

# YOUR *newsletter*

A space where we keep  
Forgotten Australians /  
Care Leavers, family,  
friends and service  
providers connected and  
up to date about any  
news and the supports  
available for our  
community of people  
affected by out of home  
care or harmed in other  
Australian institutions



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*Relationships Australia*  
TASMANIA

Relationships Australia Tasmania acknowledges that we work on Aboriginal land, Lutruwita, the lands of the Palawa and Pakana peoples. We are deeply committed to community action and to community healing. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. Always was, Always will be.

# Introduction



Welcome to the Summer edition of Your Newsletter!

This summer was one of the warmest seasons experienced in Lutruwita for a long time. During this time, we experience increase in daylight and bask in the warmth of this season. In this edition of newsletter, we are honoured to bring forward a personal reflection by a member of the community on their experience of accessing Direct Personal Response. A reflection on the apology done by the Institution acknowledging the unacceptable treatment. The Forced Adoption and Your Place peer support group meet at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hobart as this place hold significance of the apology delivered by the government. The group met at the gardens in late March and early April to acknowledge the apology. We are grateful for Maryanne to give us this opportunity of interviewing her and sharing with us her experience of coming to Your Place group. We also share some important community initiatives such as community library in North-west and Community Pantry at West Moonah Community House.

With ever growing community we are grateful for their support in reading and contributing to our newsletters. Please read on to enjoy the articles, reflections and community notices in this edition.

# Significant Dates for People who have spent time in Australian Institutions

## 13<sup>th</sup> February

National Anniversary to the Apology to the Stolen Generations

## 21<sup>st</sup> March

National Anniversary to the Apology for Forced Adoptions

## 17<sup>th</sup> May

The State Government Apology to Former Wards of State Abused in Care

## 27<sup>th</sup> May to 3<sup>rd</sup> June

Reconciliation Week calls for all Australians to commit to reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples, come the 1967 Referendum and High Court Mabo Decision which granted Native Title Legislation

## 26<sup>th</sup> May

National Sorry Day- A Day of mourning and reflection about the Stolen Generation Practices

## 3<sup>rd</sup> July to 10<sup>th</sup> July

NAIDOC Week- celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Achievements, history and cultures.

## August

National Australian Family History Month

## 4<sup>th</sup> August

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day

## 13<sup>th</sup> August

Apology to Tasmania's Stolen Generations by the State Government

## 18<sup>th</sup> October

Tasmanian Government Apology to Forced Adoptions

## 22<sup>nd</sup> October

National Apology to Victims and Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse

## 8<sup>th</sup> November

State Government Apology to Victims and Survivors who experienced child sexual abuse in Tasmanian Government Institutions

## 16<sup>th</sup> November

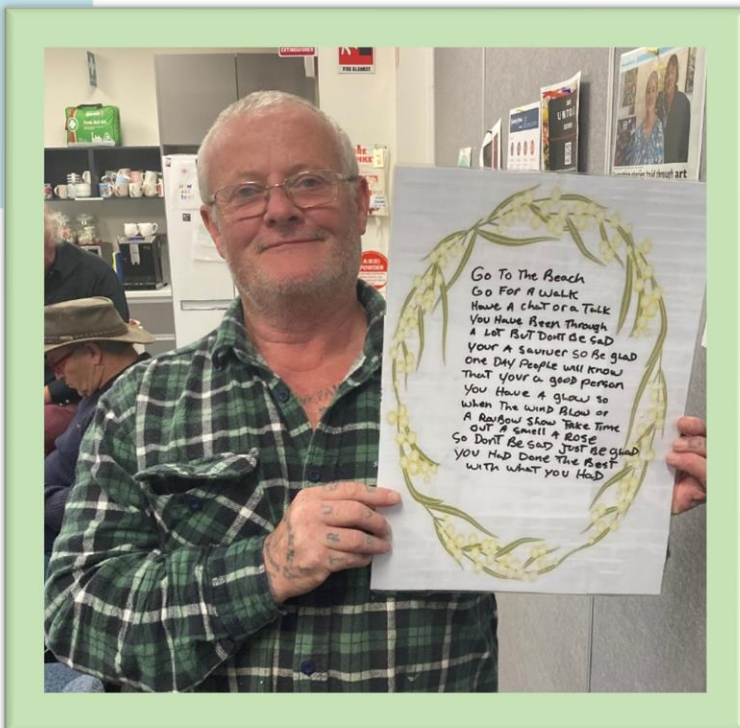
National Apology to Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants



## David Blackwell Direct Personal Response Reflections

David is a Forgotten Australian, who recently received a Direct Personal Response from the Institution that failed to care for him as a child. This is like an apology, a formal acknowledgment of the unacceptable treatment and a commitment to listening to anything David wanted to say, and addressing any concerns he may have.

His wish was to have a statue of a boy and girl made with doves representing peace either side of them, to be placed out the front of the Children's Contact Centre at Relationships Australia Tasmania in Nipaluna, Hobart- to make all Forgotten Australians and Survivors and for all children visiting the centre feel safe, seen, and welcome.



David also met with a Senior official and received a letter of apology following a meeting at Relationships Australia Tasmania, chosen by David with his wife and counsellor present as well.

David said about his experience of the Direct Personal Response "The memories and feelings will still be there, but it does give you a sense of closure.

For people who've been through any trauma to seek out support is good because it does help you.

At the end of the day, everybody deserves to be happy. It's no good going through life looking at the bad things. Look at the good things, what you have achieved and what you can achieve.

That's what it all boils down to, that everyone needs peace and calm in their life." shares David.

## Group Connections at the Botanical Gardens

The Royal Hobart Botanical Gardens, which sits on Muwinina Country of the Palawa and Pakana Community is not only a beautiful place to meet but is significant for our Your Place and Forced Adoption Support Services Group members.

After the Senate Enquiry into Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants, the government learnt directly from the community about how people were treated in their Institutions, orphanages, homes and foster care placements- the neglect, abuse and isolation from family and community was a very common experience. A formal apology was made for these acts, which spanned for many decades and have continued to have lasting impacts.

As part of this apology, there were plaques and bench seats unveiled in the Botanic Gardens near the rose arch dedicated to community who experienced forced removals. The YourPlace Southern Group are actively seeking to create a healing space codesigned with Forgotten Australians, featuring the wattle, their national symbol. They continue to meet at Relationships Australia Tasmania and enjoyed visiting the new native Tasmanian garden in the Botanical Gardens, featuring native plants and flowers from this beautiful island.



The Forced Adoption Support Services (FASS) Group also meet at the Tree of Hope, commissioned after the State Government were the first to acknowledge the policies and practices of removing and forcibly adopting out Australian children where there was no justification for this practice, concealing their identity through closed adoption records making reunification virtually impossible prior to this reform.



If you were removed from your family, placed in an Institution, or adopted before 1989, we can support you, through counselling, getting your records, family reunions where possible and peer group support.

If you experienced sexual abuse by an Institution before July 2018, we are here to support you as well. Call 1300 364 277 to access free and confidential support.



## Community Activities Updates

### Forced Adoption Library Project



A callout to interested parties...

We are looking to develop a small library of books and other resources focused on forced adoption.

The aim would be to keep these resources as items which could be borrowed via Relationships Australia Tasmania.

We would also like to advocate for the state library to develop a collection devoted to the same topic.

Finally, we are looking at curating a list of these resources to be a “recommended reading pack” for any RA Tas staff who work with Survivors of forced adoption.

Are you interested in being on a working committee to bring this to life?

If so, please contact Lyndell Kent - [lyndellk@reltas.com.au](mailto:lyndellk@reltas.com.au)



## ***West Moonah Neighbourhood House***

130 Springfield Avenue – Moonah (03) 6273 2362

### ***Community Pantry – Open Monday to Friday 9am to 2.30pm***

West Moonah Community House have a community pantry in the house where we give out food to those in need. They rely on funds from caring community minded people, purchases from Food Bank and donations of non-perishable items from the community.

If you are in need, please pop into the house and see one of our friendly staff.

We do not ask any questions but all we ask is for you not to take advantage of our generosity as the food might serve another family in need for months.

We accept repeated visits from struggling individual or families but please limit your visits to no more than once a fortnight as we would like to assist more families in the community.

**Please bring your own bag for the food.**

We welcome donations of non-perishable foods for our community pantry. Just drop them at the house during business hours.



# TERM 1

# 2024



# Midway Point Neighbourhood House

Address: 34 Hoffman Street, Midway Point, 7171

Phone: 62 651 155

Email: [admin@pwnh.net](mailto:admin@pwnh.net)



## Monday - Friday 9am - 4pm

**The Neighbourhood House's purpose is to:**

Maintain our Neighbourhood House as a safe, welcoming and well resourced space which responds to community needs and enhances the wellbeing of our members and their families



**Proudly Funded  
by the DOC**



**Find us on facebook.**

"like" our page for information  
on all upcoming events.

<https://midwaypointneighbourhoodhouse.com>

# Forgotten Australian Community Profile

## Maryann Wall

**Star Sign:** Scorpion Sagittarius, on the cusp.



### **Favourite Colour:**

Blue, Sky Blue, because Nan's house was blue. She lived in Sheffield, in a 5- or 6-bedroom house with a veranda all the way around. And fuchsia bushes, every time I see a fuchsia bush it reminds me of Nan, and I've got fuchsia bushes growing for her, that I started from little

cuttings, now I have them growing.

### **So, you're really honouring your ancestors through your garden.**

Yes, her name was Emily, and my grandfather was Allen. I just sort of remember my Pop, he used to get me to empty his piddle pot for him and he'd give me a round 50 cents for doing it. I made a promise to my Pop that I'd never cut my long hair, and so I haven't. That's my value, I do what I say and I keep my promises.

### **Who are Forgotten Australians?**

It's someone that's not been seen to. They (the Government) reckon they did but they didn't. They are people that were in homes at certain times, which we've forgotten all about. And now some of those homes have been shut down, because of the way we were treated.

### **Why did you reach out to Relationships Australia?**

I was wanting counselling and to try and figure out all this Government stuff.

**Had you ever been in a peer support group before? How did you feel before you went for the first time?**

No, and I was nervous, but now, I love it. I get to sit there and talk about anything. We don't have to sit there and talk about what happened, we can get together and talk about anything. It's really good.

**Have you brought things to the group and people have helped you think about things in a different way or have you helped others with things?**

Well they must sort of like me, because they ask, "When's Maryann coming?" which, I love that. Because I can be an ear there as well, to listen. And we've been through the same sort of things, so we know what we're talking about.

**How's it different to making friends out there in the world, coming to the Your Place Group?**

Oh no, no- I like to stick to myself. Out there, you have trust issues. In the group, it's different, you don't think so much about what the Government had done and all the problems.



**What would you say to someone who was a bit nervous about coming to the Your Place group or wanting to attend individual counselling?**

No need to be nervous, we were all nervous at the start but now we come, and we're right. There's a lot of people that need to come and open up, cos they need to know what had gone on in the past, growing up as a kid. It was very horrible and very very scary. And for me, it all started at only 7 years old, when I went to the Sunshine Home, cos my mother had my baby sister and so me and my brother were sent to the Sunshine Home and, yeah.



**What do you hope has changed, or will change, for the next generation, your grandchildren?**

They need to get people who work with kids to be trained, and be properly checked, when it comes to the way they work with children. Back in the day, no one was properly trained, it's like they just had people off the street.

**What are some of your interests?**

I like my music, but I don't like this music where they're screaming and you can't understand what they're saying. I love gardening, I love driving and I love cooking, and I love trying to steer my boys in the right direction.

My fur babies are two cats and a dog, two females, which I saved and I got my dog Baz off my cousin.

**What are some of the things that you have worked through over the past 12 months?**

I'm proud of myself, I've learnt to relax more, I'm more social, friendly and I feel safe. I used to have a fear of being in certain rooms that reminded me of welfare offices. I quit cigarettes after 30 odd years. I feel less isolated- I go to events now. I've reconnected with my sons, in Tassie and in Adelaide. And I've changed to a female doctor, who's been marvelous, so I'm caring more about my health.

*The YourPlace Group meets monthly, we also providing counselling, records tracing support with redress applications and links to other services through our Find and Connect, Forced Adoption Support Service and Redress Support Service. Get in touch by calling 1300 364 277*

# Meet our counselling staff

## NORTH / NORTH WEST TEAM



**Gardia**  
Redress, FASS,  
Find & Connect



**Lyndell**  
FASS

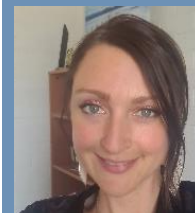


**Cara**  
Redress, FASS,  
Find &  
Connect

## SOUTH TEAM



**Alex**  
Redress  
Senior Prac



**Eliza**  
Redress, FASS  
Find and  
Connect

### Relationships Australia, Tasmania

www.tas.relationships.org.au  
20 Clare St, NEW TOWN TAS 7008  
6 Paterson St, LAUNCESTON TAS 7250  
68 North Fenton St, DEVONPORT TAS 7310  
admin@reltas.com.au  
1300 364 277

### Alliance for Forgotten Australians

forgottenaustralians.org.au  
0488 460 646 or 0419 854 980  
admin@forgottenaustralians.org.au

### Care Leavers Australia Network (CLAN)

www.clan.org.au  
support@clan.org.au  
1800 008 774 or 0425 204 747

### Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre

www.tacinc.com.au  
Hobart (03) 6234 0700 Burnie (03) 6436 4100  
Launceston (03) 6332 3800  
Free Call – 1800 132 260

### Link-up Victoria (for Stolen Generations)

www.linkupvictoria.org.au  
Free call: 1800 OUR MOB (1800 687 662)  
03) 7002 3700 [linkup@vacca.org](mailto:linkup@vacca.org)

### SASS (Sexual Assault Support Service)

www.sass.org.au  
Hobart (03) 6231 0044  
1800 697 877, 24-hour support

### Laurel House (Sexual Assault Support)

www.laurelhouse.org.au  
Northern Tasmania:  
(03) 6334 2740  
NW Tasmania:  
(03) 6431 9711  
1800 697 877, 24-hour support

### Engender Equality

www.engenderequality.org.au  
admin@engenderequality.org.au  
(03) 6278 9090 (State wide)

### Helplines:

Lifeline (24/7)  
13 11 14

### Beyond Blue helpline

(24/7) 1300 22 4636

### Blueknot Helpline and Redress Support Service

(9am – 5pm, all days)  
1300 657 380

### My Support

(SASS and Laurel House 24/7 counsellors) 1800 697 877