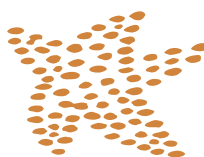


A big THANK YOU to the Woodford Folk Festival for their contribution as a Sponsor of this December edition of the RQI Newsletter.



RECONCILIATION
QUEENSLAND
INCORPORATED

NEWSLETTER 4 • DEC 2003
RQI

Report on the Annual General Meeting

by Terry Tyler, Co-Chair

Thank you to all who attended the AGM on 18 October at the Albion Peace Centre or sent in Proxy Votes. The larger than expected turnout of approximately 40 members, and the number of members unable to attend who called in an Apology, showed there is continued strong support for RQI and interest in furthering a people's movement of reconciliation.

There are many challenges facing all Queenslanders and Australians as we continue to move forward on the reconciliation agenda and take on important initiatives that show a commitment to reconciliation either through personal actions, participation at public events or through activities undertaken in Local Reconciliation Groups.

At the AGM members elected the RQI Executive and RQI Management Committees for 2003-2004. They will need members input and support to deal with important organisational matters, such as establishing sustainable funding for RQI, sorting out the Public Liability Insurance issue, lobbying, and in and finding the resources to support the magnificent contribution made by Local Reconciliation Groups (LRG).

A heartfelt Thank You was extended at the meeting to the outgoing Executive and Management Committee members. Appreciation was also expressed for the excellent work done in and out of the office, and the extra support given to the Committee Members and LRGs, by Lisa Reynolds, Coordinator and Lexie Keane, Administration Officer.

The Executive Committee 2003-2004 members are:

Co-Chair (Re-elected) - Joan Hendricks

Co-Chair (Re-elected) - Terry Tyler

Secretary (Elected) - Karen Walters

Treasurer - Terry Tyler *Acting Treasurer

Members: Michael Yau (Re-elected)
Debbie De Bree (Elected)
Angela Mulgrew (Elected)

Karen Walters is well known to many throughout the State in her former role as the Anti-Discrimination Commissioner for Queensland. Debbie De Bree is a Police Liaison Officer in the Metropolitan North Region. Angela Mulgrew is employed as the Social Planner at Caboolture Shire Council.

Please note: The Treasurer's position has temporarily been filled by Terry Tyler until a willing (new or current) member comes forward who has a good knowledge of taxation and experience in account management and financial planning. This matter is of immediate urgency. Are you the person willing to fill this position?

The Management Committee 2003-2004 members are:

Re-elected

Richard Cherry (Cairns)

Steven McDonald (Brendale)

Toni McPherson (Gold Coast)

Marshall Saunders (Cherbourg)

Nick Xynias (West End)

Elected

Peter Smith (Mount Isa)

Charlie Watson (Brisbane)

Uri Themal (Gold Coast)

Beverley Johnson (Wynnum)



In the words of Nelson Mandela - Reconciliation

Those who were privileged enough to attend the monumental National Conference in Melbourne in 1997 will recall the profound, yet simple message relayed via teleconference from Bishop Tutu on behalf of then President Mandela, "Just as South Africa found its rainbow as a nation, so too do we wish dearly for Australia to find its rainbow...and like all rainbows, they are made up of many colours".

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.



Travelling the Road to Reconciliation - Virginia State School's Journey

Virginia State School recently had the honour to adopt a local indigenous elder, Aunty Mary Zalewski, with an adoption ceremony on 1 August 2003, as part of the school's Reconciliation Day celebrations. The adoption of Aunty Mary is a highlight amongst the many reconciliation activities that have been embraced by the school this year.

Aunty Mary is a local historian for the history and culture of the Barrabim people, comprising 5 or 6 clans that lived in the North Brisbane area. She is delighted to share her knowledge and experience and was pleased to accept her new role at the school. "Being adopted as Virginia State School's elder has given me a tremendous amount of pride and joy", Aunty Mary said. "It is an act of acceptance. The word 'acceptance' has a deeper meaning than reconciliation. It has connotations that we have moved on from what black and white people have done in the past, and now we're thinking of each other as equals."

The issue of reconciliation has been well explored by the Year 6 and 7 students and teachers at Virginia, through an outcomes-based integrated unit called "Travelling the Road to Reconciliation: How Can We Shorten the Journey?" This unit, initiated by Curriculum Coordinator, Michael Paulsen, through a Federal Government "Discovering Democracy" grant, allowed the teachers to further develop the concept of active citizenship. As Michael explained, "The teachers at our school work hard to develop in our kids a sense of social justice. I believe that our unit on reconciliation has given the children an opportunity to play their part in creating a future society that will hopefully be more harmonious".

Aunty Joan Hendriks, co-chairperson of Reconciliation Queensland, helped to plan the unit implemented in Semester One by teachers Alison Stoneley, Annette Stevens, Richard Ashley and Cameron Ross. Throughout the year, students have been involved in organising and participating in a series of activities designed to enhance the reconciliation process.

In February, the Year 6 and 7 students visited Ngutana-Lui, the Aboriginal cultural centre at Inala. This was a powerful start to the unit, as students had hands-on experience in learning about bush food, Aboriginal Dreaming stories and dancing, Torres Strait Islander culture and gathering and hunting techniques.

On March 21, hundreds of Australian schools and organisations celebrated Harmony Day, with many students and teachers wearing orange shirts or ribbons to show their support for goodwill between people from all racial backgrounds.

Aunty Joan Hendriks spoke to the students in March about the Stolen Generation, while Aunty Mary visited the school in May to talk about gender roles and local sites that are significant to Aboriginal society.

The school's Reconciliation Day in August was a school-wide celebration. After the ceremony in which Aunty Mary was adopted, students of all ages rotated through activities including listening to Dreaming stories, painting Rainbow Serpents, dot painting and face painting with clay.

In September, three new flagpoles were erected enabling the Torres Strait Islander flag and the Aboriginal flag to fly alongside the Australian flag. The flagpoles will form part of the Reconciliation Garden that will be constructed as soon as the

administration block is finished. The garden will be designed and built by the students as a relaxing, reflective place to visit.

The school plans to run this unit every second year as part of its two year cycle of integrated units.

Apart from these activities, each Year 6 and 7 student has been involved in a project that aims to give a public message regarding the importance of reconciliation. Students have produced books, stories, posters, fridge magnets, badges, videos, sunglass cases and a reconciliation quilt to spread the message.

Please note:

The school wishes to announce the sad loss of Aunty Mary who recently passed away. We hope our adoption of her as our school elder enriched her life as it did ours.

Kerryn Hugo

Year 6 Parent & Media Liaison Officer
Virginia State School



RQI & Townsville

A huge thank you to all the people we met in Townsville. Your time and willingness to share with both Rohan and I was invaluable to our understanding of the reconciliation process in Townsville. I would also like to thank Evelyn Scott for her support at the community meeting.

Many issues were highlighted during the individual consultations over a two-day period. These included:

- Youth issues
- Employment and business opportunities
- Park people
- Media (need for positive representation)

RQI organised a community meeting with the aim of identifying the most appropriate way RQI could support the community in furthering the reconciliation process in Townsville. As most of the people who participated are involved in a multitude of community based initiatives it was clear that youth leadership programs are required to prepare and facilitate future community leaders. A youth forum was suggested to allow youth to be involved and to determine what, how and who should lead them into the future on social issues.

The word reconciliation was discussed and we came to a consensus that this label was inadequate and that the word had negative connotations in the Townsville area. The lack of involvement and acknowledgement of indigenous issues by the broader community is a fundamental problem that requires attention. The community members decided to name the project "People Reaching People" rather than Reconciliation. "People reaching people" indicates a more positive approach to race relations in Townsville and one that would hopefully encourage the non-indigenous community to become involved.

The group committed to a follow up meeting to discuss the way forward. The group also emphasised that support from RQI was an absolute necessity and further consultation is required. RQI can provide time, persistence and support to the Townsville region. Therefore, my assessment of the situation is that RQI must work on building stronger relationships so the community members have the confidence in RQI as the State peak body for reconciliation in Queensland.

Lisa Reynolds

Coordinator

Invitation to Local Reconciliation Groups

With 23 Reconciliation groups scattered throughout Queensland I see strength in closer co-operation including support for each group's activities, and lessons from each group's achievements - and failures. Promulgation of writings produced by one group has far wider applications - an umbrella, perhaps, to protect 23 groups from the expense of incorporation and insurance.

Reconciliation Queensland Incorporated passes on what it receives, but I see the need for more. I propose, and I have discussed this with Coordinator Lisa, that those groups who are in the vicinity of Brisbane meet in the New Year in the Albion Peace Centre to share our stories.

I also seek more direct contact between groups. I now send the Sunshine Coast Reconciliation Group (Caloundra) newsletter by email to most groups. Anyone wanting to be on the email list, let me know. Anyone who wants the posted copy, please send \$5 a year. I would like to receive more news from more groups.

Let Lisa or myself know what you think of this proposition. For the meeting, I have in mind a daytime meeting with lunch brought to share.

Keith Whisson

Ph: 54921381
kwhisson@bigpond.net.au

Reconciliation in Cairns

In Far North Queensland there is a tradition of practical reconciliation within schools and their surrounding communities. Many schools have large numbers of indigenous students, and have carried out successful reconciliation with indigenous peoples' programs during the 1990s.

One result of such activities was the training of a contingent of girls and boys to dance in the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games in 2000. It was a great success. Seventy girls and boys were trained and transported to Sydney from Cairns. They returned uplifted, knowing they had made a significant contribution to an international cultural event. At that time cultural dancing was strongly supported in and around Cairns, but in the last three years this support has diminished.

Today, what reconciliation means to teachers and students in Far North Queensland is proving a difficult question to answer. One school that has recently reconsidered its position is Woree State High School. Two members of staff, a Community Education Coordinator, SEC, and a SOSE Teacher have signed up as members of RQI to extend their involvement in reconciliation with indigenous people. At this school, in October, the staff in conjunction with the ASSPA Committee planned to include reconciliation in their NAIDOC Week activities in the fourth term.

I am keen to communicate and share ideas with anybody who is involved in such reconciliation with indigenous peoples' activities. I may be contacted by email: rcherry@vtown.com.au

Richard Cherry

Far North Queensland Member
RQI Management Committee

Land Ownership by Tom Gordon - Noonga Reconciliation Group

"...and on the seventh day God rested... pleased with the creation of space and time, matter and earth..."

In the beginning land had no ownership, no boundaries, and no fences. People roamed free and survival was by might and strength, adaptation and evolution, flight and fight, and instinct and intellect. The footprints of humans began to be embedded into the earth of every continent and to challenge the eco-system of every plant and animal. The land, sky, and sea were the trilogy of early human knowledge food and shelter, hope and spirituality, and discovery and destiny.

We grew in number and we scattered to the four ends of the earth. We hunted, we gathered, we settled, and we learned to live as individuals and in small groups. We built shelters first of straw, then of sticks, then of stone, and then of steel. We sought stability, predicability, and identity. But we wanted more and through waring we found multiple ways to impose our will and ways upon others.

To the first who made an imprint on a patch of earth the land became theirs and their heirs until

the spoils of all creation were possessed by families, clans, groups, and races of all creeds and colours. Land, for many became their sole means of survival their food and shelter, and in time ultimately became the basis for their cultural existence and spiritual identity.

The tangential inventiveness and creativity of mastery over the environment generation after generation by distinct human groupings saw the rise of social diversity and differing levels of economic development. The emergence of nation States and the rise of need and greed saw the spoils of victory (the lands of the people, the body of the people, and finally the soul of the people) go to those with greater might (but lesser right).

Time may pass, memories may fade, but oral stories retold again and again will continue to relay the true history of the past to new generations. While the forceful acquisition of clans' lands will always burn in the soul of those dispossessed, their heart has a duty to continue to seek out righteousness, and their head must find a voice to call out for ultimate justice. All must join in this process the possessed and the dispossessed.

Local Reconciliation Groups

Bayside Reconciliation Group (Wynnum)
Beverley Johnson
Phone: (07) 3341 3342

Benarrawa Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Solidarity Group (Graceville)
Michele Bourke
Phone: (07) 3373 9499 or (07) 3379 9925
Email: benarrawacda@hotmail.com

Bray Park Reconciliation Group
Celia Winter
Phone: (07) 3205 5174

Bundaberg Reconciliation Group
Lionel Evans
Phone: (07) 4152 4219
Email: lionlee@ozemail.com.au

Bunya Reconciliation Group (Murgon)
Marshall Saunders
Phone: (07) 4168 2828
Email: coord@burnett.net.au

Dadirri Reconciliation Group
Prince Charles Hospital Reconciliation Group
Robyn Chilcott
Phone: (07) 3350 8123 or 0409 540 862
Adele Dingle
Phone: (07) 3350 8124 or 0411 259 981
Email: Adele_Dingle@health.qld.gov.au

Gold Coast / Tweed Reconciliation Group
Claire Watts
Phone: (07) 5581 8594 or 0405 213 387
Email: clairewatts@hotmail.com

Gympie Reconciliation Group
Pastor Fricke
Phone: (07) 5482 1435 or 0409 477 040

Hervey Bay Reconciliation Group
Frances Gala
Phone: (07) 4124 6908
Email: scrubhill@bigpond.com

Inner Northern Suburbs (New Farm)
Enrica Sella
Phone: (07) 3254 1238
Email: sellaenrica@hotmail.com

Ipswich Reconciliation Group
Megan Bathurst
Phone: (07) 3875 7791
Email: m.bathurst@mailbox.qu.edu.au

Maryborough Reconciliation Group
June O'Hanlon
Mobile: 0409 486 760

Mt Isa Reconciliation Group
Mick Lowcock
Phone: (07) 4743 6088
Email: lowcocksqsp@centacare.com.au

Noonga Reconciliation Group
Bev Hickey
Phone: (07) 3256 3508
Email: bmhickey@ozemail.com.au

Noosa Reconciliation Group
Dale Scott
Phone: (07) 4851126
Email: thedillybag@yahoo.com

Northside Reconciliation Group (Albany Creek)
Zillah Jackson
Phone: (07) 3264 1249 or Fax: (07) 3264 1249
Email: zjackson@powerup.com.au

People for Reconciliation in Cairns
Richard Cherry
Phone: (07) 4032 4327
Email: rcherry@yvtown.com.au

Rockhampton Reconciliation Group Laurel Hunt
Phone: (07) 4930 9975
Email: l.hunt@cqu.edu.au

Royal Brisbane & Women's Hospital Reconciliation Group
Jan Roberts
Phone: (07) 3636 1839
Email: Jan_Roberts@health.qld.gov.au

Samford Reconciliation Group
Danielle Burette
Phone: (07) 3289 1540
Email: Danielle.burette@nrm.qld.gov.au

Shorncliffe/Sandgate Reconciliation Group
Susan Black
Phone: (07) 3269 0277 or 0409 542 848
Email: sandbag2@bytesite.com.au

Sunshine Coast Reconciliation Group (Caloundra)
Dawn Wilson
Phone: (07) 5492 2297
Email: dawnonline@bigpond.com

**University of Queensland
School of Social Work & Social Policy Reconciliation Group**
Leilani Garland
Phone: (07) 3365 2952
Email: garlandl@social.uq.edu.au

If you would like mailing address for any of the above Local Reconciliation Groups, please call RQI on **3857 6088**. Please let the office know if any of the above details are incorrect.

Beattie Government Announcement of Ground Breaking Importance

Reconciliation members can help turn the policy announcement from Education Minister, Anna Bligh into reality!

The following is extracted from an article written by Rosemary Odgers and Steven Wardill that appeared in the Courier Mail on 17 October 2003.

All state schools will expand the teaching of indigenous culture from next year under a Beattie Government strategy to boost the attendance, retention and literacy rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Teachers will also have to undergo cross-cultural training and the number of indigenous employees and role models will be increased at the 1300 schools.

"For too long, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students have performed at lower levels than non-indigenous students," Ms Bligh said. "This clearly is not good enough. We want to see more students at school, more often and for longer."

Under the plan, schools will have to set individual targets to help improve the performance of about 29,000 indigenous students.

They will be directed to encourage Aboriginal communities and elders to visit classrooms and increase teaching of the indigenous culture in the syllabus to help these students engage in learning.

Across the state, the plan is aimed at increasing high school retention rates for indigenous students to 80 per cent by 2005."

It would be hard to find an announcement of greater importance. But, like any policy the importance is embedded in the implementation.

I call on all parents, all teachers, all Reconciliation members, all people who know any of the above to facilitate the implementation of this policy.

Find out, if you can, what directive has been issued to schools within your contact area. Find out what steps are being taken to implement the directive. What funds are being provided? What resources? What training? Where will the indigenous employees come from? How many? Monitor the setting of individual targets.

If you are an indigenous person, note that schools are being "directed to encourage Aboriginal communities and elders to visit classrooms and increase teaching of the indigenous culture". Remember the NAIDOC theme: "Our children, Our future".

I would appreciate any feedback on implementation of this policy or lack of implementation.

Keith Whisson

Ph: 07-5492 1381
kwhisson@bigpond.net.au

Keriba Warngun Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Group Northside Christmas Party

Menu: Hot & Cold Buffet including sweets - tea & coffee and 2 x Complimentary bottles of wine per table

Entertainment: Brown Sugar Masquerade

Band: Angus Rabbit & Co

Venue: Kedron Wavell Services Club

Date: Friday, 19 December 2003

Time: 6 pm - 11:45 pm

Tickets: \$55 per person or table of ten are discounted @ \$50 per person

Contacts For Tickets: Call Rachel 3865 2346 or Debbie: 0408 745 838

RQI Membership Form

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name:	Date:	
Address:	Postcode:	
Telephone Numbers:	Home:	Work:
	Mobile:	Fax:
E-mail:		
Local Reconciliation Group (if any):		
Please include me on your mailing/e-mail list:	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Are you over 18 years of age? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
Nominated by:	Signature: (RQI Member)	
Seconded by:	Signature: (RQI Member)	

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.

Membership runs from July to June each year.

Annual Membership fee

Organisation	\$20.00
Individual	\$10.00
Concession	\$5.00

Please **make cheque or money order** payable to Reconciliation Queensland Inc.

I agree with and support the RQI Vision and wish to become a member of Reconciliation Queensland Inc.

Signed:

Date:

Woodford Folk Festival December 27, 2003 - January 1, 2004

Some 80,000 visitors will have the chance to access the world of indigenous art, craft, music and dance at this year's Woodford Folk Festival 2003, its 10th Anniversary at the Woodford site in Caboolture Shire.

Since its inception, the Woodford Folk Festival has enthusiastically encouraged the inclusion of indigenous peoples and their cultures throughout its program.

This has been achieved by showcasing successful indigenous people from all facets of the arts - a policy which is evident with the release of this year's Woodford Folk Festival program.

The Woodford Folk Festival includes indigenous performers as part of the mainstream program, a policy which can only further assist the cause of reconciliation.

Festival Director, Bill Hauritz, says "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance groups will again play a pivotal role with the opening of the Corroboree Grounds at the festival site.

They will be joined by other indigenous musicians, artists and crafts-people in a variety of program activities for the duration of the festival.

There will be a special welcome this year to the Tiwi people. Their wonderful work has received so many plaudits over the years and they will attract a great deal of interest at the festival."

This year help celebrate the 10th festival at the Woodford site.

For full program details, stalls and ticket pricing go to: www.woodfordfolkfestival.com

RQI Reconciliation Stall Volunteers Needed at Woodford Folk Festival

YOU can help spread the word at the Woodford Folk Festival about reconciliation and especially Reconciliation Queensland Inc. If you have previously volunteered, or would like to give it a go this year, then make contact immediately.

Reconciliation Volunteers who are needed at the RQI Information Stall. For more information on how to sign up as a full-time Trade volunteer with WFF benefits*, or as a part-time Casual volunteer who can give some of your time while at the Festival, please contact Angela Mulgrew through the RQI office on 3857 6088 or by email angelamulgrew@hotmail.com.

* WFF Trade Volunteers must give approximately 35 hours of volunteer time or 5 hours in a 12 hour day Festival program schedule of volunteer time on each of the days of the Festival to qualify for the benefit of a Full Program and Camping ticket.

Northside Reconciliation Group Presents...

Murri Christmas Carols

- Sunday - 14 December from 4.00 p.m.
- John Oxley Reserve, Ogg Road, Murrumba Downs
- Santa is coming! Sausage sizzle!
- Free hampers for lucky door prize winners (one ticket per family).
- **EVENT TOTALLY FREE**

RECONCILIATION QUEENSLAND INCORPORATED

Albion Peace Centre, 102 McDonald Road, Windsor QLD 4030
Tel: 07-3857 6088 Fax: 07-3857 3366 Email: reconciliation.qld@bigpond.com

