

RECONCILIATION
QUEENSLAND
INCORPORATED

NEWSLETTER 1 • 2002
RQI

Special General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that there will be a Special General Meeting of Reconciliation Queensland Inc. at 102 McDonald Rd. Windsor, 4030, on Saturday 15 February 2003 starting at 10 am. The purpose of the meeting will be to consider four motions as follows:-

1. that clause 12 be amended by insertion of the words "one of whom shall be President" after the word "non-Indigenous" in the second line, and clause 19(1) be amended by replacing the words "two Co-Chairs, Secretary, Treasurer" with the words "the four Office Bearers" (Note - the second part is for simplicity).
2. that clause 8(3)(c) be amended by the addition of the words "by more than two months".
3. That clause 7 be amended by adding the words "or executive" after the words "management committee" wherever they occur.
4. that the constitution as amended be adopted.

NOTE:

Only current Members of RQI are eligible to vote. If you are in any doubt as to your membership status please advise the office immediately and an application form will be sent to you if needed.

Also, Members who are unable to attend are encouraged to appoint a Proxy, and forms for this purpose are also available on request. If desired, you can instruct your Proxy how to vote on each of these proposals.

PLEASE ACT

How far have we moved?

Some would say not very far, but in the nine months or so since the Executive was appointed, a good deal has been achieved.

Our basic financial requirements for the year were secured by the submission of a work plan and budget for \$80,000 to DATSIP before the end of the last financial year. This was augmented by the proceeds of about \$12,000 from the Martin Luther King III Dinner and associated raffles etc.

The other vital development was the recruitment of staff and we realised soon after their appointment how very fortunate we were in the two appointments.

Lisa Reynolds, our Coordinator, has already demonstrated a clear understanding of the issues that confront us, and great imagination and drive. Without those qualities, together with her influential connections, this professionally produced Newsletter would not have been possible.

Jo Willmot, our Administration Assistant, born at Cherbourg, has not only appropriate office skills, but also extensive experience in Indigenous affairs, especially women's issues and cultural heritage.

There were inevitable difficulties in the movement to our new office, and the transition following the sudden resignation of Trevarne, who had been valiantly "keeping the show on the road". However, the appropriate systems are now just about in place, and we look forward to a really productive year in 2003.

VISION

A united Australia which respects this land of ours, values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, and provides justice and equity for all.

Storytelling, Reconciliation and Healing

Reconciliation Queensland Inc. and Dymocks MacArthur Central joined in an evening discussing Vivienne Cleven's latest novel "her sister's eye" and the importance of storytelling for reconciliation and healing. The night began with RQI Co-Chair Joan Hendriks acknowledging the traditional owners of this land and briefly outlining the outcomes of the recent National meeting of Co-Chairs in Canberra. Vivienne then shared with the group her personal life journey and the background to her novel "her sister's eye". A panel including, Aunty Ruth Hegarty, Tammy Williams, Dr. Thom Blake and Prof Carole Ferrier discussed the significance of Vivienne's novel and the audience participated in the discussion. The evening highlighted the vital role of storytelling to further the understanding of Indigenous people's experiences and culture.

Management Committee and Regions

Our original Constitution provided for a Committee consisting of between 18 and 21 members, 9 of whom were to be Representatives of designated Regions.

It also prescribed the method of appointment of these Representatives. This simply did not work, so the appointment of Regional Representatives has been made optional and the Committee can now determine the method of appointment.

It is appropriate in the light of problems already encountered, to consider some basic questions. For example:-

- Given that our primary aim is to promote mutual understanding and respect, what differences are there across Queensland, and to what extent are any such differences defined by region?
- If there are such regions, where, roughly, should the boundaries be drawn?
- What is the most practicable method of appointment of Representatives?

In considering these issues, it should be kept in mind that about half of Queensland's population lives in the southeast corner. The question of the maximum desirable size of the Committee (itself a matter of debate!) also needs to be kept in mind.

Your thoughts on these matters (by the end of February) would be welcome, so that consideration can be given to any changes that might be recommended in due course.

The Constitution and You

Constitutions are dull documents, but they are very important for a number of reasons. Amongst other things they define the rights and responsibilities of members, Office Bearers and other members of the Management Committee. For Incorporated Associations such as ours, there are legal requirements, and regrettably we have just been advised that a further amendment is required to our recently amended Constitution - we are required to have a President!

Because of the special significance of our two Co-Chairs, it has been agreed that we do not have to specify who that will be, and we can simply add "one of whom shall be President" after the words referring to the Co-Chairs. Unfortunately, we have also been told that this cannot wait till our next AGM. All Members are therefore urged to pay particular attention to the notice on the front cover calling a Special General Meeting. We are taking advantage of this Newsletter to save the time and cost involved in sending out a separate notice.

With regard to the second notice of motion, when the membership year was specified as the financial year, the provision for two months' arrears before membership lapsed was removed. It is hoped that restoring the provision for two months in arrears will remove the likely need for lots of special reminder notices. It is also suggested that the Executive be given authority to admit Members in order to avoid the delays that occur presently as the Management Committee only meets about every 3 months.

★ National Sorry Day - May 26, 2003

Link-Up (Qld) Aboriginal Corporation exists to enhance the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by reuniting those over the age of eighteen who have experienced enforced separation from their families and communities through adoption, fostering, removal and institutionalisation. National Sorry Day is a key event for Link-Up (Qld) as it helps to create awareness and understanding in regard to these issues and each year Link-Up (Qld) coordinates state-wide activities to mark this important occasion.

This year Reconciliation Queensland Incorporated (RQI) has joined the National Sorry Day Committee to have an active role in the preparation and promotion of the day throughout Queensland. We encourage all the regions to participate in organising events in their area and hope people from all nations and cultures unite to share in this day and support in healing the pains of the past, celebrate survival and walk together in hope for the future.

If you would like further information regarding this event please contact:-

Gillian Brannigan

at Link-Up (Qld)
PO Box 5487,
West End, Qld 4101
Telephone: 3255 0855
Fax: 3255 2099
Tollfree: 1800 200 855
Email: gillian.brannigan@qld.link-up.org.au



★ Far North Queensland

Reconciliation is a lively activity in the Far North. Richard Cherry, Management Committee Representative for the region, is also the Secretary of the People for Reconciliation Group, Cairns. The region also includes the Tablelands Reconciliation Group. Recently, new members of RQI have been recruited from it as well as from James Cook University, Wontulp-Bi-Buya College, and Wuchopperen Medical Centre.

Prior to the AGM of RQI, the Cairns Group launched a draft Constitution as part of their celebration of Mabo Day, and started a membership drive which is continuing. This is done, mainly by inviting every person who participates in a reconciliation activity to apply for local and RQI membership. Contact is then maintained through Newsletters, meetings and cultural events.

Richard was teaching at the Malu Kiwai State School on Boigu Island when he was elected to the Management Committee early in 2002, following the resignation of Aboriginal Pastor Norman Miller, but he has since returned to Cairns where he is based.

★ The Sunshine Coast Reconciliation Group

The Sunshine Coast Reconciliation Group (Caloundra) grew from a Social Justice Group within the Caloundra Catholic Church in 1997. It remains committed to Social Justice, religious neutrality but with strong links to the Catholic community.

For the first couple of years we had well attended meetings with a good proportion of Indigenous attendance. With limited formality we studied kits provided by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, talked, listened and learnt from Aboriginal speakers. Attendance declined and we virtually folded, but called it a recess and rose again.

We have a strong relationship with Caloundra libraries. We have organised for a large number of books to be donated from individual donors to the libraries and presented books from donated funds. We have produced a bibliography of books in the library which cover the local Indigenous history.

We participate in library Aboriginal Culture days and meet regularly to advance the library's thrust to be Aboriginal friendly and a focal point of Aboriginal knowledge.

We have computer software donated by Microsoft with a retail value of \$150,000 and are going through a difficult process of determining how best to use it for Aboriginal students' benefit.

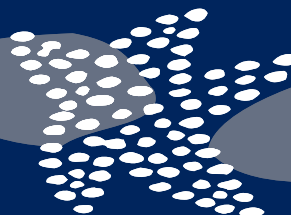
We have raised funds to send two delegates to New Zealand to a "Natural World Summit for Young Indigenous Women". We have learnt by experience that successful fundraising requires the individual, personal approach. General requesting letters have brought little success.

We have provided tutors for Aboriginal students in local schools and at home. This program, while ultimately not as successful as it had promised, had two interesting aspects. It demonstrated that there is a large number of skilled people who want to work with Aboriginal children but who do not participate in Reconciliation Group activities. And it widened the Group's network of members and contacts. We have addressed local schools. We support Aboriginal organised lunches with Aboriginal speakers. We write letters to local papers, particularly responses to racist letters.

We produce a monthly newsletter, which is available to members or, by email, to anybody who asks for it.

Contact the Editor:

email kwhisson@bigpond.net.au or
Secretary Dawn Wilson on 54922297.



Noonga Reconciliation Group Inc.

In late 1997, at a time when there was vigorous but often ill-informed debate about John Howard's Ten Point Plan, the Wik legislation and Native Title, Jeremy Liyanage, a Community Development Worker with the Nundah Community Centre decided to organise a seminar on Native Title. Following the well-attended meeting it was decided to go a step further and in February 1998 a Reconciliation Study Circle began that brought together as many as thirty people for each session. When the program drew to a close in May participants chose the name Nundah Reconciliation Group (NRG) and decided to continue meeting. Out of these meetings objectives were formulated and it was not long before a strong commitment had been made to **Reconciliation through Education** - education of group members, the wider community and young people particularly at primary school level.

In the years between 1998 and 2000 (when we became an incorporated body and changed our name to Noonga Reconciliation Group Inc) the group sought guidance, involvement and blessing of the Murri community for our community initiatives and projects. Aunty Ruth Hegarty, local Murri Elder, became the group's mentor and friend and steered us toward making contact with Taigum Primary School where we have established a 300m long Reconciliation Learnscape. The central concept behind this project involves children learning about and caring for land through an interactive relationship with Indigenous peoples and their perspectives.

The Learnscape incorporates bush food, bush medicine and utilitarian species within three forest types - dry sclerophyll, wetlands and rainforest. This project was commenced with funds of \$30 000 from the Centenary Community Projects Program and now, after numerous school and community 'working bees', hundreds of native species have been planted and ponds, paths and learning circles established. The Reconciliation Learnscape is a ten-year project with Stage 1 & 2 completed. We are now seeking funding from Il

Jupiters Casino Community Benefit Fund to complete Stage 3 which will include a performance space, a sandstone rock wall for mural painting and seating on the slopes of a natural looking amphitheatre, etc etc. We only need \$105 000 to get Stage 3 started!

Another initiative related to the Learnscape is the work being done currently to develop exciting and innovative curriculum material integrating class room teaching, Aboriginal perspectives and 'hands on' involvement in this special space. A grant of \$30 000 from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund has made it possible for NRG to engage curriculum writers to develop material which will be trialed (before publication) at Taigum school in 2003. Whilst the work involved with ongoing development of the Learnscape is constant we have found time to be involved with many other reconciliation initiatives. There is no doubt, however, that the NAIDOC Games from the Dreamtime Festival held at Taigum school was a highlight of 2002. With funding from DATSIP members of Binambi Barambah Aboriginal Corporation and NRG hosted the games and worked closely with Taigum, Zillmere and Holy Rosary schools to bring 240 excited and enthusiastic students together to participate in traditional games played by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the past. Prior to the day, adults and students from these schools and members of NRG attended a four-hour workshop with Dr Ken Edwards and two Murri Human Movement students from QUT in order to gain some knowledge and understanding of the games' cultural significance and procedure. Such was the success of the NAIDOC day that we plan an even bigger and better traditional games celebration in 2003.

We, at Noonga, are always happy to share the highs and lows of our reconciliation journey so please make a call to 3256 3508, write to P.O. Box 205 Wavell Heights Q 4012 or email bmhickey@ozemail.com.au - we'll be pleased to hear from you.

Reigniting the flame of Reconciliation

Noosa Reconciliation Group and the Rural Futures Network joined forces for an evening of discussion on the understanding of reconciliation. The event attracted a great number of people who all shared supper together while reigniting the flame of Reconciliation. Small groups were formed to consider how to work towards a Treaty to embrace the traditional caretakers and enlighten the new occupants of this land.

Reconciliation Australia Co-Chair, Ms Jackie Huggins, was the guest speaker for this event and she addressed the group on the reconciliation process at a National level. Jackie Huggins emphasised the importance of practical reconciliation and the vital role of local communities acknowledging the past and working towards a shared and equal future.

There was a lucky door prize and a wonderful raffle and a tin for gold coin donations so the group could cover the costs of the venue. The night was a complete success and definitely heightened the understanding of reconciliation within the Noosa Shire.

To contact the Noosa Reconciliation Group e-mail Dale Scott at thedillybag@yahoo.com or Jennie Harvie at harvie@optusnet.com.au or phone Dale Scott on 54 851126 or Jennie Harvie on 54 470319.

MAKE A NOTE!

RQI Special General Meeting

10 am Saturday 15 February 2003
at the Albion Peace Centre,
102 McDonald Road, Windsor 4030.

RSVP by 2 February 2003.

National Sorry Day

May 26, 2003.

Contact Gillian Brannigan at Link-Up (Qld)
for further details.

Have You Renewed Your Membership with RQI.

Please call the office on 3857 6088 to confirm
your membership.

*“Seeking to understand requires
consideration; seeking to be
understood takes courage.
Win-Win requires a high degree
of both.”*

Stephen R. Covey

Special Thanks to all the volunteers who have
helped in so many ways to support our activities.
We appreciate your time and look forward to
working with you in the future.

Management Committee Members

OFFICE BEARERS

| | |
|---------------------|-----------|
| Aunty Joan Hendriks | Co-Chair |
| Terry Tyler | Co-Chair |
| Uri Themal | Secretary |
| Wayne Costelloe | Treasurer |

OTHER EXECUTIVE

Michael Yau
Ros Kneebone
Arthur McCutchan

OTHER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Tony McPherson | Cathy Boyle |
| Richard Cherry | Claire Watts |
| Lesley Williams | Nick Xynias |
| Marshall Saunders | Beverley Hickey |
| Steve McDonald | Ellen Oldfield |
| Beverley Johnson | Sharon Kinchela |
| Ben Thompson | |

STAFF

| | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| Lisa Reynolds | Coordinator |
| Jo Willmot | Administration Assistant |

RQI thanks Queensland Rail for their kind
donation of a return trip on the Tilt Train from
Brisbane to Rockhampton for two, together
with three nights accommodation at Rydges
Capricorn International Resort. Proceeds from
this donation have funded the production of
this first newsletter.



Queensland's Reconciliation Groups

NOONGA RECONCILIATION GROUP

Bev Hickey tel: 3256 3508 or
e-mail bmhickey@ozemail.com.au

ALBANY CREEK GROUP

Zillah Jackson tel: 3264 1249 or
e-mail zjackson@powerup.com.au

BENARRAWA ATSI SOLIDARITY GROUP

Michele Bourke tel: 3379 2216 or
e-mail benarrawacda@hotmail.com

BRAY PARK RECONCILIATION GROUP

Celia Winter tel: 3205 5174

SHORNCLIFFE / SANDGATE RECONCILIATION GROUP

Susan Black tel: 3269 0277 or e-mail
sandbag1@byte.com.au

INNER NORTHERN SUBURBS

Enrica Sella tel: 3254 1238 or e-mail
sellanrica@hotmail.com

IPSWICH RECONCILIATION GROUP

Megan Bathurst tel: 3875 7791 or
e-mail m.bathurst@mailbox.qu.edu.au

BEAUDESERT RECONCILIATION GROUP

Sharon Rowe tel: 0413 672 401

NOOSA RECONCILIATION GROUP

Dale Scott tel: 5485 1126 or
e-mail thedillybag@yahoo.com

SAMFORD RECONCILIATION GROUP

Danielle Burette tel: 3289 1540 or
e-mail Danielle.burette@npm.qld.gov.au

PEOPLE FOR RECONCILIATION IN CAIRNS

Richard Cherry tel: 4032 4327 or
e-mail rcherry@vtown.com.au

BUNDABERG RECONCILIATION GROUP

Lionel Evans tel: 4152 4219 or
e-mail lionlee@ozemail.com.au

HERVEY BAY RECONCILIATION GROUP

Frances Gala tel: 4124 6908 or
e-mail scrubhill@bigpond.com

ROCKHAMPTON RECONCILIATION GROUP

Laurel Hunt tel: 4930 9975 or
e-mail L.hunt@cqu.edu.au

MT ISA RECONCILIATION GROUP

Mick Lowcock tel: 4743 6088 or
e-mail lowcock@isagsp.centrecare.com.au

MARYBOROUGH RECONCILIATION GROUP

Ros Martin tel: 4123 1975

GYMPIE RECONCILIATION GROUP

Pastor August Fricke tel: 5482 1435

PROSERPINE / WHITSUNDAY

RECONCILIATION GROUP
Sue Shanks tel: 4946 1056 or
e-mail proscamm@mackay.net.au

GOLD COAST / TWEED RECONCILIATION GROUP

Claire Watts tel: 0405 213 387 or
e-mail clairewatts@hotmail.com

SUNSHINE COAST (CALOUNDRA) RECONCILIATION GROUP

Keith Whisson e-mail kwhisson@bigpond.net.au

We made every attempt to publish the correct details.
Please advise RQI if you have found any errors or if your
local group has been missed.