



# FIND & CONNECT

## WEB RESOURCE NEWSLETTER

Issue 5: October 2012

A web resource for Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants

### FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the October edition of the *Find & Connect web resource newsletter*. This issue has caught us in the middle of our stakeholder meeting roadshow. Over the last few weeks we have had sessions in Queensland, Canberra, Sydney and Hobart, thanks to all that attended and contributed. This week we're meeting stakeholders in South Australia. These sessions are an invaluable source of feedback, contributing to the development of the web resource. We appreciate everyone who takes time out of their busy schedules to attend.

In this issue Mike Jones writes about statistics and feedback, plus there's a short update on RADP below and news of the Remembrance Day held in Queensland. The St Stanislaus article in the last issue prompted a lot of interest, you'll be glad to know that there's a follow up to the story in the state snapshots on page 2.

I hope you enjoy this edition and that you have a great month. Hope to see you in your state or territory soon!

Sal Orpin

Communications & Liaison Officer

### RECORDS ACCESS DOCUMENTATION PROJECT (RADP)

The Records Access Documentation Project has been funded by FaHCSIA to improve access to the records of Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants. As part of this project, the web resource team has developed training materials and an indexing tool designed to assist organisations in managing and documenting their archival collections.

The Index Tool and related materials are now available via the Find & Connect web resource:

<http://www.findandconnect.gov.au/RADP001.html>

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

### EVALUATING THE FIND & CONNECT WEB RESOURCE

Since the Find & Connect web resource was launched on 15 November 2011, we have been recording statistics on content and usage.

For example, we know there have been more than 82,000 unique visitors to the site so far, and these users have visited more than 520,000 individual web pages. We know our historians around the country have added more than 2,200 new entities (organisations, archival resources, publications, photographs and more) in 2012. And we know our Client Liaison Officer Sarah Green has received more than 1,120 feedback emails.

We have also collected qualitative data on the effectiveness of the web resource, working with Roger Hudson to run usability sessions for 'care' leavers, Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants around the country. These sessions have been invaluable in telling us which parts of the web resource work well and which do not. Over the coming months we will be working on implementing many of Roger's recommendations and plan to hold additional usability tests to make sure the changes we make meet the needs of our audience.

But the combined statistical and qualitative information we collect can only tell us so much. For example, if we have received emails from 1,120 of our

82,000 visitors, what did the other 80,880 visitors do? Did they find what they were looking for?

If the answer is yes, it is possible they contacted you directly. The intention of the web resource is to provide information to 'care' leavers, Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants which allows them to contact the relevant organisation directly – whether that be a support service, a past provider, a record holding institution, an advocacy group or a government department.

To put it another way, when the Find & Connect web resource works, we – the web resource team – do not hear from our users. The better the web resource works, the less users we hear from; but we don't want to assume that, just because we don't hear from users, the site works.

If you keep track of how people found out about you, have noticed more enquiries since your details were listed on the web resource, or have heard positive (or negative) comments about the site we would love to hear from you. We are always looking for information which will help us to evaluate and develop the web resource, so any feedback you can provide via the [feedback form](#) on the web resource is much appreciated.

Mike Jones

National Program Manager

### QUEENSLAND REMEMBRANCE DAY 2012

On 5 September 2012 Forgotten Australians, Former Child Migrants and members of the Stolen Generation and their families and friends, in partnership with Micah Projects and the Child Protection Week Committee, joined together in acknowledging the abuse suffered by Queensland's children and young people while in foster care, institutions and detention centres.



Kay McGrath (newsreader Channel 7), Tracy Davis, (Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services) and Allan Allaway (AFA).

# STATE SNAPSHOTS

News from our Historians around the country.

## AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

It is looking like an exciting month for the ACT site with the stakeholder meeting on the 9th of October. It will be great to reconnect with everyone and talk about where we can go from here. There are a number of questions I would like to raise and hopefully make some ground on with everyone's minds put together. It has helped me to think about what has been achieved on the site and what the most important priorities are to move forward. I would like to thank everyone for their input so far and am very much looking forward to seeing you all there.

Lydia Connell

## NEW SOUTH WALES

The NSW site is constantly expanding as more information comes to light. A 1943 article in the Women's Weekly about Belhaven Babies Home in Bellevue Hill led to a lengthy investigation into Belhaven and Hopewood, which was a children's home in Bowral. Visit the site to find out why these homes were so very interesting.

Queries from care leavers inevitably turn up new information and insights: for instance, a resident recently wrote in with his memories of St Joseph's Kincumber, and we have been contacted by former staff members of children's Homes who offer their invaluable perspective of the institutions they staffed. Being able to connect people with their memories, however slight, is the best part of a state-based historian's job.

Naomi Parry

## NORTHERN TERRITORY

This month we welcomed our new NT based Research Assistant, Megg Kelham, to the team. Based in Alice Springs, Megg has already identified some new Central Australian Cottage Homes which we have added to the site. She is also trying to find out more about the Alice Springs Receiving Home and has even spent time on her bicycle searching the streets for the former site. She has made contact with archivists at the NT Archives and other smaller repositories.

We have added new material to the entry for Somerville Cottage Homes from records researched in Darwin and have included

more detail in government home entries from research at the National Archives. We are looking forward to our trip to Darwin in late October to catch up with stakeholders again and do some more research.

Karen & Gary George

## QUEENSLAND

In September a 60 Minutes expose on historical abuse occurring in BoysTown Beaudesert, Queensland, prompted more former residents to speak out about their experiences at the institution. If there are other former residents who wish to lodge a complaint against BoysTown Beaudesert, contact Crime Stoppers 1800 333 000 (7 days / 24 hours).

Later this year the Queensland Government will make a statement of apology in parliament to the many people affected by past forced adoption practices. The Government invited those affected to provide input into the development of the apology.

Lee Butterworth

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Good news from SA regarding St Stanislaus Orphanage. Thanks to the help of Linda Lacey, Cultural Heritage Project Officer at the City of Charles Sturt we now know the foundation stone of the Orphanage has not been lost! We hope to bring you lots more news on this when we follow the stone to its current home, so stay tuned! Meanwhile we have been busy on the SA website sorting out all the incarnations of the Methodist Children's Homes, Lentara, and related Cottage Homes. As part of this investigation we visited the Magill Cemetery where we found the headstone of two small children who died at the Home in 1929 and 1960. We were relieved and quite moved to find that the headstone, paid for by the girls at the Home, was still in place and that someone had left flowers on the grave.

Karen & Gary George

## TASMANIA

A new entry about the St Vincent de Paul Boys' Hostel, Launceston came about because of an inquiry from the Department of Health and Human

Services. I would like to thank them for alerting me to it and the Tasmanian Archive and Heritage Office for finding a record that concerns it. The Department have also lent me a range of old annual reports. New and improved entries using those will soon be on the web site.

Caroline Evans

## VICTORIA

The Victorian historians have been doing interesting things this month. One highlight was our trip to the Australian Centre for the Moving Image where we viewed historical footage from the National Film and Sound Archive about the Lady Northcote Children's Farm in Bacchus Marsh. Keep your eyes out for these films on the Victorian website. We have also been travelling out to meet some of our stakeholders in their own workplaces, including a trip to Bethany at Geelong where we viewed their archival collection of historical material. There were some interesting items we will list really soon.

Nell Musgrove

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

*St Andrew's Hostel Katanning: How the system and society failed our children* was released in September, holding a lot of information relevant to the Find & Connect web resource. (<http://www.findandconnect.gov.au/wa/biogs/WE00816b.htm> and related entries. There will be more to come as I sift through the historical data in the report and transcripts.

One thing that caught my eye was this remark from Special Inquirer Hon. Peter Blaxell: 'Locating and examining pertinent documentary evidence was critical in identifying lines of inquiry, and in supporting, clarifying or challenging the evidence and recollections of witnesses. These records also provided context in relation to the environment at various hostels, community values and attitudes, and the government policies and processes which applied at the material time.' (p.15). Hear, hear!

Deb Rosser

*Editor's note: these snapshots were written and submitted before we conducted our ACT, NSW & Tasmania stakeholder meetings.*