



Issue 5 | January 2023 - March 2023

# LINK-UP (NSW) ABORIGINAL CORPORATION NEWSLETTER

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Link-Up (NSW) Aboriginal Corporation acknowledge that our work is conducted on the traditional lands of the Aboriginal nations across New South Wales.

We pay our respects to Elders both past and present, and to those emerging leaders who will guide us into the future.

Link-Up (NSW) Aboriginal Corporation is committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to Link-Up (NSW) and our communities.

We also acknowledge members of the Stolen Generations whose connection to their country was interrupted and search for belonging and identity has been long and difficult. We stand by them in their struggle.

**WARNING:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are warned that this document may contain images of deceased persons





## Aunt Annabell Reunion

March 2023 seen Senior Counsellor Mary-Anne and Caseworker Shanarah take our client, Aunt Annabell to meet her 2 grand daughters for the first time.

This reunion was a Link-Up (NSW) team effort. Due to little documentation and an informal name change making it difficult to locate family, our Media Coordinator Aiesha used the power of modern day technology and utilised our social media platforms to reach out to the community for help. We would like to thank everyone that liked, commented and shared the posts, without your support this family may not have been reunited.

Aunt Annabell was stolen at tender age of 14 and at the same time, her newborn son Elliot was forcibly removed. Devastatingly, Elliot passed away before he got to meet his Mother again. It saddens us to know that he spent years trying to find his family, but we taken comfortable in knowing we could bring his children home to meet their Nan, Aunties and Uncles.

Their first meeting was filled with intense emotion as the girls walked into the room to meet their grandmother for the very first time. They cried as they fell into her arms.. And tthis is why we do - what we do!







## Katherine NT. Reunion

Simone came to Link-Up in (NSW) in 2014 wanting assistance in locating her natural father. The only information Simone had was his name was Kevin Saunders and was around the Northern Territory area. Simone was made a Ward of the State in 1987.

With the very limited information provided, our Caseworkers were having difficulty in trying to locate a Kevin Saunders. After a few months went by, Simone contacted Link-Up (NSW) again to advise she had located her Father who went by the name of Kevin Chandler. She had undergone the Ancestry DNA testing process to see if she received any leads from this. Thankfully, they matched together on the website.

Simone was so pleased this has happened, however she let our staff know her Father was not well. Due to his health and age, this reunion was prioritised so Link-Up (NSW) contacted Link-Up (NT) to request a collaboration reunion for Simone and Kevin.

The reunion was held in February 2023 where Caseworker Shanarah and Senior Counsellor Mary-Anne took Simone and her daughter Chloe to Katherine, Northern Territory to be reunited with her father Kevin.





# Katherine NT. Reunion continued...

They were able to meet other family members there who were already connected to Country and able to teach both of them about the culture and local knowledge.

Simone and Kevin have remained in contact since the reunion, talking almost every day working on their special connection they knew they had the very moment they met.

This reunion was a team effort with Link-Up (NSW) and Link-Up (NT) in bringing Simone and Kevin home, together. We would like to thank Link-Up (NT) for collaborating with us.

We are so proud we were able to be part of their beautiful journey.

This, is why we do, what we do!







## LATERAL VIOLENCE TRAINING

This week, our Link-Up (NSW) staff attended a 2-day Lateral Violence in the Workplace workshop, which was conducted by Mel from Spirit Dreaming Training and Education Solutions. Lateral Violence happens when individuals have endured oppression and suppress their feelings such as anger, shame and rage which can manifest into behaviours such as jealousy, resentment, blame and bitterness, and direct them towards their peers. Another word for “LV” is bullying.

It is so important as an Aboriginal organisation to educate our staff on how to recognise these behaviours and provide the tools to deal with it in the workplace.

**"HURT PEOPLE,  
HURT PEOPLE... IT  
EXPLAINS IT, BUT  
DOESN'T EXCUSE IT"**







# NATIONAL REDRESS SCHEME (NRS)

The National Redress Scheme (NRS) was established on July 2018 and will close to the last applicant in 30th June 2027. The National Redress Scheme was created because of a government response to the recommendations by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The National Redress Scheme:

- acknowledges that many children were sexually abused in Australian institutions
- recognises the suffering they endured because of this abuse
- holds institutions accountable for this abuse, and
- helps people who have experienced institutional child sexual abuse gain access to counselling, a direct personal response, and a Redress payment.

Link-Up (NSW) is a National Redress Scheme support service who offers assistance to Aboriginal people who are survivors of sexual abuse while institutionalised.

Redress Counsellors Libby and Tania have been busy travelling throughout NSW to places such as Narrabri, Gunnedah, the South Coast and the local Sydney area. We continue to support our clients through the redress application process.



# **NATIONAL REDRESS SCHEME (NRS) CONTINUED..**

The Redress Counsellors have also been busy planning community organisation information days with other redress support services which will be held in the Mt Druitt and Dubbo areas. These days will provide organisations with important information on the National Redress Scheme, such as how to apply and the process, support services available and answer any questions the organisations or community members may have.

## **Good news story!**

Link-Up (NSW) recently held a Redress meeting at Yerin Eleanor Duncan Aboriginal Health Service (YEDAHS) in Wyong. It was identified by our Redress Counsellor that our Link-Up (NSW) client was a potential family member to the YEDAHS staff member who was assisting us with the planning and arrangements of our meeting. While these two ladies had met before, they have never made the family name connection.

With this information, the Link-Up (NSW) client is now interested in utilising our the reunification program. Link-Up (NSW) are hopeful the next time these two ladies meet, it will be as family members.







# COOEE FESTIVAL

15 April 2023



Celebrating the oldest  
surviving culture in the world

LIVE MUSIC  
MARKET STALLS  
FOOD TRUCKS  
ELDERS TENT  
KIDS WORLD  
ART EXHIBITIONS  
AND MORE

Mount Druitt  
Town Centre Reserve  
10am - 4pm







## LOCAL MP VISIT

The Hon MP Ed Husic; Minister for Industry & Science and Federal Member for Chifley recently visited the Link-Up (NSW) office. He met with our Chairperson, Aunty Lizzie May and CEO, Jamie Sampson to discuss Link-Up's views about the voice referendum and gain a better understanding of the concerns around the matter. Mr Husic has been a long time supporter of Link-Up (NSW) and frequently takes time out of his busy schedule to attend many of our events.







## 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL APOLOGY - PARLIAMENT HOUSE



Members of our Board of Directors were invited to the 15th Anniversary of the National Apology at Parliament House, hosted by the Healing Foundation.

The apology is such a significant date for Link-Up (NSW) being that our core business is reuniting the Stolen Generations. We would like to thank the Healing Foundation for giving us the opportunity to attend, along with Australia's Corporates, Government Ministers and Federal Department services.

Our Chairperson, Aunty Lizzie May is pictured here with previous Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, and current Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese.





## 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL APOLOGY EVENT

On 13 February 2008, then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd offered a formal apology to Australia's Indigenous people, particularly the Stolen Generations, on behalf of the nation at Parliament House.

The apology acknowledged that the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments had resulted in forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, and had inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss.

15 years on, Link-Up (NSW) acknowledged this historic day by inviting the community to Mt Druitt Community Hall. There were performances by cultural groups, speeches made by Stolen Generation survivors about their journey, a bbq lunch and the Apology was replayed on a big screen.

We would like to thank the Healing Foundation and Woolworths supporting this event. Without organisations like you, days like this would not be possible.

We would also like to thank the community, local organisations and Mt Druitt police for attending.















## Marist180 Daramu Program

The start of 2023 has seen a successful partnership between Daramu and Link-Up (NSW), who have come together investing their resources into delivering an Aboriginal Young Men's Group to the Western Sydney Region.

Link-Up (NSW) Uncle Dennis Dunn facilitates classes for this group at the Daramu premises where he teaches the young Aboriginal men to reconnect with their culture, creates a sense of identity and belonging and gives them a chance to yarn in a culturally safe space.

To date, there has been 3 classes with 23 clients who have attended. As the program continues and expands, we look forward to reaching even more young Aboriginal men across Western Sydney.







In January 2023, Uncle Dennis Dunn & Libby our Redress Counsellor represented Link-Up (NSW) and visited Evergreen Early Education Childcare Services to share Dreamtime stories, teach traditional dances and present Aboriginal artefacts.

Uncle Dennis recalls the time he spent with the Children: “it was amazing watching jarjums get involved and learn about our culture, they enjoyed the traditional dances!”

We look forward continuing our engagement and education with the next generations in the future.







## MOUNTY YARNS

Link-Up (NSW) attended the "Mounty Yarns" program launch. Mounty Yarns is a youth led project that gathers stories, expertise and knowledge from young Aboriginal people with criminal justice system experience in the Mount Drutt area.

it was held at Kimberwalli and had performances by artists such as Kobie Dee and Barkaa. It was a great opportunity for Link-Up (NSW) engage with the local community and support this deadly initiative.











**LINK-UP [NSW]**  
**Aboriginal Corporation**

## About Link-Up (NSW)

Link-Up (NSW) Aboriginal Corporation has been reuniting Stolen Generations Members with family, community, culture and identity since 1980. Today, our services expand beyond reuniting clients; seeing us conducting family history research and identifying culture for our kids in out of home care to embed a sense of identity and belonging. Building strength in our communities, as well as counselling and addressing trauma in our people. We offer mentors, self-empowerment and always strive to prove that the Aboriginal community can do more than “just survive”!

## Contact Us



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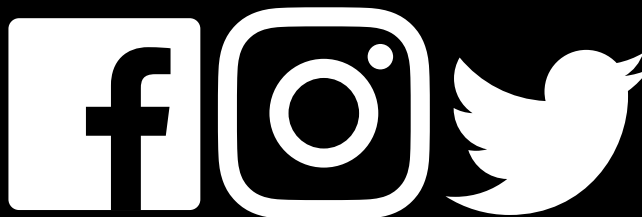
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## Social Media

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**Thank you to our funders**



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