



*Lotus Place is a dedicated support service and resource centre for adults who as children lived in out-of-home care and adults who experienced sexual, physical, emotional and spiritual abuse in out-of-home care or religious or institutional settings.*

*Micah projects supports people who have experienced abuse to seek acknowledgement and redress by Churches, Governments and Community Organisations who failed in their duty of care.*

June is here, signaling that we are nearly half way through 2017. This month edition of the Lillypad features a baked sweet potato recipe, compliments of Ally from Bundaberg. Leigh took the opportunity to try it at home and the photo of her efforts is included. It comes highly recommended. Many of you will have received a postcard in the mail with a letter from the Alliance for Forgotten Australians who have initiated a campaign to promote and implement a National Redress scheme that recognises all forms of abuse in out of home care. The postcards can be sent to the Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk, Minister Shannon Fentiman or the Leader of the Opposition Tim Nicholls or to your local member. If you didn't

receive your letter or postcard, we have some at the office, I will also have them with me for when I visit Bundaberg in June.

This month's edition features an excerpt from a Find and Connect Fact Sheet on what to expect when accessing your records which you may find useful if you have begun the journey of accessing your records or you are seeking to make sense of what you do or don't read.

We also have a number of photos in this edition of some of our morning teas and lunches. We would love to see you there, ringing early to let us know you are coming really assists us to organise catering and ensure that there is enough food for all.

Regards, Selena

## June Luncheon

Thank you to Terry from the CQ Financial Counselling Service (CQFCS) for joining us at our June Luncheon at Lotus Place and telling us about the free, government funded, confidential service for people who are having financial difficulties. Terry also talked about the No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS) available ; how to check your credit rating; and a very lively discussion on scams and how to recognize them.



Contact CQFCS  
at 2/72 High  
Street  
Rockhampton,  
phone 4928  
7844 for more  
information or  
visit the website:

[www.cqfcs.com](http://www.cqfcs.com)





## Cooking Corner

### Ally's Baked Sweet Potato

#### Ingredients

1 whole sweet potato

cinnamon

brown sugar

Greek yoghurt or butter

to serve

#### Method

Thank you Ally in Bundaberg for this very simple, tasty recipe!

Heat oven to 350°C and bake whole sweet potato



until soft (approx. 45 mins - 1 hr or until soft). Cut in half lengthwise and sprinkle with cinnamon and a small amount of brown sugar. Serve with Greek yoghurt or butter.

## Guest Speakers



Above: Jenny, Centacare

Right: Michelle James, Australian Lawyers Alliance speaking to group at Lotus Place, Rockhampton.

Thank you to our recent guest speakers, Jenny Tree (pictured left, standing) for joining with our Bundaberg morning tea group to talk about the services offered by Centacare in the area. In Rockhampton Michelle James, Queensland President of the Australian Lawyers Alliance (below). Michelle spoke at the Rockhampton morning tea on 23 May about Commonwealth Redress Scheme, the recent lifting of the Statute of Limitations and the process of making a civil claim or class action.



## John's Corner

A big hello to everyone! Great lunch on Tuesday, pizza, followed by lovely cheesecake. Our guest speaker, Terry from CQ Financial Counselling Service was of huge interest to us all.

A big thank you to Michelle from Qld Lawyers Alliance who spoke to us at morning tea.

Bob hasn't been well of late, but great to see him circulating again. Stay well my brother.

Take care everyone.

P.S. Leigh take care of that nice car!

- John



Q. What did the light bulb say to its mother?

A. I love you Watts and Watts.



## Find and Connect FACT SHEET

*What to expect when accessing records about you  
(an excerpt)*

### STARTING THE JOURNEY

If you (or a member of your family) spent time in ‘care’, there will likely be records that are personal to you, and your story. In Australia, the state government and community services organisations are the ‘custodians’ of these personal records about children in ‘care’. You won’t see these records on a website, or in a book, because they are private, personal, and confidential. But if the records are about you, you have the right to ask and to access them. People seek out their personal records for different reasons – everyone’s story is different. It can take a long time to actually make the decision to approach an organisation and ask about your records. We hope that the information here will assist you on your journey to find out about your time in ‘care’.

### WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN ACCESSING RECORDS

“Like many older care leavers, I was not even aware that files were kept about me until I was in my midfifties.” – Frank Golding, ‘Personal records and the stories they tell’.

People often embark on the journey to locate and access their records expecting to: find all the answers to questions about their childhood be given access to their records straight away find detailed, accurate records about their time in ‘care’. But, many of these common expectations will not be met when you locate and retrieve your records. If you were a state ward, there may be some form of wordship records about you held by the state government. If you were not a ward of the state, there may be records held by the non government agency that holds the records from your ‘care’ provider. In some instances, the available records may only be the admission and discharge record.

Past record keeping practices of Government departments and ‘care’ providers were primarily for administrative purposes rather than to keep an accurate record of all events. Unfortunately, the older records may be superficial, inaccurate, or incomplete, and leave many questions unanswered. The records kept and the information recorded will vary according to the time period when you were in ‘care’, what sort of institution you were in, the policies and practices of different

‘care’ providers, and even the personal habits of different staff members keeping records. Some people find that their years in ‘care’ only generated a few lines of writing. Other people are presented with reams of information (although it will not necessarily be an accurate reflection of one’s experiences).

### HOW WILL I FEEL WHEN I LOOK AT MY FILE?

Many people who read their records don’t expect it to be such an emotional experience and are not prepared for the significant emotional impact including feelings of anger, and hurt, but also sometimes feelings of confirmation or relief. Some people find that their files are not just full of bureaucratic facts and figures but contain records that evoke the pain of a child being removed from family. Sometimes the contents of your file will contradict the way you remember the past. It might contain information that was kept from you as a child, or reveal that you were lied to when you were in ‘care’, e.g. finding letters from family members that were never passed on to you, or letters that you had written. The records often contain negative, derogative, and even offensive language, to describe the child and his or her family. As Frank Golding writes.

Many of us find our personal records are almost entirely negative. Care Leavers often search their records in vain for positive achievements, but the archives are brimming with examples of our minders’ low expectations. Some of us who are perfectly intelligent have found in our records that we were described as ‘slow-witted’, even ‘low-grade mental defective’. – ‘Our side of the story’, 17 June 2016.

The process of seeking access to your records can lead to positive experiences. You can find clues and answers to these identity questions by locating and accessing records about your time in ‘care’. Records can sometimes help if you have gaps in your own personal history, especially about your childhood. Also, it can lead to reconnecting with friends from your childhood. Some people find it helpful to attend reunions of the home where they lived as children, or get-togethers organised by support groups for ‘care’ leavers.

### WHAT IF THERE IS NO FILE ABOUT ME?

Unfortunately, not every person who was in ‘care’ will be able to find and access their records. In the *(continued next page)*



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past, records have been lost and even destroyed, meaning that vital and precious information is not available. Even if you are one of the people whose records no longer exist, there are other historical records that might contain information that helps you to understand your time in ‘care’ – newspaper articles, photographs, books and oral histories can be valuable resources. This Find & Connect website has information from these types of resources relating to particular homes, organisations and events.

### THE LAW AND ACCESS TO RECORDS ABOUT ME AND OTHERS

Organisations that provided ‘care’ to children (like children’s homes and orphanages) created records to help them in their work. If you spent time in an institution as a child, there may be records about your time in ‘care’ that have been kept. You can access these records. These records can be a valuable source of information about you, your childhood, your family and the story of your time in ‘care’. There is legislation that applies to your right to access records. Different laws relating to privacy and freedom of information apply in each state and territory, and depend on whether the records are in the custody of a government department, or held by a past or current care provider organisation.

Legislation in each state requires the government to keep the personal records of children who were in ‘care’ permanently. Usually the internal policy of an organisation states that the ‘care’ provider must also keep its client files permanently. Inquiries like ‘Forgotten Australians’ and ‘Bringing them home’ have also stipulated that these records are never to be destroyed. The organisation that created the records needs to be accountable for its actions as your former guardian, and in many cases will have kept the original copies of the records. In the case of some records on your file (like personal letters, school reports, photographs) you can request the community service organisation give the original records to you, and keep a copy for its files. The government or a community service organisation might be the custodian, but you have a right to

request access to records if they contain information about you.

You may also be given the opportunity to add information to the files an organisation or government department has about you, as a way of completing the picture, and making sure that your voice is included. In the case of other people’s records, for example a sister or brother or a parent, you can access those parts of the file that contain information about you. You might find that your access to some information in the records (yours and other people’s files) is restricted, because of the interpretation of privacy or freedom of information legislation. Usually, it is information about ‘third parties’ – meaning people other than yourself – which you may not be permitted to see. The need to protect third party information is sometimes at odds with the need people have to find out information about family members, and their past. In the case of government records, there are formal avenues to appeal any information that is exempted from the file and these appeal rights are outlined when records are provided.

See also Applying for Records: Your Rights and the Law:

[\[https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/resources/your-rights\]](https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/resources/your-rights)



**Date Claimer!** Remembrance Day commemoration will be held during Child Protection Week, Tuesday

5 September in Rockhampton and Thursday 7 September in Bundaberg.

Times and venues are to be confirmed.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Forde Foundation Next grant round	Closing Date Friday 8 September	fordefoundation.org.au	Phone: 4927 7604 for more information
Forde Foundation Board meeting to assess grant applications	Thursday 28 September	fordefoundation.org.au	Phone: 4927 7604 for more information

## ROCKHAMPTON EVENTS

Rockhampton Show Holiday	Thursday 15 June	Lotus Place Rockhampton office will be closed for the public show holiday	
Centrelink visits to Lotus Place	10am Wed 5 July 10am Wed 2 August	Lotus Place, 159 Denison Street, Rockhampton	Phone for appointment Lotus Place 4927 7604
July Luncheon at Lotus Place	12pm Tuesday 4 July <i>First Tuesday of each month</i>	Lotus Place, 159 Denison Street, Rockhampton <u>Guest Speaker:</u> Leonie, CQ University Health Clinic	RSVP Wednesday 27 June Phone: 4927 7604
August Luncheon at Lotus Place	12pm Tuesday 1 August <i>First Tuesday of each month</i>	Lotus Place, 159 Denison Street, Rockhampton <u>Guest Speaker:</u> to be confirmed	RSVP Wednesday 25 July Phone: 4927 7604
Central Qld Community Legal Centre visits	10am Wed 12 July 10 am Wed 9 August	Lotus Place, 159 Denison Street, Rockhampton	Phone for appointment Lotus Place 4927 7604
Morning Tea Rockhampton	10.00am - 11.00am <i>Every Tuesday morning except when lunch is served</i>	Lotus Place, 159 Denison Street, Rockhampton	No RSVP necessary, just come on in!

## BUNDABERG EVENTS

Coffee & Cake Morning Bundaberg	10.30am - 12.00pm Thursday 15th June Thursday 20 July Thursday 17 August <i>Third Thursday of each month</i>	Take the Plunge 17 Electra Street Bundaberg	Phone 4927 7604
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Find out what the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) means for you and the important people in your life.

At LiveBetter and Excelcare, our priority is to ensure you are fully supported in your transition to the NDIS.

Join us for a bite to eat and to find out how we can help you reach your goals under the NDIS.

**Register online** at  
[excelcare.com.au/ndis-roadshow](http://excelcare.com.au/ndis-roadshow)  
 or **call** 1800 580 580

## Topics:

- NDIS eligibility and how to apply
- Reasonable and necessary supports
- Goals
- Preparing for your NDIS planning meeting (free workbook provided)
- Getting support to manage your plan

## Dates:

**6**  
JUN

**Yeppoon**  
 Keppel Bay Sailing Club  
 Anzac Pde (Commodore Room)  
 10:30am

**6&7**  
JUN

**Rockhampton**  
 Centre Point Motor Inn  
 131 George St  
 6th - 6:00pm & 7th - 10:30am

**8**  
JUN

**Clermont\***  
 Peppercorn Motel  
 51-53 Capricorn St  
 10:30am

**8**  
JUN

**Emerald**  
 Maraboon Tavern  
 Hospital & Esmond St  
 6:00pm

**9**  
JUN

**Blackwater**  
 Central Motel  
 52 Railway St  
 10:30am

**13**  
JUN

**Mt Morgan**  
 The Hub  
 63 Morgan St  
 10:30am

**14**  
JUN

**Bundaberg**  
 Country Comfort Club Intl  
 73 Takalvan St  
 10:30am & 6:00pm

**15**  
JUN

**Gin Gin**  
 Youth Activity Centre  
 4A Station St  
 10:30am

**15**  
JUN

**Childers**  
 Isis Cultural Centre  
 49 Churchill St  
 6:00pm

\*Includes plan implementation

**liveBetter**  
 community services

**excelcare**  
 AUSTRALIA

[livebetter.org.au](http://livebetter.org.au)  
[excelcare.com.au](http://excelcare.com.au)