



FIND & CONNECT Issue 6: November 2012

WEB RESOURCE NEWSLETTER

A web resource for Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants

FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the November newsletter. As I type this I'm wondering how it can be November already – time flies when you're busy and last month was very busy indeed. We travelled to ACT, NSW, TAS, SA and NT to meet the newly set up Find & Connect support services and our stakeholders. It was fantastic to meet you all – we really appreciate your time and feedback at these events – and we look forward to visiting WA early next year.

November is a momentous time for Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants with the anniversary of the National Apology on the 16th. There are a few events to celebrate the occasion around the country. You can find more details on this page. November also marks the anniversary of the launch of the Find & Connect web resource and Melissa looks back over our work during the last year in the article below. And, as always, we have a round up from our historians around the country on page two.

I'm handing over the December newsletter duties to Sarah, our Client Liaison Officer, as I'll be away on leave. I hope you enjoy this issue and I wish you all the best for the rest of the year.

Sally Orpin

Communications & Liaison Officer

FIND & CONNECT WEB RESOURCE CELEBRATES ITS FIRST ANNIVERSARY

Statistics might not be everyone's idea of a birthday celebration, but for our first anniversary we thought we would summarise the development of the web resource with some figures!

Since its launch on the 15th November 2011 the Find & Connect web resource has had 102,320 visitors from 167 different countries. Roughly 25% of people who visit the site return to the site again adding an additional 38,721 visits to the site over the last year. Although the majority of visitors find the site through Google, a number of people are also arriving from other sources including the State Library of Victoria (699 visitors), CLAN (612 visitors), Ancestry.com (578 visitors) and the Western Australian Museum (390 visitors). Visitors are engaging with the site too. Since launch we have received over 1,200 feedback emails, at least 42% of which were from Forgotten Australians, Former Child Migrants and their immediate family, and 55% of which were about accessing records.

Working closely with our stakeholders is a key part of developing the web resource, and we continue to meet with organisations and individuals in each state and territory. We have held a total of 20 workshops across Australia, with our state and territory historians attending many



more meetings and events. As well as raising the profile of the Find & Connect web resource, regular feedback and engagement helps ensure the content of the website is as complete, accurate and up-to-date as we can make it. There are now more than 8,700 web pages online,

including pages for 2,119 organisations, 1,333 digital objects such as photographs, and information about 1,050 archival collections, series and items.

All this content can be difficult to navigate, so we have also been assessing the design and performance of the website itself. This included completing usability testing with 27 people in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia. As we look back at the progress we have made over the last year we are also aware of the work still to be done, and we are particularly excited about the changes which will be made to improve the usability of the web resource. Over the next year we will continue to build on the work which we have started as we try to help more people access information about their past.

Thanks to you all for your continued involvement – you are an essential part of what we do.

Melissa Downing

Web Resource Database Manager

ANNIVERSARY EVENTS

Tasmania

Support service launch and anniversary celebration.

Friday 16th November 2012, 3pm – 4pm
Relationships Australia TAS, 20 Clare St, New Town.

[More information, invite and rsvp details.](#)

Queensland

Third anniversary celebration.

Friday 16 November 2012
7.00pm refreshments for a 7.30pm start
The Edge, State Library QLD, Stanley Place, Cultural Centre, Southbank
Lotus Place, Micah Projects.

[More information, invite and rsvp details.](#)

Victoria

Third anniversary morning tea.

Friday 16th November 2012, 11am
at Open Place, Suite 1 / 8 Bromham Place, Richmond.

RSVP your attendance to 1800 779 379.

Northern Territory

Relationships Australia NT will be holding a support service launch in the second week of December (date is to be confirmed).

They will also be holding a commemoration event for their staff on their planning day on November 16.

This newsletter is published by the Find & Connect Web Resource Project Team. For enquiries please email the editor: sorpin@unimelb.edu.au

STATE SNAPSHOTS

News from our historians around the country.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

There have been some important developments for the ACT site this month after a helpful and encouraging stakeholder meeting.

The most significant of the developments relates to information about accessing records. I have been working with each organisation to make sure the information included on the website is accurate and clear. I will be aiming to have information about accessing records for each organisation online in the coming month.

A number of people who attended the meeting have since contributed suggestions and advice which is greatly appreciated. Thank you for assisting with this priority and for your ongoing support.

Lydia Connell

NEW SOUTH WALES

This month the Find & Connect web resource team visited Wattle Place at Harris Park, and met with the team that will be supporting care leavers. We also had another stakeholders' meeting. It was heartening that care leavers were represented and that we had such a great response from not-for-profit and church agencies.

Over the last few months I have focussed on Catholic institutions, particularly those run by the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of St Joseph. I have added new photographs, strengthened the histories and worked with the Orders to clarify who holds records. I am grateful for the assistance of modern-day sisters and I hope this work will be helpful for care leavers.

Naomi Parry

NORTHERN TERRITORY

This month our NT historian Megg identified several new Homes in Alice Springs. Details about them and surviving records are being added to the site.

Our trip to Darwin unearthed much new material from records held at the Northern Territory Archives, the Department of Health and the National Archives. The stakeholder meeting added to our understanding of the unique needs

of the Territory, and a public event at the NT Library also elicited valuable feedback.

We are continually grateful for the indexing work being done by Kym Muller and Linda Zagorskis of the Department of Health. Their unique insights into departmental records and their extensive index will be of immeasurable value.

Karen & Gary George

QUEENSLAND

Thank you to all the stakeholders who attended the Find and Connect meeting on 28 September 2012 in Brisbane.

The group, through meaningful and lively discussion, provided valuable insight and suggestions about the Find & Connect web resource. Of particular interest was the debate concerning uploading of photos available in the public domain, when they portray children.

During the second half of October I concentrated on importing new historical data and photographs into the St Joseph's Orphanage (Meteor Park) entity. More information will be added in November.

Lee Butterworth

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

This month we had the wonderful opportunity to meet with many of the SA stakeholder organisations and discuss what has changed on the website in the last year, and how we can continue to improve it.

We also met with the new Find & Connect support service team to discuss how the web resource can help them provide for the needs of care leavers. Meanwhile the changes we made to Methodist Homes, including Lentara and Kate Cocks Babies Home, have gone live and thanks to the help of Uniting Communities, we have been able to add more information and new photographs to these entries as well.

Karen & Gary George

TASMANIA

October has been a busy month in Tasmania. On the 12th, we held our workshop for stakeholders at Relationships Australia in New Town.

We had some fantastic discussion with lots of new ideas being suggested by the participants. A big thank-you goes to all who attended and made the afternoon so interesting and useful.

The following week, on 18th October, the Premier, Lara Giddings, made a moving apology in Parliament to people who are affected by the forced adoption practices of the past. Her apology was the first to acknowledge the illegality of some of these practices.

Caroline Evans

VICTORIA

This month the Victorian historians have been continuing our visits with a collection of organisations and finding some really good work being done, especially with pictures. Stay tuned to see some of these available through the web resource soon.

We're also building up our entries about hulks. These were decommissioned ships that were used as Industrial and Reformatory Schools in the 19th century in Victoria, and a number of stakeholders have expressed their interest in this aspect of child welfare.

These new and improved entries will also be up and viewable soon. Thanks to everyone who has contributed to these developments.

Nell Musgrove

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Perth has glorious rivers and many Children's Homes were set along their banks. In October, I was invited to participate in a new project that will enable people who grew up in these Homes to share their childhood memories of the rivers.

The Rivers of Emotion website (www.riversofemotion.org.au) will be live for 12 months, during which time we will encourage Find & Connect web resource users to input their stories. I believe this is another meaningful avenue for reflecting on childhood and contributing a range of voices to the history of Western Australia. Please check out the website - everyone is welcome to add their memories.

Deb Rosser