



HealingFoundation
Strong Spirit • Strong Culture • Strong People

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Healing comes to Lismore Stolen Generations 3 February

The Northern Rivers region will be a focus for this year's seventh anniversary of the national Apology to the Stolen Generations as Lismore-based Aboriginal healing organisation, Rekindling the Spirit, and the Healing Foundation, commemorate the historic event.

Rekindling the Spirit's Jeff Richardson said the commemoration event will provide an opportunity for the local community to join together for a day of observance, honouring and recognising local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their families who are part of the Stolen Generations.

"We want to both acknowledge the horrors that so many of our people endured in the past but at the same time encourage the healing process and acknowledge the positive changes that our people have sustained," said Jeff. "We want to recognise the strength and resilience of our people, particularly those that suffered from being removed, but we certainly don't want to promote victimhood.

"It is so important to honour the hard-won successes of our people in ensuring that this history has finally been acknowledged and that the national healing process has begun," he said.

Fifty-seven year old Bundjalung/Gumbayngirr/Dunghutti woman, Lauren Jarret, was taken at nine years old and was unable to reconnect with her mother for eleven years.

"It was so hard because I was a different person when I came back; full of anger and hurt after so many years away from my family and my culture," said Lauren. "My own healing from the trauma of growing up in the Cowper Orphanage has been made possible by reconnecting with my family and with my culture; particularly relearning the ancient weaving techniques and dances of my people. I feel like I've finally landed."

The day's activities will include the collating of stories and photos from a diverse group of people who identify as part of the Stolen Generations to form part of the commemoration which will stand as an historical cultural record of those who were removed from their families, culture and land due to the racist policies of the day. The event on 13 February 2015 will also include cultural activities, a local Bundjalung weaving workshop, the planting of a garden around a bronze statue of two young Aboriginal children, a barbeque lunch and local musicians.

The Healing Foundation is a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation with a focus on community led healing solutions and creating culturally strong, community designed and delivered pathways to healing.

Editors and Chiefs of Staff please save this date in your diaries. Photos and interviews with Jeff Richardson, Lauren Jarret can be arranged.

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