff in the Brisbane LUQ office are excitedly looking forward to a visit from Daisy and her mum soon.



Link-Up (Qld) Researcher Rebecca Locker with her partner and baby Daisy



Daisy Jill Parry, born 7.08am, August 16 2020

COVID-19 update

The following information was taken from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (Qld) (ATSILS) website:

www.atsils.org.au and the

Australian Government

Department of Health Website:

www.health.gov.au

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV). A novel coronavirus (nCoV) is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a new coronavirus introduced to humans for the first time. It is spread from person to person mainly through the droplets produced when an infected person speaks, coughs or sneezes.

Symptoms

Symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild illness to pneumonia. Some people will recover easily, and others may get very sick very quickly.

People with coronavirus may experience:

- fever
- symptoms such as coughing, a sore throat and fatigue
- shortness of breath

Who is most at risk

In Australia, the people most at risk of getting the virus are:

- travellers who have recently been overseas
- those who have been in close contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19
- people in correctional and

detention facilities

- people in group residential settings

People who are, or are more likely to be, at higher risk of serious illness if they get the virus are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 50 years and older with one or more chronic medical conditions
- people 65 years and older with chronic medical conditions
- people 70 years and older
- people with compromised immune systems

Social Distancing

Social distancing in public means people:

- stay at home and only go out if it is absolutely essential
- keep 1.5 metres away from others
- avoid physical greetings such as handshaking, hugs and kisses
- use tap and go instead of cash
- travel at quiet times and avoid crowds
- avoid public gatherings and at risk groups like older people
- practise good hygiene

Protect Yourself and the Community

It is important we all play our part in preventing the spread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19). Queensland Health recommends 5 important ways we can all follow help stop the spread of viruses:

- Clean your hands regularly with soap and water or alcohol-based hand rubs.
- Cover your nose and mouth with

a tissue or bent elbow when coughing or sneezing.

- Avoid touching your face, nose, and mouth. And avoid shaking hands.
- Stay home if you are unwell.
- Avoid contact with anyone who is unwell – try to stay 1.5m away from anyone coughing or sneezing.

Potential ways you may contract the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) include:

- someone with the virus sneezes or coughs onto you
- someone with the virus coughed or sneezed onto a surface (like a door handle) that you touch, and you get the infected droplets on your hands and then transfer them to your mouth, nose or eyes when you touch your face or eat.

Remember: Looking after yourself by eating a healthy, balanced diet, getting regular physical activity, sleeping well and reducing stress is important all the time.

Keep Up to Date

As the impact of the virus in Queensland changes, advice will change, so it is important to get up-to-date advice from credible sources. We recommend following updates from:

Queensland Health:

www.health.qld.gov.au/coronavirus

Australian Department of Health:

www.health.gov.au/news/health-alerts/novel-coronavirus-2019-ncov-health-alert

World Health Organisation:

www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019





Always Was, Always Will Be.

8-15 NOV 2020

"Always Was, Always Will Be.

Always Was, Always Will Be. recognises that First Nations people have occupied and cared for this continent for over 65,000 years.

We are spiritually and culturally connected to this country.

This country was criss-crossed by generations of brilliant Nations.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were Australia's first explorers, first navigators, first engineers, first farmers, first botanists, first scientists, first diplomats, first astronomers and first artists.

Australia has the world's oldest oral stories. The First Peoples engraved the world's first maps, made the earliest paintings of ceremony and invented unique technologies. We built and engineered structures - structures on Earth - predating well-known sites such as the Egyptian Pyramids and Stonehenge.

Our adaptation and intimate knowledge of Country enabled us to endure climate change, catastrophic droughts and rising sea levels.

Always Was, Always Will Be. acknowledges that hundreds of Nations and our cultures covered this continent. All were managing the land - the biggest estate on earth - to sustainably provide for their future.

Through ingenious land management systems like fire stick farming we transformed the harshest habitable continent into a land of bounty.

NAIDOC Week 2020 acknowledges and celebrates that our nation's story didn't begin with documented European contact whether in 1770 or 1606 - with the arrival of the Dutch on the western coast of the Cape York Peninsula.

The very first footprints on this continent were those belonging to First Nations peoples.

Our coastal Nations watched and interacted with at least 36 contacts made by Europeans prior to 1770. Many of them resulting in the charting of the northern, western and southern coastlines - of our lands and our waters.

For us, this nation's story began at the dawn of time.

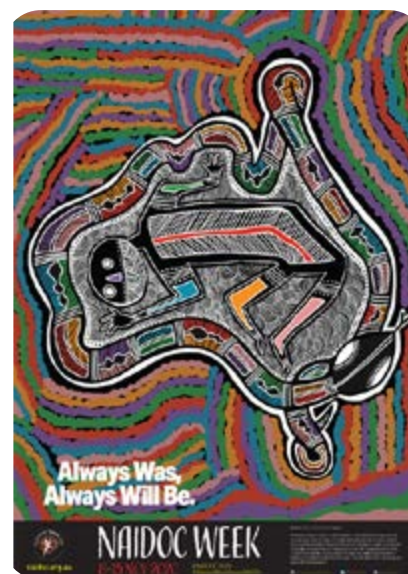
NAIDOC 2020 invites all Australians to embrace the true history of this country - a history

which dates back thousands of generations.

It's about seeing, hearing and learning the First Nations' 65,000+ year history of this country - which is Australian history. We want all Australians to celebrate that we have the oldest continuing cultures on the planet and to recognise that our sovereignty was never ceded.

Always Was, Always Will Be."

From <https://www.naidoc.org.au/get-involved/2020-theme>



2020 NAIDOC poster-
Tyrown Waigana 'Shape of Land'

National Redress Scheme

The National Redress Scheme is in response to the Royal Commission into Institutional responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

National Redress Scheme Line - 1800 737 377

The Scheme:

- acknowledges that many children were sexually abused in Australian institutions
- holds institutions accountable for this abuse, and
- helps people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse gain access to counselling, a direct personal response, and a Redress payment.

The Scheme started on 1 July 2018 and will run for 10 years.

The Australian Government wants as many people as possible to have access to the Scheme. Institutions must agree to join the Scheme so that they can provide redress to people who experienced child sexual abuse while in the care of their institution.

Institutions named in the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse or named in an application received by the Scheme must have provided a clear written statement setting out their intention to join the Scheme by no later than 30 June 2020.

Access to redress is based on where the abuse occurred and the institution responsible. Where you live now does not affect your ability to get access to the National Redress Scheme.

Second Anniversary Review

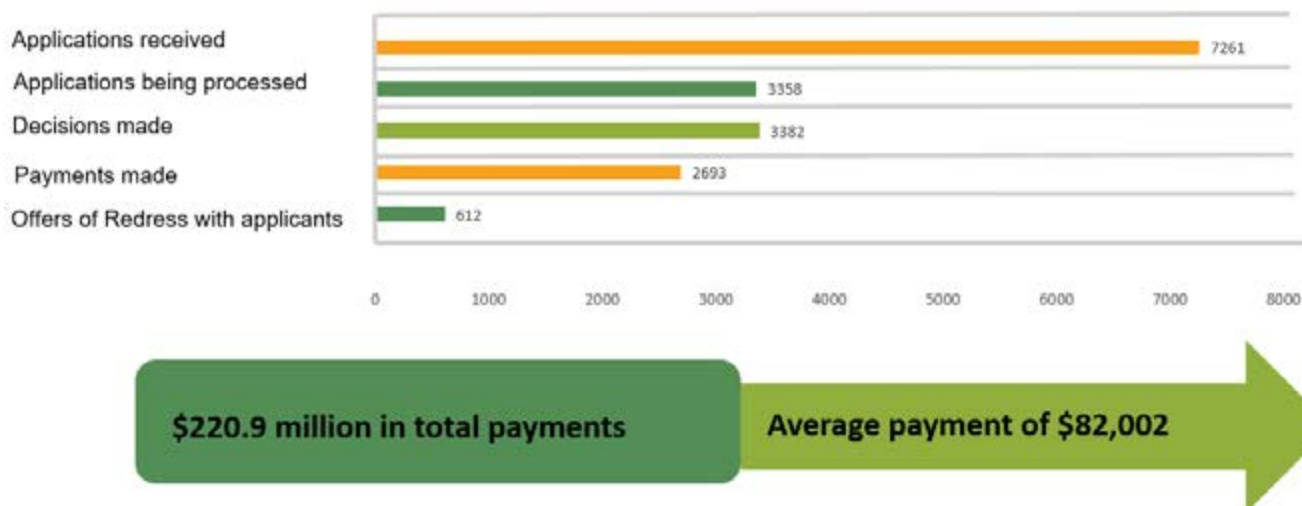
The Scheme was established on 1 July 2018. Following its second anniversary, an independent review is being conducted to consider how the Scheme is working for survivors and other stakeholders.

The review is wide-ranging and will consider the implementation and operation of the Scheme, how survivors experience the Scheme, access to Redress Support Services and to counselling and psychological care as well as financial arrangements.

An independent reviewer, Ms Robyn Kruk AO, is undertaking the review. Ms Kruk was the Independent Assessor of the Defence Abuse Response Taskforce and is currently the Chair of Mental Health Australia. In 2018, Ms Kruk was appointed as an Officer of the Order of Australia for distinguished service to public administration, including mental health reform.

The review is undertaking consultations from July 2020 until September 2020.

Application progress as at 26 June 2020



To help us improve the Scheme, we encourage survivors, advocates and other stakeholders to have their say in the review. It is critical that survivors are at the centre of the review and that the review captures what matters to them most.

You can provide feedback by making a submission and/or participating in a feedback study with pre-prepared questions. Information about how you can make a submission is available on the Scheme website: www.nationalredress.gov.au/about/second-anniversary-review.

The feedback study will open from August 2020 and we will provide further information about this on the Scheme website and an upcoming newsletter when available.

If you are experiencing emotions you are not coping with, the following services can be contacted 24 hours a day and seven days a week:

Beyond Blue:
1300 224 636

1800RESPECT:
1800 737 732

Men's Line Australia:
1300 789 978

Lifeline: 13 11 14

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467

For more information or to find support services, go to the National Redress Scheme website: <https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/> or call 1800 737 377 Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time), excluding public holidays.

Please feel free to speak with the Redress team at Link-Up (Qld) Anne Struckett-Redress Manager and the Redress Counsellor's Yvette Salam and Keiron Brown.

They are available 8am to 4pm – Monday to Friday by phoning (07) 3638 0411 or freecall 1800 200 855 or you can email contact@link-upqld.org.au.



The Redress Team at Link-Up (Qld): Redress Counsellors Yvette Salam, Keiron Brown and Redress Manager Anne Struckett

Staff Professional Development

Staff Professional Development remains a high priority at Link-Up (Qld). We currently have two staff members completing their Diploma of Counselling and another working hard on her Masters of Social Work.

Congratulations to Tahnee Rapson from our Cairns office who has recently finished her diploma and is now a fully qualified counsellor in health or community settings.

All Link-Up (Qld) staff have their current First Aid Training and CPR.

13 of Link-Up (Qld) staff completed four days of Marumali training® in August with Aunty Lorraine Peeters and her daughter Shaan, meaning that now all staff at Link-Up (Qld) have completed The Marumali Program® in 2020.

Marumali is a Gamilaroi word meaning 'to put back together'

and through this unique healing framework developed by Aunty Lorraine, staff were trained in how to support the healing of people who have survived being removed from their families.

We were all touched by her strength, warmth and generosity and gained much both personally and professionally from her unique learning program.



Link-Up (Qld) staff members from left to right: Tahnee Rapson, Christine Kanofski, Kerry Sandow, Keiron Brown, Yvette Salam, Mirko Soto, Aunty Lorraine Peeters (Marumali), Pat Thompson, Anne Struckett, Sandra Wortlethock, Joshua Williams, Tamara Maisema, Shaan Peeters (Marumali), Michelle Resuggan, Rebecca Oberle, Alison Bell.



Shaan and Aunty Lorraine from Marumali are presented with gifts and flowers by Anne Struckett and Joshua Williams

Staff Spotlight - Tamara Maisema

In our latest employee spotlight interview, we meet Tamara from our Brisbane office

Position: Research Officer

Team: Research (Brisbane)

Tell us about your role at LUQ?

My role here at Link-Up (Qld) is to carry out family history research where I write genealogical reports and prepare family trees using present and past historical record sources. The information contained in the reports is then used to assist with reunifying our Stolen Generations clients with family, community and country. It is a very rewarding role that I really enjoy. I feel truly privileged to be a part of the research component and team at Link-Up (Qld).

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy that I'm able to work in a position that combines two of my passions, family history research and the preservation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage.

I believe that knowing where you are from and where you are connected to is important for a person's healing and wellbeing. It is a privilege to assist Stolen Generation members and their families on this journey.

What is a common question you get asked?

Where am I from, who's my mob? I identify as a Buttagal (water) person of the Dharug (south river) and Darkinjung (north river) Tribes of the Hawkesbury River in NSW. This comes down through my paternal Grandfather.



What were you doing before you came to Link-Up (Qld)?

I worked as a Social and Emotional Wellbeing Project Coordinator at Gurring Yealamucka Health Service Aboriginal Corporation in Yarrabah, a resilient beautiful Community located about an hour out of Cairns. I really enjoyed my work in Yarrabah where I connected with Stolen Generation members and families in community to deliver SEWB support.

Three words to best describe you?

Dedicated
Caring
Determined

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Spending quality time with all my family and conducting family history research.

Favourite quote?

"Hope is the sublime courage of those who will not be defeated"

from the novel 'Hope' by Mary Ryan



From the Archives

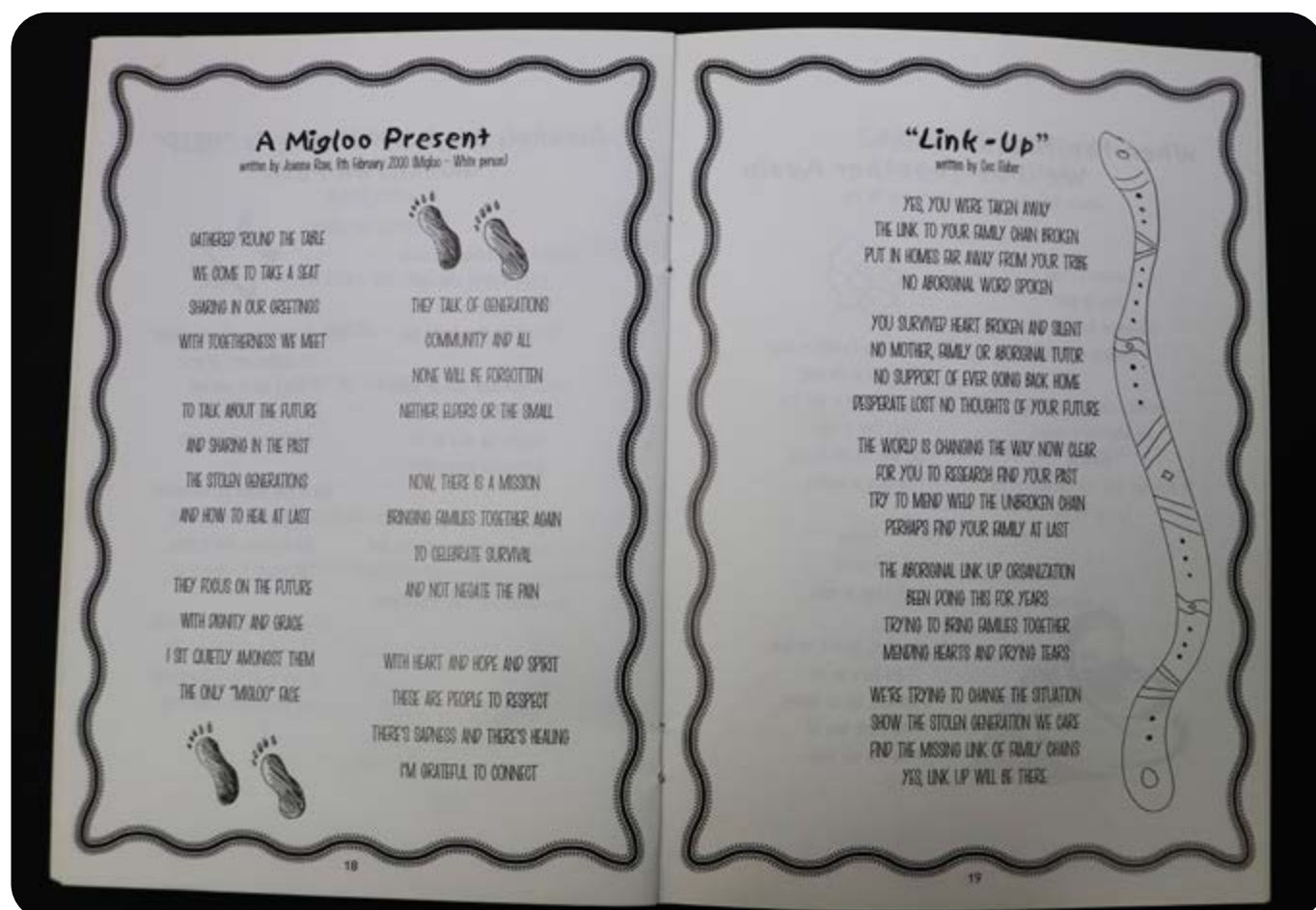
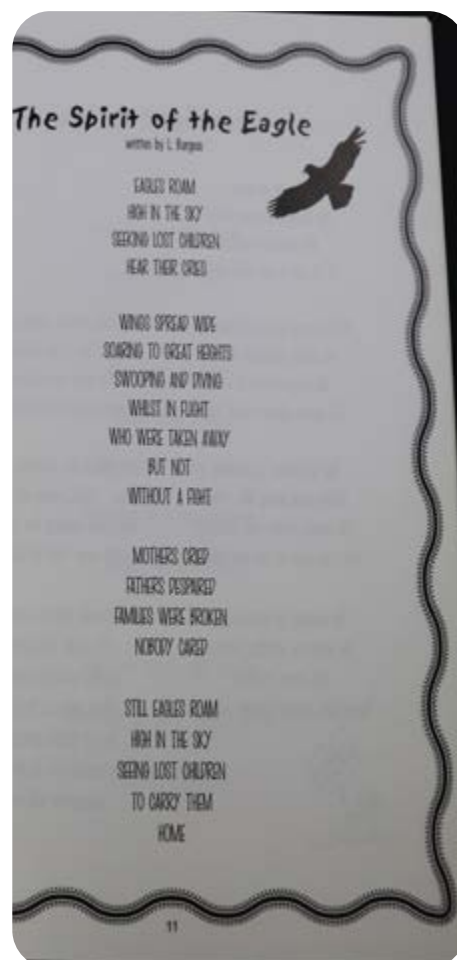
Link-Up (Qld) owns a small collection of books, reports, magazines and audio-visual material collated over time, since our beginnings in 1984.

Among the collection is a booklet of poems published by Link-Up (Qld) in 2000. The poems were written by past clients and staff as part of our client support group, and funding was provided by the Gaming Machine Community Benefit Fund, Queensland. The introduction to the booklet reads, "A good cry & a cuppa tea" and is dedicated to all the children and families who suffered from removal, fostering, adoption and institutionalisation.

The Link-Up (Qld) client support group is an ongoing initiative providing a platform for sharing, collaboration and healing amongst our clients.

Many of the poems contained in this special booklet are about identity, belonging and the unique journey that Link-Up clients experience when they are reunited with their family.

Three of the poems from the booklet are featured below.



Baby Photos -

Congratulations to our readers who guessed correctly who our staff members were in their younger years - a prize pack of Link-Up goodies will be heading out to you shortly. How many did you guess right?



Kerry Sandow
Administration Officer



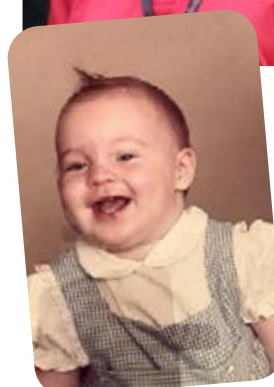
Joshua Thompson
Service Delivery Manager Cairns



Lauren Scheiwe
Research Officer



Ruth Loli
Research Manager



Rebecca Oberle
Executive Officer



Mirko Soto
Finance Manager

About Link-Up (Qld)

Our Mission

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) Offices

BRISBANE:
5 Reid Street, Woolloongabba, Qld 4102
PO Box 3229, South Brisbane, Qld 4101
Tel: (07) 3638 0411 Fax: (07) 3217 3458
Email: contact@link-upqld.org.au

Quick Facts

- 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

Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/linkupqueensland
or visit our website at www.link-upqld.org.au

Toll Free: 1800 200 855 from landlines

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