

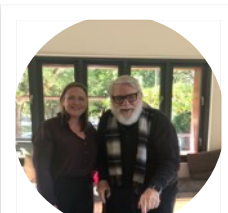
Bits & Pieces

Jigsaw Qld: (07) 3358 6666 – FASS: 1800 21 03 13 – www.jigsawqueensland.com



END OF AN ERA - CELEBRATING TREVOR

In this special edition of Bits & Pieces we celebrate, Dr Trevor Jordan OAM as he steps down as Jigsaw Queensland's CEO and moves into the golden era of his retirement. Trevor has faithfully served Jigsaw for more than two decades and has had a positive impact on the adoption community in Queensland, nationally and internationally. All while navigating his own adoption journey. Thank you for your service, Trevor!



GOING, GOING, BUT NOT GONE: A second retirement

By Dr Trevor Jordan

I entered my first retirement in 2010, when I left academia after more than 30 years of research and teaching.

In 1997 I was asked to speak on ethics and adoption at the Australian Adoption Conference. At that time, as I recall, there were only seven scholarly articles in the world published on the topic of ethics and adoption. Nevertheless, ethics and adoption was a topic close to my heart because for the first 23 years of my life I was not told that I was adopted. I was very fortunate in being able to combine my academic duties in applied ethics with my growing interest in adoption reform.

Finishing up as CEO of Jigsaw, then, is my second retirement. I have only been employed at Jigsaw part-time for the past eight years, but I have been actively involved for over twenty years now. Stepping down from my CEO and manager roles has been long planned. A couple of years ago, I handed my President's cap to the very able Dr Jo Sparrow. Helen Angela Taylor

will bring her enthusiasm and focus to the CEO role.

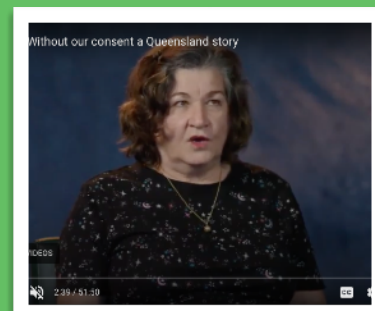
There has been some debate recently on whether I ever volunteered for the role of President of Jigsaw or whether everyone else just took a step back. Either way, I was more than happy to oblige. By the time I joined, Jigsaw had already accumulated well over two



Trevor at his OAM ceremony with his family.

Have you watched the *Without Our Consent: A Queensland Story* oral history yet? The interviews feature a mother who was forced to give her child up for adoption (Anne), an adoptee (Jo), and a father who was coerced into placing his son for adoption (Alan). It also includes interviews with representatives of post adoption organisations and Queensland politicians.

This video is a must watch for anyone affected by adoptions between 1950 and through the 1980s. You can watch it here: <https://www.jigsawqueensland.com/without-our-consent-a-qld-story>



decades of solid experience in peer support. In fact, Jigsaw had helped my adoptive brother find his original mother. There were many dedicated and hard-working people involved. I was happy to be in.

Reflecting on my time at 'Jiggy', there have been many highs and lows. Thankfully, more highs than lows but, adoption being what it is, there will always be lows.

Starting with the highs. It was great to be involved in a mature organisation with accumulated knowledge and experience. I am a natural lifelong learner and I just soaked up the wisdom and insights of those who had travelled the road before me. 'If you haven't made a mistake, you haven't made anything!' Jigsaw members had learned from past mistakes and missteps and put in place sound structures and policies appropriate for a small organisation serving members and clients whose experiences of loss and grief were not recognised in the wider community. While I could bring my own unique experiences and skills to Jigsaw, there wasn't any need for me to reinvent the wheel. Respect and learn from those who have gone before you is my view. After all, you can't learn to fly Jumbo jets through trial and error.



Early staff photo following the funding of Jigsaw's Forced Adoption Support Service.

Another high for me has always been our Jigsaw support group meetings. I think I have participated in well over 200 support meetings at Jigsaw alone. Even though we are all grappling with difficult adoption issues at times, everyone is so warm and accepting. The enthusiasm is catching. We come because we need some information or emotional support and we end up supporting others. It is a real buzz when you realise, 'This is my tribe.'



Celebrating Jigsaw Queensland's 35th birthday.

Of course, there have been times there were so few attending that you could hear the crickets chirping. Luckily, my peer support training had prepared me for these fallow times. It pays to have a little faith and always make time for others. In over twenty years, I think we have only ever had to cancel maybe two or three meetings.

Another satisfying aspect of working at Jigsaw has been the opportunity to combine justice and care through addressing both the personal and political impacts of adoption. Unfortunately, love does not conquer all; sometimes, you need good policy and practice. At Jigsaw we provide information and emotional support, but we also advocate for changes in laws and policies that negatively impact those affected by adoption.

We are not a 'bandaid' organisation, we want to change the policies and structures that continue to hurt those whose lives are impacted by adoption. There is a time to be gentle and kind and there is also a time to be righteously assertive.

For a good deal of my time at Jigsaw, our advocacy has been around opening records, giving all parties a right to access information about their family and providing adequate professional and peer services to support people through these transitions. Achieving adoption reforms in Queensland has certainly been a milestone. I was delighted to be just a small part of that. Progress, even gradual and small, always lifts the spirits.

We must always celebrate these gains, because many in the adoption community worldwide are still struggling against closed adoption systems. At the same time, we need to recognise that many issues remain unaddressed; for example, redress, discharging adoptions, and realistic alternatives to plenary adoption.

We can all change the world if we are prepared to stand with others and to look, listen and learn. But it's like a pot-luck dinner; we all have to bring something to the table.

Another real high for me, was being able to work alongside my 'sister who I didn't grow up with', Collette, as both office volunteers and committee members. It was a great way to make up for the lost years. For my first five years, she had lived only two or three blocks away from me in Moorooka!

Another absolute buzz for me is the public response from the work Dr Jo has done on the Jigsaw website and the Adopt Perspective podcasts. I have had service providers from much larger organisations express their envy of our website, the amount of information on it and its ease of use. And the positive feedback

about Jo's podcasts have been across the board, from people impacted by adoption, our funding bodies, journalists and professionals.

Over the years I have observed many shifting trends in the way adoption is understood—grief and loss, trauma, PTSD, mindfulness, neuroscience and DNA float in and out of the



*Brother & sister, Trevor & Collette
working side by side.*

conversation. For me, beneath all these changing trends there is always the bedrock of authentic interpersonal relationships—how to create and sustain relationships that are mutually need-satisfying. Getting your information and having a reunion mean nothing and get nowhere without bringing understanding, empathy and communication to a new relationship with adult strangers, even if they are blood relatives.

It would be fantasy to think that there have been no low points in my time with Jigsaw, but there haven't been many. Certainly, advocating for change over a long period of time can at times be wearying. It has been helpful not to have an 'it is all up to me' attitude and to let a 'thousand flowers bloom'.

Sadly, as the saying goes, hurt people hurt people, so people impacted by adoption can

trigger each other badly from time to time. While it is understandable that a lot of this goes back to our experiences of adoption trauma, we all have the responsibility to work on this in our lives. Unfortunately, in my experience, some people impacted by adoption really do not want to change. Their trauma wounds have become such a defining part of who they are and how they relate to others that any significant healing would challenge their identity.

While it can be a real revelation when we learn how adoption has impacted our lives and we put the pieces together, there comes a time we need to understand that not every problem in our life is about adoption and that some issues are about ourselves as unique individuals. We might need to get help to deal with anxiety, depression, aggression and addiction. This can be costly but, at some point, we may need to invest in ourselves or risk losing everything else.



Trevor cutting his cake with Jo at the Stakeholder Farewell afternoon tea.

The best way out of the negativity of the past is to be amiable and useful in the present, building good relationships with others and helping where you can to make their lives better. That's why I may be retiring, but I am still going to be a Jigsaw volunteer for as long as I can. I hope you will join me.

Reflection on behalf of Jigsaw

By Heather Hermann

As our longest serving volunteer of Jigsaw Queensland, we asked Heather to pen some thoughts on behalf of the organisation.

The good news is that most people who have been touched by adoption have had problems from time to time, but they have survived. We just need to ask them how they do it. With a little thought and a lot of heart we all have the ability to help each other. It is a trap to think that the world has to change before anything good happens in your life. If you live your best life now, your world will change.

I first met Trevor in 1999 at a Jigsaw Open Meeting in Spring Hill. After this meeting, he continued to come along to our meetings and events and the Jigsaw committee slowly got to know him and learn more about his personal and professional experience.

In 2003, Jigsaw Queensland was at a stage where we really needed someone to take on the President role and we were worried that we wouldn't find the right person. At our AGM, 21

DO YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL?

Do you have a story to tell? If so, we'd love to hear from you. We regularly feature personal stories, poems and articles in our newsletter and on the website, or you can submit a form to be interviewed on the podcast. Email us at support@jigsawqld.org.au or go to www.jigsawqueensland.com/adopt-perspective to fill in the podcast prospective guest form.



years ago now, Trevor attended and was sitting quietly in the corner. When we called for nominations for the President's role, he put his hand up and said, 'I'll be President'. It was such a relief to know we were placing Jigsaw in trusted hands, and we have never looked back from that time onwards.

Trevor made Jigsaw Queensland a professional organisation. He ensured that everything was done ethically and is always mindful of the feelings of others and of where everyone fits in the adoption world. He is respectful of everyone...all members of the adoption triad and always keeps the best interests of the adoption community front of mind. Trevor is so well-loved, liked and respected by so many people, inside and outside of the adoption community.

He has contributed to legislative and policy changes in Queensland, interstate, federally and internationally. Through Trevor's dedication and good management, Jigsaw was funded by the Federal Government in 2015 to provide Forced Adoption Support Services in Queensland. He has sat on many committees to share his knowledge, gained through his academic research, ethics experience and through listening to the needs of our community. In doing so, he always considered other organisations and individuals. He is remembered in these settings as never being



James Johansson farewells Trevor.

flustered, and was able to keep his composure in sometimes challenging circumstances.

We have worked together for more than two decades, and I continue to greatly admire and respect him as a friend and as a leader of our organisation. Nothing is ever too much trouble for Trevor. He has helped me with computers and the administration parts of my role and ensures that everything is done correctly. He is selfless and always puts the needs of others ahead of his own.

One of the highlights of our time working together was the realisation that I had met his mother as she once lived nearby me. She was a wonderful woman. Trevor walks upstairs just like she did.

I know Trevor has also enjoyed working with his sister, Collette at Jigsaw. The two of them have volunteered their time and experience side-by-side for years. Building relationships after reunions can be challenging for all involved and it offered the two of them a unique opportunity to build a shared history. On behalf of the Jigsaw Queensland Management Committee, we wish Trevor all the best for his retirement. May he have wonderful health, happiness and enjoy his days fishing, and spending time with his wife, children and grandchildren. It is time for him to be looked after and to put his needs first.

Messages and well-wishes from our friends, allies and stakeholders

Professor Nahum Mushin

I am delighted to have the opportunity to wish Trevor well on his retirement. Trevor and I first met in 2012 when he attended a consultation on the forthcoming apology by the Commonwealth to people affected by forced adoption. Since then, our paths have crossed on a number of occasions at commemorations, conferences and social events.

Trevor is a person of great intelligence, humanity and compassion. His insight into his own adoption and his perception of the issues faced by others who have experienced forced adoption are second to none.

Jigsaw Queensland is one of the premier forced adoption peer groups and service providers, due

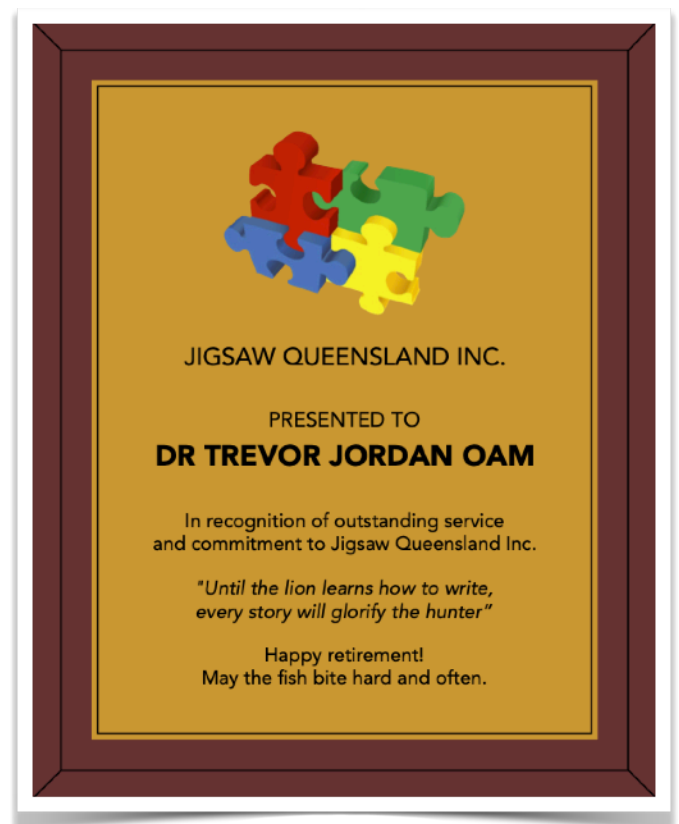
in no small measure to leadership Trevor provides in the sector.

I know that people who have interacted with him come away with a feeling of enrichment which has always been my experience in our relationship. I look forward to our ongoing contacts after his retirement.

All the best, Trevor. Enjoy your retirement in good health.

The Hon. Claire Moore, former Queensland Senator

Thank you Trevor, your leadership, resilience and compassion have added so much to the ongoing campaign to respectfully acknowledge and support all people impacted by adoption systems.



Plaque presented to Trevor in recognition of his more than 20 years of service to the organisation.

From a time when the issues were rarely questioned, through numerous inquiries, reports and budget struggles, you seem to have been a constant, informed voice, reminding governments at all levels and flavours, providers, people with lived experience, good and bad, and the ever elusive media, that adoption is complex, with life long impacts for everyone involved.

Every person has deep, individual experience and must be respected. We all know that the challenges continue but your work and insights will always be there.



Jo Sparrow shares some of Trevor's career highlights at his afternoon tea.

Damon Martin, Deputy CEO, International Social Service Australia

I vividly remember the first time I heard Trevor Jordan speak, it was at the 2008 Australian Adoption Conference when he spoke about ethics in adoption. I was incredibly moved by his presentation and natural ability to connect with the audience.

Since then I have formed a strong professional working relationship with Trevor, we have been members of several Advisory Groups and Steering Groups for adoption sector. I have always been impressed by Trevor's clear and

logical adoption mind, and I have always valued his generous professional opinion and support. Trevor has the ability to manage group dynamics, especially when adoption conversations can heighten people's emotions. And I have always admired how his delivery is intertwined with humour.

Trevor is a tireless advocate for adoptees rights, and whilst he is an adoptee himself, he is always able to balance his personal experience, knowledge of others affected and professional experience in way that is rarely seen in the adoption sector.

Overall, Trevor is genuine and a great guy, someone I have always looked up to and respect. In regards to professionals in the adoption sector, I don't think there is anyone I admire more than Trevor and what he has been able to achieve for adoptees and Jigsaw Queensland. Whilst I am based in Sydney and Trevor is in Brisbane, I often attempt to meet with Trevor when visiting Brisbane and I know he is only a phone call away whenever I need to consult or seek advice.

To conclude, I wish Trevor a great retirement and I feel fortunate to have crossed paths with him professionally over many years.

Vivienne Timmermans, You Gave Me A Voice

I would personally like to thank Trevor for all his hard work over the past 1,000 years guiding and supporting both mothers and adopted peoples.

Trevor has always supported myself and Joyce with our support group *You Gave Me a Voice* and I will be forever grateful.

Trevor, how can we acknowledge all the seconds, minutes, hours, days and years of

research, study and support you have shown many. I just don't have the words.

I understand Jigsaw is a team however you have been the backbone from inception. So from me personally - thank you and we wish you all the best on your next journey.

Patricia Large OAM, President of A.L.A.S. Aus Inc.

Hi Trevor, as you transition into retirement, we wanted to extend our best wishes for your future endeavours. Your unique approach and distinctive style have certainly left an unforgettable impression on all of us.

While your time has been anything but ordinary, we appreciate the moments that have tested our patience and adaptability. Your ability to keep us on our toes will be remembered, and perhaps even serve as a lesson in perseverance.

Over the years we have been part of many major Adoption Law amendments / changes for the better and given many FORCED ADOPTION Survivors a better life. Thank you.

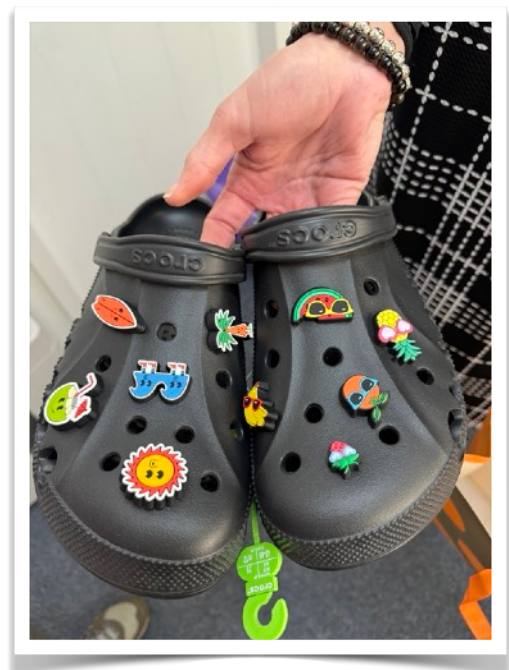
Judy Glover - Secretary of Adoptee Rights Australia

I feel truly honoured to have known, learned from, and worked alongside Dr. Trevor Jordan. His dedication to supporting and advocating for adopted people, their first families, and those who support them has been nothing short of inspiring.

Trevor's unwavering commitment to openness and honesty in adoption practices and his support for those affected has profoundly impacted many lives within our adoption community. Under his leadership, Jigsaw Queensland has flourished, offering essential

services such as searching for relatives, contact and mediation, counselling, peer support groups, and advocacy for adoptees and natural families. His personal support and advocacy have been a beacon of hope for those navigating the complexities of adoption.

As Trevor embarks on his well-deserved retirement, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude for his tireless service and wish him all the best in the next chapter of his journey. Trevor, your legacy will continue to inspire and support those affected by adoption, and your presence will be deeply missed. Thank you for everything you have done both for me personally and to improve the lives of all adopted people and their families.



Two croc loving CEOs?! New CEO, Helen Taylor's retirement gift to Trevor.

Therese Hawken

I first met Trevor over 20 years ago at a Jigsaw meeting at the bottom of the stairs, near the old laundry tubs of the current building with my son that I had also lost to adoption. At the time it was rare to have a mother who was an adoptee

and her son she lost to the Former Forced Adoption be reunited and attend a meeting together. The facilitator from memory that day was a university student studying social work and she was rather thrown a little by that situation. Trevor was very quiet and taking in a lot more than I thought about all the people attending this meeting on this day.

I attended the Adoption conference in Sydney where Trevor was a presenter talking about ethics in adoption and my story was being presented by a Professor as well. I attended his presentation and after started to talk to him and he recognised me and remembered my name. Trevor totally threw me as I at that point I had not realised this professional man in the suit was the same man I had met in QLD as I was only told his first name, not his surname. Over the years our paths have crossed whether standing in Parliament waiting for the laws to be changed, or him supporting me in my journey or working on a committee together.



At times his input has been a privilege and a challenge as a man's input is at times different to a woman's input. The other day we had a chat about retirement and adjusting, so as he steps back and reflects on what he has been involved in and can see the difference he has made in people's lives, and hands the baton on

to others that he can get to enjoy his family, his music, reading and driving to one of his favourite country towns, enjoying his friends, laughter and his favourite salad dressing. Thank you Trevor

Kerri Saint - Association for Adoptees

Dear Trevor, Association for Adoptees is very saddened to hear that you are leaving Jigsaw. We feel that the adoption stakeholders meetings, events and advocacy world will not be the same without you.

We within Association for Adoptees would like to express that every team needs a Trevor Jordan! Your depth of knowledge, respect for others and caring approach in often difficult discussions such as forced adoption, is a quality to be applauded.

In your role advocating for others and being an integral part of our Stakeholder committee you have always remained open and approachable, never shying away from pursuing amicable solutions and resolutions to achieve the best outcomes, for all. For this you are deeply admired.

Few ever pursue such a long and difficult road required to accomplish such positive changes for good for so many, that you have Trevor. Your determination, generous commitment, and dedication for such change for those affected by forced adoption, leaves a legacy that will endure on in the many thousands of lives that it continues to benefit directly and indirectly.

You may never realise the enormity of your work, and there are people that may never know your name but your efforts are felt every day for those whose lives have been forever benefited by your voice and lived experience of an adopted one. Please know that we have deeply

appreciated working beside you, raising our voices with you.

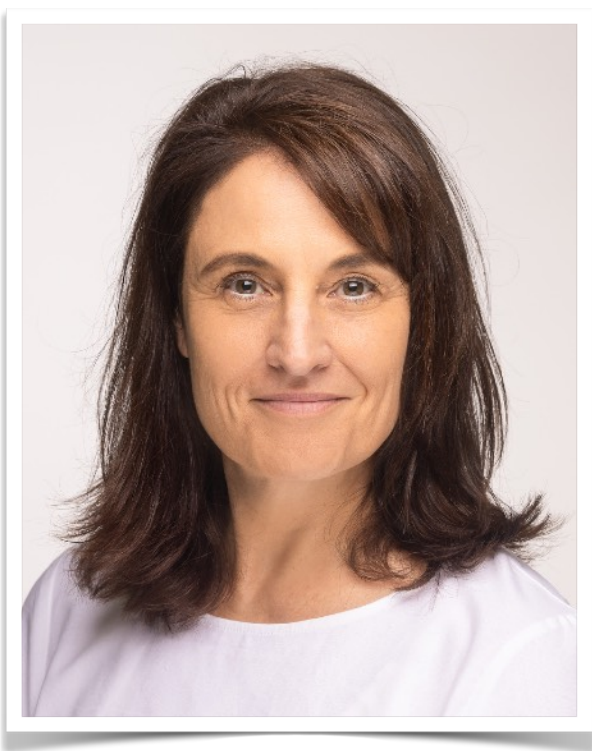
Association for Adoptees offer you the deepest gratitude and respect for a job well done, and wish you well in your future endeavours, wherever that may be.

Colleen Bernard - Origins Queensland

This message says hello and not goodbye because as you know we cannot walk away from our lives. All you are walking away from is your working life. It has been my great pleasure to work alongside you the past 12 years and achieve so many wonderful things. To celebrate the highs and lows that go along with our lives as adoptees. So please go forth and relax and enjoy these wonderful years ahead of you. All the very best for your retirement.

Introducing Jigsaw's New CEO

We are excited to introduce our new CEO and look forward to sharing more from her in future editions.



Jigsaw Qld CEO Helen Angela Taylor

Helen Angela Taylor is an adoptee who discovered Jigsaw Qld in 1991 after moving to Brisbane from Sydney. A few years later she reunited with her mother and father. Helen tried for many years to manage the impact of her forced adoption, and challenging adoptive family experience, but over time it took a significant toll on her mental health, wellbeing, and relationships.

Then in July 2019, she attended her first support group at Jigsaw Qld, and realised the power of the adoption community to support her healing.

Helen has considerable experience in frontline social justice service delivery in Queensland Government. First, as Liaison Officer and Manager, Victim Support Service, Department of Justice and Attorney-General, then as Manager, Concerned Persons Register, Department of Corrective Services. In both roles, Helen designed and delivered information, support, and referral services for victims of crime across Queensland.

Helen then embarked on individual and systemic advocacy as a Community Visitor in the Office of Adult Guardian, providing rights protection and abuse prevention services in accordance with statutory requirements. After four years of investigating allegations of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of adults with disability,

Helen took on the role of Manager, transforming the service into a highly respected, effective model of investigation and advocacy for people with disability, prior to introduction of the NDIS in Queensland.

Helen is committed to continuing the proud Jigsaw Queensland legacy of support, connection, information, and advocacy.

11th Anniversary of National Apology



On Thursday, 21st March we gathered in Victoria Park's Quartz Room in Herston to commemorate the 11th Anniversary of the Australian Government National Apology for Forced Adoptions.

Chris Mundy once again did a wonderful job as MC and a presentation was made by The Hon. Claire Moore, former Senator for Queensland to the family of Margaret Hamilton to honour her advocacy following her passing.

Guest speaker, Charlotte Smith, the now retired CEO of VANISH (Vic) spoke to us about the Parliamentary Inquiry in Victoria that resulted in the Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Scheme that opened for applications in February 2024.

Rachel Clancy performed the original song, *Chasing Rainbows* written by Kerri Saint.

The anniversary event was a collaboration between You Gave Me a Voice, Jigsaw Queensland, Origins Queensland, ALAS Australia and Association for Adoptees.

The event was funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.



Rachel Clancy performs 'Chasing Rainbows'.

2024 Events

The below dates are our scheduled meeting dates for 2024.

To keep up with the latest information or changes, please keep an eye on our website and Facebook page.

Adoptee & Open Meetings and Mothers' Morning Teas are held on the ground floor of 505 Bowen Terrace, New Farm.

Participation at the groups is free.

Open Support Group - (1.30pm to 3.30pm)
10 Aug, 12 Oct, 14 Dec.

Adoptee Support Group - (1.30pm - 3.30pm)
13 July, 14 Sept & 9 Nov.

Mothers' Morning Tea - a regular morning tea from 10am to 12 noon (address above) 17 July, 18 Sept & 20 Nov.