

# *National Link-Up News*

edition >32



# Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

A warm welcome and Happy New Year to you from sunny Adelaide! Thank you for picking up this edition of the National Link-Up newsletter. At the end of 2019, we had been hard at work assembling this newsletter and trying our best to capture the myriad activities of all the Link-Ups, including NAIDOC Week.

In addition, over the last 6 months, a significant number of events related to records access for Stolen Generations Survivors and their families have taken place, both here in South Australia and across the nation. This shift in the national response to records access for Survivors is reflective of the 1997 Bringing Them Home Report, which listed improving Survivors' access to records as a core recommendation for national healing.

In a way, this newsletter is also a record to which we all have access. It is open to everyone to read, to share their story, or even just to chat about over a cuppa. On behalf of the Link-Up SA team, I want to wish you a very restful and joyous beginning to the new year.

Emma Heidenreich  
*Community Engagement Officer at Link-Up SA*  
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## Kirby Reunion on Wilyakali Barkandji Country, Broken Hill

Since meeting her natural mother through an unassisted reunion process, Judith had a desire to go back to her grandmother's Country. She wanted to reconnect with family and community.

Judith came to Link-Up NSW to begin the search for her grandmother, a Wilyakali Barkandji Woman from Broken Hill, near the border between South Australia and New South Wales. So we tracked down some Mob and began planning.

Judith wanted to retrace the steps of her grandmother on Wilyakali Barkandji Country, as well as Poolamacca Station, where her family are from. The best way to get to Broken Hill was by plane, but Judith had a fear of flying. With a little help from our counsellor, Mary, Judith overcame her fear and we took the plane to Broken Hill!

Once we arrived, Judith felt at home. Link-Up staff could see how relaxed and peaceful she was. On the first day of the reunion, we took Judith to the dessert sculptures, where she could overlook her Country. The following day, we went to visit the Broken Hill Local Aboriginal Land Council, so that Judith could be inducted as a member and reconnect with community.

We then travelled to Mutawintji Local Aboriginal Land Council, where they told us about Ranger Leeroy Johnson. Leeroy would be able to show us some cultural sites in Mutawintji National Park. This was exciting news, as we were previously prohibited from visiting Poolamacca Station.

We ventured off to Mutawintji to see Leeroy. Finding the Rangers' house was like trying to spot a needle in a haystack! There was red dirt as far as the eye could see. We eventually found the little station where the Rangers lived and Leeroy, although he didn't expect us, came out to greet Judith and the Link-Up staff. We explained who we are and that we were taking our client back to Country.

Leeroy invited us into his home and offered us a cup of tea. He and Judith discussed their families, only to realise they were related! Leeroy pulled out a book on the family and Mutawintji Country, to show Judith that her grandmother was also in the book. Leeroy then gave us a Welcome to Country that was very moving and special for Judith and her daughter.

We said our goodbyes, but Leeroy invited Judith back for the Mutawintji hand-back celebration, which is commemorated each year by family and community, this would give Judith more opportunities to meet people that her grandmother knew. On our way back from Mutawintji to Broken Hill, Judith and her daughter stopped off to get some red dirt. We watched the sun set over the horizon as we drove back to town, Judith expressed how happy she was to have found her Mob.

Judith was at peace after her Return to Wilyakali Barkandji Country. She thanked Link-Up NSW for all our hard work and sent us a video, to show us how much her reunion had changed her life.



# Northern Territory

## An Update from the Congress Link-Up service in Alice Springs

The Congress Link-Up Service conducts promotional and informative discussions in remote Aboriginal communities throughout the Central Australian footprint area. In the past few months, our Service has travelled to Titjikala, Ntaria-Hermannsburg, Tjuwanpa, Injartnama, Engawala and Atitjere Communities, resulting in new clients now having a much needed Link-Up service.

This year, the Congress Link-Up service commemorated National Sorry Day by holding a community BBQ at the Telegraph Station, formerly known as 'The Bungalow'. Visitors to the event enjoyed a BBQ lunch connecting with each other. A local Stolen Generation Survivor gave a very moving and heartfelt speech about Sorry Day. The speech included the story of their own emotional journey – being a young child during the times of forced removal policies and the impact this had on their own parenting in the years that followed as an adult.



Attendees at a Community BBQ for Sorry Day, held at the Telegraph Station in Alice Springs

In late May 2019, the Congress Link-Up service supported a graveside reunion in Brunette Downs. Clients were given the chance to visit the graves of their grandmother and other family members who have passed. Congress Link-Up service staff and clients travelled by road to Brunette Downs, searching through dense bushland for the graveyards which were eventually found. While the sites were unkempt and overgrown, it was nice to discover there were painted shells surrounding them. Family and staff camped out under the stars and connected strongly with each other and Country over the few days.



The Brunette Downs reunion

The Congress Link-Up service also supported a large family reunion in Alice Springs with family who had travelled as far as Darwin, New South Wales and Victoria, to meet siblings and extended family of our client's late mother. The reunion was an unusually large event, and required the accommodation of a local club in which the family could stay.



The Alice Springs collaborative Reunion

In July 2019, the Central Aboriginal Congress Link-Up service worked in collaboration with Link-Up Victoria, to facilitate a reunion in Alice Springs. The three day reunion included a visit to the Alice Springs Telegraph Station, for a Welcome to Country and BBQ lunch, a cultural and sacred site tour with an Arrernte Elder, a visit to the Central Australian Aboriginal Healing centre 'Akeyulerre', where family enjoyed an interactive educational session with the Elders about Central Australian Arrernte traditional medicines and a trip to Angkerle Atwatye (Standley Chasm), in the West MacDonnell Ranges National Park.



Alice Springs reunion



# Northern Territory

## An Update from the Northern Territory Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation

Over the last few months, the Link-Up Team have been busy with further training, reunions, outreach, workshops and promotion of our Link-Up Service. Our Case Team have been working with our clients in family-tracing, reunions and post-reunion contact. We have also been part of the National Monitoring and Evaluation Plan with Link-Up services across the nation.

Our promotional tasks these last few months have been numerous. We have produced a promotional video about our Link-Up Service, attended multiple national workshops and meetings, and have visited a variety of remote communities to promote our service.

NTSGAC staff have also undertaken a variety of different trainings, such as the Training Advisory Reference Group for the Certificate IV in Stolen Generations Family History and Case Management. We also meet every six months with the Aboriginal Advisory Group of the NT Archives Service and the National Australian Archives. Staff have also participated in Trauma-Informed Care and Practice and Managing Vicarious Trauma, which has made it possible for our Case Team to work more effectively with our clients. It has been great to have a Counsellor in our team, as they are on hand if our clients need someone to talk to. She is also able to assist our Caseworkers on Reunions.



The Perkins Reunion

## The Carter Family Reunion

From 3-5 September, NTSGAC staff accompanied the Carter family – Tracey Carter and her siblings, Mathew and Sarah, to Alice Springs in a Link-Up Reunion, to re-connect with families from the Arrente/Arrunda clan.

The families were content to meet each other and happy when they greeted one another. The Carter family valued their time with their families in Alice Springs and each member was able to share stories with each other.

NTSGAC staff accompanied the Carter family to various relevant sites in Alice Springs, such as the Bungalow Mission, Jay Creek burial site and Hermannsburg Mission.

Throughout the reunion, the Carter family felt a very close connection to their heritage and families, and a belonging to Country. Their re-connection to families in Alice Springs was a positive, fulfilling experience and they felt a strong bond in connecting to their Arrente/Arrunda heritage, as well as a stronger, interpersonal connection to their Aboriginality and identity.

Contact details were shared amongst families for future family gatherings.



Tiwi Outreach, Melville Island



# Northern Territory, NTSGAC

## An Update from the CEO at NTSGAC, Maisie Austin

Since our last newsletter, we have sadly lost a number of our Northern Territory Stolen Generation peoples and family members – too many to name, but we again pass on our sincere condolences to all their families.



2nd National Forum on Child Protection, 2019

On their behalf and on behalf of our living Stolen Generation Survivors, our Board continues to advocate for compensation and reparation through correspondence and meetings with politicians.

On a happier note, we celebrated NAIDOC week with morning tea at the George Brown Botanical Gardens and attended a number of NAIDOC events, hosted and organised by the Top End NAIDOC Committee and Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation.

Our Chairperson, Ms Eileen Cummings, continues to give talks about the history of the Stolen Generations at schools, Charles Darwin University and other organisations. NTSGAC are also working on our own history book and educational packages, which will be completed in the first half of next year.

We are hopefully moving into a new office premises in Malak before Christmas. The refurbishment of the office space has been achievable through funding from the Chief Minister and the Northern Territory Government. The premises will be more spacious to allow us to hold activities, workshops and board meetings.



NAIDOC NTSGAC Morning Tea

NTSGAC also commemorated the 25th Anniversary of The Going Home Conference at The Italian Club, with lunch and entertainment by Mary G. We thank our major sponsors, The Healing Foundation and The Northern Territory Government, as well as our other sponsors, Ironbark Aboriginal Corporation, Yilli Housing, Aboriginal Medical Services Alliance Northern Territory, Larrakia Nation Aboriginal Corporation, Minister Eva Lawler, Member for Karama Ngaree Ah Kit and Member for Brennan Tony Sievers.



Netta



Mary G, Betty Raymond and Kathleen Mills



Attendees at the 25th Anniversary of the Going Home Conference



# Territory

## Perkins Reunion, July 2019

In July 2019, the Perkins Reunion was held at Charters Towers in regional Queensland. This reunion enabled Survivors of the Stolen Generations to have a graveside reunion with their deceased mother, who was buried at Charters Towers Cemetery in 1967. Three siblings attended the reunion, two brothers and one sister, all of whom were separated from each other. The fourth, and eldest sibling has since passed away, but throughout their enquiries, Caseworkers found that this Eldest sibling had enquired about their siblings prior to their passing. Three of the siblings were removed from Alice Springs and placed at Garden Point on the Tiwi Islands. The youngest sibling was adopted in Alice Springs.

Whilst conducting family-tracing, clients asked if their Caseworker could make enquiries about an Exhumation of their late mother to take her back to Country in Alice Springs. Costings were presented to several agencies to see if the exhumation could happen, but it didn't occur due to the costs involved. Through these discussions, the siblings agreed that they would like to have a graveside reunion. The Caseworker then organised the reunion to take place in Charters Towers in July 2019.

This was a time to reflect on their own experiences and be able to share what each of them had experienced, but also to spend time at the graveside with each other. The siblings purchased items to build and decorate their mother's grave for when they could visit the grave again. It was an honour to assist our clients on the graveside reunion.

***By Raelene Rosas, Caseworker and Rosetta Smith, Counsellor***





# Queensland

## 35 Years, 35 Stories

Please watch this space for our Book Launch later this year!

In celebration of Link-Up Queensland's 35th Year Anniversary we will be releasing a book titled 35 Years 35 Stories. The book will showcase and honour the history and legacy of Stolen Generations clients. The 35 stories are representative of the 35 years of service Link-Up Queensland have provided to community. These stories demonstrate the continued value we bring to our clients, their families and the wider community. The stories are from urban, rural and remote Queensland, some have connections to each other.

Storytelling has long played an important role as a cultural and therapeutic practice at Link-Up Queensland. Our clients are empowered by sharing their stories, which showcase their strength in the face of heart break. The pages of 35 Years 35 Stories are windows into the grief, pain and desolation of our clients yet the courage, hope and resilience that persists.

Link-Up Queensland staff are busy right now! We are seeking past and present reunion contacts, seeking permission to tell and write their stories; identifying 35 different kinds of stories; looking for great photographs; taking photographs; working with a Graphic Designer to design the book and printing of the Book.

Plans are also underway for a suitable Venue for the Book Launch in Brisbane, a suitable date to hold the launch, speakers and entertainment. Watch this space!



Ladies at the Link-Up Queensland 35th Year Anniversary enjoy the photobooth

## 35th Year Anniversary Gala

On Friday 24th May, Link-Up Queensland celebrated its 35th Year Anniversary with a Gala celebration at Brisbane City Hall. Over 300 people attended this event, to celebrate a significant milestone in Link-Up Queensland's history. The Gala was an opportunity to pause and reflect on 35 years of service to our community. Over these years, Link-Up Queensland have reached out and formed bonds with thousands of lives, reconnected people to their country and families and rebuilt communities.

More than 20 of our clients attended the Gala, with events including a Healing Camp Choir who performed a song which they produced over just a couple of days. Attendees also did workshops with Music Therapists, Getano Bann and Toni Allayalis. It was a wonderful way to start our celebration and our clients lead the way.

The celebration was also a testament to our hard working and dedicated staff, who all glammed up on the night and represented Link-Up Queensland in a very positive way – we are proud of all the we have achieved.



Welcome to Country for the Link-Up Queensland 35th Year Anniversary



Link-Up Queensland 35th Year Anniversary Gala



A Healing Camp Choir - Link-Up Queensland, 35th Year Anniversary



Link-Up Queensland Staff Members, Anne Garrett, Counsellor, and Kerry Sandow, Reception



# South Australia

## Keeping the Doors Open

### An event for the signing of Memorandums of Understanding between Nunkuwarrin Yunti's Link-Up SA Program and seven South Australian record-keeping agencies.

At noon on 24 July 2019, an air of anticipation settled in the Hetzel Lecture Theatre at the State Library of South Australia as the CEO of Nunkuwarrin Yunti SA Inc and staff from Link-Up SA joined key representatives from seven record-keeping agencies: State Records of SA, National Archives of Australia, Lutheran Archives, State Library of SA, Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, the South Australia Museum and Uniting Communities.

The purpose of their attendance was to sign Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), to officially recognise partnerships between Link-Up SA and the record-keeping agencies that provide assistance with access to records for survivors of the Stolen Generations. Some agencies signed revised and updated MOUs, others, including the South Australian Museum and Uniting Communities signed wholly new MOUs with Nunkuwarrin Yunti.

In 2017, the Healing Foundation reviewed the recommendations of the 1997 Bringing Them Home report. The report found that expediting the discovery and release of records was particularly significant for Stolen Generation Survivors. These MOUs are significant because they pave the way for better access to records for Stolen Generation Survivors who courageously take the step of becoming Link-Up clients. By signing these documents, agencies show that they recognise the particular needs of Link-Up clients and the caseworkers and researchers who work on their behalf.

Prioritising Stolen Generation client's access to records is essential, given the often complex removal stories that arise with clients who were transferred to multiple institutions or removed interstate.

These experiences mean that clients' records may be held in many places, under the control of multiple agencies. Developing and signing MOUs with record holders plays an essential role in overcoming such barriers.

'Locating, researching and accessing records related to each client's removal from their family is an essential part of the process of re-connecting people to their past', says Vicki Holmes, CEO of Nunkuwarrin Yunti SA Inc. 'We need to nurture and strengthen the relationships we have created with record holders to guarantee the best outcomes for our clients'.

'To have these MOUs signed and re-signed in time for the 20th anniversary of the Link-Up SA Program in 2020 is significant. It means that the doors to records will be kept open and maybe even pushed further open or entirely removed', says Karen.

*By Emma Heidenreich and Karen George*

### WHAT IS A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING?

MOUs play a vital role in the process of identifying and accessing records to trace and reunify families who were separated under past policies of Australian Governments. 'An MOU is a formal agreement between two parties – in our case between the Link-Up SA Program of Nunkuwarrin Yunti and a number of record-keeping agencies', says Karen. 'The MOUs provide faster, better and more sensitive responses to our requests for assistance. They also have written in to them the sharing of information and training between agencies. So Link-Up can come in and do presentations about our work to agency staff and vice-versa'.





# South Australia

## Social and Emotional Wellbeing Services Roll Out in the Mid-North and Yorke Region



Sharon Varcoe and Katie Southern are Nunkuwarn Yunti's newest Social and Emotional Wellbeing Workers, based in the Mid-North and Yorke Peninsula

In April 2019, Nunkuwarn Yunti Social and Emotional Wellbeing staff held a number of consultations with Community in the Mid-North and Yorke region. The consultations' key finding was that local people felt there was a lack of effective outreach or Social and Emotional Wellbeing services in the region, especially on the Yorke Peninsula. As a result, Nunkuwarn Yunti's Social and Emotional Wellbeing team were funded to set up a new regional office in Moonta, to service the region and provide Community with the same services frequently accessed by people in Adelaide.

The following interview introduces two new Social and Emotional Wellbeing workers who have joined Nunkuwarn Yunti and are based in the Mid-North and Yorke Region. We ask them what it means to be pioneering such an important service in the region, what inspired them to do so and what they aim to achieve as a team working in regional South Australia.

### What are your formal role titles and where did you work before joining Nunkuwarn Yunti?

**Katie:** "I am employed by Nunkuwarn Yunti as a Social and Emotional Wellbeing Counsellor. I have spent the majority of my career across an array of community-orientated government roles. In 2012, I accepted a state government role based in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands and have since known I wanted a long-term career in Aboriginal settings."

**Sharon:** "I am a proud Narungga woman and have family connections to Nukunu people. I am employed by Nunkuwarn Yunti as a Social and Emotional Wellbeing Worker and am presently undertaking a Diploma of Narrative Therapy. I previously worked as an enrolled nurse, providing disability and mental health support services, and with Elders delivering domestic and social support. I also have experience working with youth, and spent a number of years as an Aboriginal Education Worker."

### What made you want to work for Nunk and in this field specifically, and what does it mean to you?

**Katie:** "I wanted to work for an Aboriginal organisation because Aboriginal people know who they are and what they need. I want to uphold that. I sought an Aboriginal-led workplace to know with certainty that Aboriginal expertise is being valued, and to ensure that my work is relevant and culturally safe. I especially wanted to work for Nunk given their reputation for providing excellent health care while celebrating Aboriginal diversity and brilliance."

**Sharon:** "I have always wanted to work with Nunk. It was the ultimate goal for me because to work with Nunk is to work with a preeminent Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation. When the position was advertised, I thought "perfect!", because it is a way for me to give back to my Community in Narungga Country. I also really value my clients and have a deep sense of empathy and compassion for people."

### What do you hope to achieve together as a team?

We seek to provide optimum mental health support and casework to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community residing throughout the Mid-North and Yorke Peninsula in South Australia. We aim to connect with people who previously may not have been able to access services like ours. We also seek to build robust relationships and partnerships with existing service providers in the Mid-North and Yorke area, to best support our clients.

Katie and Sharon each work four days per week and ensure that the service operates Monday - Friday between 9.00am - 5.00pm. They offer Social & Emotional Wellbeing counselling and casework services, support clients accessing Link-Up and Redress, and facilitate group activities. Katie divides her time between the Mid-North and Yorke Peninsula, and Sharon is based in the Yorke Peninsula. Both Sharon and Katie can provide outreach by arrangement throughout the region.

### Mid North and Yorke Social and Emotional Wellbeing

52a George Street, Moonta, South Australia

Katie mobile: 0429 896 631

Sharon mobile: 0455 674 380



# Australia

## Nunkuwarrin Yunti Family Fun Day, October 10

Link-Up SA is just one of the many services offered by Nunkuwarrin Yunti SA Inc. On October 10, Link-Up SA participated in Nunkuwarrin Yunti's annual Family Fun Day, set in beautiful Whitmore Square in the heart of Adelaide on a warm, sunny day. 'Our timing for the event is usually the spring school holidays to enable families and friends the opportunity to spend time together as well as with others from the Community', said Nunkuwarrin Yunti's Marketing and Communications Officer, the key organiser of the event.

The event included a diverse range of stalls, events and activities, attracting some 600 attendees. Stalls showcased the large variety of health services delivered to the community by Nunkuwarrin Yunti, such as primary health care, social and emotional wellbeing and maternal and child health. Nunkuwarrin Yunti's Community Health Promotion and education unit had a tobacco photo booth. There was also a Men's and Women's hairdressing booth, a weaving activity by Southern Elders Weaving Group and a large array of children's amusements, including a climbing wall, bouncy castle, football kicking challenge, Indigenous farm animals and a large bubble maker, which proved very popular for under-10s.

The Family Fun Day also featured live musical performances, including a choir performance from the Deadly Nanas, music from

renowned singer-songwriters, Eddie Peters and Nathan May and a young, local singer, Caitlyn Walker, whose sweetness and purity of voice filled the space as people looked on.

2019 also marks the International Year of Indigenous Languages. As such, much of the entertainment and events on the day focused on, and featured, Kurna and Ngarrindjeri language, as well as Kalau Lagau Ya from the Torres Strait Islands and Wiradjuri language from New South Wales. Link-Up SA made their appearance with a special puppet play, based on the story 'A' is for 'Aunty', by Elaine Russell. The story tells of Elaine's memories growing up on Murrin Bridge Mission, with each memory coordinated with a letter of the alphabet. The little ones gathered and watched, totally mesmerised by the characters and sound effects. Link-Up SA also had a number of people attend Aunty Janice Rigny's weaving table, during which many meaningful conversations about connection and family were had.

As a member of staff, it is always special to be reminded of the vital role that Nunkuwarrin Yunti and Link-Up SA specifically, play in the Community.

**By Emma Heidenreich**



The Puppet Play Cast, from left - Emma, Dell, Christy, Toby, Tanya and Rose





Our Managing Accountant, Robyn Sherry, gives out prizes



The Main Street at Port Pirie, where Nunkuwarrin Yunti's new Social and Emotional Wellbeing Services are available



Our team of dedicated health professionals - Dr. Melissa, Dr. Alexandra, Dr. David



Aunty Belinda, one of our Social Health Caseworkers, does a Healing Activity



Vicki Holmes, CEO of Nunkuwarrin Yunti, opens the Family Fun Day with a welcome to all Community



Activities included Butterfly Stilt Entertainers



The large bubble maker proved very popular with the young ones!



### An Update from Our Deadly Team

The beginning of the 2019/20 year saw us farewell our much-loved team member, Angela Swindle. Angela started working in the Link-Up Victoria program as a caseworker some 14 years ago. Over this time, she has developed a wealth of knowledge and expertise in the Aboriginal family research and tracing field. Angela went on to become our Team Leader, a position she held with great compassion and support for clients and staff alike for some 10 years. We wish Angela well with her new role in Aboriginal Education.

Current staff are:

Program Manager	Bev Murray
Records and Administration Officer	Jebrina Close
Reunions Officer	Angela North
Reunions Officer	Anita Singh
Client Support Officer	Ricky Baxter
Client Support Officer	Narelle Carter
Client Support Officer	Terence Creek

### Review of Client Files

Given that this is the last year of our current 3-year funding agreement, a basic review of applications and current client files was conducted. This review produced some interesting results that will require further analysis and discussion within VACCA, to determine the best way forward in meeting changing needs of our client group. We already know that our client group is ageing and have increasing health and wellbeing issues, which means we need to continually assess the way we provide services, activities and events.

### Stolen Generations Marker Project

VACCA began partaking in this project some 5 years ago. The Stolen Generations Marker Project required VACCA to contact a number of selected councils within the Melbourne area and assist with their development of a Stolen Generations marker, one that acknowledges the experiences of the Stolen Generations. So far, Link-Up Victoria has worked with the City of Darebin and the City of Yarra. Over the next year, we will be working with the City of Hume on their Stolen Generations marker. It is hoped that the City of Melbourne will be the next council to start working on their Stolen Generations marker, as well as other councils in more regional and remote areas, where there is a significant Aboriginal population.

### Supporting the Voice of the Stolen Generations

At Link-Up Victoria, the voice of the Stolen Generations will always be an important goal of our program. For the 2019/20 year, we intend to stage at least two exhibitions that will tell give voice to Stolen Generation stories through mixed media. Link-Up Victoria has a great collection of artworks produced by Stolen Generations, combined with the films we have created of clients talking about their experiences and resources leftover from our very first exhibition. We believe these two new exhibitions will provide a learning opportunity for a variety of audiences.



## Our Reunions

This is the story of one of the reunions VACCA has recently facilitated. It is was a highlight for our team, because it is a provided a wonderful example of how even the small things we do for our clients and their family can be more significant to their healing journey than we realize.

We were approached by a young man a number of years ago who had been adopted. He wanted to find his birth mother who had also experienced removal. Unfortunately, by the time we were able to find out who the birth mother was, she had passed away. Of course, this news was very hard for the young man to take. He needed time to grieve, so he withdrew from our service for a long time. During this time, we continued our research on the young man's mother and found that he had sisters, some of whom had been in care as well. We made contact with each of them and talked about how we could bring them all together. The family suffered a lot of trauma throughout their young lives and the loss of their mother compounded their trauma even more. Although every effort was made to try and bring the family together, life events cropped up for each of them at different times that prevented a family reunion from happening.

We let the family know we were there for them anytime they wanted and waited for them to contact us when they were ready. As with many of our clients, however, they never seemed to find the right time for all of them to meet. Life was just too hard for each of them. Then, out of the blue, the young man contacted us again last year. We decided that we would proceed with a graveside reunion at his birth mother's resting place, with the hope that at least one of his siblings would be involved too. The alternative was to continue to wait, but we felt this was not a good option for our client, life for him was still a struggle. Prior to the reunion, we consulted with our client and the family about the wording for a small plaque to mark the resting place of their mother. Upon reflection, this was probably the first time all the siblings had been involved in a joint family activity that, although sad, became very special to all of them, because they worked together to create a lasting and beautiful plaque honouring their mother. The graveside reunion was held and one of the sisters attended. Although a small reunion, it provided healing for our client, his sister and to all the family too. It helped to cement bonds between them that had been ripped apart so many years earlier.

## 2019/20 Year

The remainder of the 2019 year will be a very busy time for us, as we continue to plan and organise reunions, complete family research, address the many queries we receive for family research advice and assistance, assess new applications for eligibility, participate in important networks and meetings, workshops and complete projects. This will also be a time for us to discuss our plans for the first six months of the 2020 year, the busiest time of year for us all.





# Western Australia, KSGAC

## Biddy Trust's Back to Country Reunion

A wonderful Return to Country reunion, held in the East Kimberley, saw more than 150 people gather at Wuggubun, to celebrate the 90th birthday of Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation member, Biddy Trust.

Many Stolen Generation Survivors and their descendants came together for several days to be with Biddy and her family. Most were amazed that Biddy, despite her age, stayed up to the wee hours of the morning to talk with family and friends.

KSGAC helped people living in the West Kimberley with transportation and accommodation. A bus of excited members and carers travelled more than 1000 kilometres to get to the small community of Wuggubun, not far from Kununurra.

'The community of Wuggubun is strong. The time spent there was full of stories and laughter, dancing and good food. Our members were given accommodation at Wuggubun and we are very grateful for the chance to spend time with Biddy and her extended family,' says Chairman Dr Mark Bin Bakar.

'Biddy is an Elder and we were honoured to be with this beautiful welcoming person who has so much kindness for everyone... People like Biddy show us what peace there is in being in the bush, to live a good life and a full one with her family,' says Dr Bin Bakar. 'It was so good to see Biddy's family surrounding her and many people who are connected right across the Kimberley to her,' he says.

'Back to Country Reunions are vital to Stolen Generation people's wellbeing,' says Dr Bin Bakar. 'It's never to be underestimated the strength that people gain as they travel back to Country to see people and family,' he says.

The KSGAC bus stopped several times so members could take in Country and also visit loved ones graves along the way. During the reunion, members also made it to Wyndham, to sit with other Stolen Generation Survivors. Not a precious moment was wasted.



Biddy Trust Surrounded by Family for her 90th Birthday



Biddy Trust's Back to Country Reunion, First Generation and Family



The Group at Biddy Trust's Back to Country Reunion



# Western Australia, KSGAC

## Mental Health Day Gathering Brings the Broome Community Together

In October, 100 people came together for the Mental Health Day community event held at Centacare in Broome. An enjoyable breakfast, barbeque and a host of other activities occurred in a joint effort to promote mental health.

The event organised by the Broome Mental Health Advisory Committee took a month of planning through a host of services including the Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation.

During the event, a stall manned by KSGAC a colouring-in competition promoted awareness and acknowledgement of the Stolen Generation people. The activity centred on the Stolen Generation Native Hibiscus, the national symbol of a flower that represents continued strength and resilience by the people removed from Country, language, culture and family.

‘The colouring in competition was awesome. We had our members and other people who enjoyed the activity and were relaxed. There were open mic sessions, music including drumbeat and all of the effort made by the Broome Mental Health Day advisory committee showed a joint approach to helping each other,’ says KSGAC Senior Redress Officer, Kirk Coffin, ‘it was a great day for all.’

‘To see the little kids colouring-in and sitting beside the old people was really lovely – that was a highlight for me. When the little kids won prizes they were so excited,’ says KSGAC Groundsman, Will Pollock, who was instrumental in running the stall.

KSGAC would like to thank their hosts, Centacare, the Broome Mental Health Advisory and the Western Australian Association for Mental Health, for their support.



KSGAC Stall at the Broome Mental health Event

## Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation Commemorates Blue Knot Day

On October 28, The Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation recognised Blue Knot Day through Healing Art activities with members and friends.

The annual Blue Knot Day acknowledges and raise awareness for adult survivors of childhood trauma and abuse. It encourages those effected to seek help and support.

On the day, the KSGAC laid their blue knot on the grounds for passers-by as a symbol of respect.

During the fortnightly Healing Art Group, participants selected hats to decorate a variety of blue materials, including ribbons, broaches, bows and flowers. The activity was a success, participants said they felt safe and happy during the activity. People enjoyed a relaxing lunch before heading off in their new, bright blue hats.

The KSGAC service offers Redress application support for people effected by Institutionalised Child Sexual Abuse in Broome, Bidyadanga and Dampier Peninsula. To request assistance, please contact (08) 9193 6502, or feel free to come and visit us at 28 Barker Street, 6725.

For more information on supports available, please contact the Blue Knot Foundation Helpline 1300 657 380



Blue Knot Day, October 2019



# Australia

## Growing Awareness through Community Education

One of the key roles of the KSGAC is to create greater awareness, of education and to celebrate and respect the Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal people, their Elders and the descendants to come. Each year, KSGAC conducts a number of education sessions with schools. These education sessions range from primary to university level and aim to help students understand the effects of Government policies that were a catalyst for child removal and the ongoing trauma experienced in Aboriginal families as a result.

In June, KSGAC held 7 education sessions at the KSGAC office and surrounding schools. During sessions, KSGAC utilises The Healing Foundation's new Stolen Generations Resource Kit for Teachers and Students. The students also heard several Kimberley First Stolen Generation digital recordings. Healing Foundation Education Kits are used in schools throughout Australia, from Reception to Year 9.

Victorian youth and University of Notre Dame medical students also had the opportunity to meet face-to-face with KSGAC staff and members. Other schools and universities that welcomed KSGAC to speak included Derby Hold Rosary School, Beagle Bay Sacred Heart

School, Xavier College, Broome Senior High School and the University of Notre Dame. Each contacted the KSGAC in relation to their personal and curriculum studies around significant days such as National Sorry Day, Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC.

The students also participated in Healing Art Activities such as card affirmations, bath bombs or Protective Behaviour Magic Hands, which proved popular and provided the Stolen Generation members and students a chance to come together. Through these yarning circles, principles of Healing are applied and the Magic Hands give teachers and youth the opportunity to name support people on their art hands.

For the KSGAC NAIDOC event, the Magic Hands were placed on sticks to form a sea of purple hands during NAIDOC. We encourage other Kimberley schools to contact the KSGAC to arrange an education session.

More information on the Healing Foundation kit is available here: <https://healingfoundation.org.au/schools/>





# Western Australia, KSGAC



Derby Holy Rosary Shool - Protective Behaviours Magic Hands

## Pauline McKenzie wins Kullari Voice, Treaty, Truth Award

The Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation's Link-Up Team Leader, Pauline McKenzie, has received a prestigious Kullari Voice, Treaty, Truth Award, for NAIDOC 2019.

Pauline received the Honour for her dedication to locating and reuniting Stolen Generation Survivors, both alive and passed, with their families.

'I never thought I would be nominated or receive a NAIDOC Award. I have always wanted one, never thought I would get one, but now I have. I am so surprised,' she laughs.

Pauline received the award with humility and grace, as her daughter Melanie and many other friends cheered her on.

KSGAC truly appreciates Pauline's leadership. As Dr Mark Bin Bakar explains, 'Pauline demonstrates integrity and through her diligence with the data entry project has located a number of Stolen Generation Survivors buried in unmarked graves,' he says.

'Pauline is a courageous, Second Stolen Generation person. Pauline's mother was taken away as a child from her family. Pauline's level of understanding of Stolen Generation people's experiences is very deep and we are very glad she works with us here,' he says.

Pauline has previously worked for the University of Notre Dame and at the Sisters of St. John of God Heritage Centre in Broome.



KSGAC Vice Chair Greg Tait speaks with Notre Dame Students



NAIDOC Award-Winner, Pauline McKenzie (left) with the University of Notre Dame's Maria Morgan, accepts her NAIDOC award for her commitment to Stolen Generation Survivors



# Australia

## Ashfield Family Day to celebrate NAIDOC 2019



Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Ken Wyatt and Yorgum Link-Up Acting Manager, Cheryl Augustsson with the Feedback Tree at the Ashfield Family Day

On 11 July, the Yorgum Aboriginal Corporation in Western Australia participated in a variety of activities to celebrate the annual NAIDOC week. In coming together and engaging with the community, we celebrated our rich and diverse Culture – we celebrated what it means to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders'. Over 1,000 people attended this significant celebration.

This year, Yorgum held a stall at Ashfield, Bassendean. We promoted our services through promotional bags, Family History Packs and basic family tree sheets.

Members of the public were also invited to share their thoughts on this year's NAIDOC Theme: Voice, Treaty, Truth. The public were engaged and invited to put pen to paper on a large poster sharing their thoughts on the NAIDOC theme – all comments expressed are valued and important.

A large, funky and unique poster with an Aboriginal themed tree, captured many comments and thoughts. The two posters, which are filled with empowered comments from community, sit framed at Yorgum Head Office and the Link-Up Office in East Perth. Staff even managed to engage Ken Wyatt, the Federal Minister for Indigenous Affairs, to share his thoughts on one of the posters.

'Many voices at all levels – they need to be heard', he said.

Members from a vast mix of the community and general public visited our stall. It was refreshing to see not only Aboriginal people, but also members from other countries, young and old, keen to listen and learn about The Stolen Generations. Staff were able to engage with and share information about, Yorgum and the Healing work we deliver to the community and Stolen Generation Survivors. Overall, feedback from the event was positive, and many people complimented staff on this work. Caseworkers, Bringing Them Home Counsellors, Team Leaders and Clinical Counsellors, Redress Counsellors, Researchers and Administration Staff were all in attendance on the day.

The outcome of the day was extremely positive, the Yorgum Tree Activity was particularly popular and engaged the community well. It offered them an opportunity to voice their opinion about this year's NAIDOC Theme – VOICE, TREATY, TRUTH, whilst sharing information on the important work Yorgum continues to deliver, in Healing the Trauma of the Stolen Generations.



**VOICE  
TREATY  
TRUTH**  
07 - 14  
JULY 2019  
Let's work together for a shared future.

Thank you for  
Welcoming Me to your home

Yorgum

ABORIGINAL  
CORPORATION



# Western Australia, Yorgum

## NAIDOC Luncheon for Stolen Generation Survivors in Kalgoorlie, WA

As part of the NAIDOC Celebrations in July 2019, Kalgoorlie Link-Up worked in conjunction with Hope Kalgoorlie, to organise an Elders Luncheon. The Luncheon was held at the newly opened Ray Finlayson Sporting Complex and is the third year that Kalgoorlie Link-Up have supported this important event. In the past, special guests attended and local bands were invited to play music. Through experience, however, Kalgoorlie Link-Up have learned that our Elders do not necessarily need or want all this fuss. Instead, they prefer to listen to old songs they can relate to and just to sit, talk and engage with other Elders.

The majority of the Elders who attend are Survivors of the Stolen Generations. They find this luncheon to be of great benefit to them, because many live on their own and are heavily reliant on other community members and Elders, to sit with them and just talk or listen to their stories. On most occasions, many don't get any visitors at all, so we tend to try and seat them together so they can exchange details and continue to visit one another once the Luncheon has finished.

The Luncheon as a whole was a success. We had Mr. Aubrey Lynch say a few words about Kalgoorlie Link-Up, Hope Kalgoorlie and Mineral Resources. We are looking forward to providing support to the NAIDOC Luncheon next year. We are continually aware of how time flies – some of our Elders have since passed away, so the Luncheon has become a celebration of their lives and of their Survival through removal.



Aubrey Lynch, Janine Evans, Lorraine Griffiths, Richard Evans and Sandra Evans at the Elders Luncheon



Raelene Cooper, Faye Schroeder, Ian Tucker, Helena Ashwin and Janine Evans at the Elders Luncheon



Gerald Zaro, Brian Champion Snr, Richard Evans and Sandra Evans at the Elders Luncheon



## Preserving the Past for Future Generations

From 13-14 August, the Healing Foundation held the first in a series of national forums in Perth.

Attendees included Yorgum Link-Up Researchers, Kimberley Stolen Generations' Researchers, Yokai, the Uniting Church, the State Library of Western Australia, the State Records Office, the Aboriginal History Research Services of the Department of Local Government, the Department of Local Government, Sports and Cultural Industries and various government and record-keeping agencies from around the state.

The aim of the forum was to discuss the importance of improving access to Stolen Generations Survivor's archives and records. The forum also touched on how government and church archives can work with programs, such as Link-Up, to deliver a culturally safe and secure service for our Elders, their descendants and to our community.

These state-based forums rose from the Healing Foundation Knowledge Circles that were held last year in Canberra. It is exciting to see Aboriginal grassroots programs, government and church agencies, coming together to develop a better way of working together. Other forums are expected to be held around the nation in the near future.

The importance of discussion around the records of the Stolen Generations is paramount to posterity, it ensures the security of the future generations and their access to the past. In addition, being able to access one's records assists in the Healing of our people, strengthens our cultural identity and bears witness to the resilience we as Aboriginal people hold.

By Casey Petersen, Senior Researcher at Yorgum Link-Up

## The Marjorie Winmar Reunion, July 2019

Aunty Marjorie was born in 1943. At five-years-old, she was placed in Carnarvon Mission and subsequently discharged to Wandering Mission, over 1,000 kilometres from her Country.

As a First Stolen Generation Survivor, Aunty suffered the adverse impacts of past policies, both emotionally and physically, but this has not dimmed her courageous spirit. Her tenacity and her reputation proceeds her.

Aunty is on dialysis, with long-term health problems. This has prevented her from being able to travel, so her family, Patricia, Brenda, Val and Irma, were invited to join her in Carnarvon. Yorgum Link-Up staff members travelled 893 kilometres to be with the family and provide support through the reunion. After settling into the hotel, the group decided to go into town for lunch. We had not planned to see Aunty until late afternoon, but to everyone's surprise and delight, Aunty roared towards us in her buggy straight from the hospital bed. She was wearing a huge grin, her signature beany and light padded jacket. Her infectious smile and enthusiasm for life and love for family set the pace for the following four days. Marjorie has been a pleasure to work with, despite the suffering and loss she has experienced, she remains happy, and never complains.

Aunty Marjorie and family were able to reconnect and to begin the healing process, Marjorie also shared a lot of local wisdom from the past. The reunion included hours of yarning and sharing memories of loved ones past and present: the tears, the joy and the laughter healed the mind, body and spirit.

Throughout the week-long reunion and with the assistance of Carnarvon, there were a number of events we all attended. One such event, a highlight for all of us, was the memorial statue of a woman and child pointing towards Burnie Island. One of the women spoke in Language and given respect to people from the past, present and future.

Thank you Aunty Marjorie for your knowledge and wisdom that you have shared with us all. It was an honour for Yorgum Link-Up Service to deliver the Marjorie Winmar Family Reunion.

***By Jane BinSaad, Leanne Jones and Pippa Young***



# Western Australia, Yorgum

## Yorgum Link-Up Planning Week - June, 2019

Each year, Yorgum Link-Up staff, including the two Regional Offices and Perth, come together to plan for all events and happenings in the following year, including Reunions, regional visits and Healing Camps. The purpose of the planning week is to discuss potential clients for Reunions, prioritize those Survivors of the Stolen Generations who are requesting a service, share knowledge and information, attend specific training, and map the work which is to be undertaken for the coming year. This week includes training, special events, such as NAIDOC, targeted events for Survivors of the Stolen Generations and other healing events.

The planning week was held at Burswood on The Swan, just near the Swan River or the Derbarl Yerrigan. This venue and time was chosen because of its significance to the Whadjuk Nyoongar and the season of Makuru, which is one of the six seasons of the Nyoongar calendar.

All staff worked together to organize this important planning day event. This was important, as the plans we make for the coming year involve and impact all staff. Staff were asked to bring their caseload, including the case histories of their clients. The team then worked to prioritize these files and map them on the calendar. This is a great opportunity to share and discuss clients with other staff members and for all to become informed and familiar with the

context in which each other is working. Careful and timely planning with Counsellors and Case Workers is essential for all reunions, to prevent burn out and to take into consideration the subtleties of each individual case.

The week also included team-building training for staff, which was provided by Bodo Frost from Project Reboot. The training covered the following topics:

- Revisiting the Yorgum values
- Team functions
- Team Roles and;
- The stages of case-development eg: Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing.

The team-building training was met with enthusiasm from the staff. All feel that team-building training should be undertaken in the future.

The Yorgum Link-Up now have a strong and unified vision for the year ahead.

***By Colleen Wheelock, Team Leader at Yorgum Link-Up***



The Yorgum Link-Up Team at the Annual Planning Week, 2019



# Canberra, AIATSIS

## AIATSIS Family History Unit - Canberra

The Family History Unit of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS), is on hand to provide support to Link-Up services across Australia. The unit can help when Link Ups seek assistance for additional research and require access to archival material from national agencies in Canberra. These agencies exist for the storage and protection of other collections in Australia, as well as the AIATSIS collection. They play a vital role in the work of tracing and reunifying Survivors and family members of the Stolen Generations.

AIATSIS also provide guidance to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples seeking to do family history research. Our website contains help sheets to get you started on your journey. The unit holds the world's largest collection dedicated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories. You can search the AIATSIS Mura catalogue to check if there is any material relating to your Country, language groups and family. There may also be information about family indexed in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Biographical Index, or in personal stories published from the time of missions and reserves.

We have updated our Link-Up only site and continue to include new, up-to-date and relevant information and resources to help caseworkers with their clients' family history research. Some of our recent additions include: the Tardun School Records finding aid, Genealogies of Families in Willowra NT names' list and Murrin Bridge NSW Cemetery Records.

Some material that is also easily available on the AIATSIS webpage, and may be useful for family history research are: the old mission newsletters, Dawn and New Dawn magazines, Indigenous Australians at War and Koorie Mail newspapers. These can be found at: <https://aiatsis.gov.au/collections/collections-online>

If you do find something in the AIATSIS Mura catalogue you would like to see, please send a request through and the helpful Family History Team will assist you.

## First Nations Senior Consultative Circle AIATSIS Visit, June 2019

In June 2019, the First Nations Senior Consultative Circle from Wodonga and North East Victoria, visited AIATSIS. The First Nations Senior Consultative Circle was formed as an independent group and work with departments and community agencies so they can utilise the skills and knowledge of the group to support community development, self-determination, harmony and social gathering. Elders have expressed the need to support each other and the community, to facilitate healing and bring a positive future for all Aboriginal people living in the community and surrounding areas. The members of First Nations Senior Consultative Circle each have a diverse background and bring a wealth of knowledge, lived wisdom and life experience to the table.

AIATSIS Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Gamilaroi man Michael Ramalli, welcomed the group to AIATSIS. During their visit to AIATSIS, members conducted family history research on their ancestors and searched the AIATSIS collection for material related to their families and country. Many items were found of great relevance, providing some with information previously unknown until their visit. The members who attended all had different stories and knowledge of their mob and Country including Wiradjuri, Gunai Kurni, Pyemairrener, Makindji and Wamba Wamba. The AIATSIS Indigenous Caucus members joined them for lunch, where stories were shared, many laughs had and connections made. The group finished up late in the day and expressed their keen interest in making this an annual event - perhaps in the warmer months so the more elderly members could join them in Canberra. The Family History team were delighted to host the group and will warmly welcome them back to AIATSIS anytime.



AIATSIS Family History Unit Team from left - Grace Price, Sherilyn Dean, Jane Rankine and PJ Williams



First Nations Senior Consultative Circle with AIATSIS Family History Unit and Access Staff



## Contacts & Resources

# National

### New South Wales

#### Link-Up (NSW) Aboriginal Corporation

4/2 Central Place, Ropes Crossing NSW 2760  
PO Box 185, St Marys NSW 2760  
Freecall: 1800 624 332  
Tel: (02) 9421 4700  
Email: [linkup@nsw.link-up.org.au](mailto:linkup@nsw.link-up.org.au)  
[www.linkupnsw.org.au](http://www.linkupnsw.org.au)

### Northern Territory

#### Central Australian Aboriginal Congress Link-Up

14 Leichhardt Terrace,  
PO Box 1604,  
Alice Springs NT 0871  
Tel: (08) 8959 4750

#### Northern Territory Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation

2/3 Cascom Centre,  
13-17 Scaturchio Street, Casuarina NT 0810  
Tel: (08) 8947 9171  
Fax: (08) 8947 9173

### Queensland

#### Link Up (QLD) Aboriginal Corporation

3-5 Reid Street, Woolloongabba QLD 4102  
PO Box 3229, South Brisbane QLD 4101  
Toll Free: 1800 200 855  
Tel: (07) 3638 0411  
Fax: (07) 3217 3458  
Email: [contact@link-upqld.org.au](mailto:contact@link-upqld.org.au)

#### Link-Up (QLD) North Qld Regional Office

2/128 Spence Street, Cairns QLD 4870  
PO Box 298 Bungalow QLD 4870  
Tel: (07) 4041 7403

### South Australia

#### Nunkuwarrin Yunti of South Australia Inc. Link-Up SA

182-190 Wakefield Street, SA 5000  
PO Box 7202, Hutt Street, SA 5000  
Tel: (08) 8406 1600  
[www.nunku.org.au](http://www.nunku.org.au)

### Victoria/Tasmania

#### Link-Up Victoria

48 Mary Street, Preston VIC 3072  
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Freecall 1800 687 662 (1800 OUR MOB)  
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Email: [linkup@vacca.org](mailto:linkup@vacca.org)  
Website: [www.linkupvictoria.org.au](http://www.linkupvictoria.org.au)

### Western Australia

#### Yorgum Aboriginal Corporation – Head Office

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#### Perth Link-Up

3 Brammal Street, East Perth WA 6722  
PO Box 236, Northbridge WA 6865  
Tel: (08) 9428 3700  
Fax: (08) 9227 0514

#### South Hedland – Link-Up

Suite 4, 3 Brand Street,  
South Hedland WA 6722  
Tel: (08) 9140 4029  
Fax: (08) 9140 4031

#### Kalgoorlie – Link-Up

34 Dugan Street, Kalgoorlie WA 6430  
Tel: (08) 9091 6359

#### Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation

28 Barker Street (PO Box 2775),  
Broome WA 6725  
Freecall: 1800 830 338  
Tel: (08) 9193 6502  
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Email: [admin@kimberleystolengeneration.com.au](mailto:admin@kimberleystolengeneration.com.au)  
[www.kimberleystolengeneration.com.au](http://www.kimberleystolengeneration.com.au)

### National

#### AIATSIS Family History Unit

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[www.aiatsis.gov.au](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au)

#### National Archives of Australia

National Archives of Australia,  
National Office, Canberra  
Old Parliament House  
18 King George Terrace,  
Parkes ACT 2600  
PO Box 4924, Kingston ACT 2604  
Tel: (02) 6212 3600  
Email: [archives@naa.gov.au](mailto:archives@naa.gov.au)

#### National Library of Australia

Parkes Place, ACT 2600  
Tel: (02) 6262 1111  
Fax: (02) 6257 1703

#### National Stolen Generations Alliance

Connecting Home (NSGA Head Office)  
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