

From the Lily Pad

10 years since Forde Inquiry

In August 1998 The Hon Anna Bligh Minister for Families, Youth and Communities established a Commission of Inquiry to examine whether there had been any abuse, mistreatment or neglect of children in Queensland institutions for children run by church and state.

In May 1999 Leneen Forde the appointed Chairperson of the Inquiry presented the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions.

The conclusion of the Report stated:

Over the years significant numbers of children in the care of the State in government and non government institutions have been subjected to repeated physical, emotional and sexual abuse. The scope and scale of the abuse varied amongst institutions and varied at times by different perpetrators. However, some of the key commonalities among the abuses included an abuse of power, a betrayal of trust, a reluctance of people in authority to acknowledge or deal with the abuse, and an official response which showed more concern for the protection of the institution and the abusers than for the safety of children, particularly where cases of sexual abuse have been referred to the police for prosecution.

Aside from the abuses, we found in a number of institutions a failure to provide for the basic human needs of children. Many children in institutions received limited education, little instruction in life skills and an emotional coldness that had a profound impact on their lives.

In making our recommendations we conclude that although it was individual who perpetrated each act of abuse, they alone cannot shoulder the whole responsibility. Some measure of responsibility must be taken by those to whom the abuses were reported and who did not act, those in charge of institutions who did not have enough safeguards in place to protect children, those members of religious institutions who turned a blind eye, the staff and management of the Department of Children's Services who

did not adequately monitor the children in their care, successive State government that have not sufficiently valued children to adequately resource the Department entrusted with their care, and society which ignored or accepted what happened to children in the care of the State.

As a State, we must face up to past wrongs and make proper redress, and ensue that when children are in our care we do them no harm.

Executive Summary Commission of Inquiry

In response to the Forde Inquiry a joint Apology was issued by the Queensland Government and Queensland Heads of Churches.

Apologies by their nature are very personal and mean different things to different people. Public apologies to generations of people who have been in care are no different. This year for Remembrance Day we have compiled a booklet of apologies recognising 10 years since the completion of the Commission of Inquiry into the Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions. The Inquiry being the first of its kind in Australia did spark responses which led to different religious institutions and governments issuing apologies.

The Sisters of Mercy in Rockhampton were the first Religious Order to settle on an out of court settlement and issued an apology to the former residents of St Joseph's Orphanage Neerkol.

In May 2007 the Hon Anna Bligh Treasurer of Queensland announced the Queensland Government Redress Scheme in response to the Recommendation 39 of the Forde Inquiry –

That the Queensland Government and relevant religious authorities establish principles of compensation in dialogue with victims of institutional abuse and strike a balance between individual monetary compensation and provision of services.

Continued over page



Adversity to Empowerment

Autumn
2009

What's inside

From the Lily Pad	1 and 2
Forde news	2
Remembrance Day invitation	3
Forde Inquiry – 10th Anniversary	3
Youth detention commemorative artwork update	3
Redress Scheme update	4
Alliance for Forgotten Australians update	4
EM-Power Arts	5
Reunions	5
Story telling group	5
Date Disclaimer	5
Sewing lessons	5
Reading Group	5
Centre news	6-7
Historical Abuse Website	
Happiness Club	
Calendar	
Drop-in Days	
Vocational support	
Reading Group	
Micah Projects	
Men's Wellness Group	
Writers-in-Residence	
Citizen Participation Kit consultations	8
Walking group	8
Important numbers	8

Continued from front page

\$100 million was allocated for the implementation of the Redress Scheme which is to be completed in 2009.

The Australian Government through the Senate Community Affairs Committee has undertaken four inquiries:

1997 HREOC Stolen Generations Report: *Bringing them Home Report*

2001 *Righting the Wrong: Lost Innocents*

2004 *Forgotten Australians*: Still awaiting a national apology

2005 *Protecting Vulnerable Children: A National Challenge*

Upon many requests we have also with the assistance of Ink hoots produced a post card of the Statue at the Roma Street. We know how important this statue is to many people as a quiet place to sit and reflect, to bring family and friends, to visit when in Brisbane from regional centres. The Statue is another public statement that has broken the silence on the abuse of the past and affirmed the findings of the Forde Inquiry.

As Redress comes to completion it is yet another process which like apologies is very personal in its significance to each of you. It is important that at this time you each take care of yourself as you process the outcomes of your application. Whilst there will be disappointments do not forget just how far we have all journeyed together over the past 10 years with your elected members of parliament, government employees, community organisations and advocates, the media, general community and your family and friends.

Your courage in the face of so much power and opposition has made a difference and this is what we remember each year on Remembrance Day during Child Protection Week.

Kayn Walsh

THE FORDE FOUNDATION is pleased to announce the appointment of the new Forde Board of Advice (BOA), with Mr Errol Evans as the new Chair. Errol Evans has replaced Terry Sullivan, whose term on the board had ended. The new board aspires to build on the good work of Terry Sullivan and guide the foundation into the future.

Members of the Board of Advice are:

- Errol Evans, (Chair) has worked in the health and welfare field in clinical, policy and managerial roles for over 30 years. He has also consulted in the community sector, as well as providing advice, on a number of state wide and national forums including the National Drug Strategy Committee and the National Advisory Committee on Oral Health. He was also instrumental in establishing an agreement between Oral Health Unit, Queensland Health and the Forde Foundation for oral health services to grant recipients.



Presentation of flowers to Ms Forde

- Emmalene Travers, (Deputy Chair) has served as a member of the Forde Foundation Board of Advice since 2002 and was a major player in establishing CREATE Foundation (an organisation which supports children and young people in care). During her 10 years with CREATE she was Founder and State Coordinator of CREATE SA, editor of the national magazine and National Manager of Marketing & Communications.

Emmalene is currently an advisor to The Pyjama

Foundation (a not for profit organisation providing early intervention programs for children in out-of-home care) and studying law and journalism at Griffith University

- Dr William (Bill) Egerton, has an extensive work history which encompasses more than 53 years in the medical profession, primarily in the cardiovascular field. Was chairman of the Royal Brisbane Hospital's Human Research Ethics Committee 1996-2006. He has served as chairman, member, fellow and secretary on a multitude of committees since 1979 (primarily in the education sectors).
- Donna Harris has extensive experience and qualifications in the Child Care sector and has worked for peak bodies and training institutions to provide training to child care professionals and management teams throughout the State. Donna has attended State and Federal meetings in relation to Quality Assurance standards in childcare. She is a strong advocate for the provision of quality care for all children and trusting relationships with carers.

The new BOA is looking forward to a challenging and productive year ahead. It is envisaged that the Minister for Communities Karen Struthers will be announcing in the near future the outcome of the Forde Review, and the direction of the Forde Foundation for the future.



10th Anniversary of the Forde Inquiry Morning Tea

On the 5th June 2009 a morning tea was held at Lotus Place to mark the 10th Anniversary of the Forde Inquiry of Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions. The day was an opportunity to remember but also to celebrate where individuals have moved to. There were about 120 people who attended with special guests Ms. Leneen Forde and Hon. Karen Struthers addressing the audience. The Lotus Place team would like to thank the guests and also each of you who attended the event.

Youth detention commemorative artwork update

Art work for this important memorial to those mentioned in the Forde Inquiry who were placed in Youth Detention is complete. The artwork is to be placed at Kurilpa Point on the Brisbane River where there is a longstanding connection with many former residents.

At the present time negotiations are underway with Queensland Rail, the Brisbane City Council and the Department of Communities to finalise the project details and there will be an opening when this is all completed. Invitations to the opening will be issued to members of the Historical Abuse Network as soon as the date is set.



Remembrance Day

For people who have experienced abuse in state and church care



Wednesday 9th September 2007

12pm - 2pm



The Parliamentary House

Undumbi Room Level 5
George St Brisbane

Please RSVP to The Esther Centre on 1800 035 588

This year Remembrance Day will be held at Parliament House. The ceremony will be held in the Undumbi Room level 5 and followed by afternoon tea in the Speakers Hall level 4. Being the 10 Anniversary of the Forde Inquiry it would be great to see as many of you as possible attending on the day.

Please contact the Information Referral Worker at Lotus Place if you are able to attend on 1800 035 588

Redress scheme update

The Redress Panel of Experts has completed the assessment of all Level 2 applications. The Panel assessed over 5400 applications on a case-by-case basis. Level 2 payments are for the more serious cases of harm. It is anticipated that not everyone who is eligible for a Level 1 payment will be eligible for a Level 2 payment.

Payment amounts will be allocated on the basis of harm suffered by the applicants. Only those applications assessed as the most severe will receive the maximum of \$33 000. Other payment amounts will vary depending on the level of harm suffered, the number of eligible applications and the amount of funds remaining for distribution.

Regardless of the decision in relation to your Level 2 application, all Level 2 applicants will receive a letter. Notification to applicants on Level 2 applications is currently underway. Payments to approved applicants will commence as responses to advice are received in Redress Services.

Applicants who deferred their Level 1 payment will be re-offered the Level 1 payment and if approved for a Level 2 payment will be offered a combined Level 1 and Level 2 payment. Applicants can choose to either accept or reject this offer. These applicants will be required to return a signed Deed of Release witnessed by their legal representative before the payment can be made.

Applicants who are successful in being allocated a Level 2 payment and have previously received a Level 1 payment, are required to confirm the preferred method of payment and details of their bank account if they wish the payment to be directly deposited.

Level 2 payments will be processed as quickly as possible over the coming months, with priority given to those applicants over 70 or with a documented life-threatening illness.

If you do not receive a letter in the next few weeks, please contact Redress Services on 1300 769 291 to check that they have your current address and they will re-send your letter.

Department of Communities



Enogerra Boys Home

The Enogerra Reunion was held on Saturday 15th August at Hillbrook Anglican School which was the site of Enogerra Boys Home. It was a beautiful day and the principal provided the attendees with a tour of the new library complex which was amazing to see. There were about 30 people who attended with all chatting and having a shared lunch.

Thanks to all who attended and organizing the event.



Enogerra reunion attendees

Alliance for Forgotten Australians update

The Alliance for Forgotten Australians (AFA) has been promised funding for another year. When we met recently in Brisbane, Minister Jenny Macklin sent a message of support, assuring us that this would not be our last meeting. So AFA will continue its work. AFA is a national alliance incorporating existing service providers and support groups. We don't provide services ourselves. We aim to educate the Australian people about Forgotten Australians, and we lobby for better support for them from governments and past providers. Allan Allaway is the HAN nominee to AFA.

AFA has produced a booklet, *Forgotten Australians: Supporting survivors of institutional care in Australia*. It tells of the experiences and needs of survivors of out-of-home care in the last Century. It has been distributed to many government, health and welfare organisations – and also to Forgotten Australians themselves, who find that it tells at least part of their story to the people who need to understand: counsellors, doctors and other health professionals. The booklet is free from Families Australia on 02 6273 4885.

AFA's wish-list of projects for the next year includes:

- a series of community service announcements, to raise awareness of Forgotten Australians;
- a training package for future social workers, doctors, mental health workers etc; and
- an enhanced website that will direct people to information about services and about research.

The amount of funding we get will determine what we can produce.

We will also continue to lobby for a national apology and for national services and redress for all Forgotten Australians.

EM-Power Arts

Part of the Historical Abuse Network
The Forgotten Australians



The project from the 30th August 2009 through to February 2010 will be focused on providing a Public Awareness Project to promote public awareness on Forgotten Australian's in the Queensland context.

The major works will be a T-Shirt which will be available for Remembrance Day this year. If you would like a T-Shirt please place your order through Lotus Place Information and Referral worker.

The T-Shirts have been priced at \$15. Monies raised by the sale of t-shirts will go towards HAN members small projects. A T-Shirt and calendar will also be sent to the AFA committee to demonstrate the work Queensland members are doing to increase the profile of Forgotten Australians.

The members of Em-Power Arts invite individuals to attend their regular weekly meetings where they develop projects and seek ideas that can be supported. The meetings are held every Tuesday 130pm here at Lotus Place. If you are outside of Brisbane and would like to contribute your ideas please either phone to speak to one of the members or drop them a line. Em-Power Arts C/O Lotus Place PO Box 3449 South Brisbane 4101 or email esther@merivale.org.au.

Historical Abuse Web Site

To help us provide a better service at the Esther Centre we would like to invite you to answer these three questions:

- What would you like to learn at the Esther Centre?
- What should the Esther Centre be doing for you?
- What activities do you enjoy doing with others at the Esther Centre?

You can mail your response back to us, visit Lotus Place to complete a survey or complete the survey online at <http://www.han.merivale.org.au>

You do not need to provide any personal details with your response and your participation will help our commitment to social inclusion.



Riverview Crew

REUNIONS

2009 Riverview Reunion Report

Well its all over again for another year, and what a great success it was . All up we had 56 people at the reunion, we wish to say a big thank you too all the sponsors for this years help in items for the Reunion and hope to see them next year on the 8th August 2010. Anyone wishing to come along can contact me via email at robsmurf@gmail.com or phone me personally on 0411418931. See you all again in 2010.

Robert Toreaux Riverview Organizer

Has anyone ever read you a story?

In the coming weeks we will be starting a story telling group on Thursday mornings at the Esther Centre.

As part of the group you will be read a short story or a chapter of a book, then a discussion will take place about what you liked or disliked. You can even choose your favourite story to be read out if you wish.

For more information contact Joanne on 1800 035 588.

Do you want to learn to sew?

We will be starting basic sewing lessons soon at the Esther Centre run by an ex-resident who is also an Award Winning Fashion Designer. The sessions will be run weekly on Monday mornings and we will be starting up a alterations and repairs service for anyone who needs it. If you are interested in joining, register with Joanne at the Esther Centre or call 1800 035 588. You don't need to have any previous experience. If you have an old sewing machine you do not use, we are also looking for donations.

Date Claimer - HAN Christmas Party

This year the Christmas Party will be held at Souths Logan Magpies Club at West End on Friday 18th December 2009 so put it in your calendar and more details will come in the next edition of the Lily Pad.

Centre news

Happiness Club



Happiness Club

The Esther Centre applied to the Happiness Institute in Sydney to establish a Happiness Club at Lotus Place. The first meeting started on Friday 15th August where there were participants.

The Happiness Club is about having fun and sharing ideas on how to

be positive, set and achieve goals and focus on your strengths. Happiness Clubs give people with a common interest, the pursuit of happiness and desire to live a good life an opportunity to meet regularly, share ideas, and discuss and debate relevant issues and support each other along the way.

Paul McKenzie and Bryan Harts have kindly agreed to facilitate the group. The Club meets on Friday afternoons 3-5pm the first hour will focus on a discussion or learning and the second half will be a chance to catch up and have afternoon tea together. If you are interested in attending please give us a call on 1800 035 588.

<http://www.thehappinessinstitute.com/events/clubDetails.aspx?c=9&s=QLD>

Community Education

HAN members have continued to provide training to new inductees of Department of Child Safety, Youth Detention and Juvenile Detention workers. Training occurs regularly throughout the year at various centers.

It is an essential part of the program to ensure new workers understand and are mindful of the impacts of institutionalization and abuse.

It is an important role for the HAN members that provide this service which we note with gratitude and thanks.

Centre time table

August 2009				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Basic Sewing 10:30am-1:30pm Close at 3pm ☹️	DROP IN DAY Reading Support Clothes Shop First Tuesday of each month Lawn Bowls 10am-12noon LUNCH Job Club Empower Arts Group Cert 2 in Business	Open at 12noon ☺️ Writer-in-Residence 1-4pm Walking Group 1pm Men's Personal Training 1-2pm Yoga 2:30-3:30pm	Story Telling Group 10am-12noon Reading for Understanding All day Computer Course 1-3pm	Writer-in-Residence 1-4pm Happiness Club 3-5pm

Centre activities: Sewing and mending • Regular BBQ's • Photography • Reunions

Other activities: Art group • Tai Chi • Street soccer • Cooking club • Planting for pizza • Drama • Fitness

Centre services: Tea and coffee • Newspapers • IT and internet access • Lounge and foxtel • Kitchen facilities

Other services: Quit smoking • Dental treatment • Writing project • Life skills training • Counselling • Referral service

Drop-in days

Regular features on “Drop-In” day include Colleen’s Second Hand Clothing Store on the first Tuesday of each month and the community BBQ on the last Tuesday. Check the whiteboard and the calendar for other details.

Every Tuesday from 9.00am the centre is open for former residents and their families to “drop-in” for a social gathering and a light lunch. This is a great opportunity to meet others to share ideas, stories and importantly enjoy your time at Lotus Place.

Interested in paid work, voluntary work or training?

Some of you may have seen a new face round The Esther Centre lately. Joanne is a vocational support worker from England who has worked in recruitment in London and Australia for over 5 years.

If you are interested in looking for work, voluntary or training opportunities, or would like to do something but not sure what, then come and visit Joanne at the Esther Centre. You can get assistance with job searching, writing a resume, interview practice or even joining or running a community group.

Don’t worry if you have not worked for a long time, Joanne can help you identify all the wonderful skills you have and talk to you about the things you are interested in. Give us a call on 1800 035 588 if you would like to know more.

Improve your reading

The Reading group meets at Lotus Place. We have an enjoyable time and many feel it is an easy way to learn. Sessions are available both individually and in small groups at Lotus Place Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursdays.

If you would like to join the Reading group, please contact the Lotus Place reception soon on 1800 035 588 for more information.

Ways to participate in Micah Projects and other events

This includes a variety of activities at Micah such as the Wednesday morning Art Group at BHSC. The Wednesday afternoon yoga class at Lotus place and the Peer Support group for people who identify as Lesbian, Gay Bisexual or Transgender and have a disability. We are now lucky enough to have a hairdresser visit BHSC one Monday a month; her next visit will be from 11am on the 31st of August. All of the activities mentioned are free for participants and unless otherwise stated they are open to all who may be interested. For a range of ways you can be included in these, or to enquire about other activities happening in your community, please feel free to contact Sarah at BHSC on 3036 4444.

Men’s Wellness Group

5 men and Jo as the token female attend on a weekly basis a local gym where we do a workout which lasts an exhausting 45 minutes. We have just had our third session and already the benefits are being noticed. We have committed for a 10 week program and in the 8th week we will evaluate the benefits of the program and communicate in the Christmas newsletter. The women are already agitating for their group also!



Bryan and Paul

Writers-in-Residence

As a part of the 10th Anniversary of The Forde Inquiry into Abuse of Children in Queensland Institutions Kris Olsson and Donna Hancox have been appointed to run a project which will potentially culminate in a publication of the works.

The aim of these workshops would be to encourage participants and empower you to use writing and language to create a story based on your own lives – either non-fiction (autobiography/memoir) or fiction, to give you confidence in your own expression.

Writing can become a way of claiming our lives, of making them real and valid, of accessing our own truths. For many people, writing is a path to connection, to making themselves and their stories visible, to inclusion in the wider narrative of community.

Got a story you’d like to write down or record? Ever felt like you’d just like to do some writing or story-telling, but didn’t know where to start? Come along to Lotus Place on Wednesday or Friday afternoons from 1 pm. Two local writers, Kris Olsson and Donna Hancox, will be available to help, support, and point you in the right direction to getting that story down, either on paper, or using pictures and speech to make a spoken story. Whichever way you choose, we want you to enjoy it.

Starting Wednesday 19th August at 1–4 pm at Lotus Place.

Citizen Participation Kit consultations

As some of you might remember Helen Wallace came to a BBQ at South Bank where she chatted with you about your participation in Micah Projects through activities at The Esther Centre.

The kit has now been completed and we hope to have it available to you shortly. Helen's observations of the meeting with you are included below and some of your suggestions have been included in the kit:

Helen's observations: Some people were expressing a vision or aspirations for a club house / recreation model of service.

For others, benefits for people involved like self improvement, healthy living and learning were most important additionally people are striving to contribute, to make a difference and play a role as citizens, which is exactly what citizen participation tries to build and support.

People seemed very comfortable with each other and most were in conversation with one or more people the whole time. Others were quiet but seemed happy to be there.

Picking up on one suggestion, low key conversations in small groups seem like an optimal way to invite participation, at least for those who join in at Lotus Place. The importance of communication (about relevant things) came through strongly as a way to increase the sense of control and belonging.

Walking Group

As part of the Esther Exercise Program Colleen Stevenson runs a weekly walking group on Wednesday afternoons. This group is open to people who are interested in participating in a regular low intensity exercise activity. The length of the walk will depend on who joins the group and their fitness levels – but walks will not last more than an hour. We will be exploring local walking tracks close to the Esther Centre and also on occasions visit different tracks in the wider Brisbane area like the New Farm Park River Walk, St Lucia walking track and Green Bridge, and the floating walkway in New Farm.

Location: Leaving from the Esther Centre to various local and Brisbane wide walking tracks

What to bring: Hat to wear, sunscreen is essential, water to drink, comfortable closed-in walking shoes and comfortable clothes to walk in.

Important Numbers

Forde Foundation. Phone: 1800 035 588 (free call)

Email: mailbox@thefordefoundation.org.au Web: www.thefordefoundation.org.au

ARC. Phone 1800 501 560 (free call)

Email: aftercare@relateqld.com.au Web: www.aftercareresourcecentre.org.au

The Esther Centre. Phone: 1800 035 588 (free call), or 3844 0966

Email: han@merivale.org.au Web: www.esther.merivale.org.au

Lotus Place. Phone 1800 035 588 (free call), or 3844 0966

Brisbane Homelessness Service Centre Visiting Agencies
Appointments can be made by ringing 3034 6666

Mental Health Team: Wednesday 9:30 – 12:30pm

QPILCH (Free Legal Team): Tuesday 9:00 – 11:00am

Medicare: 2nd Wednesday of the month

Health Clinic: Bulk Billing GPs: Dr Paul Cleary is available Monday 4 00pm- 7 00pm and Dr Peter Norris Thursday 11 00am – 1 00pm.

Registered Nurse: available Monday – Friday 9:00 – 5:00pm by appointment.

Acupuncturist: Gemma Taylor Monday 3 00pm – 5 00pm

Counselling: Mick Devlin Monday 3 00pm – 5 00pm

Podiatry Clinic: 4th Tuesday of the month at 9:00 – 12:00pm
appointments can be made by ringing BHSC on 30364444