



RECONCILIATION QUEENSLAND INC.

✧ Message from RQI Co-Chair Joan Hendriks

When you receive this newsletter, Sorry Day: Journey of Healing and Reconciliation Week, will be close to reality and not just in the preparation stage as we are experiencing at the moment that I write this message. These events offer the opportunity to

- gather together to share in ritual and ceremony the commemoration of the forced removal of children from their families.
- promote the need for all Australians to continue the journey of Reconciliation as a Peoples Movement, dealing the legacy of Unfinished Business on the Road to Reconciliation.

✧ Reconciliation Australia (RA) National Meeting

RA invited the State Co-Chairs and Co-Ordinators to attend a National meeting in Sydney which was held early March. The purpose of this meeting was to share "what is happening at State and Local levels" and "RA's future directions" RA presented their "Pathways to Reconciliation" plan which is to be finalized for launching at the Opening of Reconciliation Place in Canberra during Reconciliation Week. RA anticipates that the relationship between RA and local community will be channeled through State groups.

✧ Sorry Day Reconciliation Week Convening Group

A convening grouping in collaboration with local community peoples has been meeting regularly for the past 2 months to prepare for these coming events. Those involved are members of the following organizations:

Reconciliation Qld Incorporated (RQI); ANTA Sea of Hands; Churches Together Indigenous Peoples Partnership (CTIPP); Link-Up Qld; Musgrave Park Cultural Centre; Reconciliation Songlines

The following events are being organised in Brisbane.

- A Candle Lighting commemoration ritual and ceremony to be held at the 'Bringing Them Home' plaque in King George Square
- A Reconciliation forum at the Power House New Farm
- An Information sharing and Cultural presentation in the Brisbane Mall
- Early Morning Services at the 5 "Bringing Them Home Plaques" that were placed around Brisbane in 1998

The Management Committee is confident that Local Community Groups across Queensland will be participating in these events according to each community's needs and aspirations. We look forward to hearing from you.

✧ RQI and Townsville

Lisa Reynolds, Nick Cowan RA's Youth Worker and myself attended a Community gathering in Townsville in February as a follow-up to the previous meetings that Lisa and Rowan had attended late last year. A Youth Forum was facilitated by Lisa and Nick and my responsibility was to be with the Elders and Community members and listen to their needs and visions. The outcome of this meeting was the decision that People reaching Peoples could be assisted with the presentation of the Leadership Training Program and follow through talks with the Youth. Lisa has maintained conversation with the delegated contacts and RQI is continuing working through the issues that RQI has been confronted with.

✧ Woodford Folk Festival

RQI participated in the Woodford Folk Festival which is held during the Christmas New Year festive season. This festival attracts peoples from across Australia and gave the opportunity to further discussion on Reconciliation.

As we move on dealing with the serious issues and concerns that are on our doorstep at the present time let us remember who we are and what we are here for. The going gets tougher at times but the tough stand firm in the struggle for justice. Justice will only roll down when we have as a nation realise that there can be a united Australia which respects this land of ours values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and provides justice and equity for all

We are who we are. We can't change this but we can change attitudes.

*To our fathers fathers, the pain the sorrow,
To our childrens' children, the glad tomorrow
(Oodgeroo Nunucaal)*

If we lose sight of these factors then we have lost the plot.

Joan Hendriks
RQI Co-Chair

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.

Townsville Project

After receiving support from Reconciliation Australia through the Youth Coordinator, Nick Cowan the Townsville project was able to continue. I contacted all the people I had previously met last September and proposed a youth forum to bring both Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people together under the theme of Reconciliation and leadership. We sent a letter to every school in the Townsville region inviting both the students and teachers to participate. The group "People Reaching People" put their 100 per cent support behind the youth forum and sent out fliers to all the youth organisations and circulated it to all the young people they knew.

Aunty Joan Hendriks offered her support and through her current positions as Coordinator at Churches Together Indigenous Peoples Partnership was able to join the Townsville project as a mentor for myself and Nick Cowan. Therefore the cost of the second part of the Townsville project was minimal to RQI. Reconciliation Australia paid for Nick Cowan's time, accommodation, travel, provided a car and paid for the B.B.Q for the youth forum. Churches Together Indigenous Peoples Partnership paid for Aunty Joan's travel and accommodation and RQI's cost was my travel and accommodation. St Teresa's Catholic Church gave their premises for the youth forum and worked as the contact people for interested young people.

Once we had set the date February 7, 2004 unfortunately, the State election was then called for that same date. We all knew that this might have some impact on the youth forum but decided it was more important to proceed as previously organised. We all flew up to Townsville on the Thursday February 5 to meet with the elders at

St Teresa's church and organise the youth forum. We also took this opportunity to meet with more youth organisations and invite them to participate and support the youth forum. Friday 6, 2004 was set aside for media coverage. We had a radio interview with FM107.1 4K1G too deadly and then meet with Ian Fraser from the Townsville Bulletin. Also on the Friday, time was set aside to meet with RQI Committee member, Peter Smith who was in Townsville with a work commitment. This was a great opportunity as RQI's Coordinator to meet Peter Smith and learn more about him as a person and a RQI Committee member and all the positive things that are happening in the Mt Isa area. RQI is very fortunate to have Peter Smith as part of the Committee.

Many people both young and old arrived to participate in the day's activities. We separated the young from the older people and Aunty Joan led the adults in their own workshop. This allowed a free space for the young people to come together and speak about the issues that concern them. The youth forum consisted of young Murries. Unfortunately there were no non-Indigenous young people participating in the youth forum. However, the young people did address this issues and talk about the best way to engage non-Indigenous people for future events. The youth forum was lead by both Nick Cowan and myself and it was broken into 3 different sessions. The morning session consisted of ice breakers, getting to know one another and exploring the issues that most impact on the young Murries in Townsville. The young people openly and honestly shared their stories and experiences to the group. This was an empowering session as the youth connected

Low cost Computers available for disadvantaged Aboriginal students from Green PC in conjunction with the Sunshine Coast Reconciliation Group (Caloundra)

The Sunshine Coast Reconciliation Group (Caloundra) has obtained computer software from Microsoft for the benefit of Aboriginal school students. It consists of licences to install Microsoft Windows 98 and Microsoft Office XP Professional, which includes Microsoft Word, Excel, Outlook, Power Point and Access .

SCRG (Caloundra) invites Reconciliation groups or Indigenous organisations to identify students who need these programs. The programs can be installed in the end users existing computer or can be installed free of charge in computers purchased from "GreenPC". Green PC can supply modern Pentium computer systems, for the benefit of Aboriginal students, from \$350. This price is for a late model Pentium 11, 333 mhz, with Windows 98 second edition, 17 inch monitor, internal modem, sound card and speakers, keyboard and mouse, with our Microsoft Office XP Professional. It does not include a printer but a new Hewlett Packard bubble jet printer is available for \$88. Computers can be collected in Brisbane or delivered from \$35. Beginners computers, with Windows 98 but not capable of operating Office XP professional, are available at lower prices. See GreenPC website.

While we do not expect the application of strict family income limits, it should be understood that the scheme is intended for those who would have difficulty in obtaining a computer at shop prices.

We envisage that Reconciliation Groups will liaise with Aboriginal Student Support groups or school Aboriginal liaison officers to identify needs and that they will pass the information to the Treasurer of SCRGR (Caloundra), Keith Whisson, on 54921381 or kwhisson@bigpond.net.au . Keith will advise Green PC of the potential customer and the customer then deals direct with Green PC. The purchaser may select from catalogue or by visiting Green PC. Green PC's phone is 3407 2054 (ask for Christine or Bonda) and their address is 399 Montague Road, West End.4101 . Their website is www.greenpc.com.au There is a 3 month guarantee with systems.

Green PC is associated with Infoxchange Australia a national not-for-profit social enterprise focusing on community development using Information Technology to create positive social change. Green PC recycles computers and sells to low-income individuals and not-for-profit community organisations. The role of SCRGR (Caloundra) is to introduce purchasers to Green PC and to supply software to Green PC for computers which are sold to purchasers introduced by us. Any dispute concerning the quality or suitability of any computer material provided is between the purchaser and the supplier.

Keith Whisson for Sunshine Coast Reconciliation Group (Caloundra)

through their similar experiences and stories. The main themes that came out of this session were the experience of young Murries at school and interaction with the police. At the end of the morning session the young people then prepared the sausage sizzle (paid for by Reconciliation Australia) for the adults and we all ate and talked together. The afternoon session focused on solutions for the issues that were raised in the morning. To begin the session the concept of identity was brainstormed non-Indigenous identity and Indigenous identity. This exercise highlighted how unsure we as humans are of our identity especially the identity of the "other" in relation to one self. These identity exercises enable the young people to step into the shoes of others for a short time to gain a better understanding. Admittedly this would have been more beneficial if non-Indigenous youth had participated.

The suggested solutions from the youth were:

More positive Indigenous symbols in schools and community and positive interaction with police to improve relationships. Hence, the young people decided that a joint letter should be written to the police commissioner to outline the unfair treatment

of Murries in Townsville. This is an empowering solution as the young people feel that their voices need to be heard at the top end.

The next decision was to find a way to have both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags in the schools of Townsville. We suggested that we start this process by writing to the Education Minister to ask for support and guidance on the matter. Both these outcomes are empowering and positive for the young people of Townsville. RQI support and guidance on these matters is important for this process to continue.

Late in the afternoon the adults and young people came together to see what each group had come up with. The adults have decided to work together as a local reconciliation group called "People Reaching People" and want to take on the leadership workshops that Joan Hendriks coordinates. At this time we had Ian Frazer from the Bulletin speaking with the youth about the outcomes they had come to in the forum.

See article at below.

Lisa Reynolds
Coordinator

'Unfair targets'

Teens tell of police suspicion

By IAN FRAZER

YOUNG people who attended a reconciliation forum on Saturday want Queensland's police commissioner to hear their concerns about racism in Townsville.

The 60 or so people at the forum – organised by Reconciliation Queensland Incorporated – called for a meeting with police, including Commissioner Bob Atkinson, to discuss what they see as unfair targeting of indigenous youth.

One participant, Jasmin Onus, 14, said police and security officers treated all indigenous people with suspicion.

"If they see a group of indigenous people they think they are making trouble," she said.

"They should be more aware of what's happening. They tend to ig-



TALKS . . . reconciliation advocates Nick Cowan, Lisa Reynolds and Aunty Joan Hendriks at the forum

Photo: LORI NEILSEN UN326008

nore our side of the story."

Ms Onus said the "People Meeting People" forum had also discussed racial taunts and bullying in schools, and advocated better teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

Her mother Florence Onus, one of a number of parents at the forum, said they would like to see "cultural exchanges" between Townsville schools.

"A lot of non-

indigenous students that go to private schools might never come into contact with indigenous people," she said.

Mrs Onus said she and other parents had formed an interim coordinating group to hold leadership training forums for young people to further reconciliation.

She conceded that there had been few Torres Strait Islanders or non-indigenous people at Saturday's talks

at St Teresa's Catholic Church, Garbutt, but believed future meetings would be better attended.

"We hope in future there will be representatives of the wider community, black and white," she said.

Nick Cowan, Reconciliation Australian Youth project coordinator said Saturday's meeting was the best "grassroots" gathering he had seen anywhere in Australia.

Local Reconciliation Groups

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ipswich Reconciliation Group
Megan Bathurst - Ph: (07) 3875 7791
Email: m.bathurst@mailbox.qd.edu.au

Maryborough Reconciliation Group
June O'Hanlon - Mobile: 0409 496 760

Mt Isa Reconciliation Group
Mick Lowcock - Ph: (07) 4743 6088
Email: lowcocksasp@centacare.com.au

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

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

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

People for Reconciliation in Cairns
Richard Cherry - Ph: (07) 4032 4327
Email: rcherry@vtown.com.au

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

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

Samford Reconciliation Group
Danielle Burette - Ph: (07) 3289 1540
Email: Danielle.burette@nrn.qld.gov.au

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

Sunshine Coast Reconciliation Group (Caloundra)
Jenny Cronin - Ph: 54911971
Email: jenny.tony@bigpond.com

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

Ecumenical Social Justice Group (WS) Inc.
Helen Carrick - Ph: 3378 3973
helen.carrick@uq.net.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.

PLO Locations & Contact details for the Metro North Region

PLO Debbie DeBree (Aboriginal / South Sea Islander)
Petrie Police Station Ph: (w) 32850260

S/PLO Kim Robinson (Aboriginal)
Sandgate Police Station Ph: (w) 36318000

S/PLO Roy Hodges (Aboriginal / Torres Strait Islander)
Boondall Police Station, Zillmere PCYC, Ph: (w) 38655622
Boondall & (w) 36330244, Zillmere PCYC

S/PLO Paul Coolwell (Aboriginal / South Sea Islander)
Ferry Grove Police Station Ph: (w) 38514499

S/PLO Laurie Nona (Torres Strait Islander)
Indooroopilly Police Station, Indooroopilly Police Beat
Ph: (w) 38785077, Indooroopilly (w) 30008255, Police Beat

S/PLO Joe McDonald (Aboriginal)
Brisbane City Watch house Ph: (w) 33646665

S/PLO Debbie Saunders (Aboriginal), S/PLO Kerry Scowcroft (Aboriginal),
S/PLO NhiThuy Vu (Vietnamese)
City Police Station, City Police Beat Ph: (w) 32582582, City & (w)
32244444, Police Beat

S/PLO Shana Plummer (Aboriginal), PLO ChiKim Wong (Chinese)
Valley Police Beat Ph: (w) 31311200

PLO Shelton Murphy (Aboriginal)
Valley PCYC Ph: (w) 32523365

PLO Graeme Finn & PLO Selena Malone (Aboriginal)
Police Railway Squad, Roma St Ph: (w) 32351185

PLO Rebecca Johnson (Aboriginal / South Sea Islander)
Redcliffe Police Station Ph: (w) 32830555

National Sorry Day May 26

Reconciliation Week May 27 - June 3 2004

Look out for future details of events RQI is hosting for National Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week. Contact your local reconciliation groups for details of local events.

Sorry Day is a day of remembrance so past mistakes are never repeated and Reconciliation Week acknowledges the journey that both Indigenous peoples and the broader community are taking with the aim of a future that mirrors RQI's 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."

Reconciliation Learning Circles

The School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences holds Reconciliation Learning Circles for all university students and staff. These gatherings are facilitated by Leilani Garland and follow the process set down by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation on the website

<http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/IndiQLRes/car/>

Participants do not require previous knowledge of Indigenous peoples, only open minds and enthusiasm to learn. Everyone has something to contribute.

You are welcome join the Reconciliation Learning Circle of the School of Social Work and Applied Human Sciences. We meet every second Wednesday from 12.145pm in room 202 Chamberlain Building. Contact Leilani Garland for more information: 33652952 or email: l.garland@social.uq.edu.au

WUKINDI ROM PROJECT: Arnhem Land, 20-27 June 2004

"The Wukindi Ceremony belongs to the Yolngu people of East Arnhem Land and has been used traditionally for centuries as a conflict resolution and healing process to restore relationships between individuals, groups and clan nations. This ancient ceremony is strongly linked conceptually to non-indigenous ideals related to mediation, conflict-resolution and decision-making processes. Leaders from the Yolngu people have joined with leading exponents of mediation in Australia to offer a cross-cultural workshop in which both indigenous and non-indigenous young people from across Australia will learn through direct contact, the shared cross-cultural ideas, processes, symbols and ritual related to peace-making and conflict resolution. This unique experience is planned to become an annual event in Australia and will contribute in a positive and practical way towards national reconciliation as well as providing an opportunity to exchange dispute resolution understandings and skills between our 'western' and indigenous sources of learning."

If you would like more information or an application form go to www.wukindi.com or email paul.tolliday@wukindi.com alternatively let us know here at RQI and we will send you an application form. This is a great chance for local groups to support a young person to attend this event and further the reconciliation process.

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: <i>(RQI Member)</i>
Seconded by:		Signature: <i>(RQI Member)</i>

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:

 **Fay Gee-Hoy's view on the Triple P (Helping Families Change) Conference, Auckland New Zealand 2004 - "Somewhere in my past is my future" (Maori Proverb)**

As an Indigenous Australian woman and member of 'Mothers crying out for help' group attending the Triple P (Helping families change) conference in Auckland, New Zealand from the 19-21 February 2004, I felt very privileged to have been invited. Many thanks go to Maria Wallaby for even considering me for the trip; she put great effort into getting us to NZ. Also Wilma Kemp for her help as well, and not forgetting Donna Cobbo who was an inspiration to us all.

The highlight of this conference for me was the presentation of the Maori women, the Rev. Hannah Pomare and Rangi Cook (traditional owners of that area). They began by quoting the proverb above and this touched my heart because the meaning for them was that in their past was their future. Especially the future of their young people, to take them back to the past and that learning from one's own past would reinforce their self-worth and to take pride in who they are and where they come from. Teaching them about the past includes: traditions, culture, language, dance, music, values and beliefs. Oral history was very significant to teach to young people as well. To close the generation gap is to "weave together the threads of our ancestors to make us stronger" and that pride and strength comes from within.

"Taking them backwards into their future" and to "reconnect to the ancient world" they can "Share the knowledge of the ancient ones with everyone then we will have many leaders who can lead the people into a better future". "The future was uncertain but the past was there to learn from".

These Maori women were crying out for help for their young people too, as they have the same problems that we are experiencing with our youth. Maria and Donna visited a centre run by the Maori women where a lot of their community programs involved the youth. They found it to be a very

rewarding experience, essentially, by the sharing of the problems that both our peoples endured with our youth.

Alcohol, drugs, substance abuse (chroming), many young people committing crimes and going to prison, lack of education, lack of job opportunities and racism are some of the many reasons why we formed the 'Mothers crying out for help' group two years ago. Mothers who did not want their children becoming a statistic or another case study, who wanted a positive change and to see their children have a future to look forward to. We also wanted action; we need a detox centre and a healing place for our kids, somewhere that they can get an alternative education and a place where they can come and learn about their past as well. Give them back their identity and make them proud to be Aboriginal by learning from the elders about their culture, traditions, language, oral history and much more. At the moment we have nothing and we are tired of the talk and more talk and after all is said and done there is more talk and no action we need help now!

From a multicultural perspective the Triple P conference has shown that even though there was a diversity of peoples from all walks of life each had similar problems. Those similarities were so amazing that people are people no matter the location, but it still is about "reconnecting to the ancient world" for us Indigenous peoples.

It was about strengthening families and the importance of unity. I thought this quote from one of the presentations was quite apt

'Much love, much trial, but what an utter desert is life without love'.

(Charles Darwin on parents' love for children)

Fay Gee-Hoy's People Reaching People, Townsville