



A web resource for Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants

FROM THE EDITOR

Hello everyone and welcome to the March edition of the Find & Connect web resource newsletter. We're busily planning our final stakeholder meetings for this phase of the web resource project, I've included the dates on this page so that you can put them in your diary. We're delighted to see that the *Inside: Life in Children's Homes and Institutions* exhibition has opened in Fremantle WA. I encourage all of you in the west to go to this very interesting and moving exhibition. In this issue we also have an article from Mike Jones about the importance of non-traditional records and on page 2 we have the regular updates from our state-based historians.

I hope you enjoy this issue and have a great month. See some of you soon!

Sal Orpin

Communications and Liaison Officer

NOT JUST PAPER: THE IMPORTANCE OF 'NON-TRADITIONAL' RECORDS

When many people think of archival records, they think of paper – paper in files and filing cabinets, files in boxes, loose pages in drawers, bound admission registers, printed photographs. But many archivists think about records more broadly. For example, the New South Wales State Records Act 1998 defines a 'record' as: "any document or other source of information compiled, recorded or stored in written form or on film, or by electronic process, or in any other manner or by any other means" [my italics].

I was reminded of this last month. As some of you may have seen via our news blog, in the first week of January 2014 demolition started on the Magill Training Centre in South Australia. Prior to this our historians Karen George and Gary George, hearing about the impending demolition, had put in a request to photograph a mural painted in the 1970s (pictured above right), when the [McNally Training Centre](#) operated on that site. Their request was not accepted. With no advanced warning the mural was demolished. While this record was not made of paper, it was still an important record.

Some organisations recognise the importance of these 'non-traditional' records. For example, the New South Wales

1. [State Records Act 1998, New South Wales Consolidated Acts](#)



Benevolent Society recently agreed to sell the property containing [Scarba House](#) which will prevent future access to the building. Therefore, they are creating an online record of the house and grounds using photos and other materials – a 'virtual tour'.

We know via our stakeholders, Senate reports and other sources how important records are to this community, and there are some paper records related to McNally that survive, but we must be aware that we have a collective responsibility to locate, preserve and provide access to more than just paper.

Those of us working in this field need to keep raising awareness. Case files and admission registers are critical records, but so too are paintings, walls, buildings, gardens, mementos and other objects. We must seek to preserve them, at least digitally. Such records sometimes contain more meaning and emotion than words on a page. Sometimes they are the only records left.

Mike Jones

Lead Archivist

SAVE THE DATE: FIND & CONNECT STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

We are currently planning the final round of stakeholder meetings for this phase of the Find & Connect web resource project.

I will be sending out invitations to you in the coming weeks. However it would be great if you could save the date in your diary. We will be inviting representatives from all of our stakeholder organisations – which will mean most of you reading this newsletter. If you would particularly like to attend please send an email to me at sorpin@unimelb.edu.au so that I can ensure you're on the invite list.

The stakeholder meeting dates are as follows:

VIC	Tuesday 8 April
QLD	Thursday 1 May
ACT	Tuesday 6 May
NSW	Wednesday 14 May
SA	Tuesday 20 May
WA	Thursday 22 May
NT	Tuesday 27 May
TAS	Monday 2 June

EVENTS DIARY

WA

Friday 14 Mar 2014 – Sunday 29 Jun 2014

9:30am – 5:00pm

**INSIDE: LIFE IN CHILDREN'S HOMES
AND INSTITUTIONS**

Western Australian Maritime Museum



Inside, the exhibition that shares the experiences of some of the half a million children who spent time in institutional 'care' is now open in the WA Maritime Museum. <http://museum.wa.gov.au/museums/maritime/inside-life-childrens-homes-and-institutions>

This newsletter is published by the Find & Connect web resource project team. For enquiries please email the editor: sorpin@unimelb.edu.au

STATE SNAPSHOTS

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Pictures tell thousands of words. It's one thing to present information on a web resource like Find & Connect about institutions, and about their context. It's another to be able to give people searching the website such a tangible link to the past as a photograph gives. Apart from continuing the research into the NSW State Children's Relief Board, and successor institutions in the ACT, I've focused on sourcing pictures of places that were care institutions or Homes, wherever we don't have one yet.

Liam Hogan

NEW SOUTH WALES

It has been a busy month in New South Wales. The publicity given to the public hearings at the Royal Commission, particularly about Parramatta Girls 'Home', has stirred up many people to get in touch. I'm not surprised to hear that record-holding agencies are busy fielding inquiries from people seeking records.

I joined my colleagues at the Australasian Welfare History Workshop and spoke about how buildings matter because memories are written into their walls. It was, therefore,



heartening to learn that Parragirls had a most successful Children's Day at the Parramatta Female Factory Precinct in early March, layering some good memories over the sad ones.

Photo by Mike Chin at Children's Day 2014 - Her Excellency The Honourable Prof. Marie Bashir Governor of NSW and Dr Geoffrey Lee State MP for Parramatta.

Naomi Parry

NORTHERN TERRITORY

As our time as historians on the Find & Connect web resource is rapidly coming to an end, we have been working for the last couple of months on a final review and update of every page on the Northern Territory website. This has led to the addition of new information on many Missions, and Government Settlements. Meanwhile, Gary has presented a conference paper about the children who were committed to Mud Island Lazaret

and Channel Island Leprosarium, as well as some of the island Missions, hoping to help shine a light on an often overlooked area of child welfare history in the NT.

Karen George, Gary George and Megg Kelham

QUEENSLAND

February has been dedicated to getting as much information as possible about Queensland in the web resource. With the deadline looming for the end of this phase of the project, I am endeavouring to move tasks from the 'to do' list to the 'completed' list. At the moment I am creating entities for Queensland Missions that housed children in dormitories. This will result in another 23 entries, along with all the associated entries. This new material will be published shortly. Thanks must go to the Community and Personal Histories team at the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs for assisting with information on the Queensland Missions.

Lee Butterworth

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

With just months remaining before the end of this phase of the project, we have been working through every historical entry on the web resource to make sure that it is accurate and easy to read and that the information about records is clear and informative. We are adding what we can about Homes for children with disabilities and Mission stations to make certain that we have as complete a picture of institutions for children in South Australia as possible. Karen presented a conference paper about the death of children in State care. This was inspired by research conducted by Steven Page and a shared aim to remember and honour children who died in care. Future publication of the paper will hopefully share the stories of these most forgotten of Forgotten Australians with a wider audience.

Gary George and Karen George

TASMANIA

February was an exciting month for Tasmania because, on Wednesday 12th, the Find & Connect web resource team held one of its rare face to face staff meetings in Hobart, with state-based historians and

News from our historians around the country.

many of the Melbourne team attending. It followed a two-day Australasian Welfare History Workshop held at the University of Tasmania at which many of the historians gave excellent papers based on their research for the Find & Connect web resource. It was wonderful to have everyone in Hobart - even the weather behaved. Otherwise, work preparing the website for completion continues.

Caroline Evans

VICTORIA

In February we gave a presentation at the Australasian Welfare History Workshop in Hobart. Our presentation focussed on the benefits and trials of our use of annual reports for the Victorian section of the Find & Connect web resource. Annual reports, to state the obvious, are inevitably biased towards promoting the best work of organisations. Despite this, we find annual reports provide an enormous wealth of information about particular Homes and they're especially useful for those nitty-gritty details, such as opening and closing dates. Sometimes they also contain photographs and other information of enormous value to care leavers. If you come across annual reports that you think it'd be worth us listing on the web resource, please do let us know!

Sarah Green and Rosemary Francis

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Given the nature of the Royal Commission, it was heartwarming to hear Commissioner Helen Milroy reflect on her experiences to date at the Royal Commission Stakeholder Forum in Perth. Particularly Commissioner Milroy's observation that people who had participated in public and private hearings were all concerned that 'this should not happen ever again'. Moreover, participants offered practical ideas about what would help to both prevent abuse and deal effectively with the outcomes. Another highlight this month has been positive feedback from record holders, telling us how the Find & Connect web resource has led many people to seek records from them.

Deb Rosser



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