

Alliance for
Forgotten Australians

Patrons: Senator Andrew Murray
Jack Thompson

AFA
e-Update
May 2010

The Alliance for Forgotten Australians (AFA) is a national peak organisation promoting and supporting the interests of survivors of childhood institutional care in Australia. e-Updates are occasional and intended to provide an overview of the activities of the Alliance members and progress on projects.

Please distribute throughout your networks

IN THIS ISSUE...

Views & news from AFA: Budget 2010 Announcement; Forgotten Australians now qualify as a 'special needs' group for Aged Care access.

Top stories: *National Inquiry into Aged Care; Review of Government Compensation Payments; Oral History Project; New AFA website.*

VIEWS & NEWS FROM AFA...

Find and Connect

The Federal Treasurer announced \$26.5m over the next four years, yesterday evening (11 May 2010), to fund a new service for Forgotten Australians - Find & Connect. The Prime Minister included this commitment in the National Apology last year.

The new service will provide a phone service and website as a central contact point for the Forgotten Australians and former child migrants. Where people wish, they will be referred to case managers who will provide an Australia wide records tracing service to assist in locating personal records and to reunite them with their family where possible. Counselling and support services will also be made available where required.

Details of how and when the service will commence, will be circulated when available.

Forgotten Australians targeted as special needs group

As a result of the Apology in November 2009, and the Australian Government's on-going commitment to Forgotten Australians, the Department of Health and Ageing announced that 'care leavers' are now included as a special needs group - **effective from January 2010**. More information at:

www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ageing-acessentials-Jan2010.htm

This means that Forgotten Australians are now a priority target group for access to:

- Community Aged Care Packages (CACP/EACH and EACH Dementia) for people wanting to stay in their own place
- Residential Care places for people no longer able to stay in their own place.

The Guidelines for Aged Care providers have been updated. All service providers are now required to demonstrate 'how they will tailor their service delivery' to meet the particular care needs of Forgotten Australians. More information at: [www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/7602F807EE20A59ACA2576BD00003303/\\$File/2009-10_Essential_Guyide.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/7602F807EE20A59ACA2576BD00003303/$File/2009-10_Essential_Guyide.pdf)

The AFA Secretariat has fielded calls from a few interested Residential Aged Care providers who were writing applications for aged care funding. There is still some way to go in addressing AFA's concerns about the provision of aged care support to Forgotten Australians and we will keep you posted as we become aware of developments.

OTHER TOP STORIES...

Senate Inquiry into Government Compensation

The Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee of the Senate announced the Terms of Reference for a Review of Government Compensation Payments for people who have been adversely affected by government policies, legislation or unlawful actions.

AFA will be making a submission and you may wish to make a personal submission to the inquiry. **Submissions close 4 June 2010.** More information at: http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/Committee/legcon_ctte/govt_comp/index.htm

Inquiry into Aged Care

The Australian Government announced Terms of Reference for the Productivity Commission's Inquiry into Aged Care. The Commission will hold hearings as well as take submissions with a view to providing options for a re-designed aged care system. Forgotten Australians (as a new 'special needs' group) still have a lot to achieve in gaining more access and a better understanding of their needs by the aged care sector. It is therefore vital that AFA, other Forgotten Australian support organisations and individuals contribute to the future re-development of the Aged Care system. So many people suffered abuse or neglect in institutions as children and are understandably worried about the prospect of being placed in another institutional setting. To make a personal submission and get more information go to:

[http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/B200B4688292126ECA25770C001DC8CA/\\$File/je030.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/B200B4688292126ECA25770C001DC8CA/$File/je030.pdf)

Oral History Project (NLA)

The National Library of Australia – Forgotten Australians Oral History project is now seeking people interested in telling their story. To register phone 1800 204 290 and for more information go to: www.forgottenaustralianshistory.gov.au

AFA website

The re-vamped AFA website went live on 29 March 2010. We welcome your visits and feedback. Parts of the website are still under construction and the booklet *Forgotten Australians: Supporting survivors of childhood institutional care in Australia 2nd Edition* is being finalised for print. A copy is now available on the web. Please visit the AFA website at: www.allianceforforgottenaustralians.org.au

AFA - in Review

For most of last year the AFA focussed on preparations for the National Apology. This included participation in the National Apology Advisory group and AFA members being

interviewed by a wide range of national and international media. Caroline Carroll (AFA Chair) and our Patron Jack Thompson held a press conference at the NSW State Library just days before the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition delivered their Apologies.

AFA members participated in various reference groups: in the lead up to the NSW Healing Service and Memorial Unveiling in Sydney - in particular we would like to acknowledge the commitment and dedication that AFA member, Pamella Vernon made to this event; Victorian Sector Working Group (convened by the Centre for Excellence in Child & Family Welfare); Find & Connect; History Projects and Aged Care.

AFA representatives provided professional development and conference presentations including: Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) ACT and the Family Inclusion Network (FIN) ACT National Gathering.

AFA Steering, Advisory Group and Secretariat members met in Melbourne on 8-9 February 2010. AFA meetings focus on promoting the interests of Forgotten Australians through advocacy and educating the community through awareness-raising projects.



This picture shows the current membership of AFA at our recent meeting. Among other matters, the Forgotten Australians and their Advisory Group discussed and contributed to planning around the new Australian Government projects following the Apology last year:

- Aged Care: AFA representatives met with the Federal Minister for Ageing, and senior personnel. AFA: highlighted the need for alternative models of aged care, including extending access to in-home services and investing in purpose-built accommodation; stressed the need for flexible supported accommodation needs of homeless Forgotten Australians; stressed the lack of statistical information about this group and asked for more 'counting' wherever it could happen.
- Access to records: the Federal Government's Find and Connect service will assist Forgotten Australians to find their own records and to track down family members. It was agreed that there are a number of layers to this project, including archiving and legislative issues that need examining. Scoping is underway, and the project is clearly a large one and needs to be introduced in phases in order to make it comprehensive and effective.

- Historical projects: AFA has actively supported the development of the National Library of Australia oral history project, and the National Museum of Australia exhibition about Forgotten Australians.
- AFA Sub-committees have been formed to progress the work of the various projects as follows -
 - A. Find and Connect
 - B. Aged Care
 - C. Oral History/National Exhibition

British Apology 25 February 2010 - AFA representatives attended receptions in Perth, Melbourne, and Sydney to hear the UK Apology to Former Child Migrants. The Apology and £6M Family Restoration Fund are welcome moves in acknowledgment of the abuse and harm caused by these failed government schemes.

There is still much to do for Forgotten Australians, and Families Australia will continue to support AFA as it lobbies for better services, redress and support across all States and Territories. See AFA's website at: www.forgottenaustralians.org.au